

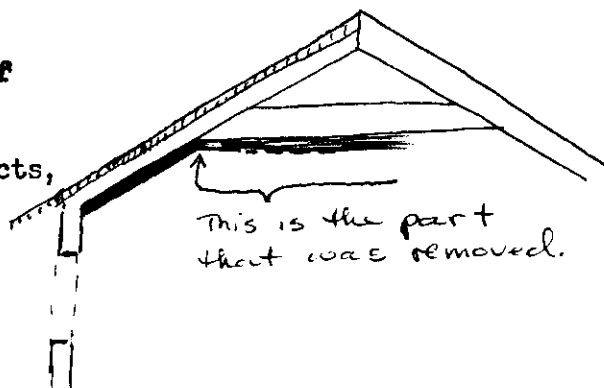
Chu Lai
June 12

Dear Family -

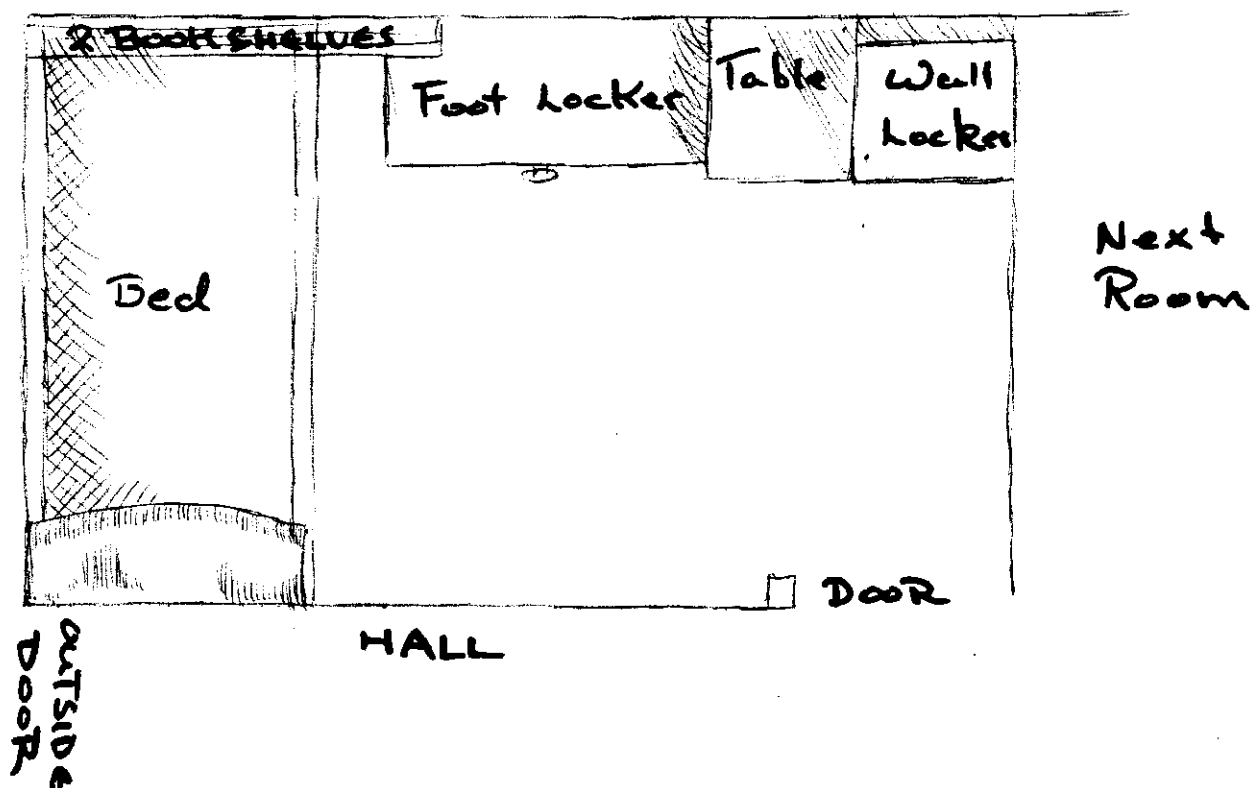
Let me see; I think I have any number of questions to answer this time - since I've been fairly deluged with letters from my family the last few days. First of all, all my glasses have now arrived - though it seems odd that the first to be sent out would be the last to arrive. Also, I do have my SP4 pins; PFC pins were in scarce supply around here simply because there are more PFC's. What else? The Sayers and Allinghams have arrived and are being read - However, when are you going to send me another food package? That sounds dreadfully demanding, however, I think I'm entitled once in a while - especially now that you do have my check list. I envision truckloads of cheese, liverwurst, and pudding arriving. As for a camera - I will have to do something. I haven't decided quite what I'd like to get, though. Having seen some of the photos that people have come up with from 35mm cameras, I have given some thought to picking one up. The difference between that and, say, an Instamatic is, of course, quite obvious. Even so, I'm not absolutely sure that the money would be that wisely invested - inasmuch as I don't intend to make a hobby of it. I suppose that the only reason I'm considering the possibility is that over here, through the PX system, they are extremely inexpensive - compared to their U.S. prices - which are incredibly inflated. However, we shall see. One might be very much appreciated on another trip to England.

As for R&R, it's still a-ways off for me. I'd rather come back from it with only a short time left in Vietnam. Australia does seem like the best place to go, but I still have plenty of time to make up my mind. Unfortunately, one can't get over to New Zealand - R&R is available only in areas where there is an R&R center, and sadly enough, there isn't one in New Zealand - probably fortunately for NZ. Anyway, we shall see.

We've been rather busy this last week. Not that the casualty work has increased; rather, we've been occupied with all kinds of odds-and-ends. We have an IG (Inspector General's) inspection coming up in a little while, and are busy trying to clean about a year's mud and dust off everything...which isn't exactly easy, since equipment deteriorates rapidly in this climate. So we stand around painting desks and chairs, and steel-wooling various rust-incrusted objects. To top it off, the local IG decided that our hootch had to be rearranged, inasmuch as the rooms weren't perfectly uniform in size, height of walls, etc. Anyway, the ceilings that we'd put up for insulation came down (not the whole thing, but the parts that were horizontal to the ground). It seems that someone got it into his head that they were a haven for rats. It's a pity he didn't try looking at one of the hootches first. Any rats that appear live at ground level, the ceilings were inhabited by the gekkos - which are clean, non-diseased, kill insects, and make cheerful sounds. Oh, well. One benefit of the rearranging is that my room (which was the only single when we had far more people) is now much larger. The wall has been extended into the next room about 1-1/2 feet and, more important, into the hall about 1/4 inch, which allowed me to swing my bed around to the short end of the room



producing quite a bit more room (and I can now actually call the place a room. It's nice to be able to get out of bed in the morning and still be in the same place, instead of the hall.). Anyway, this is the way it looks now:



In a way, tearing the inside of the hootch out and doing it all over was fun as well as a hassle. Unfortunately, now someone in a position of authority (one never finds out just who these people are) has decided that we can't have our front porch, which has been there ever since the hootch was built (it's all of three and a half feet wide), so I suppose that will be going down next. Remember make-work in grade school?

Even so, life here is quite endurable. I have my books ~~and~~ (even if it's not the greatest) conversation - and there have been a few rather good movies lately on our big plywood board. Last night we saw Romeo & Juliet (100 GI's walk off afterward muttering, "Gee, that was sad!").

I think I'd better get back to work. (Oh yes, in reply to Lois's question: Sham was definitely under a month, probably quite a bit, when we got him. He's just beginning to learn to get around, which is rather hard to teach him since he doesn't have his momma.) I love you all, and think about you.

R.L.