

On September 15, 1950, American troops landed at Inchon and began fighting their way eastward toward the capital city of Seoul, Korea. From the air it was observed that 8 switcher locomotives were trapped behind enemy lines in a small town named Yong Dong Po, located a few miles away. Seabees from Amphibious Construction Battalion One volunteered to retrieve the locomotives and bring them behind the U.S. Marine lines. Chief Petty Officer E.A. Sidney, a Seabee veteran and former railroad man, volunteered to get the locomotives. Most reports say that Sidney took 8 others with him, and there are records of 3 men, Donald T. Bloomer, Walter Horn, and Gordon K. Barnett, receiving Navy Commendation Ribbons in 1951 for this action.

Upon reaching the trapped locomotives in Yong Dong Po, the men realized the trains were sitting at the switching yard for Kirin Brewery and proceeded to load 15 cases of beer and sake onto the trains. As they headed towards the safety of the U.S. Marine lines, several broken rails had to be repaired by the Seabees along the way. Shortly after starting the engines, the North Korean infantry noticed the movement and began to fire rifles and machine guns at the moving locomotives. Minutes later, North Korean mortars began dropping shells on the trains, and shrapnel fragments showered the locomotive cabs and boilers as they moved. The men ducked down and kept moving towards the area occupied by the U.S. Marines.

Marines of the First Division were unaware this was going on and upon seeing the locomotives approaching from behind enemy lines, the Marines set up a bazooka along the track to blow the trains up. Marines also began firing shells and bullets at the approaching trains. A young Marine private named Crestfallen noticed the men driving the trains were wearing green fatigues with a GI cut, and said "Hold your fire! Wait a second, these guys aren't North Koreans!" He shook head and said to his WWII veteran platoon sergeant, "Imagine that, Sarge, there was a bunch of "doggies" out ahead of us." "Naw," the sergeant said, "it's just them damned Seabees at it again!" The Seabees approached the Marines laughing and waving.

One report says the beer and sake was not issued to soldiers because of danger of contamination but Sidney admitted that a sampling of the beer and sake back at the brewery may have influenced their resolve in the matter at hand. In an illustration of the event by Robert Pearson, all of the soldiers on the trains are waving beer bottles in their hands as they come from behind enemy lines into the area secured by the Marines. The mystery of what happened to the beer and sake once behind Marine lines remains.