

20 Aug 68

Hi Gary,

How is everything in Holland?

I'm sorry I haven't written sooner but you know me, always late.

I don't know if you would be interested in how I live over here or not but I can sum it up in one word, miserable.

At night I sleep in a poncho tent on a flat air mattress I have had a new one on re-supply for 2 weeks but they just don't care much for the comforts of the infantry.

We are suppose to get beer & soda (2 cans of each) every day. We have gotten it 4 times in 3 weeks. When I get home, (8 months) I will drink every beer I see, I swear to that. Of course for me that is not unusual

but at least now I have an excuse.

As far as the war over here goes, everything is always changing. We never do the same thing or stay in the same place very long.

At the present time we are on a fire base around a large town named "Ban Me Thout". The gooks are suppose to attack this town, ~~in~~ and that is why we are here, to stop them. Out of every 6 nights my ~~own~~ platoon goes out for 2 nights. We split up into 4 man teams and go out to a prearranged spot and sit there waiting and watching for gooks. The next day we pick up and move to another spot. Then we sit there that night. The reason we are out there is to watch for enemy movement and if possible call in mortar or artillery fire on them if we see them.

Since I have been in country I have not been in a regular fire fight yet but I have been fired at and about a week ago I called in mortar fire on about 300 gooks. That was the ~~last~~ 2nd night

of a 2 night operation. The next day after we got back to the fire base some choppers got fired on so our whole company moved out on patrol in that area. When we got there we captured a wounded NVA. He told our interpreter that he was wounded the night before by mortar fire in the area I called it in. That is how I know how many gooks were there when I called it in, he told us he was with an element of about 300 men. From what he said alot of them got it when those mortar rounds started coming in. When we are out there we don't get much sleep because we are scared stiff. When you have only got 4 men about all you can do is run if you get in trouble because you are outnumbered so bad. I hope they don't keep this type of operation going much longer because I don't like it one bit.

When I first got here I was a squad leader. About 2 months ago my old

platoon sergeant went to the rear and I took over the platoon. I have been platoon sergeant ever since and it looks like I am going ~~to~~ to be from now on. I like it a lot better than squad leader.

About the only good I can see about this place is that every day that goes by I get a day closer to home. As far as the experience goes I have had my fill.

Well now that you know my troubles I expect a line or two from you soon also.

Have you seen or heard anything from Kenny Nyland or Cartwright?

See you in 69

RED

May 68 - May 69 - Lost Year