

Post. To teach them, with due patience, the efficient methods and procedures carried out by our Department.

As I confidently sat down at my desk a voice said:

"Type this in 5 copies right away."

"But Mr.", I started to complain.

"Don't 'Mr.' me young man. I'm a Sgt. Major." said the voice angrily.

It wasn't going to be easy to teach these fellows how to run an office!!!

"Have you got the 5 copies of that 292 finished? Get them signed by the DAA and QMG. They have to be delivered to the M.I.R. for the M.O. right away".

"But, what is an M.I.R., Sgt. Major Your Honour?" I meekly asked.

"WHAT!! Young fellow, if you expect to work in this office you had better acquaint yourself with a few simple abbreviations."

Well I was made an Acting, Unpaid, Unofficial Corporal three days later. Another month and I was appointed Acting, Unpaid, and Unofficial Sgt. I was very proud of gaining this promotion so rapidly as it indicated to me that my Army friends had learned quickly.

But I had been day-dreaming. This was another day and I must get up and be off to work. As I pulled aside my mosquito net, my room-mate, an Army Corporal, stuck his head out of the bathroom and bellowed:

"Come on, 'External', get out of the sack or you'll get bed sores. It's after 7 o'clock."

This uncouth manner of speaking hurt my sensibilities at first but I had adapted very well and was able to come right back at him with a sneering "oh yah".

Stepping onto the cold tile floor I hurried into the bathroom and stepped under the shower. Hot water for showering and bathing is unknown in Cambodia, and the water, cooled by the night atmosphere, is a startling way to begin each day. As I shaved, my reflection in the mirror reminded me that I had lost a few pounds in weight since I left Canada.

Father had said good-bye to a 19-year old rosy-cheeked, plump young boy. He was destined to greet a 20-year old, brown-cheeked, slim old man, on my return. The life abroad certainly makes men out of boys, as the Sgt. Major says.

Dressing in white shirt and shorts I went next door to a restaurant called "La Taverne" for breakfast. Here French food is served, either at a sidewalk table or inside the restaurant. We are fed at the expense of the Commission and sign bills for all meals. Eating French cooking is difficult to become accustomed to, particularly when it is prepared by a Chinese cook with Cambodian ingredients.

The Canadian office is only a block away in a former flat and after breakfast I strolled over, arriving about 10 minutes after 8. (My attendance record should not be consulted.) This is dip bag day and there probably will be the mad rush to get it closed in time.

The Commissioner and officers started to arrive shortly after my arrival. They live in another hotel called the Royal, a larger hotel and, I'm told, some of them have air-conditioned rooms. There are three cars assigned to the Canadian Delegation in Phnom Penh and, as the officers live a distance away, the cars bring them to work each morning.

There was a meeting of the Commissioners of the three Delegations yesterday and therefore our Commissioner started right to work on a report for the bag. In our outer office there is a flurry of activity as the morning mail is opened and distributed. One or two of the officers from fixed and mobile teams are in town for various reasons and they drop in to report to the Commissioner. We have 5 fixed teams, and 4 mobile teams situated throughout Cambodia.

The General has to attend a meeting of the Military Advisers Committee tomorrow morning and the Sgt. Major is busy preparing the agenda notes. I finish up preparing the monthly accounts for Ottawa and take them into the Political Adviser for signature (he is also accounts officer). Someday I would like to be an accounts officer. It is so relaxing. As I go into the Political Adviser's office he is lost in thought with a pencil between his teeth. Probably an important report for the dip bag.

The DAA and QMG is busy (I'm not sure what he is doing - in fact I've never been sure what he does). The Staff Captain is also busy at something as obscure to me as the DAA and QMG's work. He always seems to be figuring out the cost of the last party, or planning the next one.