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PR01289

Papers of Ravenscroft, Raymond Bruce (Private); Vietnam; Diary

[1 of 1] Item(s)

Edited by Karl Metcalf 16 April 2016 for private research purposes.

Notes on edited version.

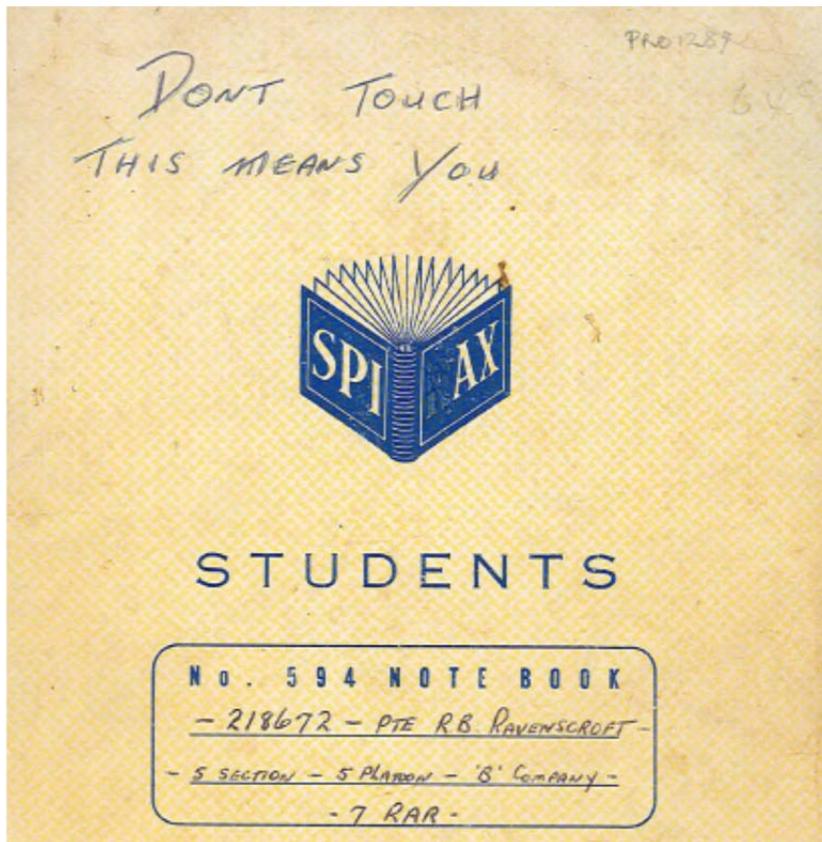
1. Radio callsigns cited in the manuscript, for example the B Company radio callsigns 20A, 21, 22, and 23, have been shown in plain English as B Company Headquarters, 4 Platoon, 5 Platoon, and 6 Platoon respectively. Similarly, sub-elements of platoons, for example the 5 Platoon radio callsigns 22A, 22B, and 22C have been shown as 5 Platoon group A, 5 Platoon group B, and 5 Platoon group C respectively.
 2. Minor changes to the author's original grammatical structure have been made to make the manuscript easier to read and some entries have been rearranged into chronological order to make the flow of events less disjointed.
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3. Editorial comment has been included in square brackets, [editor's comments] where clarification of the manuscript was considered necessary by the editor. Where the editor is not sure of the original meaning a question mark in square brackets has been inserted, for example XYZ [?].

4. The author has used initials/nicknames of most of the persons mentioned in the diary as shown in the following table.

Initials / Nickname	Service No, Rank, Name	Comments
Billy Nicko	3411491 Sergeant William Joseph Nicholson	Platoon Sergeant of 5 Platoon
Brain	39979 Lance Corporal John Arthur Brain	
Charlie T., C.T.	4720142 Private Colin Tilmouth	
Chippis	4721046 Private Trevor Michael Raftery	
Cisco	218672 Private Raymond Bruce Ravenscroft	Author of the diary
CO, Niner, Grey	57011 Lieutenant Colonel Ronald Alwyn Grey	Commanding Officer of 7 th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (7 RAR)
CQ, Head, Jimmy H.	214154 Staff Sergeant James Leslie Head	B Company Quarter Master Sergeant
D.C., Crusie	4410621 Corporal David Warren Cruse	
Don F., Fordy	219104 Private Donald Francis Ford	
Gavin, Rodie	5716347 Lance Corporal Gavin Angus Rodie	
George	3790298 2 nd Lieutenant George Roman Wenhlowskyj	Commander of 6 Platoon
Gilbert	1735157 Lance Corporal Garth John Gilbert	
Greeny	2791899 Private Gilbert George Green	
J.J.	55645 Private John Joseph Smith	
John T.	2795701 Private John William Turner	
K.C.	2791510 Private Keith Geoffrey Connell	
Kavanagh	4720992 Private Graham Robert Kavanagh	
Meggs	3794976 Private Kevin John Morrison	
Mr Pothof	235354 Lieutenant Robin Christiaan Pothof	
Rusty	3789903 Corporal Warwick Russ Hollings	
Sergeant	39747 Sergeant Graham Alexander Collins	

Initials / Nickname	Service No, Rank, Name	Comments
Skipper, Gibbo, Gibbons, Get Mobile	57089 Lieutenant Peter Douglas Gibbons	Commander of 5 Platoon for first half of tour
Snoopy	39191 Corporal Brian Michael Peter Defreitas	
Spunky	14623 Sergeant Douglas John Fieldhouse	Mortar Fire Controller attached to B Company
Stumpy	38877 2 nd Lieutenant Karl Metcalf	Commander of 4 Platoon
Warland, Grog, OC	29067 Major Gregory Patrick Warland	Officer Commanding B Company



[Beginning of diary]

1970 – 71

DIARY OF VIETNAM

DAY I MONDAY 16-2-70

Reveille: 0430

Parade: 0700

Departed Holsworthy 0730 by buses for Garden Island. Arrived Garden Island 0845. Boarded HMAS SYDNEY 1000. Departed Garden Island 1100. Good crowd for farewell.

Lined flight deck until we passed through the Heads which was at 1145.

The SYDNEY! What a ship. We ended up like sardines in a tin, in our sleeping quarters. Roamed around the ship until 1230, then went down for lunch. Found the ship to be huge in size, with five decks apart from the flight deck. Lunch good. Introduction to ship at 1330 and demonstration of life jacket. 1430 continued to roam around ship. 1600 and afternoon tea. 1800 and supper, which was quite good. Bought one packet of B&H [Benson & Hedges cigarettes], one tin [can] of orange drink, a box of matches, a total of 25 cents. 2000 and went to the pictures, not bad. 2230 went to bed, on the high seas.

DAY 2 TUESDAY 17-2-70

Reveille: 0730

Parade: 0900

Given duties, turned out to be quite good, beer party, worked for a whole half-hour and was entitled to double ration. Ration is one 26 ounce can, for 20 cents, at 1100. Passed the coast off Brisbane at 0800. 1200 lunch. 1330 and sleeping for rest of the day. 1800 and supper. 2000 and the pictures again. Meals good all day. Saw a good Western. 2230 and getting ready for bed. Getting used to the occasional sway of the ship, and finding my way around. 1030 saw a demonstration of the life raft by means of a movie. Saw a lot of flying fish around 1800. Quite a slack day.

DAY 3 WEDNESDAY 18-2-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0900

Got up at 0730. 0930 Tests of Elementary Training on SLR [7.62 mm rifle], M16 [5.56 mm automatic rifle], M60 [7.62 mm machinegun]. 1130 finished for lunch. 1330 saw three films, a waste of time. 1500 and physical training nearly killed everybody. 1545 finished work for the day. Passed Hayman Island at 0800. Sighted a few tankers during the day. Temperature getting hot. 2000 and changed course to get through Barrier Reef off Townsville. About 20 miles out to sea. Spent three hours tonight playing Five Hundred [card game], won eight out of eleven games. 2130 and hitting the sack.

DAY 4 THURSDAY 19-2-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Got up at 0715. 0915 fired off the aft end of the ship at balloons. Good fun. 1130 finished firing and went to lunch. 1330 saw a couple of movies. 1500 and forty minutes of physical training again, not too bad today. Passing Cairns this morning. Still in the Barrier Reef. The coral looks very nice. 2000 and saw the *Untouchables*, a good movie. Islands everywhere. 2230 and nearing the top of Australia. Expecting to go around the tip at 2350. Meals good. 2230 hitting the cot.

DAY 5 FRIDAY 20-2-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

0930 and seen a couple more films, military. 1030 and a lecture on mortars. 1115 a lecture from the Padre. 1145 finished for lunch. 1330 another film. 1430 and physical training again. Not bad, getting into condition. 1515 finished work. Well across the Gulf [of Carpentaria] by now. No sight of land all day. 1540 and saw a good water spout, 200 to 300 feet high. Weather getting hotter. 1800 supper. 2000 saw *The Planet of the Apes*. A good show. Starting to get a good tan. Meals good. 2230 hitting the cot again.

DAY 6 SATURDAY 21-2-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

0820 came to a complete stop about 100 miles out from Darwin. A patrol boat came out to meet us and hand over mail and pick some up. 0835 and on our way again. 0915 lecture on the Vietnamese language. 1000 saw another film, rather interesting, about Communism in South East Asia. 1100 physical training. Getting good as far as fitness is concerned. But seven times around the flight deck is no joke. 1145 finished for lunch. 1330 live firing from aft end again. 1815 Eastern Standard Time and putting our watches back half an hour. About 200 miles from Darwin. Saw a lot of flying fish today. Meals good. 2300 hit the sack.

DAY 7 SUNDAY 22-2-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0930

Rounded Timor Island at 0820 this morning. A very quiet day. We have it off. J.J. and myself did two hours of vaulting from 1300 to 1500 – enjoyed it very much. 1815 and our watches going back another half hour. Meals good. 1945 and hit the sack early for once.

DAY 8 MONDAY 23-2-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Went to dentist with a good toothache. 0900 saw *Captured* for the third time. But still enjoyed it. 1030 and an old filling taken out. Getting it refilled tomorrow. 1115 and physical training again. 1340 and started live firing again. 1530 and finished for the day. A swell of about eight feet today. The ship really got rocking in it. 1815 and put our watches back another half hour. Meals good today. No sight of land today. Went to bed at 2200.

DAY 9 TUESDAY 24-2-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Getting tooth refilled tomorrow. 0915 and a lecture on pay for our term in Vietnam. Seen a film on venereal disease this morning at 1000. Getting rather sick of half of these films. 1100 physical training again. No comment. Have the afternoon off. 1500 and have sighted our escort, the HMAS *YARRA*, came alongside at 1530 and we exchanged supplies. 1700 and pulling away to follow us. 1815 and our watches go back another half hour. Now two hours behind Australian Eastern Standard Time.

1900 and passed Mount Krakatoa. It is the most active volcano in the Pacific Ocean. Sailing on the west side of Java and the east coast of Sumatra. The islands around us are very lovely. Saw a lot of sampans and a couple of big villages. 2000 and saw *The Professionals* at the flicks [movies]. 2245 and hit the sack.

DAY 10 WEDNESDAY 25-2-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

0915 a lecture on disembarking. 0945 physical training again. But the last. 1100 changed our money for Military Payment Certificates (MPC). Have the afternoon off. 1330 saw a firepower demonstration by the HMAS *YARRA*. Real interesting. 1430 and we had the Crossing of the Line (Equator) [celebration] which was a million laughs. We crossed the line at 1522. Still the occasional island and sampan. 2100 and hitting the cot. Meals good, and the *YARRA* still with us. Tooth filled today.

DAY 11 THURSDAY 26-2-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

No work today. Just getting ready for disembarking tomorrow. Playing the odd game of cards. Just turning dark and the *SYDNEY* and *YARRA* will move in darkness all night because of the war zone, water-wise.

DAY 12 FRIDAY 27-2-70

Reveille: 0430

Parade: 0500

Moved down into the hangar at 0645 and got into position for disembarking. Ship stopped and anchored at 0630. Sampans, barges and tankers everywhere. We are still two miles out at sea.

0750 boarded landing craft medium (LCM) and headed for the shore. 0830 landed on land in South Vietnam, Vung Tau. Got into trucks and headed for Nui Dat.

Boy talk about stink and the houses. The place stinks and the houses are less than shacks. Arrived at Nui Dat at 0945 and began to settle in for a long stay. Hit the cot at 2130.

DAY 13 SATURDAY 28-2-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Doing general improvements around the place. Spent the afternoon out on the range firing our weapons. Meals good. We have our own boozier, having a few drinks tonight. 2100 and hit the cot. Now ten days on Paludrine for malaria.

DAY 14 SUNDAY 1-3-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Up until lunch at 1230, general improvements again. 1400 up to Special Air Services (SAS) Hill for a look around the place. Could see all of Nui Dat, an area of about four square miles. Meal fair. Carrying five 30-round magazines and five water bottles (minimum) for the rest of our tour.

DAY 15 MONDAY 2-3-70

Reveille: 0600

Parade: 0630

Did nothing until 1000 when 18 of us went out to the range and fired a claymore each which took us up until 1145. 1400 J.J. and myself doing two hours gun picket. J.J. ended up sleeping for one and a half hours while I wrote three letters. Gun picket hard. 2000 and big scare, six Charlies [Viet Cong] walking around the wire. 2200 and they are still there. Huh! The skipper racing around with a torch blasting away trying to get blokes into pits. 105 mm artillery guns blasting away also. 2220 and stand down. 2300 and hitting the sack.

DAY 16 TUESDAY 3-3-70

Reveille: 0600

Parade: 0730

0815 move just outside the Task Force area and watched a fire power demonstration put on by the Australian and American forces. It consisted of the gunships (Bushrangers, Australian) and Cobras (American), tanks and APCs, artillery.

1352 bombers drop six 750 pound bombs, (Canberra's), two F100 drop ten 200 pound bombs plus four napalm bombs. 1400 demonstration of Dustoff by helicopter. Still being fed bullshit, just like back at Holsworthy, and at times worse. Very quiet night and hitting the cot early.

DAY 17 WEDNESDAY 4-3-70

Reveille: 0600

Had a quiet morning. Gavin and myself spent up until 1300 on the day picket. I got at least two hours sleep and wrote two letters. Gavin likewise. This gun picket is hard work. 1400 revision on mines and booby traps at the Engineers' camp. A quiet night until the alarm went off, and we hit our pits. Seven blokes outside the wire. 2315 and stand down. Nobody found. Just a trial run. 2330 and hit the cot.

DAY 18 THURSDAY 5-3-70

Reveille: 0600

Spent all day getting our front line ammunition ready.

Spent a few hours in the boozer and went to bed rather under the weather.

At 1500 we were told we were going out on an operation tomorrow and coming back on Saturday. A big ambush tomorrow night. Spent a few hours at the boozer again. Hit the sack! [When] I am not sure.

DAY 19 FRIDAY 6-3-70

Reveille: 0600

0800 moved out to assembly area and picked up by APCs and tanks (Centurions) and at 1130 moved out to begin Phase 1 of two phases.

Phase 1 was to destroy a cache that had been found, but on arrival we had no explosives so moved on to Phase 2, ambush site. Arrived one click [kilometre] from position at 1430, and had tea until 1900, boy, talk about slackness. Tankies shouting, signal sets blasting,

ourselves walking around half with and half without weapons and webbing and talking. 1900 and moved into position with three APCs, and then waited.

DAY 20 SATURDAY 7-3-70

Moved out of position at 0715 and headed back to camp, arriving at 0830 and as dirty as one could possibly get, from the dust from the APCs as we were sitting on top (just like the movies). Got cleaned up and had the rest of the day off. We are now real worry soldiers [slang – sarcastic term for combat experienced]. Went to bed early after a couple of beers.

DAY 21 SUNDAY 8-3-70

Reveille: 0615

Have the day off. Took good advantage of it. Did our washing, read a few books, got some extra sleep and wrote a few letters. Big booze up tonight as we are on the dry tomorrow night. Went to bed! Think of any time.

DAY 22 MONDAY 9-3-70

Reveille: 0615

Nor much doing today. Got our front line ammunition again, as tomorrow we go out on first big operation, which could last six to eight weeks, no one really knows.

Went down to the PX [Post Exchange – a military shop selling goods at discounted prices] and bought a few things. A good watch \$24, a Seiko “S” 21 jewel automatic with calendar. A camera, Canon Demi EE17 for \$43. And a twelve piece watch set (female) for \$42. All about two-thirds cheaper than in Australia. Cigarettes are 15 cents a packet, beer 10 cents a can (13 ounces).

2130 and hitting the sack.

DAY 23 TUESDAY 10-3-70

Stand to: 0615

Stand down: 0645

0800 and test fired our weapons and prepared for our move out at 1230 to be picked up at 1300 by choppers.

1320 and have landed in our area of operations and after we got in C Company arrived. When all of C Company had arrived, we moved on, and A Company came in.

D Company have it easy as they are working with the tracks, as a cut off group. The artillery pounded hell out of the landing pad from 2400 last night up until 30 minutes before we

arrived. We only moved 200 metres from the pad then harboured up for the rest of the day and night.

DAY 24 WEDNESDAY 11-3-70

Stand to: 0615

Stand down: 0645

Had breakfast and at 0900 moved out to new location. Moved about 500 metres then harboured up in ambush for the four hours of day light left and staying for the night. The going was good. All quiet.

DAY 25 THURSDAY 12-3-70

Stand to: 0615

Stand down: 0645

Had breakfast then at 0900 we moved out to a new position, on the way I came upon a wrecked helicopter (I am forward scout) mainly the rotor section. It had been shot down. A little further on I came upon a 750 pound bomb that had not gone off and Charlie [Viet Cong] was in process of dismantling it. Moved on about 500 metres after blowing it and came across a staging camp with two huts. Searched the area then destroyed them.

Moved on again only to come upon three more 400 metres further on, but with five pits, to hold two men each. Searched the area again and then destroyed the huts and pits, then moved back into the middle of the two areas and set up an ambush for the night.

DAY 26 FRIDAY 13-3-70

Stand to: 0615

Stand down: 0645

No result during the night. 0900 moved 400 metres and got our first resupply. A couple of cold drinks (goffers), a pint of milk, a bread roll with salad, rations and water. 1300 moved out, and after moving 1,500 metres we had a contact, we had one man hurt, [5716707 Private Paul Lusk] hit on the side of the face and nose, CASEVAC [Casualty Evacuated] to hospital, will be OK. [5716707 Private Paul Lusk.]

The enemy turned out to be Callsign 21 [4 Platoon], or a platoon from our own company. They claimed we should have been 300 metres further on, and that they saw three Charlies and opened up at them. Bullshit. We didn't return fire, just as well, 4 Platoon were ready to let us have it with everything they had. They only fired 100 M60 machinegun rounds and two 20-round magazines of M16, before we realised it was us they were firing on and stopped them over the radio. After the chopper had left we all moved on together for 200 metres and harboured up.

Two hours later at 1900 and 4 Platoon open up again, saw a Nog (the enemy) [Nog – Australian slang for any Vietnamese (usually derogatory)] across the clearing from us and let them have it. Fired untold M60, M16, SLR and M72 ammunition at him and then he got away. Artillery was called in on his escape route until 2000, and boy did it come close to us, and it really came in. Only 150 metres from us. It sounded good, but we were still shitting ourselves.

DAY 27 SATURDAY 14-3-70

0445 and 4 Platoon open again, so the artillery started coming in again, the first one within one minute and forty seconds from when it was first asked for. They pounded the hell out of the area until 0535, again we were shit scared. 106 [Artillery] Battery supporting us for the whole trip, and was at Fire Support Base ANNE.

0700 reconnaissance party went out but found nothing. 0945 and we moved out for a new position on a creek line, and stayed for the night. Ambushed a track alongside a clearing.

DAY 28 SUNDAY 15-3-70

At daylight we pulled back into the scrub. No result during the night. At 1000 we moved out after 4 Platoon and B Company Headquarters took over our position, and we moved 2,000 metres through jungle that was as thick as hell, and just as hot, as I've never known before. I was in front again.

Could only move 400 metres an hour and it took us six and one-half hours to get to our new position, just 150 metres across the clearing from our last position. At 1900 a warning order for a 3,000 metre hike tomorrow.

DAY 29 MONDAY 16-3-70

Stand to: 0615

Stand down: 0645

Nil result last night. 0900 and we took off for our big hike, along with 4 Platoon and B Company Headquarters, and what a hike, after going only 1,000 metres Greeny took crook with heat exhaustion and we had to carry him out to a suitable pad.

After going 1,500 metres we came upon a big clearing, so got him lifted out, and decided to get our resupply there also. Thank goodness, because he was heavy, and again very hot. One of the choppers ended up losing its lift-off power, so we had to stay longer to protect it until we got it fixed.

DAY 30 TUESDAY 17-3-70

Stand to: 0615

Stand down: 0645

A quiet night. At 0930 we moved out by ourselves (5 Platoon or Callsign 22) for a new position. Only moved 400 metres and we hit a bunker system, only a matter of weeks old. B Company HQ, 4 Platoon and 6 Platoon were called up to join us and surround it so it could be searched. 5 Platoon cleared it and only found a few papers.

1120 and we took off, while the rest of the company destroyed the bunkers. The rest of the day was just like in Australia, head down and tail up. We were looking for some track, but ended up lost. So we harboured up and called in artillery so we could get a bearing on where we were. Only 700 metres off course.

DAY 31 WEDNESDAY 18-3-70

Stand to: 0620

Stand down: 0635

Moved out at 0930 and ended up like yesterday, head down – tail up. Still looking for this track, if it's there. Stopped somewhere at 1300 and sent out a reconnaissance party. 1420 reconnaissance party returned, no result. Moved 200 metres and harboured up and found out where we are by artillery again.

DAY 32 THURSDAY 19-3-70

Stand to: 0620

Stand down: 0635

0700 we called in a chopper to find a clearing so we could take a resupply. He found one just 200 metres away, it turned out to be a bomb crater, so we ended up chopping a pad. The scrub as thick as hell. And about 14 feet high plus four trees each about two and one-half feet in diameter. After one and one-half hours victory, but everybody had it, and no water.

Waited one hour for chopper, was never so pleased to see one. After resupply we moved 400 metres and harboured, well-hidden for a rest.

DAY 33 FRIDAY 20-3-70

Stand to: 0620

Stand down: 0635

At 0930 we moved north 300 metres and harboured up again, to wait for the rest of the company to move up level with us.

DAY 34 SATURDAY 21-3-70

Stand to: 0620

Stand down: 0635

0930 we headed out north, I am still in front. We have only moved 1,200 metres and yippy, I come across a nice cold stream with running water. Harboured up around it. Two reconnaissance patrols out, and the rest of us have a tub. The first tub we have had. Reconnaissance patrols come in after two hours. Nothing to report. Moved 100 metres from creek and set up ambush.

DAY 35 SUNDAY 22-3-70

Stand to: 0620

Stand down: 0630

0930 moved out of position to a slight clearing about 150 metres away, and ended cutting another pad for resupply, but not quite as bad as the last one. After resupply moved 200 metres and harboured up for the night. Time, 1430.

DAY 36 MONDAY 23-3-70

Stand to: 0620

Stand down: 0635

Moved out at 0930 and after moving 1,100 metres in two hours through easy scrub, we came across a fair sized creek, with cold running water, so harboured up and everybody having a tub. Sent reconnaissance patrols out at 1400 but nothing to report after coming back in in two hours. Staying in position for the night.

DAY 37 TUESDAY 24-3-70

Stand to: 0620

Stand down: 0635

1000 moved out 700 metres to another creek junction and harboured up again.

DAY 38 WEDNESDAY 25-3-70

Stand to: 0620

Stand down: 0635

0930 moved out to a resupply area, 4,500 metres away. Nobody has any food, but plenty of brewing material, and water. Came upon the Song Rai river and started following it north. 2,000 metres away came upon the old bridge on Highway 327 at 1545, and called for resupply straight away. Ambushing road tonight. Food tastes good again.

DAY 39 THURSDAY 26-3-70

Stand to: 0620

Stand down: 0635

Staying in position today. Wrote a few letters and sat around doing nothing in general. [Still in] Phuoc Tuy Province.

DAY 40 FRIDAY 27-3-70

Stand to: 0620

Stand down: 0635

Moved 800 metres to 6 Platoon and after one hour we were picked up by tracks and taken to FSPB [Fire Support Patrol Base] ANNE, where we had a shower and a good clean up. Got a resupply and staying for the night. The end of Operation FINSCHHAFEN, but a new one tomorrow. Attend a church parade this afternoon on my own accord. Good Boy me.

DAY 41 SATURDAY 28-3-70

Stand to: 0620

Stand down: 0635

0915 moved out 500 metres to chopper pad for lift out to a new area of operations. Picked up and dropped some 7,000 metres away. Moved 1,500 metres to junction of Song Rai and Sui Le rivers. Bloody hot moving, and dry. Staying here for the night.

DAY 42 SUNDAY 29-3-70

Stand to: 0620

Stand down: 0630

0945 Moved to point of junction and set up ambush on side of track. Staying here for the night.

DAY 43 MONDAY 30-3-70

Stand to: 0620

Stand down: 0635

A quiet morning. 1100 and moving back to B Company HQ who have not moved from the position where we got off the choppers. 1230 and moving, after 200 metres we come upon a 500 pound bomb that had not gone off.

DC, J.J., CT, and myself have to stay behind and blow it. Boy what a job. Lit the fuse, giving us a 300 metres start, and took off. Moving that fast that we had covered 550 metres, when bang! And rubbish started falling all around us. Another 200 metres and have caught up to

the rest of the platoon. One and one-half hours later reached B Company HQ and had a tub in the river.

DAY 44 TUESDAY 31-3-70

Stand to: 0620

Stand down: 0635

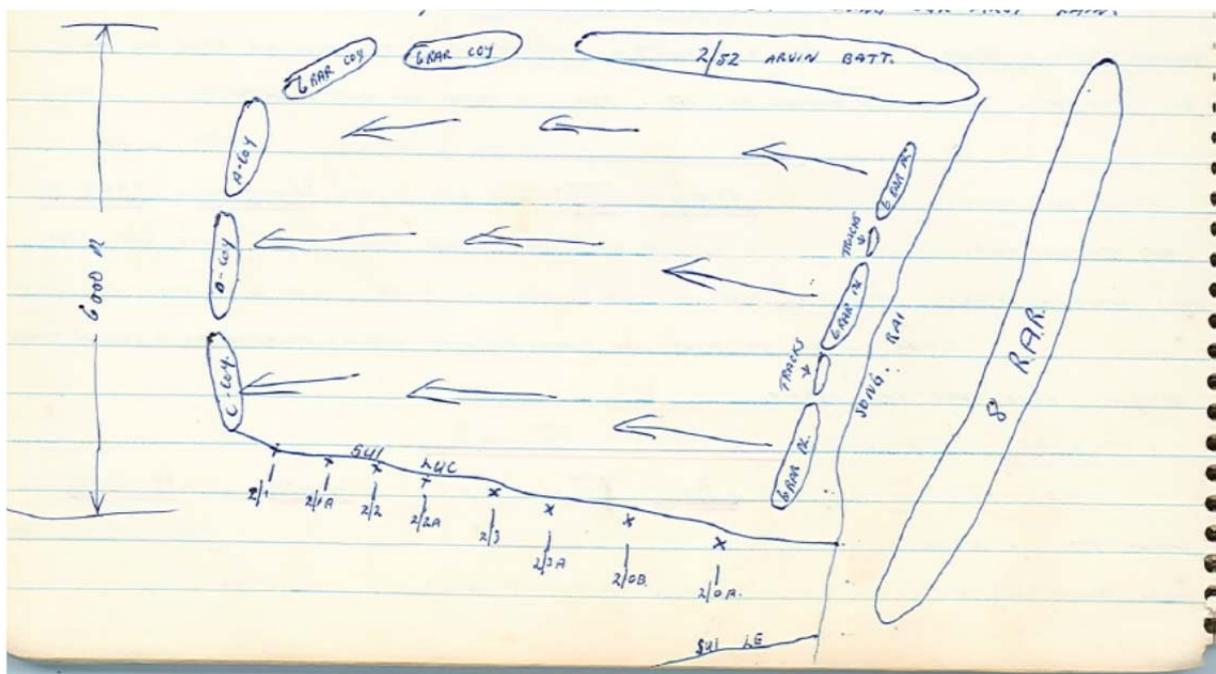
Got a resupply today and told of another big move, 5,700 metres in fact. The going was good and a good pace maintained. It took us two and one-half hours. Still very hot. After moving 4,000 metres we left the rest of the company and moved on for 1,700 metres, but dropped half of the platoon off 500 metres back. Harboured up for the night on the banks of the Sui Luc creek.

DAY 45 WEDNESDAY 1-4-70

Stand to: 0620

Stand down: 0635

1000 and we have to move another 500 metres. Going good, we harboured up in a type of harbour-ambush facing a track on the other side of a creek. We are now in Duc Thanh Province. We have become a blocking force for a big push. See diagram below. I went out on a reconnaissance patrol, and yes, no April Fool, I found a cache. It consisted of fifteen blocks of Chicom [Chinese communist] [plastic explosive], nine inches square, five inches deep. Weighing ten pounds each. We are on the Sui Luc river, about two feet deep and thirty feet wide. Having our first rain.



DAY 46 THURSDAY 2-4-70

Still in position, today we blew the Chicom, except one block. 5 Platoon group A have also just found a cache, one machinegun, two AK-47s, and fourteen mines and four grenades. Blew the Chicom and what a mess it made. Cleared the area for 200 metres.

DAY 47 FRIDAY 3-4-70

Still in position, getting a few letters written, and some books read. Artillery and jets starting to get on our willies [making us nervous]. All quiet.

DAY 48 SATURDAY 4-4-70

0830 we moved back to B Company HQ for a resupply, very easy going. After resupply we moved back to our position. Artillery and jets still screaming around.

DAY 49 SUNDAY 5-4-70

Still in position, everybody enjoying this. 1400 and back to B Company HQ. It took us forty minutes to reach them. The track is looking like a highway. Word is back to the Dat [Nui Dat]. Staying in a company position tonight.

DAY 50 MONDAY 6-4-70

Stand to: 0615

Stand down: 0640

1100 and still no word on what's going on. Just sitting around not that we mind. 1315 word through. Moving 2,000 metre to a big clearing to be picked up by choppers and lifted out. Where to we don't know. Going good.

DAY 51 TUESDAY 7-4-70

Stand to: 0615

Stand down: 0640

0900 and word through. Back to the Dat [Nui Dat], and two days R&C [Rest & Convalescence]. 1100 and choppers arrive. 1140 and back at NUI DAT. Handed in our ammunition and got new stuff, cleaned our weapons then into a shower. Rest of day off. Barbecue tea and 94 cartons of grog. Result of operation. Ourselves: one KIA [killed in action], seventeen wounded. Enemy: eleven KIA, 18 wounded, five prisoners and two Chieu Hoi [former enemy who rally to the Government of South Vietnam].

DAY 52 WEDNESDAY 8-4-70

Reveille: 0700

Parade: 0900

Had a quiet day. Mainly administration. Went down to the swimming pool for two hours this afternoon. It was good. No beer left after last night. Funny sleeping in a bed, after the ground. Having a quiet night.

DAY 53 THURSDAY 9-4-70

Reveille: 0615

Parade: 0800

Nothing much done today, more administration and the pool again. Everybody told to get a haircut. We look like a mob of long haired louts, that you would find on the streets. Growing a good moustache. Getting a new set of greens [jungle greens combat uniform] for our R&C. Another quiet night and early to bed after a couple of beers.

DAY 54 FRIDAY 10-4-70

Reveille: 0615

Parade: 0800

Another slack day, more administration, did Operation LIFESAVER [refresher training in weapon safety and mine recognition], usually takes one-half hour. It took all of us ten minutes. Down to the pool again this afternoon. Had a late night 0130 to be truthful.

DAY 55 SATURDAY 11-4-70

Reveille: 0615

Parade: 0800

Spent the morning out on the range, fired three M26 grenades and one white phosphorous grenade each. Went swimming again this afternoon, for two hours. This morning we became the Ready Reaction Company. 4 Platoon are HAWKFLIGHT, on five minutes notice [to move], the rest [of the company] on 30 minutes [notice to move]. Having an early night.

2050 and just about to hit the cot and bang! We are being reacted. 4 Platoon have just moved out on tracks. The rest of us standing by. 8 RAR in a major contact, and taking casualties. 2130 and still here [waiting]. Everybody hoping we don't get reacted. 0230 and still waiting. Bugger this I am going to hit the cot and get some sleep.

DAY 56 SUNDAY 12-4-70

Reveille: 0615

Parade: 0800

Everybody told to go to bed at 0400. Ha! Ha! By then I already had had one and one-half hours sleep. 0800 and got the facts of 8 RAR contact. Hit fifteen Nogs. Nogs split up and hit

each flank of 8 RAR who had two casualties. Three Nogs KIA and two wounded. Found the drag marks of five others [bodies being dragged along the ground].

Went swimming again today. 2100 and bloody artillery starting up. 2130 and artillery really going to town. They are only 250 metres from us. 2145 and going to bed for the rest of the night I hope.

DAY 57 MONDAY 13-4-70

Reveille: 0615

Parade: 0800

Spent all morning at the Engineers' camp, Number 2 Troop, doing a mine course. Today we (5 Platoon) are HAWKFLIGHT. Went swimming again this afternoon. Having a quiet night.

DAY 58 TUESDAY 14-4-70

Reveille: 0615

Parade: 0800

Spent most of the day changing tents. Replacing the ripped ones with new ones. Also had a general clean up. Back down to the pool again this afternoon. Plus two hours at the Pearson Club. A quiet night.

DAY 59 WEDNESDAY 15-4-70

Reveille: 0615

Parade : 0800

As from 0700 we are HAWKFLIGHT again. Boy is our skipper after kills. He volunteered us for this one. Just sitting around waiting. Most of us got some sleep and a few letters written. Finish 0700 tomorrow. A quiet night.

DAY 60 THURSDAY 16-4-70

Reveille: 0715

Parade: 0900

Sunday times today. On company duties today, I got gun picket, which is good. Have all morning off. Start at 1300, and sit on chair next to the gun waiting, drinking goffer [can of soft drink], smoking, reading, writing, listening to radio and the odd bit of sleep. Hard work this. On with J.J. Finish at 1830 had a few beers tonight and to bed early. R&C tomorrow, for two days at Vung Tau.

DAY 61 FRIDAY 17-4-70

Reveille: 0615

Parade: 0800

Everybody racing around madly, like hens with their heads cut off, getting ready for Vung Tau. 1300 and onto the trucks. 1400 and off the trucks at the Badcoe Club, for the rest of our leave. 1500 and free to do what we like. Everybody put their gear into their rooms and headed off in civvies [civilian clothing]. John T., Don F., Charlie T. and myself headed for the canteen for a couple of beers. 15 cents a can, and it's Australian. 1630 had tea [dinner] then we headed for town, about half a mile away, to see what makes it tick.

Oh-boy! What a place, stinks, streets very narrow, and everybody driving on the wrong side of the road. Mainly motorbikes, and Lambrettas [small three wheel micro buses based on motorbike frames and normally called Lambros], only a few cars, a few horse and carts, and a few bicycle carts. 2100 and back to the club. Everyone has to be off the street by 2200 as curfew starts then. Found the White Mice (or South Vietnamese Police) very interesting, they shoot first and ask questions second. If they sing out to stop then you stop because they don't sing it out twice. We hold great respect for them.

DAY 62 SATURDAY 18-4-70

Got up 0800. 0845 the four of us went to breakfast, and we were waited on by South Vietnamese girls, but hands off, they are government employed. They were fun to talk to and would have a joke with you. They speak very good English. They are also employed to clean our rooms and make our beds and general work around the place. 1000 and we all set off, camera in hand, and a beautiful day. Took photos of just about everything that moved.

1500 and returned to the club and did some surfing until 1630 when we went to dinner, and another terrific meal, plus a can of free beer which goes with each meal except breakfast. 1900 and back into town. Another hectic night until we jumped into a Lambretter and back to camp, for a good night's rest, and to get our feet up.

DAY 63 SUNDAY 19-4-70

Up at 0800, but at 1200 we had to go back to Nui Dat, and back out into the bush. One thing we agreed on, that is, we would rather walk around the Cross [Kings Cross, Sydney] at 0200 by ourselves than walk around here in pairs. You really have to watch your pockets, your watch, and camera. Full marks to them though. They are good. Makes the fellows around Kings Cross look like beginners. I didn't suffer, but a couple of my mates did.

1600 and heading bush again. We know where to, but not what for. Moved 3,000 metres by trucks then 2,000 metres by foot, and harboured up. 2200 moved out again, moon now up. Followed creek bed for 4,500 metres. Hot as hell and drinking a lot of water.

DAY 64 MONDAY 20-4-70

0300 we reached point we were heading for, and harboured up, for rest of the night. 0700 still in position. Still nobody knows what for. 0830 moving 1,300 metres to the BONE, 1350 B Company HQ and 4 Platoon had a contact [with the enemy]. 1520 contact broken. One enemy KIA, one badly wounded. "Stumpy" took off on blood trail, with a section. Calling in [tracker] dogs. They lost the trail but found an AK-47 and a pack. 1610 and 4 Platoon make contact again resulting in one enemy KIA. One RPD 2 [light machinegun], one AK-47.

We were pulled in to act as a cut-off group. Enemy came within 100 metres of us then turned off onto another track, the bastards. Started off on the 19th with eight water bottles, now 1720 and no water at all, it's that bloody hot. Could be getting some from the Song Rai river tomorrow. 1730 and moving 100 metres to ambush another track for the night. Carrying five days Yank rations.

DAY 65 TUESDAY 21-4-70

Moved out 0815 towards 6 Platoon, 1,100 metres away. Getting some water off them. 1015, and Christ only knows where 6 Platoon are. But we have moved 2,000 metres and still haven't found them. Everybody had it, and not a bit of sweat on any of us, we are that dry. Everybody getting really shat off. 1030 I collapsed along with three others, I didn't know of the others until a lot later.

1040 and reconnaissance patrol out. Found 6 Platoon at 1050, 100 metres away. Have now gone 3,700 metres to reach them. Got half a bottle of water each, then headed off for the Song Rai. I nearly collapsed again on this trip. Two others did. 1140 reached the river. 1,700 metres from 6 Platoon. It was supposed to be 200 metres. 1155 and water. 1400 and reconnaissance patrol out. Going to ambush the track on the river tonight.

DAY 66 WEDNESDAY 22-4-70

Moved 300 metres north to a new track, and harboured up. Last night at 1810 Kavanagh of 6 Platoon died of dehydration.

1215 reconnaissance patrol out. 1300 they sighted seven Nogs. 1335 hit them. B Company HQ called down [i.e. advised over the radio] that they and 4 Platoon would act as a blocking force. 1340 Charlie Tilmouth hit in the neck, but OK.

1430 Dustoff flying overhead, plus two Bushrangers in support. 1435 Bushrangers open up [begin firing]. 1440 Charlie Tilmouth lifted out.

1540 Bushrangers open up on Nogs in a bunker system, and how.

1620 Gunships run out of ammunition and low on fuel, and returning for resupply. 1620 B Company HQ and 4 Platoon in big contact. Size of system approximately 60 metres by 120 metres. 1645 still a lot of firing. 1630 two more blokes wounded, don't know who as yet. 1650 gunships return.

1700 they opened up again with rockets, 30 calibre [30 mm] mini-guns plus M60 door machineguns. 1750 gunships out of ammunition again.

1800 bombers have taken over. They dropped ten napalm bombs. We had to move 200 metres away, but we may as well have been in the [bunker] system for what it was worth. CO flying around the area in Possum [light observation helicopter], but took off after Nogs put a few rounds into them [those in the helicopter, i.e. the pilot and the CO].

1830 bombers finished and gunships have taken over again. 1850 gunships out of ammunition again. They are calling it quits until tomorrow. 1900 and artillery have taken over. 2030 and artillery have stopped. Boy did they plaster the area. During the night a firefight took place when the enemy tried to get out. One enemy KIA, one wounded.

DAY 67 THURSDAY 23-4-70

0630 big assault takes place, tanks going through bunker system Christ only knows how, but Charlie [Viet Cong] is still in there. 0800 tanks open up with high explosive rounds plus twin 30 calibre and 30 – 50 calibre and twin 50 calibre combinations [of machineguns].

CO flying around in a new chopper but a bit higher this time.

0900 tanks half way through system. Another two more enemy killed. 1200 and harboured up just off system until tomorrow. Thank Christ but all quiet except for occasional artillery.

DAY 68 FRIDAY 24-4-70

0730 moved 700 metres to B Company HQ for resupply. Arrive 0815. Got resupply 1130, and had a tub in the Song Rai at 1500 (lovely). Moved out 1545. Harboured up after going 300 metres. All quiet.

DAY 69 SATURDAY 25-4-70

Moved out 0845. Held up at 1000 for a spell after going through 1,200 metres of virgin raw jungle. 1030 moved out again, after going 1,000 metres we came across a good track at 1535.

Dug holes in a nearby dry creek bed for water while a reconnaissance patrol goes out. 1630 moved into an ambush position just off track. Had a blue [altercation] yesterday and again today with the skipper, and so did Meggs yesterday.

DAY 70 SUNDAY 26-4-70

0900 moved 200 metres and harboured up. Water party going to Song Rai for water. 1500 moved out and did a zig-zag course for 1,000 metres. 1530 and end of first leg, no track, returning to last position. Reconnaissance patrol out and found a track and at 1800 moved down to ambush it.

Last night Mr Pothof killed in the Long Green by a mine.

DAY 71 MONDAY 27-4-70

0730 water party out, to creek, and reconnaissance patrol out. Found a well-used track junction. Staying in position today and tonight. Snake on chest.

DAY 72 TUESDAY 28-4-70

Still in position today. Doing small reconnaissance patrols and catching up on a few letters. Animals fighting over waterhole.

DAY 73 WEDNESDAY 29-4-70

Moved to last resupply area at 0800. We had another tub. Got a report the Nogs' morale down to rock bottom. They have suffered a lot of heavy casualties and deaths, mainly officers and NCOs plus a lot of documents. A Nog NCO reported: "7 RAR wiped out to every last man". Staying here tonight.

DAY 74 THURSDAY 30-4-70

More reports on Nogs. They have taken a big loss in this area. They are pulling out of the Long Green and the Long Hais [Long Hai mountains] for regrouping. Those in the Long Hai mountains are taking a hiding from C Company and will be pulling back through us. We are going to sit here and wait for them. Baria and surrounding villages are supposed to be getting wiped out tonight, but we have upset their plans too much. Old Mao Tse-tung's birthday. Moving back to waterhole area.

DAY 75 FRIDAY 1-5-70

Still in position at waterhole. All quiet. Catching up on a few letters and some reading. Monkey parade yesterday afternoon.

DAY 76 SATURDAY 2-5-70

Moved to B Company HQ for resupply. 1100 and the rainy season may be beginning. We are having a little rain. 1120 and returning to position. 1200 and moving 50 metres up onto a small knoll.

1520 and contact. Two Nogs. Gavin opened up on them and missed. Snoopy, Brain, Chipps and myself moved out to pick up their tracks and give chase. Followed trail for 500 metres but no sign of blood so returned to position.

DAY 77 SUNDAY 3-5-70

Still in position. 1110 hours and 4 Platoon had a contact not far from us. Approximately 1,000 metres away. They have two blokes wounded but not serious.

Quiet day for us. 2000 and we can hear several Nogs walking around on the next ridge line approximately 200 metres away. Everybody shit scared.

DAY 78 MONDAY 4-5-70

1100 moved down to bunker system and cleared it. 1500 and resupply across the river with B Company HQ, 4 Platoon, and 6 Platoon. Supplied by tracks. 1730 moved across river and harboured up for the night.

DAY 79 TUESDAY 5-5-70

0730 moved to Bone feature and formed an ambush. Dug in to shell scrape depth.

DAY 80 WEDNESDAY 6-5-70

Still in position. 1400 water party to Song Rai. 1730 party returned.

DAY 81 THURSDAY 7-5-70

Still in position. 1700 and a big message coming, it cannot be put over the radio. The rest of the battalion are in the Long Green, so we think we know what it is. Will know for sure tomorrow.

DAY 82 FRIDAY 8-5-70

Still in position and still no word to what is going on. 1850 packing up and going back to B Company HQ. Someone died. 1915 and moving. 1927 arrived at B Company HQ. Death all bullshit.

DAY 83 SATURDAY 9-5-70

Resupply today. 1500 moving back to old position plus 6 Platoon is with us, but they will move on.

DAY 84 SUNDAY 10-5-70

Moved 50 metres back up to knoll. 1000 and the rest of 5 Platoon and B Company HQ join us. We could be here some time. Rest of battalion still in the Long Green. A and D Companies ambushing Dat Do by night and resting by day in the Horseshoe.

DAY 85 MONDAY 11-5-70

Still in position. All quiet. I have a splitting headache and vomiting.

DAY 86 TUESDAY 12-5-70

Still in position. Head OK. 1030 going out on gun picket. 1045 and I killed a five foot python. I shit when I saw it.

1100 shit again, with rounds flying around us everywhere. Just been told water party coming in 150 metres away, spotted eight to ten Nogs sitting on track between them and us,

but out of our sight. Result three Nogs killed, four packs, two AK-47s and a lot of papers and documents. Two blood trails, one going north and one going south.

Two five-man patrols going out to follow up each one. Artillery called in. 107 high explosive rounds fired. Brought in as cut off 200 metres from us. A little too close for comfort. On hitting the deck I collided with a log and got several large splinters in my head, and again another sore head.

Reconnaissance party that headed north found two more bodies. 1630 and we (5 Section), went out to ambush a track 400 metres away.

DAY 87 WEDNESDAY 13-5-70

Returned 0645. Then moved to BONE feature at 0730, everybody (Company) dropped packs and headed off 2,000 metres to proposed new bunker system. 5 Section, Snoopy plus two of his blokes [6 Section] and Artillery Forward Observer and his signaller stay to watch the packs, and a main track running along the side of the Bone.

1120 and just finished reading a good book, *The Ugly American* by William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick all about America and how she is going wrong in fighting communism. Should be read by one and all. Resupply put back five hours and is only a three-dayer.

DAY 88 THURSDAY 14-5-70

5 Section and five blokes from Support Section [part of Company HQ] leaving position for a new ambush site. 0815 and arrive in position 300 metres up a track from the main junction.

Found a body today, (Spunky) and myself. K.C. and me had to bury him. He had a briefcase with 72,000 piastre, one AK-47, a pack and some papers. We burnt the papers, split the piastres between the twelve of us and handed in the AK-47 and pack.

DAY 89 FRIDAY 15-5-70

Arrived back at B Company HQ and 5 Platoon at 0715. Rusty moving out with a party. Another body found yesterday. They think they were from our contact last Tuesday. Five-day resupply tomorrow. Catching up on a few letters again today.

DAY 90 SATURDAY 16-5-70

Moved one click to resupply area. 1300 took off for three clicks with five days rations and are we hiking. 1700 and 5 Section plus four men from 4 Section and their 2ic plus MFO [MFC] Spunky took off for a further 1,500 metres. Reached our position at 1850 and found nothing.

Reconnaissance patrol went out and have come upon an old track. As old as me and hasn't been used for nearly as long but ambushed it anyway. By this time a very edgy mob of

blokes. A couple of blues on the way here. Mainly Crusie had the shits with Spunky but took it out on Fordy. Quiet night.

DAY 91 SUNDAY 17-5-70

Moved 1,500 metres in a zig-zag course having a look around. 0940 and the Adjutant has just had a few shots put into his Possum, two clicks away.

1230 and just ordered back to 5 Platoon. 1430 have moved. 1500 and still no sign of 5 Platoon. 1530 and found 5 Platoon after Spunky got lost. Moved out five minutes later. OK by the Skipper, he's been sitting on his arse for the past day and a half. Sergeant grizzling about his leg and everybody else whinging. After one click I collapsed, Gavin and Fordy started pouring water over me. "Get Mobile" roaring like a bull at a red gate. But can't make out what he's saying and don't much care. Crusie's still got the shits, and I just told him where to go. Back on my feet 20 minutes later.

One click later and the boys are carrying my gear. 500 metres later the Sergeant and myself dropped off at B Company HQ. The rest of 5 Platoon push on.

Too many unqualified doctors in this company and not enough soldiers. Warland's famous last words, "If it takes us all day to go 500 metres, then we will take all day." But nobody has seen it yet.

DAY 92 MONDAY 18-5-70

Still with B Company HQ. Going to ask for a transfer. Still crook in the stomach. Head dizzy, legs weak. But I am not dead yet so I am OK. 1100 and 5 Platoon picked up the Sergeant and myself and returned to the ambush position, two clicks away. Quiet night.

DAY 93 TUESDAY 19-5-70

Still in position. Feeling a lot better. Chest still tight and have a slight headache. Writing a few letters. All quiet.

DAY 94 WEDNESDAY 20-5-70

Returned to B Company HQ for resupply. Been told we could be getting R&C on 4 -5 June. 1515 returning to the Bone. 5 Platoon went to their position and 5 Platoon group A went to ours 500 metres away. On arrival I did my stack with Crusie, Rodie and then the Sergeant. Got extra sentry, for it. Ha! Ha! A whole hour. Still tight in the chest, and pains. Quiet night.

DAY 95 THURSDAY 21-5-70

Still in position. Someone having fun about three clicks away, gunships, artillery and rockets. Sounds like a big contact. Pains in stomach a lot better, head OK. Chest eased off, a lot. Contact three clicks away turned out to be 1 Platoon. They took thirteen casualties altogether.

DAY 96 FRIDAY 22-5-70

Still in position. All quiet. Catching up on some sleep. 5 Platoon had a contact today, nil results.

DAY 97 SATURDAY 23-5-70

Still in position. All quiet. Have been told I am going back to base tomorrow. Shit-hot, will be LOB [left on base] for two weeks.

DAY 98 SUNDAY 24-5-70

Moved to B Company HQ for resupply. I returned to [Nui Dat] base. Boy! Wasn't it good to have a shower after five weeks without one. And good to sleep in a bed again. Did nothing today except get cleaned up.

DAY 99 MONDAY 25-5-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Had a good night's sleep. Doing two hour shift in the Command Post with three other blokes. LOB means left on base. A few fellows out of each platoon do it. It is added protection [for the base], and do other jobs around the place. After two weeks you re-join your platoon and some new blokes take over. It is a good break too.

DAY 100 TUESDAY 26-5-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Worked down the Other Ranks' Mess. Boy what a day. Had nearly four hours off in the afternoon. Finished at 1830. Of all the time I worked, I spent most of it eating. By the time I had finished I would not give you 20 cents for a piece of food. Having an early night in bed.

DAY 101 WEDNESDAY 27-5-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Another slack day. Doing gun picket. Two hours on, four hours off. Another early night in bed.

DAY 102 THURSDAY. 28-5-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

At 0830 left on a TAOR [Tactical Area of Responsibility] patrol, which is a two-day patrol around a sector outside of the wire, about 2,500 metres away. It's to make sure that no Charlies are assembling quietly outside the wire to have a go at us.

0900 and arrived at sector. Moved 2,000 metres into the rubber trees arriving at 1100. Everybody just sat down in column of blob [literally sit down wherever you stopped without proper regard to adopting a proper tactical fire position] for the rest of the day.

1730 moved into an ambush position about 200 metres away. During the day we had no sentries and Gilbert started potting off birds with the M16. We were talking that loud that anyone 1,000 metres away would have heard us. Fires going all the time for brews.

DAY 103 FRIDAY 29-5-70

Got up at 0630, no stand to. We dragged in the Claymore we had put out and at 0700 moved down the track to a small creek about 500 metres away, and had breakfast and then stayed in the position until 1400.

At 1400 we moved into another ambush position for the night. At 1520 Gilbert finally hit a bird after three shots at it, and then got a photo of himself taken with it. This bloke would not have a brain in his head, as far as picking an ambush site and setting one out leaves a lot to be desired.

DAY 104 SATURDAY 30-5-70

Got up at 0630 again and the same procedure as yesterday only at 0700 we moved back to the highway, to be picked up and returned to base. On our way up the track we stopped some Vietnamese civilians and checked their ID [Identity Cards]. One chap had a card dated eleven years ago, so we detained him. Stopped another two lots but they were OK. On reaching the road we were told to take him to the authorities at Ap Sui Na about a mile away.

When we got there, there wasn't anybody there, so we headed off to a Regional Forces post back down the road. What a mess it turned out to be. They didn't want him, so they called the authorities at Dat Do to send someone up to collect him. When he arrived he was just as useless.

About ten minutes later an officer arrived from Ap Sui Na, it turned out they were still in bed when we arrived by this time it's 0930. We gave the bloke to the officer and took off, as we all wanted to get back to camp and have a shower. We arrived back there at 1000 and had the day off. Boy, what a bloody joke these TAOR [patrols] are.

DAY 105 SUNDAY 31-5-70

Reveille: 0645

Parade: 0800

Spent another enjoyable day down at the ORs Mess. Did about three hours work altogether. Spent most of the day playing darts with the cooks. Early to bed again tonight.

DAY 106 MONDAY 1-6-70

Reveille: 0645

Parade: 0800

A very slack day. Just pottered around doing little odd jobs. We had two American Red Cross girls out this afternoon for two hours. Sort of a keep merry program that they sponsor. Went to the boozier last night with a few of the other blokes. Got full and did gun picket at 2110, as full as a boot. Relieved at 2235 by a mate that was also full as were the others as they did picket. Real great night defence we have. Hit the cot at 2250.

DAY 107 TUESDAY 2-6-70

Reveille: 0700

Parade: 0800

Main reason for late rise was because everyone slept in, including the Sergeant, who is back from the bush, and the CQ. Another slack day. Just sitting around doing nothing in particular boys returning from the bush tomorrow. Went to bed only half sloshed this time.

DAY 108 WEDNESDAY 3-6-70

Reveille: 0700

Parade: 0800

Again we slept in, and again because of the good night had by one and all in the boozier last night.

0900 the Company returned. Everyone racing around madly. I am out of the road, volunteered for the ORs Mess. Thank goodness.

DAY 109 THURSDAY 4-6-70

Reveille: 0700

Parade: 0815

We had a good night last night on the grog. There are 94 blokes in the Company and we went through 84 cases of beer. Oh! Boy my head.

1100 and handed Gibbons a transfer.

1145 OC passed it. 1330 because of [approved] transfer have had my R&C cancelled. Gibbo has the shits with me. Going to bed early.

DAY 110 FRIDAY 5-6-70

Reveille: 0700

Parade: 0815

Only eight of us [from B Company] left in camp. Having a quiet day. Watching some TV. Nothing else to do. Spent an hour down [at the] boozier this afternoon. Hit the cot at 2130 after a good day.

DAY 111 SATURDAY 6-6-70

Reveille: 0700

Parade: 0815

Nothing much doing today. Mainly watching TV.

1400 and the Company back from Vung Tau, they had a good time. Ended up with forty-one charges [for breaches of military discipline], including the OC for putting an MP [Military Policeman] in hospital, and another one [MP] walking around with bruises.

Hit the sack at 2200 after three and one-half hours on the booze.

DAY 112 SUNDAY 7-6-70

Reveille: 0600

Parade: 0830

0830 Company leaving for the Horseshoe. I am staying back LOB. Working in the CP [Command Post]. Hit the cot 2030.

DAY 113 MONDAY 8-6-70

Reveille: 0700

Parade: 0815

Spent the day in the CP out of everybody's way. Wrote a couple of letters and read a book. Hit the cot 2100.

DAY 114 TUESDAY 9-6-70

Reveille: 0600

Parade: 0715

0800 moved out on a TAOR patrol. Same place as last time, except 400 metres further up the track. Arrived 1035. Will be here for two days.

DAY 115 WEDNESDAY 10-6-70

Stand to: 0545

Stand down: 0630

Put sentries out 0630. Dave Cruse brought back from the Horseshoe to take us out. Doing one hour on, six off, so far going by the book [everything being conducted in accordance with proper procedures]. 2230 and had a good storm.

DAY 116 THURSDAY 11-6-70

Stand to: 0545

Stand down: 0630

0630 started packing up. 0700 moved back to Highway 2, arriving 0735. Stopped several South Vietnamese and checked identity cards. OK.

0815 trucks arrive. 0840 back in camp. Relaxed for the rest of day. 1400 had a blood test for any germs which I may have picked up. Had a few beers and went to bed at 2050.

DAY 117 FRIDAY 12-6-70

Reveille: 0645

Parade: 0815

Working down in the CP again. Had a few beers tonight. Hit the sack 2200.

DAY 118 SATURDAY 13-6-70

Reveille: 0645

Parade: 0800

Woke up 0815 along with everyone else. Even Jimmy H., the CQ. Working again in the CP. Beats the bloody bush and a lot safer. Getting plenty of sleep as all good things come to an end.

DAY 119 SUNDAY 14-6-70

Reveille: 0715

Parade: 0915

Worked down in the ORs Mess today. Quite easy actually. Finished 1830. Had two beers and went to bed at 2030.

DAY 120 MONDAY 15-6-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Two other chaps and myself doing gun picket. Two hours on, four off, until 1830. Quite a slack day. Wrote a couple of letters This work and life is just too good.

DAY 121 TUESDAY 16-6-70

Reveille: 0645

Parade: 0815

Working in the CP again. Still no word on my transfer. Wish someone would extract his finger. But then even that would mean work. Had two beers and hit the cot 2000.

DAY 122 WEDNESDAY 17-6-70

Spent the day in Vung Tau. Had to go to the hospital (1st Australian Field Hospital) to have my leg x-rayed. Whatever is on my leg it's got them worried. Returned to camp 1700 and in bed at 1930, mainly due to the amount of cans (ten) [of beer] had at the Badcoe Club [at Vung Tau].

DAY 123 THURSDAY 18-6-70

Reveille: 0645

Parade: 0815

Along with everyone else woke at 0820. Working in the CP again today. Missed out on a TAOR patrol today. Boy! My heart bleeds. Saw *Von Ryan's Express* at the flicks tonight. Had seen it in Australia but still enjoyed it. In bed at 2215.

DAY 124 FRIDAY 19-6-70

Reveille: 0645

Parade: 0815

Working in the Officers Mess today. Not much to do actually. Had from 0900 – 1200 off and then 1330-1700 off. Finished at 1830. Had a couple of beers and went to bed at 2030.

DAY 125 SATURDAY 20-6-70

Reveille: 0645

Parade: 0815

Back on the gun today. Two hours on, four off. Had a couple of beers and into bed at 2100. Had a lot of rain during the night.

DAY 126 SUNDAY 21-6-70

Reveille: 0645

Parade: 0815

Down in the ORs Mess today. Did nothing much except eat and play darts in the cooks' tent. Finished at 1830 then adjourned to the boozier for a couple [of beers], with the cooks. Hit the cot at 2200. Raining like hell at the moment (2200).

DAY 127 MONDAY 22-6-70

Reveille: 0645

Parade: 0815

Have today off. Catching up on some letters. Had a good storm yesterday. Brought down power lines, trees about three feet in diameter, and the tent next to mine, last night.

DAY 128 TUESDAY 23-6-70

Reveille: [no entry]

Parade: [no entry]

On the gun again today. Caught up on some washing and cleaned up the tent. Hit the cot 2230.

DAY 129 WEDNESDAY 24-6-70

Reveille: 0645

Parade: 0815

Spent the day down at the armourers and engineers work shop. I had to make four metal boxes, with legs, to put over the phones at the gun pits. Had them made in one hour. Returned at 1630. Had six beers and hit the cot about 2100.

DAY 130 THURSDAY 25-6-70

Reveille: 0645

Parade: 0815

Another good day doing nothing in general. I painted the phone boxes. Had a few beers and hit the cot at 2100.

DAY 131 FRIDAY 26-6-70

Reveille: 0645

Parade: 0815

Worked down in the Officers/Sergeants Mess. Had a good day. Finished at 1900 and headed for the boozier. Hit the cot 2215.

DAY 132 SATURDAY 27-6-70

Reveille: 0645

Parade: 0815

Working on the gun again today. Did some washing and wrote a few letters. The mosquitoes are bad, but like the rain and heat, insects and leeches, snakes and everything else, you have to put up with them. Hit the cot at 2140 after a few beers.

DAY 133 SUNDAY 28-6-70

Reveille: 0745

Parade: 0815

Have today off. Spent most of the day sleeping. Wrote a few letters. Still raining a lot. The place becoming a quagmire and the mud a bloody nuisance. Had a few beers and went to the pictures. One of Elvis Presley's with Mary Tyler Moore. Not bad either. Hit the sack at 2300.

DAY 134 MONDAY 29-6-70

Reveille: 0645

Parade: 0815

Back on the gun again. Each shift (of two hours) I studied the woodpecker in action on the trees around me. When off I did some washing and wrote some letters. I also read a good detective story. Had a few beers and watched the movie (one every night). Hit the sack at 2240.

DAY 135 TUESDAY 30-6-70

Reveille: 0645

Parade: 0815

My last day of being 23 years old working in the Officers/Sergeants Mess. Have done nothing but eat, which I don't mind. Finished work at 1845 and headed for, yes, you guessed, the boozier. Then the movie. Got to bed at 2215.

DAY 136 WEDNESDAY 1-7-70

Reveille: [no entry]

Parade: [no entry]

Happy Birthday Cisco. 24 today and feel it. Another TAOR out last night and missed it. Good old Jimmy H. The Company returning to camp for two days R&C starting tomorrow. Then heading back to the Horseshoe.

Working in the CP until 1330. Had a good night on the booze, at least until 2100. Don't know much from then on, or how I got to bed or when. Was told next morning I was carried to bed at 0145. According to my head I believe them.

DAY 137 THURSDAY 2-7-70

Reveille: 0600

Parade: 0800

A good night had by everyone. The Company went through 107 cases of grog or 2,368 cans plus 96 cans of soft drink (goffers). Heading for Vungers [Vung Tau] at 1000 today. Everybody looking forward to it. Just a month since the last one.

Arrived at the Badcoe Club 1040. No leave until 1300. Having a Company barbecue 1300 and heading out with five other chaps to have another look around. Headed for VC [Viet Cong] Hill, to see Buddha. Spent two and one-half hours there. Really worth seeing. Then headed back to the [Badcoe] Club for tea, shower, shave, and then headed back into town for a few beers. Got back to the Club at 2145 for a good night's sleep.

DAY 138 FRIDAY 3-7-70

Got up at 0800 and went to breakfast. 0900 and headed for the South China Sea (100 yards away) for a swim. The day is very hot. Had lunch at 1230 and then the six of us went back into town, for a few more photos. 1630 and headed back to camp for shower, shave and dinner.

1830 and back into town. 2000 and touring the bars, half shot [half-drunk]. Picking out the best looking girls and having our photo taken with them. Most of them didn't mind, but a few did, but too bad for them. 2150 and back to the Badcoe Club, quite stung [very drunk], as we had a drink in each bar and hotel.

DAY 139 SATURDAY 4-7-70

Got out of bed quite fit (somehow) at 0800 and had breakfast, and then started to pack our gear to move back to Nui Dat at 0930. Arrived back at camp at 1010 and started to get ready to move out to the Shoe [Horseshoe], or the Bone as we have just been told, tomorrow. In bed at 2030.

DAY 140 SUNDAY 5-7-70

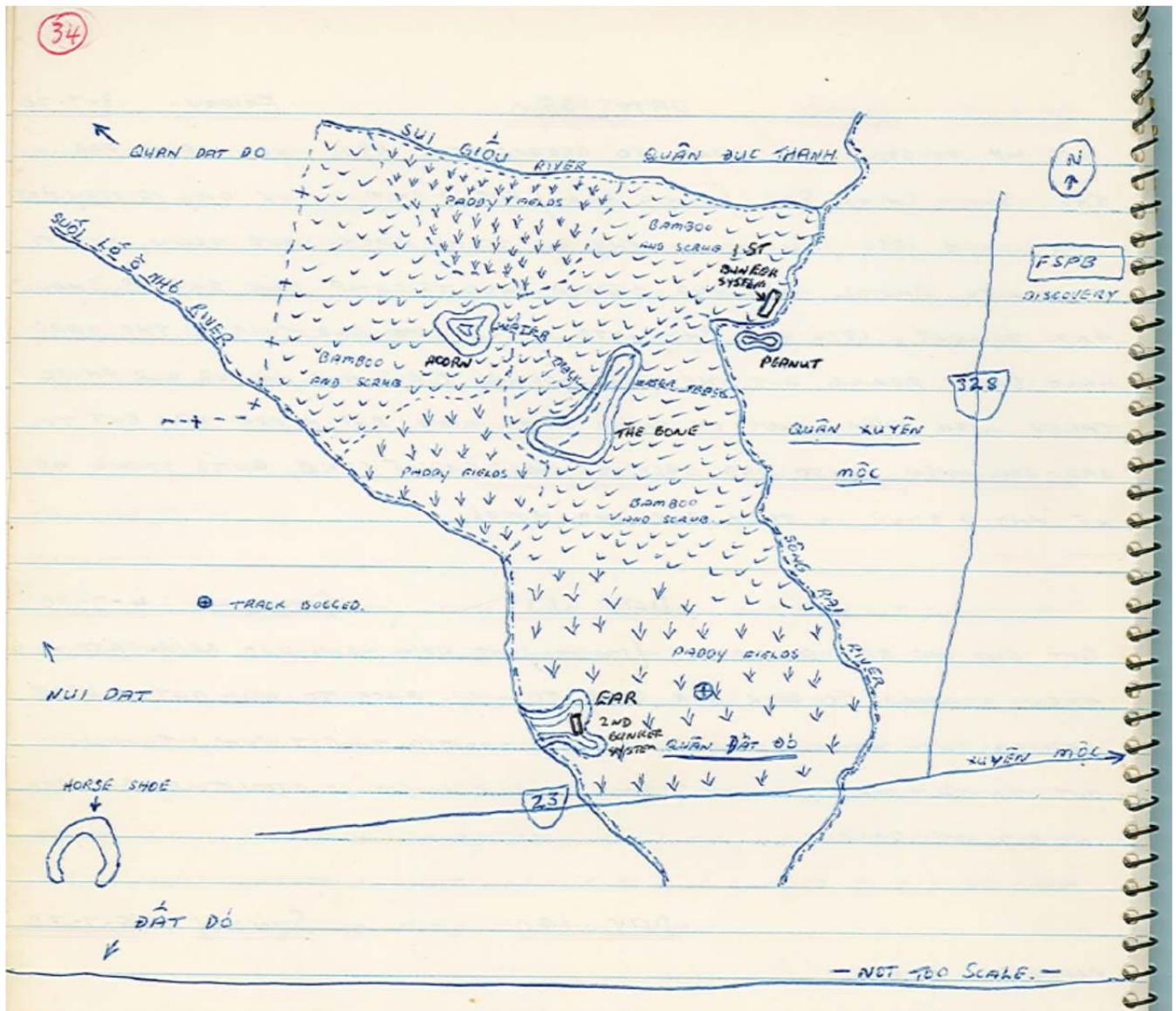
Reveille: 0615

Parade: 0930

We are moving out to the Bone. A "Big Charlie" [senior VC officer] is supposed to be moving around there with two million piastres to pay Charlie [VC soldiers] for their needs and their first pay this year. Moving out at 1030 by tracks. Will be out there for about ten days.

SAS patrols were pulled out yesterday. The main reason we are going in is because we know the area so well. After this operation we are supposed to be returning to camp for ten days. For map of above area see over page. When we had completed half the move out, we headed for the paddy fields. The tracks were sliding everywhere. We (our section, 5 Section) were in the last track and we got bogged. The track in front of us had to come back pull us out.

We left the tracks at 1220 and headed off for two clicks, to the Bone. Crossed a creek chest high in water and arrived at 1550 and settled down with B Company HQ while 4 Platoon and 6 Platoon headed off for their positions.



DAY 141 MONDAY 6-7-70

A quiet night had by one and all. Not much doing today. Just sitting in an ambush position. Doing double gun pickets. 1700 started raining like hell. 1930 and it's pouring. 2300 and rain easing off.

DAY 142 TUESDAY 7-7-70

The rain has stopped. Not much doing again. Getting very hot. Two million piastres is worth one hundred and sixty thousand dollars. Hope we find him. 0930 and have chipped my middle finger on my left hand. Christ, it's sore.

DAY 143 WEDNESDAY 8-7-70

Another quiet night. 1000 and moved 400 metres down the Bone to a new position. 1300 and 6 Platoon have sighted nine Nogs [enemy] and giving chase. 1340 the Nogs crossed the

Song Rai. 1800 Nogs split. 6 Platoon stopping for the night . Going to call the dogs in tomorrow. Nogs heading for Xuyen Moc in a large weaving pattern.

DAY 144 THURSDAY 9-7-70

A quiet night for us. A [tracker] dog flown in to 6 Platoon, but the Nogs got safely into Xuyen Moc. 6 Platoon moving back to their old position.

DAY 145 FRIDAY 10-7-70

Another quiet night for us. Getting a resupply today and staying here. Unbelievable. Still with B Company HQ. Moved 1,300 metres for resupply by tracks and then back to the Bone at 1500.

DAY 146 SATURDAY 11-7-70

5 Section plus three blokes from Support Section [of B Company HQ] going on a five click [5,000 metres] reconnaissance. Left at 0930. 1100 and boy did we find a bunker system. Still being built, thirty-four already completed and fourteen others marked out. Overhead protection four feet thick. Thank goodness it's not being occupied. From marks and things lying around, they have been here within the last twelve hours. Dave Cruse, Don Ford and myself are going in to clear them. Bunkers clear but on the way out Fordy nearly trod on a mine.

1130 and calling for a sapper [Engineer] and a mine detector. 1230 and sappers arrived and started sweeping. 1500 sappers finished. Only two entrances mined. Four mines found. Two with anti-lifting devices. 1530 sappers have blown mines and with some papers that we have found, we are heading back. Ambush party ready to move to bunkers already.

DAY 147 SUNDAY 12-7-70

Papers hold valuable information. So we are all going back to the bunkers. 0850 and 5 Platoon group A in contact at the bunkers. Opened up on three Nogs seventy metres away and missed them. We arrived at the system at 1130.

Dave, Don and myself have been given the job of clearing the bunkers again. We all had a mouth full of water before we went in, and two bottles full when we came out. It took us one-half hour to clear them. 1430 and 4 Platoon have joined us. 1530 and we are setting up a large ambush on the system.

DAY 148 MONDAY 13-7-70

Still in position. All quiet. 1518 and contact. Two Nogs killed and one got away. But according to his blood trail, his mind will be turned off sex for a while. Got two AK-47s. No one hurt among us. Contact lasted twenty minutes.

DAY 149 TUESDAY 14-7-70

Getting a resupply next to the system. Still staying here. 1600 and we are moving out back to the Bone. It's starting to rain also. Looks like a big move on tomorrow.

DAY 150 WEDNESDAY 15-7-70

Moving at 0900 for an eight and a half click [8,500 metres] march. 1700 and have arrived in position and it's pouring rain. 1715 and moved another 400 metres and stopped for the night. Still have to go two clicks [2,000 metres] tomorrow so we have just been told.

DAY 151 THURSDAY 16-7-70

New orders again. We are moving to [FSPB] DISCOVERY, seven clicks away. These blokes change their minds more often than women do. 1100 and ploughing through swamp and jungle, slow going. Blokes falling down holes up to their waists and hard to get out of.

1200 and stopping for a brew. Don't know where we are, nor much worried. Still one click from B Company HQ and two clicks from Discovery.

1400 meet up with B Company HQ. Our section staying with B Company HQ while the rest move 800 metres away to ambush a track.

DAY 152 FRIDAY 17-7-70

Supposed to be moving to the Horseshoe today. But our plans have been put back twenty-four hours. Don't mind though, just sitting around doing nothing. 1600 hundred and starting to rain. 1620 and the rain is pelting down. 2200 and still raining.

DAY 153 SATURDAY 18-7-70

Meet [the rest of] 5 Platoon at 0745 and moved to Discovery. Being picked up at 1030 by tracks. 0900 and having a yippee [shoot] [impromptu target practice] at [old used ammunition wooden] boxes. 1100 and tracks arrive. Arrive at the Shoe [Horseshoe] at 1320. Had a good lunch. 1830 moving out to do night ambushes. Will be doing this for about four days.

DAY 154 SUNDAY 19-7-70

Arrived back at 0610. Back out tonight at 1830. Nothing doing today.

DAY 155 MONDAY 20-7-70

Arrived back 0618. Nothing to do again today. Moving out again tonight at 1830.

Have been [here] one day and already the guns are driving us mad [because of the noise of firing]. 106 Field Battery with their 105 mm guns and our mortars (81 mm) and two Yank eight inch guns from a Yank Battery.

DAY 156 TUESDAY 21-7-70

Arrived back 0600. We have the day and night off. Will be doing gun pickets on the Shoe. Two posts. Each with an M60 and a fifty calibre [0.50 inch] machinegun.

Eight inch [guns] gave us a demonstration of a H & I [harassment and interdiction shoot] at 1600.

DAY 157 WEDNESDAY 22-7-70

Not much on today. Just cleaning up around the place. So far each day we have been having two beers and a goffer each. Moving out tonight at 1830. Back to the Dat tomorrow.

DAY 158 THURSDAY 23-7-70

Arrived back 0610. 0830 on to tracks and back to the Dat. Arrived at the Dat at 0920. Had a quiet day. Hit the sack at 2155 after a few beers.

DAY 159 FRIDAY 24-7-70

Spent the morning cleaning up the place. Everyone from the Sergeant up have shit-on-the-liver [bad mood]. Goodness only knows what from. From 1330 until 1630 we played C Company sport. Four of us showed them how to play tennis. We won three singles and two doubles. Gun pickets tonight but I'm on early. Hitting the sack at 2100.

DAY 160 SATURDAY 25-7-70

Reveille: 0530

Parade: 0730

Some big wig's coming from Saigon today, to have a look around the place. Had to get up early to get the place spotless for them. Everybody wishing they would stay in their own back yard instead of ours.

1100 having lunch. 1130 and we are heading out to the range at the Shoe to fire the smoke-grenades, M72, Claymores, and hand grenades. On arrival 4 Platoon had one bloke hit in the eye with shrapnel. Getting a Dustoff in for him. He should be OK. After firing the M72 EOD [Explosive Ordnance Disposal] came to do an investigation into the accident. Stumpy has been relieved of his duties, pending court-martial.

Arrived back at the Dat at 1700. Had a few beers and went to bed at 2200.

DAY 161 SUNDAY 26-7-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Just sitting around until 1000 then doing Exercise LIFESAVER. Playing D Company sport this afternoon. Will show them how to play tennis too. We ended up winning seven out of eight games.

DAY 162 MONDAY 27-7-70

Reveille: [no entry]

Parade: [no entry]

Having a lesson on night patrolling which we are about to commence doing. Also practising moving in formations. Will also be doing TSOETs. This break is being taken well by all, including myself. The above did not come off. Having a few beers early and doing gun picket 2015 – 2145.

DAY 163 TUESDAY 28-7-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Just mucking around this morning doing everything in general but nothing in particular. From 1330 – 1630 we will be test firing our weapons on the range. C Company coming up tonight to play us darts. Done C Company in darts and going to bed at 2200.

DAY 164 WEDNESDAY 29-7-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

At 0900 going back out to the range. This afternoon played 6 Platoon volleyball and beat them 4 : 2. Moving out to the range at 1900 for night firing. Will be out until 2400.

DAY 165 THURSDAY 30-7-70

Reveille: 0700

Parade: 0900

Have the morning off. Good night last night. We fired thirty-two thousand rounds. 4 Platoon and 6 Platoon fired twenty-four thousand rounds each.

1300 and doing a mines lecture and course. 1600 split our platoon up and had a game of volleyball. Doing some letter writing tonight. No beer tonight. Hit the sack 2130.

DAY 166 FRIDAY 31-7-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Having two lectures this morning. One on encoding and decoding [radio messages] and another on first aid. This afternoon it poured rain. Doing gun picket tonight 2100 – 2230, after that having a few beers.

DAY 167 SATURDAY 1-8-70

Reveille: [no entry]

Parade: [no entry]

Did about one hour of harbouring [practice] this morning, very hard [being sarcastic]. Have this afternoon off. Listening to the rugby league from Sydney on the radio. Manly vs C-BKTS [Manly Warringah vs Canterbury Bankstown]. Going to have a few beers tonight then off to bed.

DAY 168 SUNDAY 2-8-70

Reveille: 0730

Parade: 0930

Not much on today. Playing sport this afternoon 5 Platoon vs 6 Platoon in volleyball. R&C tomorrow. CBLC [Canterbury] beat Manly yippee. Another few beers tonight. Hit the sack at 2240.

DAY 169 MONDAY 3-8-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

No R&C, instead we are going bush, with the rest of the battalion. Moving out to the Shoe. Trouble brewing around Dat Do. Arrived at 1030 and got settled down. 1830 moving out to Hoi My [village] in two sections, 5 Platoon and 5 Platoon group A, to ambush Route 326 for the night.

DAY 170 TUESDAY 4-8-70

Returned 0650. A quiet night. During the night we [the Australians and the Vietnamese] are putting fifty-four ambushes around Dat Do, and nine inside. [Information] from Chieu Hois [indicates that] Charlie is getting desperate and is going to come in, in strength.

Moving out tonight at 1830 in tracks. Pouring with rain at the moment.

DAY 171 WEDNESDAY 5-8-70

Arrived back at 0650, soaking wet. I found two mine markers on the road last night 200 metres short of our position. So we stayed there for the night.

1400 and Snoopy and myself along with two Engineers and three tracks are moving out to check out the markers. 1415 and arrived. Markers moved, but still on the side of the road. Most likely by civvies [civilians]. We checked out two positions but nothing found. Returned 1500. Moving out at 1830 tonight.

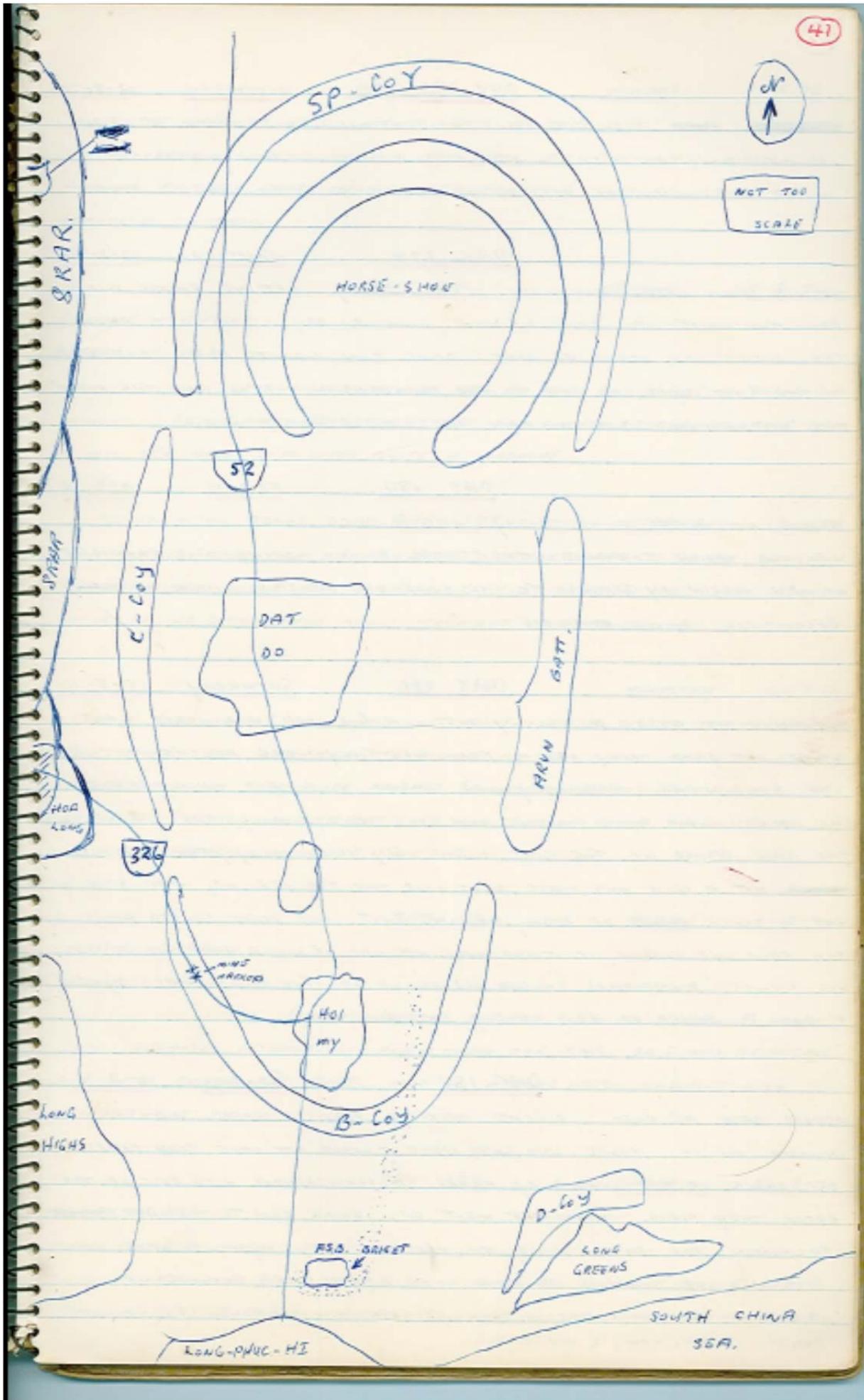
DAY 172 THURSDAY 6-8-70

Returned at 0650. No sign of markers on road. Big contact at Hoa Long early this morning. 8 RAR in contact. Nineteen enemy KIA, six PWs [prisoners of war] and two Hoi Chanh [ralliers to the Government of South Vietnam] later[after the contact was over].

They [8 RAR] lost two. We were only 1,500 metres from it. Used as cut off. Moving out at 1830 again. For area of map see next page.

[Note: there appears to be an error in the compilation of the diary at this point. The 8 RAR ambush at HOA LONG occurred at 0315 hours on 12 August 1970. See AWM95, 1/4/197, p.128.]

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DAY 173 FRIDAY 7-8-70

Arrived back at 0650. Another quiet night. Moving out at 1830 tonight but will be staying out until Sunday. Civvy [civilian] blown to bits today where [the enemy mine] markers [that we found] were.

DAY 174 SATURDAY 8-8-70

Quiet night. Today we are hiding in thick bush (5 Platoon and 5 Platoon group B) trying to fool Charlie into coming in. Other patrols picked up at 0630 by tracks. Will move out after it gets dark.

DAY 175 SUNDAY 9-8-70

Quiet night. 0545 we (5 Platoon group B) moved to 5 Platoon then to Hoi My and picked up at 0630 by tracks. We have tonight off.

DAY 176 MONDAY 10-8-70

Today we have to build a bunker ten feet by seven feet by four feet and put two feet of overhead protection on. It's going to be used as an ammunition bunker. Getting some sleep this afternoon. Moving out to new position tonight leaving at 1845.

DAY 177 TUESDAY 11-8-70

Arrived back 0650. Doing some work around the place. Have this afternoon off. Going to the flicks at Turtle Village tonight (106 Battery) [106 Battery used a turtle picture on their unit sign].

2010 and a good storm has broken, we have watched it brewing up all afternoon. Movies stopped. We could not even see the screen and we were only 40 feet away. Ahh, well, that's what life is in this place.

DAY 178 WEDNESDAY 12-8-70

Still working around the place after a quiet night. Have to re-build a bunker consisting of some 800 sandbags. Moving out tonight at 1830 by tracks. Same position.

DAY 179 THURSDAY 13-8-70

Arrived back 0650. Not much doing today. Getting rather burnt from the waist up. Rain by night, hot by day. 5 Platoon group A and 5 Platoon group B have the night off again tonight. Doing gun pickets again, but I am on the last shift so off to the flicks again. 2130 and the movie has just finished but the rain has started and how.

DAY 180 FRIDAY 14-8-70

Again not much doing today. Had a good sleep in a Nog hammock which I picked [up]. They're real good. Moving out tonight at 1830 again by tracks to the same old position which is becoming quite hairy [dangerous].

DAY 181 SATURDAY 15-8-70

Returned at 0730, but only just. A Company had a contact last night at 2200 only 1,500 metres from us. They were at the foot of the Long Hai Mountains. Artillery was called in to act as a cut off. The rounds were going straight over our heads, [when] suddenly the 8 inch guns from the Shoe opened up. The first round only 1,300 metres away, the next one hit a cloud and burst right over the top of us. The 8 inch gun has a safety radius of 800 metres, and we shit [ourselves – figuratively]. One piece [of shrapnel] landed about a foot from one fellow, if it had hit him it would have turned out his lights. Shrapnel landed all around us. The round fired by the 8 inch gun is 200 pounds of high explosive. A Company got four enemy KIA.

DAY 182 SUNDAY 16-8-70

Arrived back at 0650. Brought back a piece of shrapnel with a number on it. Yanks said last night it could not have been theirs. On check of the number by Yanks it corresponded with one of the batch they fired. Have the night off. Going back to Nui Dat tomorrow for R&C. Going to Turtle Village again tonight. 1500 and it's starting to rain with a big storm brewing up. 1815 and the storm has hit. Never seen rain like it. Task Force kill this month: 33 KIA, 6 prisoners of war, 2 Hoi Chanh.

DAY 183 MONDAY 17-8-70

Left the Shoe at 0930. Arrived back at [Nui Dat] at 1008. Doing some cleaning around the place. R&C tomorrow. Having a farewell party tonight to the 14th [National Service] intake. About fourteen of them.

DAY 184 TUESDAY 18-8-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Leaving for Vung Tau at 1000 and having a barbecue lunch. Leave begins at 1330. Spent the day on the beach drinking beer. Hit the sack 2100 with quite a headache.

DAY 185 WEDNESDAY 19-8-70

Got up at 0800 and had breakfast. Then straight to the water to try and sober up. Spending the day on the beach again. Four of us going into town tonight for a while.

DAY 186 THURSDAY 20-8-70

Had a good night in town last night. Did a bit of stirring around the place and was told to behave by two White Mice. So we did, at least while they (Civilian Police) were around. Moving back the Dat at 1030. Arrived at the Dat 1115 and getting ready all day to go bush tomorrow. No beer tonight.

DAY 187 FRIDAY 21-8-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

The Company is leaving for the bush at 0945. I am staying back because I have six and a wakey [i.e. six days plus the morning of the seventh day when I wake up] for R&R so I will be getting my gear ready for that. Also my medical check, passport, visa sorted out.

DAY 188 SATURDAY 22-8-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Not much doing today. Going down to the Dust Bowl [the outdoor concert platform at Luscombe Airfield] to see a group of singers from Adelaide. 1400 and have just got back from the show and a good one too. Had the *Carousels*, Irene Petrie, and a good group backing them. The Compere was Bob Francis of 5 AD [radio station]. Heard the Souths 24 beat Manly 20 at 1500.

DAY 189 SUNDAY 23-8-70

Reveille: 0730

Parade: 0930

Worked in the Sergeants Mess today. A total of two and three-quarters of an hour. Hard work indeed. Hit the sack at 2130 after a few beers.

DAY 190 MONDAY 24-8-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Got up at 0750. Had a good night's sleep. Nothing much doing today. Doing some spine bashing with a book. Having a few beers again tonight and early to bed.

DAY 191 TUESDAY 25-8-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Got up again at 0750. This I can take. Doing gun picket today. Having a few more beers tonight and again early to bed.

DAY 192 WEDNESDAY 26-8-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Got up at 0700. Getting things finalised for tomorrow. Health card, Identity Card, pills, movement orders.

DAY 193 THURSDAY 27-8-70

Reveille: 0540

Parade: 0645 at Battalion HQ

Leaving at 0730 from Luscombe Airfield for Saigon. Arrive Saigon 0820. Leaving for Bangkok at 1630. Spending the in between time looking around Saigon. Left Saigon 1630 in a Pan-Am 727 Silver Clipper. Arrived Bangkok airport at 1950.

We had to put our watches back one hour. Arrived at the R&R Centre at 1030. Given our R&R brief and then taken to our motel. We are (three of us, two Aussies and one Yank) staying at the Parliament Motel. Quite a plush place too.

DAY 194 FRIDAY 28-8-70

Got up at 1015 after getting settled down and having a good night's sleep. Spending the morning looking around the city. This afternoon going on a tour to Timland [?] a miniature city of Thailand. Looking around the city again tonight. Hit the sack 2300 after a very enjoyable day.

DAY 195 SATURDAY 29-8-70

Got up at 0700. Have a tour on again today. Going to see the "Bridge over the River Kwai". Arrived back at the motel at 1720. Having tea and a few drinks in the dining room then off to bed. Have another big day on tomorrow.

DAY 196 SUNDAY 30-8-70

Up again at 0700 for another tour. Going by boat along the canals to see more of Bangkok and the "Floating Markets". Arrived back at the motel at 1600. Going to have another tour round the city tonight. Another good day. Hit the sack at 2230. Today is the half way mark of the Battalion's tour of duty.

DAY 197 MONDAY 31-8-70

Got up at 1030. Not much doing today. Had a swim in the pool for a few hours. Have an afternoon – night tour tonight at 1500. Dinner at a restaurant then off to a night club. Got to bed at 0020.

DAY 198 TUESDAY 1-9-70

Got up at 0930. Have a tour of the temple on today. R&R party tonight. Hit the sack at 2345.

DAY 199 WEDNESDAY 2-9-70

Got up at 0500. Left for R&R Centre at 0630 for return to Vietnam. Arrived Bangkok Airport and took off 0815. Arrived Tan Son Nhut Airport, Saigon, 0950. Caught Wallaby [RAAF Caribou] for Luscombe Airfield at 1100, arriving 1145. Got back into camp 1210. Stripped and into bed 1230.

DAY 200 THURSDAY 3-9-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Not much doing today. Going out to the Shoe this afternoon as “shotgun” [guard] on the vehicle. A couple of my mates coming down from SASR for a few drinks. Hit the sack at 2205.

DAY 201 FRIDAY 4-9-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Not much doing today. Working in the Sergeants Mess. Catching up on a few letters. Hit the sack 2200.

DAY 202 SATURDAY 5-9-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Going out on a patrol today. From the briefing it is a laugh. We have to go outside the wire off the rubbish tip. Kids are getting in and pinching stuff. Left at 1000 and arrived at 1030. Hid in some thick bush and started playing cards (Five Hundred). Came back in at 1400 for lunch and went back at 1500. Found a map that the kids had found. Handed it in when we got back, at 1820. Had a few beers and hit the sack 2130.

DAY 203 SUNDAY 6-9-70

Reveille: 0730

Parade: 0900

Working in the Other Ranks Mess. Rather quiet day. All hell has been set loose over the map we handed in. Even the Task Force HQ screaming. The map had every building in Nui Dat marked on it and named. Having a few beers tonight and then early to bed.

DAY 204 MONDAY 7-9-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Not much on today. Just odd jobs around the place. Both ears aching. Had a few beers tonight and into bed 2100.

DAY 205 TUESDAY 8-9-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Ears worse, also throat and chest. Saw the RMO [Regimental Medical Officer]. Have a germ in all three places. Had blood taken. Will see him again tomorrow. Had two beers and went and saw a movie. It wasn't bad either. Into bed 2200.

DAY 206 WEDNESDAY 9-9-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Not much better today. Saw the RMO. Have glandular fever. Having another test Friday. Hit the cot 2000 after doing a few jobs.

DAY 207 THURSDAY 10-9-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Working in the Other Ranks Mess. Another good bludge. Into bed at 2100. Ears a little better, chest and throat still very sore.

DAY 208 FRIDAY 11-9-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Doing gun picket today. Two hours on, four off. No improvement on yesterday. Having another blood test today. Medics had four attempts at getting blood. Fifth time lucky. Into bed at 2000.

DAY 209 SATURDAY 12-9-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Working in the Sergeants Mess today. Still no improvement. Arms are sore. Another quiet day. Early to bed again.

DAY 210 SUNDAY 13-9-70

Reveille: 0730

Parade: 0900

Feeling good today. First blood test proved glandular fever. 1400 and going out to FSPB ISA [a military operated quarry] for a few days, to help with the pickets. 5 Platoon are already out there. Acting as support for engineers working on a new road. ISA is at the foot of the Long Hai Mountains.

DAY 211 MONDAY 14-9-70

As slack as hell. No particular time to get up so long as you are ready for a parade at 0830. Then one hour's work then knock off for the day.

DAY 212 TUESDAY 15-9-70

Got up at 0730 and had breakfast. Another hour's work then finished for the day. 1600 and half of the platoon are going up the road about two miles to a Yank training base. Other half are going up tomorrow night. And then so on each night. We got back tonight at 1830. The Yanks train Regional Forces, Popular Forces and Cambodians. Don't like the Yank beer but better than nothing. We had two beers and two goffers.

DAY 213 WEDNESDAY 16-9-70

Same this morning as yesterday. I am getting a little burnt. Just getting around with shorts on.

DAY 214 THURSDAY 17-9-70

Moving out this morning to the Horseshoe. 1330 and pogos [a 'base wallah', particularly a non-infantry soldier or one stationed at Vung Tau] from Vung Tau arrive to take over. We will be ambushing the west side of Dat Do. Moving out at 1830 by tracks.

DAY 215 FRIDAY 18-9-70

Arrived back at 0650 after a quiet night. Not much doing today. Having the night off, and going to see [the movie] *Bullet* again.

DAY 216 SATURDAY 19-9-70

Doing a little cleaning up today. The 155 mm guns have taken over from the 8 inch guns and they opened today. They make more bloody noise than the 8 inches, even though they are a smaller calibre. Going back out to our position west of Dat Do tonight at 1830.

DAY 217 SUNDAY 20-9-70

Arrived back at 0650 after another quiet night. Not doing much today. Getting well burnt by now, but not to worry. 5 Platoon have the night off but are working, the poor buggers. [Our half of the platoon] moving back out at 1830. Snoopy in charge (5 Platoon group A).

DAY 218 MONDAY 21-9-70

Arrived back 0640. Cleaning up today and sending gear back to the Dat. Moving to the Dat tomorrow for ten days, also two days R&C. Moving out tonight at 1830.

DAY 219 TUESDAY 22-9-70

Arrived back at 0630. Having breakfast and then moving back to the Dat 0830 by tracks. Playing sport this afternoon. Beat C Company 44 – 14 in basketball. Having a piss-up [drinking spree] tonight.

DAY 220 WEDNESDAY 23-9-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Not much doing today, just cleaning up and getting ready to go on R&C tomorrow. Have a new platoon commander as from today. [Lieutenant Gibbons swapped jobs with the Battalion Intelligence Officer, Lieutenant O'Brien.]

DAY 221 THURSDAY 24-9-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Moving out to Vung Tau at 1030. Having a barbecue lunch and a piss-up at 1100. Spending the afternoon doing some [water] skiing and, along with four other chaps, trying to teach seven other chaps how to ski. Hit the cot at 2300.

DAY 222 FRIDAY 25-9-70

Got up at 0800 had breakfast and back to skiing. Had a terrific buster [fall], and the bugger who was learning (CSM, in the boat) had the bloody hide to laugh. I suppose it did look a little funny. Saw the final between Souths and Manly, at the movies tonight. Not a bad match. Had a swim in the pool and hit the sack about 2315.

DAY 223 SATURDAY 26-9-70

Left Vung Tau at 0945 for the Dat. 1330 and playing A Company basketball. Beat them 38 – 36. They were, as told, the team to beat. Having a few beers and a couple of games of darts tonight. Hit the sack at 2130.

DAY 224 SUNDAY 27-9-70

Reveille: 0730

Parade: 0900

Have the day off, believe it or not. Unbelievable. Having a few beers tonight and a few rounds of darts. Duties tomorrow. I am on gun picket.

DAY 225 MONDAY 28-9-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Big clean up today. Grey is doing his annual inspection. Says he is and does not turn up. Quiet afternoon.

DAY 226 TUESDAY 29-9-70

Reveille: 0530

Parade: 0620

Having a battalion parade today at 0645. Battalion's fifth birthday. Our guest speaker is Brigadier Henderson, Commander 1 ATF. On being woken the platoon commander and platoon sergeant brought us all a mug of rum and coffee. Not bad either. Parade finished 0800 and had the morning off. Intercompany sports this afternoon. I am playing basketball. 1330 sports begin. 1700 sports finished. We are the champions at basketball, volleyball, rugby union and baseball. We lost the 20 mile relay and Australian Rules. Not a bad effort.

1700 – 1900 intercompany barbecue. 1915 battalion concert. Blokes from each company putting on different acts. 2300 concert ends. A good day had by one and all.

DAY 227 WEDNESDAY 30-9-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Not much doing today. Getting a lecture on D445 [enemy local force infantry battalion] doings [activity] this morning. Quiet afternoon. Doing some washing. Having a few beers and early to bed.

DAY 228 THURSDAY 1-10-70

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Getting a big briefing on our move out to FSPB BRIGID on Saturday. We will be working with the RF [Regional Forces], in an area with hundreds of mines. We are expecting to have a few encounters with them. Hope I am not one of them. Having a lecture on mines this afternoon. Had a few beers tonight and hit the sack 2150.

DAY 229 FRIDAY 2-10-70

Reveille: 0730

Parade: 0845

Having a talk on Operation LIFESAVER this morning and at 1000 going to see a concert tour at PORKY 7 [7 RAR's helicopter landing pad]. Concert really good. Sydney ABC Band (14 members), Sylvia Rae, Helen Noonan, Mary-Jane Boyde, Buster Fiddess, hosted by Gordon Boyd. The show was to finish at 1200 but ended at 1250.

Final packing this afternoon. No grog left in the boozers. So [others] heading to other company's [boozers]. Me too.

DAY 230 SATURDAY 3-10-70

Reveille: 0530

Parade: 0700

Moving out to BRIGID 0830. Arrived 0950. First opinion not bad. The whole area is sand, surrounded by dunes. For about 400 metres between us and the sea. Settling in OK. Moving out to ambush position 1800.

DAY 231 SUNDAY 4-10-70

Got back at 0650. A quiet night. One hour's work to be done then the rest of the day off. Getting around in shorts only. We will be having a hot box [large portable insulated food container] tea [dinner] each night. Yank [combat patrol] rations for the other meals. Move out at 1800.

DAY 232 MONDAY 5-10-70

Arrived back at 0655. A quiet night. Having a quiet day. We have three APCs here with us. Move out tonight 1800. Taking ARVN [Army of Republic of Vietnam] troops along [with us]. We (5 Platoon group A) are split into joint patrols [with the ARVN].

DAY 233 TUESDAY 6-10-70

Arrived back 0700. I had two ARVN [soldiers] with me. Both good blokes, and could speak only a little English. Having a quiet day. Moving out at 1800.

DAY 234 WEDNESDAY 7-10-70

Arrived back at 0650. A quiet night. Not much doing today. Have the night off. Some movies being sent out to us.

DAY 235 THURSDAY 8-10-70

A good night. The movies were good. 1020 and bang, 100 metres outside the gate an ARVN [soldier] has stood on a mine. No more worries for him. Moving out tonight 1800. A joint patrol with ARVN.

DAY 236 FRIDAY 9-10-70

Arrived back 0645. Had two more ARVN with me last night. One of them I had [with me] the last time. A quiet day today. Moving out at 1800 tonight.

DAY 237 SATURDAY 10-10-70

Arrived back 0620. Had ARVN again last night. Another quiet day. 5 Platoon have the night off. We (5 Platoon group A) are splitting into two callsigns [sub-elements], group A and group C, each of six men. Both to go out with ARVN. At 1815.

DAY 238 SUNDAY 11-10-70

Arrived back 0630. Another quiet day. This place is great. We should have the night off but we haven't. The platoon is splitting into four callsigns [elements], again of six men each. No ARVN [with us] moving out 1900.

DAY 239 MONDAY 12-10-70

Arrived back at 0620. Have been doing one and a half hour pickets. Three on each gun. My rifle is acting as a machinegun (it's not actually a rifle). A quiet day. Moving out at 1815 tonight. Another joint patrol.

DAY 240 TUESDAY 13-10-70

Arrived back at 0630. Another quiet day. Each morning before we move on to the track to the main gate we have to wait for it to be cleared by mine detectors.

Cambodians are moving into the settlement just outside Long Phuoc Hai, on the edge of the beach about 2,000 metres away. Moving out at 1630. Just outside Ap Lo Gom and this side of Hoi My.

Big contact with "S" [South] compound and our "E" [East] machinegun position last night. We watched the whole lot from our position.

DAY 241 WEDNESDAY 14-10-70

Arrived back at 0710 by tracks. Quiet night. Moving out at 1830 for three-day layup. Same position as last night. Taking out seismographic detectors [to detect vibrations in the soil caused by approaching enemy].

DAY 242 THURSDAY 15-10-70

Found fresh tracks on the move in. The Viet Cong spotted us and took off as if they had a stick of dynamite with an inch of lighted fuse stuck up their arse. B Company HQ says come back in. Arrived back at 0730.

Moving back out 1830. 1900 and being mortared from the Long Hai Mountains. Lasted 20 minutes.

DAY 243 FRIDAY 16-10-70

Got into position 0100 this morning and well hidden in scrub. 1020 and five kids have sprung us with the aid of their dogs. Changing position tonight.

DAY 244 SATURDAY 17-10-70

0300 and packing up and moving to a new position. Started cutting out 0320 and in position 0530. A quiet day. Not sprung yet. Snoopy still not sprung. Moving into new position at 1900.

DAY 245 SUNDAY 18-10-70

Arrive back at base 0730. Having a quiet day. 1340 and it's pelting down rain. Shit hot, we have the night off.

DAY 246 MONDAY 19-10-70

Still raining. Having a quiet day. Getting a lot of sleep. Moving out to ruins again. Should be in position by 2000.

DAY 247 TUESDAY 20-10-70

Arrived back 0720. Shit flying everywhere. All brass [senior officers] have shit on the liver including the new OC, ex OC of Charlie Company. Warland is on R&R. Should stay there too. Moving out to the ruins again 1830.

DAY 248 WEDNESDAY 21-10-70

Arrived back 0710 another joint patrol last night. All quiet today. Moving out to ruins again tonight, with ARVN from Hoi My.

DAY 249 THURSDAY 22-10-70

Arrived back 0710. A quiet night. ARVN were OK. Some big flip coming out today. His [visit] was, as they all are, the usual visit to the troops. Got off his chopper, said "Hi" to the OC, then took off again.

Moving out 1830 for usual position.

DAY 250 FRIDAY 23-10-70

Arrived back at 0715. Again not much doing. Reading a few books and papers. Not a bad life by day actually. Night time is different though. A cow trod on a mine just outside the wire today at 1135. Boy, what a bloody mess. Moving out to the ruins again tonight at 1830.

DAY 251 SATURDAY 24-10-70

Arrived back at 0710. Another quiet night. Another joint patrol last night. Not doing much today. Moving out at 1815 for the ruins again. Intelligence say it's a food pick up area.

DAY 252 SUNDAY 25-10-70

Arrived back at 0715. Quiet night. No ARVN last night. Have the night off and not before time.

DAY 253 MONDAY 26-10-70

Had a good storm last night and it's still raining. Could last all night. Moving out to Hoi My at 1800 to pick up ARVN again and then to a new position.

DAY 254 TUESDAY 26-10-70 [Sic – should read 27-10-70]

Arrived back at 0710. A quiet night. ARVN not too bad, but not too good either. A good day, moving out at 1800. Shit hot, no ARVN, but a good storm brewing.

DAY 255 WEDNESDAY 28-10-70

Arrived back 0720. Soaking wet. Boy, what a storm last night. Second-in-Command of HQ 1 ATF coming today to say his typical hello to the troops. The best way anyhow. Moving out 1800 for same position northeast of Hoi My. No ARVN again.

DAY 256 THURSDAY 29-10-70

Arrived back 0700. Having a slack day. Moving out 1830 for the same position.

DAY 257 FRIDAY 30-10-70

Arrived back 0710. A quiet night. Mosquitoes getting bad of a night. Moving back out tonight at 1830 for the same position again.

DAY 258 SATURDAY 31-10-70

Arrived back at 0710. Another quiet night. Still operating with six-man sections. 5 Platoon going out on a five-day layup. Warning order at this stage. Moving out to ruins at 1830.

DAY 259 SUNDAY 01-11-70

Arrived back at 0650. Another quiet night. Not much doing today. Moving out at 1800 with ARVN for the ruins area.

DAY 260 MONDAY 02-11-70

Arrived back 0650. Not a bad night. Re-building Number 3 Gun Post today, until 1130. Have the night off. Again about time.

DAY 261 TUESDAY 03-11-70

Doing a little more to the Gun Post again. Second-in-Command 1 ATF coming again today. Hope it's his usual visit. Listening to the Melbourne Cup today at 1330. A direct broadcast. Moving out tonight for junction at 1830.

DAY 262 WEDNESDAY 04-11-70

Arrived back at 0710. Another quiet night. Doing a bit of work around the place today, but not much. Have tonight off again. Wonder what they want?

DAY 263 THURSDAY 05-11-70

0900 and have found out what they want. 5 Platoon group A (5 and 6 Sections plus the platoon sergeant, signaller and two engineers) to go out for a five day layup at 1745 today.

DAY 264 FRIDAY 06-11-70

Moved out last night by tracks to near foot of Long Hai Mountains, then by foot for 200 metres, then stopped until dark. 1900 and took off through a mine field, the two sappers with mine detectors first, then me. Have two clicks [2,000 metres] to go. 0100 this morning and we are lost. Everybody guessing which way to go. Everyone bitching and not without cause. 0300 and stopping for a rest until 0600 when it should be light enough to get a few bearings. 0600 and took off again, 0745 and arrived in position. Everyone going to gonk [have a sleep].

1440 and we are under fire, three of us hit, all with shrapnel, one hit really bad. The other two (myself and the corporal engineer) are shutting up, as our [wounds] are minor. 1800 and we've been told to move back, tomorrow. Third bloke OK.

DAY 265 SATURDAY 07-11-70

A quiet night. Moving back at 0900. Meeting tracks at drop off point. 1230 and climbing aboard tracks. 1310 arrived back at Brigid. Word is the Nogs were watching us move in and let us get settled down. We were the third group to move into the area in twelve days. All

told yesterday, eight contacts [involving] our battalion and the enemy hit [us] first five times [out of the eight contacts]. We have the night off.

DAY 266 SUNDAY 08-11-70

Bullshit flying, big clean up and work to be done. 1200 and everybody stopping work for the day. Billy Nicko awake to what happened to me and the corporal engineer but not going to say anything, just made sure we were OK.

Moving out to track junction at 1830.

DAY 267 MONDAY 09-11-70

Arrived back 0650. A quiet day today. Have the night off. Something wrong.

DAY 268 TUESDAY 10-11-70

Packing up today for move back to the Dat tomorrow. Moving out to track junction by tracks tonight at 1830.

DAY 269 WEDNESDAY 11-11-70

Arrived back at 0645 after being picked up by tracks. 0930 and heading back to the Dat by tracks. 1040 and back at the Dat. R&C tomorrow. Barbecue tea tonight. Two minutes silence at 1100.

DAY 270 THURSDAY 12-11-70

Moving out to Vungers [Vung Tau] at 0950 by trucks. Having a barbecue lunch. Ski boat has a new motor and has to be run in for a couple of hours first. Skiing tomorrow. Having a few beers and a quiet day.

DAY 271 FRIDAY 13-11-70

Got up 1030 after a good night's sleep. 1100 having a swim in the pool. 1400 and arrived at the boat shed to do some skiing only to find some Lieutenant Colonel, the Adjutant of the Club, our OC and a nursing sister have taken the boat out for a run while they are all drunk.

1630 and a junk is towing the ski boat back. The motor blown. Good old brass! [senior officers]. Bugger us, their ride is more important than our skiing. None of them have a licence. Getting pissed tonight and perhaps watch the movies.

DAY 272 SATURDAY 14-11-70

Moving back to the Dat 1000. Arrived 1130. Not much doing. Having a few beers tonight and hitting the sack early.

DAY 273 SUNDAY 15-11-70

4 Platoon and 6 Platoon and Company HQ moving out today at 1000. We are staying here as ready reaction platoon. Will be here for about ten days. 1230 having a beer but not feeling too good, going to lay down. 1800 just had a beer, and still feeling crook, calling it a night. 1900 and have just been found, blood and vomit all over the side of the bed and floor. 1910 and being rushed to 8 Field Ambulance. Suspected burst appendix.

DAY 274 MONDAY 16-11-70

Still in hospital [8 Field Ambulance]. Awaiting doctor's visit. [I was] checked last night and told not to worry. Fluids only. 1030 doctor arrived. Could not make any sense out of him. Pain still severe. 1945 pains getting worse. Doctor coming. 2130 doctor arrived. May as well not have come at all.

DAY 275 TUESDAY 17-11-70

Only slightly better. Doctor came at 1030. [He said] pains are from worrying. CRAP! 1400 and pain moving to my back. Taking pain killers.

DAY 276 WEDNESDAY 18-11-70

Restless night. Pain not improved. 1100 and Doctor arrived. 1400 and being discharged back to the RAP [Battalion Regimental Aid Post]. 1430 reached the RAP. 1500 and seen by the RMO [Regimental Medical Officer]. He asked a few questions and then rang a Major in 8 Field Ambulance and the shit hit the fan. 1530 and I am back in 8 Field Ambulance.

DAY 277 THURSDAY 19-11-70

Another restless night. Doctor coming at 1100. 1130 seen by a different doctor and being Dusted-off [medically evacuated to] 1st Australian Field Hospital in Vung Tau. Hope they are brighter.

DAY 278 FRIDAY 20-11-70

In 1st Australian Field Hospital. The doctors are doing tests. Confined to bed. Pains still severe. A quiet day, but a restless night.

DAY 279 SATURDAY 21-11-70

Doctor coming at 0900. More tests required. Looks like ulcers on the bowel. Talked the sisters into letting me go to a show this afternoon. Wheelchair only. Lorrae Desmond and the Taylor Sisters, starts at 1400. 1630 and back. Show was good.

DAY 280 SUNDAY 22-11-70

Another restless night. Doctor arrived 0900. Still doing tests. Confined to bed again.

DAY 281 MONDAY 23-11-70

A quiet night. Doctor arrived again 0900. Still more tests plus x-rays. If these tests fail to be positive tomorrow I wear a tube up the Khyber [Pass] [rhyming slang for arse]. Hope the tests are positive, as I've just seen the tube. 2130 stomach getting tight with pain.

DAY 282 TUESDAY 24-11-70

Results positive. Have ulcers on the bowel. Still checking other things. 1330 copped the tube anyhow. Oh Hell! Still have pains and headaches.

DAY 283 WEDNESDAY 25-11-70

Saw the doctor at 0830. 1400 had another attack. Doctors came a running. More blood taken. Lost count of how much now. Started treatment for a tropical germ.

DAY 284 THURSDAY 26-11-70

A restless night. Not too bad today. Doctor came at 0830. Still confined to bed.

DAY 285 FRIDAY 27-11-70

A good night and a good sleep. First one for a while. A quiet day.

DAY 286 SATURDAY 28-11-70

A restless night, but feeling good today. Getting plenty of sleep during the day, in between pills and needles.

DAY 287 SUNDAY 29-11-70

A good night last night. Feel good today. Seen a good movie last night. Having a quiet day.

DAY 288 MONDAY 30-11-70

A good night again and feeling real good today. Doctor arrived 0830 going to the movies tonight.

DAY 289 TUESDAY 01-12-70

A good night and movie. Doctor arrived 0830. Being discharged to the Peter Badcoe Club this afternoon. Don't know for how long. 1100 arrived at the Peter Badcoe Club. Feeling good today. Will be here for two to three days.

DAY 290 WEDNESDAY 02-12-70

Had a swim in the pool yesterday. Swum one lap and it took me ten minutes to get my breath back. Saw a good movie last night. Spending most of the day in the pool. Lost a whole stone [in weight] while in hospital. Now ten and one-quarter stone ringing wet, was eleven and one-half when I left Australia. Had a couple of beers today. Tasted good too. Another movie tonight.

DAY 291 THURSDAY 03-12-70

Another good night. And movie. Have to report back to hospital at 1330. A check-up then back to the Dat, I hope. 1710 back at the Dat, early night.

DAY 292 FRIDAY 04-12-70

A good sleep. Not doing much today. Three day's light duties.

DAY 293 SATURDAY 05-12-70

A good movie last night. Sitting on the gun today. Two hours on, four off. Going to have a few beers tonight then off to the movies.

DAY 294 SUNDAY 06-12-70

A bloody good movie last night. The beer wasn't bad either. Working in the ORs Mess. What a bludge. A few more beers tonight and another movie.

DAY 295 MONDAY 07-12-70

Another bloody good movie last night, starring Stella Stevens and Len Robertson. Not much doing today. Went on a rubbish run and flogged [stole] two bunches of bananas on our way back. Goodness knows how many pogos had their eyes on them, but stiff shit for them. Doing gun picket tonight. Also going to the movies.

DAY 296 TUESDAY 08-12-70

Only a fair movie last night. Not much doing today. Replacing a few sandbags around the place. A few more beers tonight and another movie.

DAY 297 WEDNESDAY 09-12-70

Movie again fair. Filling the resupply bags for tomorrow, when I'll also go back out scrub. Having a few more beers tonight. Heaven knows when the next one will be.

4 Platoon mortared 0615 this morning. Two of our fellows hit. [38877 2nd Lieutenant Karl Metcalf and 130419 Corporal Kenneth Michael Weightman.] However, they got one enemy KIA.

DAY 298 THURSDAY 10-12-70

Resupply put off until tomorrow. 5 Platoon moving up to 4 Platoon, have run into a huge bunker system. Not doing anything today. A few more beers tonight.

DAY 299 FRIDAY 11-12-70

Moving out to 5 Platoon at 0930 by chopper, with resupply. Landed with 5 Platoon at 1018. Boy, what a [bunker] system. They are still building them. Area size 1,000 metres by 300

metres. One mini-team [of engineers] already here. Another one has been called in to help blow them [up].

D & E [Defence and Employment] Platoon from Vung Tau have been called in to help C Company to act as a cut-off for anything that may come from up north.

1330 and we're heading off for eight clicks. D & E Platoon in to protect the mini-teams who are expected to take three days to blow them. The system said to be the largest ever encountered by Australians. We are heading for the waterfall area. 1800 and stopping for the night. Two clicks short of the position.

DAY 300 SATURDAY 12-12-70

0730 and heading for final location. 0845 and in position staying here for three days.

DAY 301 SUNDAY 13-12-70

1000 and heading for Route 328 [to join] the rest of the company. So much for our three day's stop. 1155 and I have come across fresh tracks. B Company HQ and the rest of the company are moving up to join us.

1400 and moving off as a company. Moved three clicks and stopped. Reconnaissance patrols going out. We were following tracks for two clicks, and the situation getting too hot, we've been told to return. We are operating with two nine-man sections plus the Platoon Commander, Platoon Sergeant, and one signaller. Big platoon.

DAY 302 MONDAY 14-12-70

0830 and everyone heading southeast for the big blue [ocean]. 1200 and have stopped for a brew. 1320 and off again, mind in neutral, finger in bum, and head down. 1620 and a member of 6 Platoon stepped on a mine (ninth bloke in front of me), an M16. Luckily it did not jump, just went off in the ground. He copped it in the legs and backside but OK. 1645 and heading off. [Wounded] member just lifted out.

1815 and harbouring up. B Company HQ and 4 Platoon have stopped one click back. Today we have gone through scrub, jungle, clearings, paddy fields, swamps, and God knows what else, and covered thirteen and one-half clicks. Not bloody bad.

DAY 303 TUESDAY 15-12-70

0745 and off again, with 6 Platoon for two clicks. 0900 and have stopped, 6 Platoon going on for another click. We have to check out two places. Found nothing. 0930 and 6 Platoon have found a fire still smouldering, five packs and partly cooked food. Nogs must have spotted them and taken off.

1100 and we have joined 6 Platoon to have a look around. 1230 and we are heading back to B Company HQ. 1245 and with 6 Platoon in front, they have hit two Nogs, and they took off. We swept through and only found three sandals.

1308 moving back to B Company HQ. About eleven clicks today. 1500 and everybody moving off. 1610 and we have lost B Company HQ and 4 Platoon plus half our blokes.

George or Grog have the shits [in a foul mood]. Hit the big blue [ocean shoreline] at 1800. Went through everything again today. 1830 and quick dip [in the sea] in the raw [naked].

DAY 304 WEDNESDAY 16-12-70

Resupply today 1330 and another dip in the raw. Everybody switched off and couldn't give a damn. Heading off at 1900 for ten clicks, four clicks along the beach and then into the scrub. What a bloody joke. 2100 and stopping until 2300 when the moon comes up before heading into the bush. 2300 and leaving the beach. 0130 and stopping until 0800 thank goodness. Have done six and one-half clicks.

DAY 305 THURSDAY 17-12-70

0800 and moving off again. Just three clicks to go. 1330 and in position.

DAY 306 FRIDAY 18-12-70

A quiet day. Lost B Company HQ and 4 Platoon yesterday [left them behind] and now we are heading for the coconut grove at 1400. Only four clicks. Should be easy going. 1830 and in new position.

DAY 307 SATURDAY 19-12-70

A quiet night. Staying in this position today.

DAY 308 SUNDAY 20-12-70

Still in position but don't know what's doing. 6 Platoon have moved up to near us, don't know what for. Bloody cold this morning. 1100 and moving back down Route 23 to meet 6 Platoon and continue on to old contact area. 1500 and 6 Platoon leave us. 1700 and we reach our new position for the night.

DAY 309 MONDAY 21-12-70

0900 and heading back to B Company HQ. Nobody has any munga [food] left, but plenty of brewing gear. 0930 and joined 6 Platoon again. Moving together for two clicks then parting. 1020 and I have found a land turtle. Taking him with us. 1500 and have scratched "5 PI, B Coy, 7 RAR 70" on the turtle's back and then let him go, while having a brew. 1630 and in position one click from B Company HQ.

DAY 310 TUESDAY 22-12-70

0800 and moving back to B Company HQ. 1100 and being choppered back to the Dat. 1109 and the first chalk [group of helicopters] arrive. I am in second stick [single load of soldiers for one helicopter] of the second chalk. Took off at 1135 arriving at the Dat at 1210. Not doing much this afternoon.

DAY 311 WEDNESDAY 23-12-70

Bugger all doing today. Just getting ready for R&C tomorrow. BBQ tea and a night on the grog.

DAY 312 THURSDAY 24-12-70

Leaving at 1010 for Vung Tau . Arrived at 1120. Having a Christmas Dinner and being served by all officers and senior non-commissioned officers. 1330 and boy what a dinner. Going into town at 1400 and back at 1600 for barbecue tea. 1715 and could not eat or drink another thing. Watching a movie tonight, if possible, the beer today is all free.

DAY 313 FRIDAY 25-12-70

Flaked last night around 2300. But boy what a head [hangover] today. 1030 and going for a swim in the pool to try and sober up. 1330 and just had a good lunch and now feeling good, so four of us are heading for town. 1900 just finished tea and have been told the beer is free until 2200. Shit hot.

DAY 314 SATURDAY 26-12-70

0900 returning to the Dat. 1015 and arrived. Getting new ammunition. Still seedy [hungover].

DAY 315 SUNDAY 27-12-70

0800 moving to the Horseshoe for rest of tour in this joint. 0900 and American Red Cross putting on a show for us. 1330 just been told we will be spending four weeks in the Tan Ru area, but in broken shifts. Moving out tonight at 1830 to ambush track 1,500 metres west of the Shoe.

DAY 316 MONDAY 28-12-70

Returned 0650. Having a quiet day. 1400 and 6 Platoon reacted to west of Xuyen Moc. Moving out at 1830 for same position as last night.

DAY 317 TUESDAY 29-12-70

Returned 0650. 6 Platoon hit late last night. Lost one chap killed, three wounded and they got one enemy KIA. Moving out 1830 for same position again.

DAY 318 WEDNESDAY 30-12-70

Returned 0700. 4 Platoon being reacted to join 6 Platoon along with Company HQ. Moving out to Route 326 tonight 1800.

DAY 319 THURSDAY 31-12-70

Returned 0715. 1400 and off to join everybody else. Big contact last night with 6 Platoon and tracks, 22 enemy KIA, including CO of D445 Battalion, seven company commanders, four platoon commanders, six platoon sergeants, and a big political chap, three section commanders. What a hole has been knocked in Charlie's arse. Contact was near a bunker system. We have to clear it and another one nearby.

DAY 320 FRIDAY 01-01-71

Stopped last night in between the two systems. Contact at 2130. All hell let loose from us. One enemy KIA. Got a lot of documents and medical supplies from the system yesterday.

1500 and have reached the second system. What a way to celebrate the old year out and the new year in.

DAY 321 02-01-71

Quiet night. Moving to new position on Route 23 for the night at 1500.

DAY 322 SUNDAY 03-01-71

Quiet night. Being picked up at 0930 by tracks, then to the mangroves area to check the area out. One company (approximately) of enemy were seen moving through there two days ago, carrying wounded. 1100 and nil result. Now moving back to the Shoe. Picked up the rest of the company at Xuyen Moc. Arrived at the Shoe 1235. Route 326 for us again tonight.

DAY 323 MONDAY 04-01-71

Returned 0730. Having a quiet day. 5 Platoon have the night off.

DAY 324 TUESDAY 05-01-71

Another quiet day. Good movie last night. Route 326 again tonight at 1815.

DAY 325 WEDNESDAY 06-01-71

Returned 0720. Saw a spectacular sight last night. Naval barrage on to the Long Hais, then the gunships took over, with rockets and straight tracer from the door gunners. Everybody stayed up for 45 minutes to watch it. Moving out 1815 again to Route 326.

DAY 326 THURSDAY 07-01-71

Returned 0730, after a very interesting night. Got into position and at 1920 we got mortared, from the Long Hais. Twenty rounds landed approximately 100 metres away from us (5 Platoon group B). Then they started on 5 Platoon group A, but again missing.

Having spotted the muzzle flashes we called in artillery, and how. Final result of rounds fired were 217 of 105 mm from BRIGID; 1,138 rounds from the Horseshoe; and 960 rounds of 155 mm from the Dat. Who said we are scared, with only 46 days to go, and who's counting? Last night must have really frightened the brass. The crap we have to go through tonight to get to our position.

DAY 327 FRIDAY 08-01-71

Another narrow escape last night. Dropped off by tracks at the "S" [southern] end compound of Dat Do and waited for dark. Took off across the paddy fields and got into position at 1930 and at 1940 sixty VC hit the same corner of the compound that we had just left. 6 Platoon got three enemy KIA and one prisoner. The White Mice also got one enemy KIA in Dat Do. We have been warned to expect a lot of this during the next month or so. 5 Platoon have the night off. Watched the movies and had a few beers.

DAY 328 SATURDAY 09-01-71

A quiet night. A quiet day. Moving out to southeast of Dat Do tonight.

DAY 329 SUNDAY 10-01-71

Returned 0730. Three and one-half clicks out and back. I became the signaller. We were split callsigns again (5 Platoon group B) and only eight of us. Moving out to the same position at 1815.

DAY 330 MONDAY 11-01-71

Arrived back 0730. We have the night off again. Something about to happen.

DAY 331 TUESDAY 12-01-71

Saw a good movie last night. 0900 and have just been told we and 6 Platoon are going out for a seven-day layup, in the Long Hais. Nobody looking forward to that. Leaving at 1900 tonight.

DAY 332 WEDNESDAY 13-01-71

Took off last night in tracks for the drop off point arriving at 1940. Waited for artillery to stop pounding the Long Hais at 2100 and then moved in. 2300 we stopped, and 6 Platoon kept going.

2400 we moved off to our position. 0420 finally arrived. Last click cleared by engineers with mine detectors. 0630 and 3 Platoon [A Company], just down from us, just got one enemy KIA.

DAY 333 THURSDAY 14-01-71

A quiet day yesterday and today. 5 Platoon group A moved in last night to join us but a bit further down. Altogether six half-platoon ambushes in at the moment.

DAY 334 FRIDAY 15-01-71

Again all quiet. No sign of Charlie. 1620 and 5 Platoon group A in contact. 1655 and contact finished. Us, one killed and three wounded. The enemy: two KIA. 5 Platoon group A being pulled out. The nights are getting bloody cold.

DAY 335 SATURDAY 16-01-71

A quiet night except for two hours of listening to gunships after 5 Platoon group A left. And then five and one-half hours of artillery.

0815 and 6 Platoon in contact. 0900 fight finished. We lost one and one wounded. The enemy had five KIA. 6 Platoon being pulled out now. 0920 and the gunships are at it again. 1140 gunships stopped, artillery taken over. 1515 and artillery stopped. We pull out 0130 in the morning.

DAY 336 SUNDAY 17-01-71

0610 and waiting for pick up on main drag, at 0730. Back at the Shoe 0810.

DAY 337 MONDAY 18-01-71

Had yesterday and last night off along with 6 Platoon. Saw a good movie. Going back to the Dat on a working party for the day. Moving out tonight 1800. 1,500 metres to the west.

DAY 338 TUESDAY 19-01-71

Returned 0700. A quiet night, and day. Moving out tonight for same position.

DAY 339 WEDNESDAY 20-01-71

Returned 0650. Another quiet night. We (5 Platoon group B) have the night off. Shit hot.

DAY 340 THURSDAY 21-01-71

Another good movie last night. A quiet day. Moving out tonight at 1815 to the same spot.

DAY 341 FRIDAY 22-01-71

Returned 0635. Heard tracks coming and I got on the blower [radio] to ask them for a lift. We picked up 5 Platoon group A. 4 Platoon returning from the Bone area today. Move out 1815 for same spot.

DAY 342 SATURDAY 23-01-71

Returned 0650. Moving back to the Dat at 0930 for final packing. 1030 and a briefing: we aren't here for final packing, we are here for rebuilding Nui Dat, or at least our lines. All huts to be re-sandbagged and the bunker rebuilt. The beer of a night and the soft bed should make up for it though.

DAY 343 SUNDAY 24-01-71

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Start work 0830, lunch 1200 – 1330, finish 1700. Lost a lot of sweat today, will replace it tonight, beer.

DAY 344 MONDAY 25-01-71

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0830

Same timings as yesterday. You should see the bullshit going on. 98% of the company are in agreement. Still, more grog tonight.

DAY 345 TUESDAY 26-01-71

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Working with Jimmy Head (CQMS) today. 1400 and everyone starting work again. Ha! Ha! Ha! 1630 finish. More beer tonight.

DAY 346 WEDNESDAY 27-01-71

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Supposed to be going bush too, but put off until tomorrow. Dixie bashing [washing dishes] in the Officers Mess today. May be able to get to the PX for the first time. If not, then there's the boozer.

DAY 347 THURSDAY 28-01-71

Reveille: 0630

Parade: 0800

Leaving for the bush 0930, a track north of DISCOVERY, by tracks. Arrived at the drop off point after getting lost when we left Route 328. Have left our drop off point and gone one click, but no track that is supposed to be there. Now 1430.

1700 stuff it. We're harbouring up for the night.

DAY 348 FRIDAY 29-01-71

Staying in this position today. Reconnaissance patrol out trying to find this track. 1900 and still no sign of track. Besides being in good cover (scrub) we are wondering is there a track??? We don't care, if there isn't one we'll stay here.

DAY 349 SATURDAY 30-01-71

Moving to B Company HQ's location at 0830, about two clicks away. 4 Platoon and Company HQ have found an M16 mine on a track (it's fresh). 4 Platoon and Company HQ also have APC s with them. Arrived at 1020.

DAY 350 SUNDAY 31-01-71

Getting a resupply today. Moving out at 1000 for a big push up on the May Tao Mountains with the Yank 2/15th Brigade. Moving along Route 329, towards [Fire Support Base] LYNX with fourteen APCs and four tanks. Dropped off at 1200 and now moving four and one-half clicks by foot, with seven days of rations, I also have the gun.

We are to act as a cut-off group. Jets, gunships, and artillery are plastering the May Taos. Went over the position on Route 329 where a tank ran over a 30 pound mine yesterday. Arrived in position at 1800.

DAY 351 MONDAY 01-02-71

A quiet night and day today. Staying here tonight.

DAY 352 TUESDAY 02-02-71

Another quiet night. Moving one-half of a click at 0900 to a new position. Good going, arrived at 1010. 274 NVA [North Vietnamese Army] [enemy regular force soldiers] are supposed to be in the May Taos and approximately 1,000 men strong. Hope they don't decide to come our way all at once. Shit! Staying here tonight.

DAY 353 WEDNESDAY 03-02-71

Another quiet night and night [sic – day intended]. Staying here again tonight.

DAY 354 THURSDAY 04-02-71

Quiet night. Everything still being thrown at the May Taos, via air attack, by the Yanks. We're out of range of our own [artillery] guns. Nights are still cold.

DAY 355 FRIDAY 05-02-71

Another quiet night. Staying here today and again tonight. Resupply tomorrow but we don't know where. Six Yanks were killed and ten wounded yesterday. They came across a wire over a track and all decided to investigate, nothing one end, 300 metres away on the other end with all looking at the ground, bang, a command detonated mine of approximately 40 pounds.

When choppers came in to get them, two were shot down, snipers in the trees, and everywhere, according to their radio operator. Good old Yanks.

DAY 356 SATURDAY 06-02-71

Moving out at 0830 for resupply, one click away. What then goodness knows. 1300 and moving three clicks, and staying one click from LYNX until the 8th then to the Shoe. Arrived 1630 after going through a swamp 300 metres wide and waist deep.

DAY 357 SUNDAY 07-02-71

A quiet night. Reconnaissance patrols going out for a look around. The way Grog is carrying on, if he's not after a medal, I don't wish to be with a fellow who is. A quiet day.

DAY 358 MONDAY 08-02-71

Moving 0700 for the road just past LYNX for pick up, by choppers. 1050 everybody back at the Shoe. 4 Platoon moving to the Bone for a five-day patrol, then 6 Platoon to take over. Moving out to ambush position two clicks north of the Shoe tonight.

DAY 359 TUESDAY 09-02-71

Returned 0650. Returning to the Dat for a work party. We have the night off with 5 Platoon.

DAY 360 WEDNESDAY 10-02-71

A good night last night. Moving out by APCs at 1330 for the Tan Ru area. 1130 and just told the operation is off. A company of ARVN are out there until the 17th. 1815 out to our last position again tonight. 4 Platoon returning tomorrow to the Shoe.

DAY 361 THURSDAY 11-02-71

Returned 0705. Doing more bullshit work for Grog. 5 Platoon, 5 Platoon group A and 6 Platoon have the night off.

DAY 362 FRIDAY 12-02-71

A good movie last night. Time is short now, we're on Happy Pills [final anti-malarial medication]. Working again today. Having the night off again. Moving out tomorrow though, to the bush. 3 RAR advance party arrives today.

DAY 363 SATURDAY 13-02-71

Moving out at 1000 by choppers, with four engineers and three hundred pounds of explosives. We're going to be blowing bunkers. We're acting as protection [for the engineers].

I am not going out. Got tick on my old fellah [penis] and not bloody funny.

DAY 364 SUNDAY 14-02-71

Saw a good movie last night. Not doing much today. Still sore [from tick bite].

DAY 365 MONDAY 15-02-71

Saw another good movie last night. On the dry, shit! Have a dental check today.

DAY 366 TUESDAY 16-02-71

Another good movie last night. 3 RAR as rookie [like raw recruits] as hell. 5 Platoon due back in 1500. The whole company moving out tomorrow for four days to the coconut [area].

DAY 367 WEDNESDAY 17-02-71

Another good movie last night. Having our RTA [Return to Australia] medical today. We are moving out at 1000 by tracks. Seven and a wakey, or eight days to go [until the end of the tour of duty].

DAY 368 THURSDAY 18-02-71

Reached the sand hills, just past the coconut grove, yesterday at 1400 and stayed for the night and staying here today. We're right on the beach, hiding.

DAY 369 FRIDAY 19-02-71

Moving out at 0800 for the opposite side of the [coconut] grove. Arrived 1010. Sentry being done on my gun, but 250 metres out. [Original three figures for distance have been heavily crossed out and are no longer discernible.]

Very slack, yelling, shirts opened, reading or playing cards. 1400 and Robbo opens up (sentry), everybody shit. Two Nogs, after he got in another gun and myself opened up, and literally sprayed the area.

Fourteen [original figure of "10" has been crossed out and figure "14" written over it] of us then swept through. Quickly found one body and one AK47. 50 metres further on another AK47 [original word "body" has been crossed out and word "AK47" written over it], 20 metres further Nog behind log with hands in the air. Platoon sergeant radioed Grog, Grog said he make [?] two bodies. Two M60s, four Armalites and eight rifles all opened up. Result two enemy KIA and two AK47s. I fired 1,470 rounds [sic]. Niner picked up the weapons, we

buried the dead. Ha! Ha! Now pissing off for a couple of clicks. 1700 and in new position and everybody digging shell scrapes without having to be told.

DAY 370 SATURDAY 20-02-71

Moving 500 metres then the platoon sergeants get lifted out for some dinner, and 3 RAR come in. B Company HQ, 4 Platoon and 6 Platoon then taking them up to our big bunker system. We're staying put, with their packs. 1500 everyone back moving 500 metres for the night. Back to the Dat tomorrow.

DAY 371 SUNDAY 21-02-71

Quiet night. Chopper due at 0930. Bush, goodbye. Arrived Shoe 1010. 1300 our flag lowered and 3 RAR's raised. Good luck fellows. They have now taken over. Back to the Dat tomorrow. 1500 just informed my RTA is by plane then into Concord Hospital for an operation on my left leg, I wonder why.

DAY 372 MONDAY 22-02-71

Move out on trucks 0850. 0940 and back in the Dat. Handing in all stores and the gun. Not much doing otherwise. Getting gear cleaned for farewell parade on Wednesday. Big piss up tonight.

DAY 373 TUESDAY 23-02-71

Boy what a night last night. Everybody sick as dogs. One fellow ripped another bloke's shirt and that started it. Within two hours you were lucky to still have your trousers on, or even part thereof. Having a quiet day, thank goodness. Having a practice march on parade today and then that's it. Everyone on the dry tonight. 1130 and have just been told General Tre (South Vietnam) will be inspecting us tomorrow. 1400 and just heard on the radio that General Tre was shot down, along with three of his fellows, and all killed. Some other big wig to take his place. Hitting the sack early tonight.

DAY 374 WEDNESDAY 24-02-71

1000 and moving out for our farewell parade. 1120 and parade finished, just waiting for General Frazer (Australian) and General ? (South Vietnam) to arrive to present awards. 1230 and it's all over.

Having a barbecue at 1300 and on the piss all arvo. I have to hit the cot early tonight. Everyone else is going to play up. They don't have to leave for another few days.

DAY 375 THURSDAY 25-02-71

Got up 0430. Had breakfast at 0500 then reported to Battalion HQ at 0530. Moved to Luscombe airstrip at 0700 by truck. Left Luscombe at 0750 by Hercules, for Ton San Nhut airport in Saigon. Left Saigon at 1430 by Qantas V Jet for Mascot, Sydney.

2200 and up until now it has been a wet flight [alcohol served]. We have just drained the aircraft dry, and according to the steward they took on extra before they left. Well, I might try and get some sleep. 0150 and have touched down on good old Aussie terra firma at Mascot.

Altogether, not a bad tour, seen a lot of things that were most interesting and some that weren't. As to the way of life of other people of the world compared to ours, well ours will do me just fine thank you.

THE END

Rear Cover of Notebook:

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