

From the Barrel

The Happening

*Then out spake Elephinious
The captain of the bar,
"For every man upon this earth
Death cometh near or far."*

*"For how can man die better
Than consuming fearless grogs?
For the hangovers of his fathers
And the breweries of his Gods."*

*"Who will stand by my right side
And support the bar with me?
Who will stand on my left side
To drink on bold and free?"*



*Then out spake Alconphinias
Of Scottish blood was he,
I will stand by the right side
And drink the grog with thee."*

*"For who can put us under
With Resches for our aid,
And VB for a booster
Our courage cannot fade?"*

*Then out spake Purist Grogen
Of Australian blood was he,
"I shall support thy left side
And sip the grog with thee."*

*"For I weren't bred on water
And life is grog to me,
The rivers will flow with liquor
To be fermented in the sea."*

*Thus the booze began it's flowing
At a gluttonous rhythmic pace,
It was guzzled by the can full
Till empties littered up the place.*

*Then time had passed the hour
For the closing of the door,
But without a pause the dauntless three
Bought a dozen more.*

*From the confinement of the club
Across earth which grew no tree,
In either hand, a crate of grog
Strode forth the dauntless three.*

"This is a hi-jack. Take me to Vong Tau."

*Even when the lights went out
And the system barred their spree,
The liquor flowed throughout the night
They drank on, the dauntless three.*

*In the morning, drunk as lords
They joined the dawn parade,
Weary from the battle field
From their liquid escapade.*

*But here all boldness failed them
Here their hopes all died,
'Cause they couldn't buck the system
No matter how they tried.*

*Then out spake brave Elephiniinius
'Oh God, and boozers too,
Today I die a million deaths
For I cannot obtain a brevo."*

*"For how can man die better
Than from drinking lots of ale?
To the spirits of his sires
Who drank it by the pail."*

*"But look at us, the dauntless three
All shattered without the booze,
The CO's put us on the dry
Oh God, 'tis death we choose."*

*So from the club on to the dry
To live on juice and tea,
Suffering in their misery
Strode forth the dauntless three.*

GNR. C. F. JONES

Pogos

THE WEARY TROOPS deplane from the choppers, climb aboard waiting trucks and begin the shuttle back to their company lines after an operation which may have lasted anywhere from a week to two months. As the vehicles enter the company area a work party is spotted preparing rations and stores on the company parade ground.

From the troops on the trucks comes the cry, "Hi pogos, where have you been for the lastweeks?"

The work party continues its tasks. Soon the incoming troops begin their post-operational administration such as re-rationing, re-packing, showering and weapon maintenance.

The evening is taken up by a company barbecue, all prepared and laid out by the same pogos. After this the newly-returned troops relax and have a good night's rest. The pogos man the wire the first night.

Pogos was the term used by all field troops to describe anybody who did not go into the bush with them on operations. In other words, pogos made up the rear detail parties which, when the battalion left Nui Dat on operations, swung into action and took over the battalion's commitments and obligations.

The backbone of the rear details were permanent members who, because of their obligations or tasks, could not leave the base area. To strengthen them, each company detailed a number of soldiers to remain behind from the

operations, much to the disappointment of the soldiers concerned.

Tasks of the rear details varied little from day to day. Field troops thought life in Nui Dat was a bludge. It wasn't. It involved hard work and monotony. Some of the never-ending tasks performed by rear details were TAOR patrols, roadrunner and cavmobile operations, and escort duties — not forgetting the manning of the wire every night.

The ultimate aim of the rear details was to resupply and maintain the troops in the field. It was hard for the men in the field to realise, for instance, that company cooks worked hours into the night to produce bread rolls and other luxuries for them, or that the Q staff spent hours scrounging, packing, loading and dispatching the demands of the forward companies. Above all these seemingly minor tasks, the normal duties and requirements to maintain the battalion in all respects were still kept to a high level.

Throughout the absence of the battalion the frustrations, boredom and seemingly never-ending tasks were borne by these rear detail parties.

All seemed of value when somebody said to a pogo, "Well done, mate."

SSGT JAMES



First contact?

The Hueys of 9 Squadron

*They raise the dust and blast the ears,
They steal your hat and bring on tears;
They're draughty, noisy, ugly, slow,
They bark your shins and stub your toe.*

*They carry water, mail and rations,
Picks and shovels, boots and bashing;
Generals, padres, doctors, newsmen,
Ammo, stick books — even the pigpen.*

*Mapspots, recce and sniffer missions,
SAS insertions in duff positions;
Dustoff, opdems, hot roast duck,
Highly polished garbage truck.*

*They span the swamp, they climb the hills,
The WingCo scathing, Blue Section mills;
Sailors can fly' em, group captains bend,
We offer tribute to "the Crunchy's friend."*

ANZAC 9.