

7 Oct. 1969

Hello Mrs. V,

I saw your name and address in the Sea Tiger.

I am not from Illinois, I was born in Jackson, Tennessee, but Jackson, Mississippi is home.

My name is Dave Plunkett, I am 20 years old, and I like to make friends everywhere I can.

I am 5'8" tall, my hair is almost black, my eyes are dark brown, and I weigh 140 pounds.

I am a Marine, I am with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, Eleventh Marines at hill 63, LZ Baldy.

I am an artillery man. I don't work on the guns, but I still influence them. I take grid co-ordinates from a map and translate them

into data which can be put on the guns so they can fire accurately. I can operate a FADAC computer which is an I.B.M. machine which does the same thing that I do, only a lot faster.

When I get back to the States, I plan on going to Data Processing school to become a computer programmer and operator.

That's a little about me, and my job. Thanks for the add in the Sea Tiger.

Sincerely,  
Dave

L/CPL. D. J. PLUNKETT 2488321

Hq. BTRY.

F.D.C.

3<sup>RD</sup> BN. 11<sup>TH</sup> Reg.

1<sup>ST</sup> MAR. DIV.

F.P.O. SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. 96602

Hi Mrs. V. & Family,

I recieved your letter Today!  
I can't write very well, but I'm  
prompt.

Well, a little about me, and  
you might know more than  
I do, but here's what I know.

First off, I just turned  
Twenty the second of August.  
I like cars. I am planning  
to go to mechanic school when  
I get out of the Corps, not  
because I want to be a mechanic,  
but because I think that cars  
fascipate me.

I have what is called a  
Southern accent, and if I can  
get rid of it, I plan to be  
a broadcast engineer, if not,  
I will work with computers  
or be a pilot for a commercial  
airline.

I like girls, cars, bowling,  
picnics, and lively people.  
I don't like snobs or people  
who are always looking down  
on other people.

Well, in Tennessee, there aren't very many big towns, and there are lots of farms. Tennessee is beautiful all the time. From spring until fall, everything is so green and fresh and lively it rubs off on everyone. During the winter, there is usually two or three snows, but when there isn't, you wake up and see a red sun reflecting on dew laden grass. Although I haven't lived there in over eleven years, I still go there when I can to visit relatives.

Mississippi is just as beautiful and warm as Tennessee, but in a different way. There isn't as much rain in Mississippi, so usually everything green has dust on it, and it doesn't snow much there either. Mississippi usually gets a snow a year, but not always.

In Mississippi winter gives way to spring and green cotton fields and corn fields.

In the fall, the cotton bolls are open, and that is a sight to be seen. Usually winter consists of tilled black earth, and rain, rain, rain!

There are lots of factories in Mississippi, and I detest factories because they ruin the nice fresh air and good fishing places.

About my job. A FADAC Computer is a Field Artillery, Digital Automatic Computer. It is manufactured by Motorola, its military designation is the (G.O.C.) Gun Directional Computer, M-18. It replaced the old I. B. M. computer because it is faster and has a broader memory.

Well, that's about it as far as things about me. Now you know as much about me as I do.

I will close for now.

Your friend,  
Dave

P.S.

SKuse "TA" RITIN!  
I'LL do Better Nex Time

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Dear Mrs. V.

I don't remember if I answered your last letter or not, but I am in a place that I can write now.

Well, not much to talk about. There is a rumor that a Battalion from the Seventh Marines will move up north. I don't know if it will be us or not. As it stands now, we are the farthest South of any Marine unit.

Mail call has been a little too slack to suit me lately. I only had one letter last week!

Well, about the light! I have seen many many things before, but a set, closet is one I have somehow managed to miss! I'll bet it is something to be seen!

Talking about cars and mechanics, I have an old 1956 Pontiac Star Chief that I use for hunting and fishing. I keep a good paint job on it and keep the upholstery in new condition, and just recently I replaced the transmission in it.



Well, it has a 316.6 cubic inch engine with a 2 barrel carburetor and a 90 degree cam in it.

I have been thinking about overhauling the motor, and the idea came to me that I can't bore the engine to a nice workable size because of the thickness of the cylinder walls, but I want it to run better than it does now. Could you ask Mr. V. if I could put something like a 200° cam in it and a Holly 3 barrel carb. in it and make it run any better.

You might also ask him for any suggestions.

Another idea that came to mind is to take a 400 cubic inch G.T.O. motor with transmission, put a high lift cam in it with high compression pistons and solid lifters and a ram air in it and make it a real "sleeper" you might also ask for some advice and suggestions on that too. I think it would be a little too expensive. Ask about the cost of the two for me too.



As it stands now, for a city runabout, I have a 1967 Chevy Biscayne with a 396 4 Barrel ram air. It has a 7/8 inch hose from the fuel pump to the carburetor and a high lift cam. Don't laugh when I say it has an automatic transmission, because it turns over a hundred and five in the quarter mile, and it turns a hundred and forty when it is wide open!

Like I say, I'm not much of a mechanic and never plan to be a mechanic. Cars fascinate me and I plan on going to a school for mechanics so I can learn more about cars and do my own work on my own cars. I do a lot of my own work now, but not nearly enough.

I figure a man is never too educated to learn something new. I have seen people who thought differently, but those are the people who have been so concieted that you couldn't tell them anything anyway, so why bother trying.

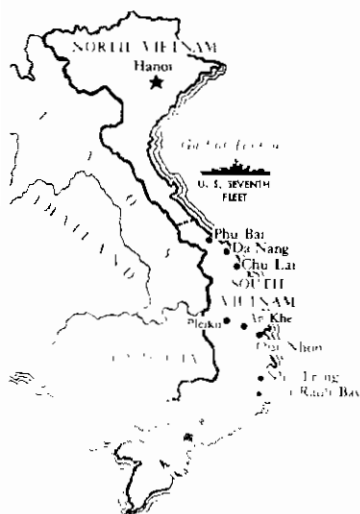


Well, off the subject of cars now!

Tomorrow, November 10, 1969, is the Marine Corps Birthday. The Marine Corps will be 195 years old tomorrow. The first Marine Corps Recruiting Station at Ten Tavern in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania is still standing! How about that?

Well, news is short so I will close. Write soon!

Sincerely,  
Dave





1ST MARINE DIVISION (REIN), FMF, VIETNAM.

HZ Mrs. V, 24 NOV. 69

Well, it was quite nice of you to write and tell me about Mr. V's opinion on my 56.

I, unexpectedly, sold the Pontiac two days ago for \$300.00 which isn't really such a bad price.

I also enjoyed the book. It might be a coincidence, but I had made plans to attend G.M. school.

I have been trying to get some information on who to write for admission.

I am thinking about buying a new Pontiac when I rotate. I like Pontiac and Chevy.

A letter from Dear Ole Dad the other day had



1ST MARINE DIVISION (REIN), FMF, VIETNAM.

the news that it is snowing  
in Mississippi a little already  
this year.

How is the weather in  
good ole Illinois?

Here in the Nam, it is  
definitely wet and getting  
wetter every day!

I'm getting short now!  
I have an R. & R. coming up  
soon. I want to go to Taipei  
or Sydney, Australia when I go.  
Just a bit of good news!

I am a Corporal now! I got  
promoted today. How about  
that! They made me an  
N.C.O.

I guess I'll close for now.

Sincerely,  
Dave

DEAR MRS. V.,

Sorry I have waited so long to write, but it seems that lately I don't even have time to eat.

Well, I have been transferred from Hq. BTRV F.D.C. to India BTRV F.D.C. the rest of the address remains the same - 3111 1ST MAR DIV.

I have moved from hill 63 to hill 590, overlooking Antenna Valley. We are way out in the bush here. We call the hill LZ Ryder. The only access to this hill is by helicopter. Usually every day a helicopter breaks through the fog and rain to re-supply us with ammo etc.

It has been 4 days since we had mail call, but in the last mail call, I recieved your box!

We made the kool-aid, and I gave the smoker's toothpaste to a friend of mine who smokes. I ate the fruit! Boy, that has to be about the best stuff in a can. I had never eaten canned orange slices before, but very honestly, they are better than most fresh oranges. I had never seen Corn Meal Mush before, a friend of mine ate it, I was

a bit skeptical about it and he laughed at me, so he scrounged up a spoon of grease and cooked it for me. He ate most of it, but I ate about 1 slice and found that if you put jelly, which we get out of C rations, on it, it is pretty good.

I will never know where he found grease on this hill.

By the way, for a Christmas meal, we had a cold ham sandwich, for New Year we had Spam on crackers with mustard! It was a change from C rations . . . to the worse.

I am going out with the grunts, our nick-name for infantry, in a couple of weeks as an artillery forward observer. I don't know exactly when I will go or how long I will be in the bush.

Well, thanks again for the package! Those orange slices were out of sight. Write soon.

Your friend,

DAVE

Dear Mrs. V,

15 JAN 70

Well, I must say that a magazine is a Treasured object now.

I also feel that I owe you an explanation for the lapse between letters. I am out with a new Battery and I am out in the "Bush" now, and just don't have the time to write like I did when I was on Hill 63.

I am on Hill 590 now, the only access to the hill is by helicopter, and only then if there isn't fog or rain, seldom, or for an emergency Med-Evac.

My New address is  
Cpl. David J. Plunkett 2488321  
India Btry 7. D. C.  
3/11 1<sup>st</sup> MAR. DIV.  
F. P. O. SANFRAN. CAL.  
96602

Well, Not much to write about, but I will write more next time.

Sincerely,  
Dave

Hi Mrs. V,

24 JAN. 1970

Sorry about all my address and name mistakes in my last letter, but I have an Aunt named Ruth King, and I was getting ready to write her before I addressed your letter, and I apparently put her name on your envelope.

Well, to answer a few of your questions about our John Waynes, the man who had two tooth-brushes on his rifle had one to clean the hard to get to places in his rifle, the other was to clean his teeth with. We use small 1 inch paint brushes, when we can get them, to brush the small gravel and dust off our rifles with.

Yes, some people do carry insect repellent in their helmet. The large rubber band that they use to hold it on with, was intended to use to hold brush and leaves, ect. for camouflage. The insect repellent containers make beautiful light reflectors

which can be seen for miles in open terrain. They also make good targets for Book snipers at 1500 meters! I keep my insect repellent bottles in my pack! I like living!

Well, today the sun came out, I took off my shirt + T-shirt, washed a change of clothes, and thoroughly enjoyed myself. I did get a little tan too. I think that well-tanned people look healthier in general. I also filled some sand-bags, and even washed my hair!

The mail came today and I got a letter from my father and one from my sister. I very seldom get mail two days in a row, but two letters in a day and mail two days in a row are an unheard of thing for me!

I sure hope the weather breaks. It was 6° at home, and every-one was cold there too.

It is almost time for  
T.E.T. now, but we aren't  
expecting a very bad time this  
year because we believe that  
they don't have very much to  
hit us with.

Well, I will close for  
now.

Your friend,  
Dave

7 Feb, 70

Hi Mrs. V,

I must say that I thoroughly enjoyed reading both of your letters.

I had a letter from my father yesterday, but it wasn't very informative. Of course, his letters usually aren't!

To answer your question about the weather in Mississippi. I must admit that 6° is pretty cold, but I can remember a few winters when it was 20 below zero. It isn't unusual to have three or four weeks of 6° weather in Mississippi, but it is unusual for it to get very much colder than that for anything over 10 days.

The expression "John Wayne" is or was used by me to depict an over-confident super-marine so to speak, because in all of his movies, he is invincible.

Most of our "Sea Lawyers" or "War Heroes" that tell their war stories all the time, are the people who probably have never even been shot at.

I used to go to the V.F.W. quite a bit, and as soon as I get home from here, I am going to join the V.F.W. They do a lot for some good organizations.

Before my grand-father died, he couldn't walk, so they gave him a wheel chair because he was a W.W.I. veteran. He wasn't even a member of the V.F.W. He ~~was~~ was 85 years old when he died, in 1968. He had some years on him.

Well, back to the V.F.W., we used to go there and play Bingo, does your Chapter of the V.F.W. have Bingo? After bingo, we would stay for the dance. They definitely used to have some good bands

there. My father is a member, because he was in the South Pacific, in the Army, during W.W.II.

They cut our beer ration down over here the first of February. We never could buy mixed drinks or hard liquor, and now they cut our beer ration to 1 can per day.

I'm not an alcoholic by any means. I don't even get drunk. As a matter of fact, I seldom ever drink beer, but it is the thought that hurts! I drink a few mixed drinks on occasions, but not much beer.

I suppose I had better close for the time, I will try to be a little bit more informative in my next letter ok.

Dave

28 MAY, 1972

Dear Mrs. Villegas,

I think I owe you an apology and an explanation, so here it is.

You see, the old Corporal got a little air-conditioned in Viet-Nam, and I just now got my gear with my letters and addresses in it. I also recieved a package from you yesterday and I have already read one of the books. I really liked it too, and the rest look even better.

I was in the U.S. Naval Hospital at Yokosuka, Japan for just a few days over two months. From there, I came to here, the first of May, and I will be here for at least another month or maybe longer. "Here", is Okinawa, my address is:

Cpl. DAVID J. PLUNKETT 2488321

CASUAL Co. Hq. PLT. H.T.S. BN.

M.C.B. CAMP Smedley D. BUTLER

F.P.O. SEATTLE, Wash. 98173

Those crazy V.C. thought that they could plant me 6 feet under, but they just weren't quite efficient enough and I am in A-number one condition now.

Well, the news is that I have been recommended for Officer Candidate School, pending my acceptance and my personal letter stating my wish to accept the offer. I don't know if I want to go or not. The pay would be better and all that, but I just want to do my time, get out, go to work, and live in peace for a long time. I think that if I decide not to go to O.C.S., they are going to promote me to sergeant, but I'm not too sure.

My job here on Okinawa is driving of all things! Never exceeding a speed of 20 M.P.H. I am almost afraid to get on a road for fear of being ran over! I'm not a speed demon by any means, but I can almost run that fast! It gets to be a bore after a while.

This whole place gets to be a bore. No money, lots of liberty, no place to go, no booze, and worse of all, no one writes any more!

I sure will be glad to get home and get some sleep! It seems like I've got a million places to go as soon as I get home, and I don't know where to go to first! Have you ever been in that predicament?

Well, got any suggestions? Thus far, I am going to Georgia, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Texas, Louisiana, and of course home! Driving all the way!

I guess I better close this one for now, I will be able to write pretty often now, so don't be mad at me.

David

NEW ADDRESS: SGT. DAVID J. PLUNKETT 2488321  
Base SGT. MAJOR'S OFFICE Bld 5204  
CAS. Co. H. & S. BN.  
M.C.B. Camp Smedley D. Butler  
F. P. O. SEATTLE, WA. 981773

Hi Dorothy,  
just a few lines to let  
you know I received 2 letters  
from you today!

Well, I have 83 days left  
over here and 43 days of leave  
when I get home.

I will be stationed at  
Quantico, Virginia for 4 months  
attending Data Processing,  
Computer Programming School.

The route I have chosen  
to Quantico takes me through  
Illinois from St. Louis, Mo.

Take a look and see if Carpenters-  
ville is on the route from St. Louis  
to Virginia, if not, how far off  
is it?

Sorry to hear about the  
cold! Maybe it won't last very  
long though.

Not really a lot to talk  
about except that I got promoted  
to Sergeant and ~~won~~ the  
Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry  
for something, I know not what,  
in Viet-Nam.

Well, I know this is  
short, but I have to work  
today.

David

Sgt. David J. Plunkett 2488321  
Base Sgt. Maj. Office Bld. 5204  
H&S Battalion  
MCB Camp Smedley D. Butler  
FPO Seattle, Washington  
98773

Dear Mrs. Villegas,

I suppose I can be classified as a born procrastinator with no hope for a future change. If I had mailed all the letters that I have started in the past couple of weeks you would have recieved an average of four letters a day. It seems that every time I get in the middle of a letter, I hear the same thing, "SERGEANT PLUNKETT, I NEED YOU FOR A LITTLE WHILE"! And by the time I get back to the letter, I just wad it up and throw it away and start again, and the process continues to repeat itself!

Well, I only have around forty days, give or take five days, left overseas! We call it getting short, and I am so short till the edge of a quarter looks like a four lane highway.

I would like to say thank you, in person, for taking your time to write all those letters, and send the packages. It means a lot to aomeone when there are people who take time and money to do things like that, so I have scheduled home through Chicago. I will leave Chicago, And come to Carpentersville . I Regret that I can only stay for a few minutes, but long enough to say hello, and thank you. My orders are being changed, but I dont know for sure where to as yet.

I really can't say much more, so I will close.

As ever,  
David