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US Army  
June 20, 1966 – June 21, 1968  
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We were all packed into this airplane and they closed the door and took off. All the guys were out celebrating and drinking and carrying on and showed up half drunk to get on the airplane and then the plane took off and they all got sick. They were all vomiting. This was not like riding in an airliner with seats in it. The seating on the airplane was like webbing. You would sit in the straps that they would hang on the wall, so literally the person next to you was in the same hammock. We were packed into this airplane. Guys were getting sick and there was vomit rolling on the floor. What a mess. We were on the airplane for twenty hours. The first stop we made was in Alaska. We stopped at the air force base to refuel. We refueled in Japan and they didn't let us off the airplane. They opened the doors and we kind of looked out of the back door. Next stop was Vietnam. When the airplane touched down in Vietnam we landed in Danang. The airplane taxied for awhile and then came to a stop. They opened the door. The air was totally different. You could smell the far eastern smells, incense and all of that, and the air was very humid.

Once we got in country we formed up into a convoy and we convoyed up route one. We went north through the city of Hue up to Dung Ha, which was our destination. We really didn't know where we were going until we got there. I didn't find out what our mission was until we arrived at our destination. Once we were at Dung Ha, we went on to the compacter and they showed us the area and said that it would be where we would be camped. We had to build our own area. It wasn't exactly move-in conditions. The first thing we did was put up tents and we eventually replaced all of those tents with buildings.

A typical day was we'd wake up and get shot at by the North Vietnamese. Usually we'd take incoming in the morning and we'd get a number of rounds into the camp. Everybody would be scrambling around and yelling "incoming" and you'd go sit in a hole for awhile until you figured it was all clear and then get out of the hole. The typical kind of routine was go get some breakfast and then hang out for the morning, and I'd go over to the hospital and help out at the hospital sometimes. We had a parent company that we were kind of attached to. I got medical support through that company, so I'd go over and check with the guy who's the sergeant and see what was going on, and then come back get lunch, and then hang out for the afternoon. There was always some activity going on. Then I'd get dinner, go to bed, and repeat.

We'd play card games at night. Yatzee was one of the favorites. I played a lot of yatzee. When I went into the service I made a determination to read as many books as I could. When I left Vietnam I had a library of over eighty books that I had collected that I donated to the unit which I'm sure they derived very little benefit from. They were not the type of books that GI's usually read if you know what I mean. I was big on Hesse and Mann and a lot of science fiction and things like that. I got books from wherever I could.

I was known as the hippie medic. I got in all kinds of trouble because I tried to turn in my rifle. We built these hooches out of plywood. I had a bunk and one of the hooches with a lot of the other NCO's. I hung my rifle up over my bed and I never took

it with me anywhere. I didn't need it. Everybody else had rifles and they all said, "Doc, if we get in trouble I'm covering you, don't worry." If anybody got hurt you had your pack, his pack, his rifle, your rifle, whatever gear he was carrying... it was a mess. So a rifle was one more thing I didn't want to have to carry. They had an inspection. They came through and they pulled my rifle down off of the wall and it was rusted. They made a big deal about that. The armorer for the unit was a really good friend of mine and he said that I could just check my rifle into the armory because that's what you did in the United States. You had a rifle that was issued to you but it just lived in the armory all of the time. You didn't carry it around with you. He said I could just check it into the armory and he'd keep it clean so that it would always pass inspection. So I went to check my rifle into the armory and they said, "Oh no, you can't do that." I said that I didn't need it. But they said that I had to have my rifle. It was like a war protest kind of thing. I was always getting in trouble for holding radical views anyways. I was kind of the outcast because I was the guy who was going to get out in two years no doubt about it.

After six months they had to rotate me back to the United States. My commanding officer called me in and said, "You know, Fancher you're doing a really good job here, and you only have three months left in the army. Why don't you just extend and stay over here." I looked at him and I said, "You must be joking, I'm going home." I processed out. I had to get a flight from Dung Ha down to Danang and then I had to get a flight out of Danang back to the States. It took a long time because I wound up stranded in Okinawa. I got a flight to Okinawa, and then I couldn't get a flight back to the states. Finally, I got a flight out of Okinawa but it went back to North Carolina. I wound up landing in North Carolina coming back. I remember waking up on the floor of the airplane screaming.