

Shu Lei
March 13

Dear Family -

Apologies for that awful gap in writing, but I'm afraid work has been piling up ever the last few weeks - as you can imagine. Worse yet, things have been frightfully boring too. Half of the day is swallowed up by work, another third goes to sleep, and sometime consumed eating. The rest I use for reading. Fortunately, I'm well supplied for that - almost over-stocked. (But the Doc in the U.S. & Lewis) I don't know what to do when the books from the Freeport Library get here - cull out the best ones & see if our hospital liaison ~~man~~ can distribute the others, I guess.

I've mentioned that I haven't really replied to your letter as to whether or not packages have arrived, so: Yes, the glasses came intact, & I've received both foot pump, also miscellaneous & important books. As for suggestions, what to do & what not to do: You might send the following -

- a) 2 immersion coils (for making tea by the cup in the kitchen - 1 spare)
- b) 1 travel alarm - winding type, as sturdy as possible
- c) box of some sort of crackers (packaged tightly so they will travel well - Biscuits, perhaps)
- d) some cans of what I want to call spray cheese, the stuff that comes in ready whip type cans (I know it sounds ghastly, but it's the only way it will keep, here)
- e) a small box of sugar (impossible to obtain here)
- f) The next 2 of 3 Warrin books
- g) The next 2 Calver or they
- h) a little tinned, spreadable meat (not too much)

File but would be sent to my mother, definitely welcome. Don't make too big a bundle, because it would take longer to arrive & be more difficult to keep within my limited storage facilities. Much as I hate to regret it, the Lipton dinners didn't turn out all that well - ~~very~~ starchy (although not cooked all that long) and the meat limited in quantity & rather salty. Still, it was an interesting experiment. All contributions are gratefully received. Also, thank you & Craig for the cassettes - they're marvelous. I know I still haven't sent you people one, but I'm working on one now. You'd be surprised at how difficult it is to fill one. Generally, the ones people make around here are filled with awkward pauses & clicking sounds where the tape has stopped & then started again. One guy solved his problem by filling in gaps with a North Vietnamese English-language news broadcast. Apparently the American (better known as the Metricat Division) has been wiped out about five times - & we never even noticed. Anyway, I'm working on it & the tape, not arising out the Division.

Our office has started to pull guard duty (don't worry, Momma, it's the safest place to be - and nothing happens in Chu Lai, anyway) each of us about once every 2 weeks. It's not bad - it gives you a day off in which you do nothing but admire the scenery. It seems the General decided the Admin Co was being controlled too much. I wonder if he'd be upset if he were told that guard isn't really a bother at all? The only unfortunate thing is that our promotion quota has been cut back - which means I may leave Viet Nam as a 1st - oh well.

*That got sort of squashed in there. No, the Vietnamese do not appreciate English poems.

I suppose that what passes at the moment for my contentedness (content?) with my situation is the fact that I've begun to regard my workday as an unreal interlude between evenings, perhaps because I started working on the night shift. Whatever the reason, it makes life much more bearable & the time go faster (at the end of the month I will have finished 25% of my tour). Evening is when I read, write (although I'm falling further behind in correspondence), & talk normally (not Army-speak). It is, one might say, when I am most myself.

I got a letter from Maggie which enclosed a clipping from Time which quoted Richard Drennon (my freshman Am. Hist. professor, now at Bucknell) as an associate ^{of the Berrigans}, and then [the article] went on about "Tommy-the-Traveller." (I have a hard time digesting that name; it makes me think of Gen Lee's horse.) Anyway, good grief, is nothing safely anonymous? Also got a letter from Norah - quite pleasant & intelligent. How I am ever going to write to everyone is beyond me. (Did Tricia get my letter?)

I think I've written enough for now. What's my father reading? How is my family, etc, etc? I love you all very dearly.

Rob