

Feb. 27, 2002

Dear ROM

I was on the USS Colvert APA32 from Apr. 52 until Dec 1955

I was in the Passage To Freedom also. My buddy Marvin M. Gales & I at the time, was in the L. division He later went to the AB div. and I went to S div. as a cook.

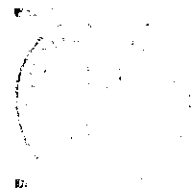
We made one trip up the river to Saigon. I think it was around 2000 people we took to Saigon, after we returned Haiphong, my so called buddy Marvin, volunteered me to take a LCM boat and remain in Haiphong to pickup civilians and carry them to the ships. It was I, Marvin and my engineer was a guy name Brunch or Bunch from the AB div. We were there for 28 days using our LCM for what ever needs the ships had. Slept on a cot on the deck of our LCM, ate meals at what ever served the best that day. Everything was good until one morning we awoke and all the ships were gone. We found out a Typhoon was coming in, so we went back in the rocks for 5 days.

2.

We had a lot of damage to our boat, but got it fixed when the Calcut came back for another load of people. I believe each family was allowed 60 lb. of what ever to take with them. There was one death of a old man and one birth of a baby on the ship. They didn't know what a bathroom or Head was for. We also found weapons on board they had hid around. They were so dirty, and used clove, their Teeth were black. We had to go to Subic Bay, Philippines for clean up a disinfect the hole ship Sept 20, 1954. The ship left Sasebo Japan 15 Aug., 1954 for Haiphong. We left Haiphong for Yokosuka, Japan 26 Oct 1954
Hope I have been some help.

Billy H. Gester.

Billy G. Hester



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