

1st Lt. Paul L. Sauer to Capt. James B. [Jim] Evans

Quang Tri
June 15, 1970
1 p.m.

Dear Jim,

Got your epistle day before yesterday and am glad to hear you got such a good assignment. Actually you probably couldn't ask for a much better location. I have a very good friend who is Registrar [same job as Erich's] at the 91st Evac. He was in OBC at Ft. Sam with me and we both put in our stateside time at Ft. Ord, I with the 8th Evac and he with the 629 Clearing Co., both line units. His name is Dave Lynn and he is a 1 Lt. He is one Erich and I used to talk about who was getting hitched to the nurse we didn't dig too much. That's off now though I guess. If you're down by A&D or R&E or whatever they call the Emergency Room, tell him I said hi and to give a call. He can do it the same way he called Erich except that when he gets through to the Quang Tri operator have him ask for 460 instead of 463. He is a darn good guy and can probably help you if you need anything.

Am going to the APO now with Daveⁱ to mail your package. Will send the fan a day or two when I get it packed.

3 July

Dave [Lindert] wanted to use your fan till I left for Bangkok. So he mailed it the day I left.

Bad news. Monday morning, before dawn, Bruce Heskettⁱⁱ was killed. They were at an NDP in the hills to the south-west of C-2.ⁱⁱⁱ Bruce was on guard watch when NVA began mortaring their NDP. He was sprayed in the face with bits of scrapnel but was in good shape. He told his Plt Sgt. He was going to get down into the turret. Sgt. Agard was helping him get down into the gunner's seat. He was just about down when an RPG struck the turret, went through, and hit Bruce in the left shoulder, just to the left of his heart. It about tore his shoulder off. He died within 5 min of fluid loss & shock, before the medevac chopper landed. I was shocked and still find it hard to believe. Why him? A guy named Ledbetter was injured, but no one else was harmed from 1/77. Carlstrom was pretty shaken up. They had a memorial service for him at A-4^{iv} and I drove up with Cpt. Stiles.

I was able to get 4 yds of medium weigh silk in Bangkok for your Mother for \$11.00. I couldn't remember the other thing you wanted, so I just let it go. I got some jewelry for my Mother and some silk to go with it. The silk was between \$2.50 and \$3.00 a yard.

I really enjoyed Bangkok, especially after getting in touch with my friend. It's a beautiful city and the standard of living seems appreciably higher than Quang Tri.

Sarge^v checked at the air port here for your baggage as did I when I went to Bangkok with negative results. I think it's in DaNang somewhere or got on a plane to Pleiku, Phu Bai, or somewhere else.

The war seems to be getting hotter here. The Tuesday after you left, Cpt. Stiles, Silva and I drove down to DaNang. That evening Quang Tri took 22 rockets. 1st Sgt. Atkinson had scrapnel [sic] hit his hand as he dove into C Co. Orderly room. There was a possibility he might lose 2 fingers. Two rockets hit behind the 1/77 stage^{vi} and one hit by the Service Club^{vii} and demolished the music room. A piece of scrapnel [sic] flew through D Co. Orderly Room and cut the cord on Cpt. Styles portable radio. 2 guys from D 75th were killed. Dave thought I had some type of psychic powers, going to DaNang the same day.

Contrary to popular opinion previously expressed, Cpt. Brown is [sic] done a real good job as S-5 and enjoyed it better than any job he's had, in or out of the Army. Our Medcap^{viii} yesterday was cancelled because a VC/NVA Company plus plus infiltrated into our district the other night. The main area of concentration is in the Tra Loc, Tra Tri area about 3 miles east of Quang Tri, but stretches south between 555^{ix} and the Lan Thuy canal, to and slightly beyond the Wunder Beach road [LZ Hardcore]. Come on back to where the action is, come to Quang Tri. Basicly only the 1st ARVN Div. is involved, but we've got the Scouts, Hy Tank Section, and a plt [platoon] from the Cav^x down there too. So far they've killed over 135 NVA/VC, with ARVN loses about 20 KIA.

LeBreque is permanent bunker line medic, where he and Lt. Shaw can drive each other crazy. He east, sleeps, shits, and goofs off out there. Thus SFC Hibbits^{xi} has retained his sanity.

Life goes on here as usual, hot and lazy. My replacement is to be here the 9th. His name is Anderson and he's supposed to be a FNG.^{xii}

The Photo Lab air conditioner have all ceased to work and I find myself less inclined to use the facilities.^{xiii}

Cann^{xiv} was transferred to Japan while I was on R&R and is not back yet.

I've got a little over 2 weeks to go in country, but I can't say as I'm all that excited to get back to the states. But I guess I can't sham forever. Dave's "letting" me do all the inspections. Real kicks.

Goad's^{xv} gone and we've got a 91C named Kiker from B Med who is excellent. Life at the aid station had slowed down so much at SFC Hibbits wants no more medics when Jessum, Hindon, etc. leave. All I can say is – SHORT!

Take care and keep your' heave down, your' just about a double digit midget. My home address is 2894 Neil Ave. Columbus, Ohio.

See you stateside,
Paul

P.S. I sent that silk to your Mother and will send you the change for that and the package.

10	1.25
+30	1.75
	11.00

40	14.00
<u>14</u>	
\$26	

ⁱ Dr. Dave Lindert followed James B. [Jim] Evans as battalion surgeon, 1/77 Armored Battalion, 1/5 Brigade [Mechanized] June 1970.

ⁱⁱ 1st Lt. Bruce William Heskett was a classmate of Paul L. Sauer at Notre Dame. Bruce Heskett, born 20 Apr 1945, was killed 29 Jun 1970, Quang Tri Province. Home of record: Spokane, Washington. Vietnam Wall, Washington, D. C., 9W, 101. On 05 June 1999, Matthew L. McGough, a Notre Dame classmate, posted the following on the Virtual Vietnam War, "I was a classmate of Bruce's at Notre Dame and a fellow member of ROTC. I remember him as a wonderful person and I know he was an excellent soldier. I'll remember him always." On 02 September 2001 Haila [Sperry] Kahoano, a close friend, posted the following on the Virtual Vietnam Wall, "He was due to come home the day after he died to see the daughter he had never met. We all love and miss him so much."

ⁱⁱⁱ C-2, Charlie 2, was north of Cam Lo and south of Alpha-4 [Con Thien] in Quang Tri Province, South Vietnam.

^v Sgt. Hollis Hibbits was NCO for the medical platoon 1/77 Armored Battalion who arrived about March 1970. He was a highly professional career Army man. He was an excellent leader and worked well with the men. The medics respected him for his integrity and involvement. He had consistent expectations of the medics and helped them achieve those goals. He assisted the medics with vehicle maintenance, jeeps and armored personnel carriers, and was definitely a hands-on leader whom the men respected. Sgt. Hibbits made a remarkable contrast to Sgt. Washburn, also career Army, but definitely not a professional. The medics detested Sgt. Washburn.

^{vi} 1/77 stage was located about 300 feet from the battalion aid station.

^{vii} Service club was about 200 feet from the battalion aid station.

^{viii} MEDCAP was an Army farce about delivering medical care and "winning hearts and minds." The medical care was worthless, at best passing out cough syrup because it tasted good.

^{ix} Highway 555 ran parallel to the coast. It was also known as "Street Without Joy." Bernard Fall wrote a book, *Street Without Joy*.

^x 4/12 Cavalry Squadron was attached to 1/77 Armored Battalion.

^{xi} Sgt. Hollis Hibbits was NCO for medical platoon 1/77 Armored Battalion.

^{xii} Fucking new guy.

^{xiii} The photo lab was at the USO Club near the Battalion Aid Station.

^{xiv} Cann was probably Lt. Cann who was injured when a mine blew up under his tank. The blast ruptured his ear-drum.

^{xv} Jaan Goad and Mark Doom were the 91Cs, medical specialists, when I arrived at 1/77 Armored Battalion, in November 1969. Mark Doom got an early out from the Army to go to college; he left Quang Tri left about February or March 1970. Jaan Goad completed his military service at an Army base in Massachusetts. I visited with him after his Army tour of duty in Austin, Texas. Mark Doom as of 2002 was living in Dallas, Texas.

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Columbus, Ohio.

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