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28 July 1966

Dear People,

Would be delighted to tell
you all about my interesting
experience in the service of my
Country but feel I cannot without
some encouragement from you.

A letter would be all the encouragement
I need. Suggest you draw straws
to see who gets the honor of writing.

One thing, though. That vicious
rumor that I'm thinking of
making the Air Force a ~~career~~ ~~of~~
career is definitely wrong.

(Sorry about the poor writing - am
writing this in the midst of 5 hungry

Kids eating lunch.) Don't throw
away my name tag yet. The
hours are great but the pay +
mucky mouse make the life drag a
little. Have pulled call ONE night
since I've been here (since May 10, 1966).
Was really tired and out of shape for
3 days afterwards. Luckily had plenty of
time to rest up.

Sorry I can't give you any
more news. Thanks for all your
notes, Ruth. - may be forced to
write you separately.

As always, your hero
on the front lines.
Dan Conlon

Blooming for John
Clinic
Dear People,

9 August 66

TEXAS

I am amazed and overwhelmed
by all your letters. Just finished
reading them and have goose pimples.
Many thanks. It is 11⁰⁰AM
now and I'm through for the
morning. Am scheduled back at
1⁰⁰PM to see 3 or 4 more patients.
Am sitting at the dining room
table at home. Am seeing so much
of my kids I can remember their
names without much trouble at all.
I'm even on time for work and
have to wait for the patients to
register. How about that for a
change, ^{John} I'll do my very best to
keep from making that a habit, tho.

(2)
Well a whole day has gone
by here in Texas and no body has
been shot. At least no one has
taken a shot at me yet. Will have
to check the news to see if my
first statement is true. This is
really the wild & woolley West.
It takes a certain amount of
courage to go out on the freeways
here. They use their cars like they
use their guns ~~there~~.

Jeri, would dance at your
next wedding if you would
continue to save stamps for me.
No bills in the Air Force, so
no envelopes to take stamps off.
By the same token, no really
seriously ill patients except a
few because they come in at

the least sign of trouble — because
it's FREE, man, it's free.

That includes waking up the MOD
at 4³⁰ pm to check out asymptomatic
mumps — "just in case."

Sounds like Medicare is working
full-time now. Would be interested
in hearing how it works. Has it
changed hospital care, paper work,
collections, load of patients, etc?
Can you project this thing 10 yrs
from now — will it be total
coverage cradle to grave? New
York State has a "Medicaid"
system that sounds cradle to
grave. What's changed for the
GP in this system? Many
questions.

Sorry to tell you, but I'm the

only I.P. ⁽⁴⁾ here except for those
taken out of internship at 1 or 2
years of residency. The general
consensus here and Montg. Alabama
is that the I.P. is dead. Most
schools east of the Mississippi
or at least east of Chicago,
have at most 1 or 2 out of
each class who haven't already
decided on a specialty. Many
of the men here with their
boards are getting a Masters
also to hang something else on
their wall in preparation for
Medicare i.e. Socialized medicine.
Most don't even take rotating
internships any more. The
only I.P.'s produced are in
the mid west & California,
Oregon, etc. - and they are

fewer & fewer every year.

As I say — I am the only GP here who has had any practise or who intends to do general practise in the future. In fact, I'm something of a novelty around here. This is all by the way of saying that I don't think we'll find another GP down here unless the new crop of doctors are different.

A few comments on the types of people here. Most New Yorkers cannot find the State of Minnesota on the map. Tell that no city below one million is worth talking about. Cannot understand why the whole country doesn't have an irresistible

urge to move to New York.

So far they seem very strange, near sighted provincial people in spite of their big city airs.

The Southern people are very charming and warm - at ~~the~~ least the 20-30 I have gotten to know a little. They give an

amazingly different picture of the Negro problem than Time, Life and NBC-CBS give.

Many of the small towns in Mississippi - Alabama are armed camps waiting for something to happen. A very sad story

but not all as one sided as it seems in Mpls. The white are not always the "bad guys"

Air Conditioning is a way of life

my chest next to the
good conduct medal and
medical service school campaign
ribbon. Sure is a tough
war! Now if I can just
remember to shine my shoes
I'll be a complete soldier.

Thanks for all the news
from the Clinic. Hope your
picnic is a success. I can
beat Woodley with one hand
tied behind me — (I say bravely
from this distance.) Ping pong
is my strong point on a par
with my hand ball. Would
like to be in that tournament.
May take leave and arrive for
the championship match.

here - even many of the
Shanties in colored town have
it. Without it life is intolerable
here. 95+ since June - 23 or
24 days over 100. Most cars
are air conditioned also. Can see
why you took it as a matter of
course to have it in your car, Jim.

Enrolled Colleen in 1st grade
at the Catholic school. Here the
parochial schools are better than
the public schools. It certainly
is nice to have one old enough to
go to school. Only 3 in diapers
at nite now. No announcements
to make. May have to pass up
that medal from the Pope
for seven kids under 7 yrs old.
I could have hung that on

Sorry to hear you and Barb are leaving, Kathy. When I get back old Happy Harry will probably be Vice president of Sears and you'll live on Knobs Hill somewhere. Have someone check his B.P. now & then. -good luck to both of you.

I wasn't aware that I had a smiling face - ^{and} you sure I wasn't leering?

Maybe I made a mistake joining the Air Force to see the world; maybe I should have stayed at the Clinic and gone on a European trip like every one else. When do you guys get the loot to do it? We went 130 miles down the road to

Lake Texoma⁽¹⁰⁾ for the weekend,
and will be broke for a month
from that.

Stick with it, Ruth. They
need you there in spite of the
fact they bark at you. Nobody
has control of that board like
you do. Was in Dnps on the
way through to Brookings for
Dr. Tom Hart's wedding. Was
dying to call you but got
too fouled up trying to get
connections for the flight
out. Wanted to hear "Bloomington-
Lake Clinic, may I help you?" in
your sexy voice.

Kay is over there laughing
at your description of your
contacts, Jeri. I bet you
think I'm beautiful, having

never seem to get glasses on.

Thanks for your long newsy letter, Dolores. Many interesting insights into the clinic workings. Sounds like Medicare is going to make all kind of trouble. It'll be nice not having to collect so many samples for the poor people, tho. We won't have to send my brown folders to that mean ol' Dolores so much. It's not all bad.

Hello to Dick, Bob, Loren and Dave. Extra still piling in? Hope to have a solution worked out for that in all my spare time. Am learning all kinds of goodies about kids, Ed. They won't let me use Achrocidin for URI's or Decadron for

Croup so half of my
armamentarium is gone. People
here are brain washed to wait
till the next day for the culture
result. Most never do get
an antibiotic. I amaze my-
self at all the "pure" medicine
I'm practising. Cured 3 full
blown pneumonias w/ any antibiotic
but just a Croup Tent, sucking out
the nose & expectorants.

This is getting rather long.
Thanks for the letters, again.

Love,

Dan Conlon

①

29 Sept 66

Wichita Falls,

Texas

Dear People,

~~1040 hrs~~
2240 hrs

Here I sit with my beer
and cigar finally writing after
a long dry spell. If I want
letters, I'd best write a few, I guess.
Am overwhelmed by your kind
thoughts and interesting letters.
Will try to answer individually
later.

Many things have happened since
my last effort. Have gone from
a Class A pediatrician to an
orthopedic surgeon (one day) to
an OB-GYN specialist. Have
been this for the last 3 wks and

am having a ball. As Jay knows, this is my first love.

was going to count the deliveries before I wrote. Have had about 20-25 ^(possibly subtract a few for being Irish) since starting. Many adventures in the wee hours. Don't want to get too boring but would like to tell some of the differences here. Four OB-GYN Specialists from all parts of the country. One uses caudal anesthesia almost exclusively. Another uses Scopolamine as drug of choice + saddle block. Another uses Saddle block as choice. I've introduced para cervical blocks and am making a convert now & then. Would like to say that

Continuous paracervical described
but no one knows how here. Have
tried Caudals and like them
very much. Would like your comments
about them. A beautiful anesthetic
during labor & delivery, easy to do
and no postpartum problems. By
the way — they use an I.V. on
every admission and drip pitocin
in postpartum. Works like a
charm.

Have tubed two babies with
apgar's of 3 or less and both are
doing fine — except they'll probably
be Democrats when they grow up.

Another thing, then I'll get off
this kick — only midlines done
here. Haven't seen a medial-lateral

episcotomy in all the time I've been here. Also works well in spite of 4th degree fears.

Oh, another thing. The honeymoon is over with the call schedule. OB takes separate call - every 5th nite - and up every nite that I've taken it. With the security of that pay check - most don't want the pill and the baby boom is really on here. The women are standing in the aisle during OB clinic.

Incidentally, you may be interested to know I'm prescribing that horrible pill now. Some 3 or 4 priests down here have

③
Convinced me of the errors of
my way. My face was a little
red the first few times I explained
them, though. You can't brain
wash a kid's mind for 30 yrs
and expect him to change overnight.

Yes, am smoking cigars now.
It started out very innocently
with a large cigar when one of
the nurses made 1st lieutenant (Sp?)
Then the HB people I'd delivered
offered a few. I'm up to 10 cigars
a day now and inhaling. Add that
to my beer consumption and may be
you won't want me back. They
really stink but I love 'em.

There are only 5 GP's here
with a complement of 60 + physicians
3 of these are in Seteria (the
dispensary) and only 2 (myself
and one other) are allowed to
practise medicine. Add to that
the constant menace of going
to South Viet Nam and things
get shaky at times here. One
GP (we had 6) has already been
sent and one other has been
tapped to go (he got out of it
by pleading something - maybe
insanity). There's only myself
and one other GP eligible to
go (the others have more than a
year in the service) so ~~to~~ am

waiting for the ⁽⁴⁾call to ~~come~~ go.

I may be an authority on
dengue fever and malaria yet.

They're very nice to you once you
get the magic call. Send you
to school and teach you all about
jumping from helicopters, jungle
survival, tropical medicine and
like that. I understand the
hours are rough but think of it
— ~~you~~ ^I could be a hero!

Have gotten through the Old
Testament to the 3rd book of
Kings but got bogged down
when I picked up Churchill's
WWII book. Solomon will
be reigning a long time, I'm

afraid, til I get back to
it. Many problems with
religion but you've heard all
that before. But now I've
got a few of the clergy on
my side. I wonder if we
should march on Rome....

Thanks very much for your
very informative and interesting
letter, Don. Did you do any
more about that Kansas M.D.
(Missouri)

Our kids have ~~a~~ taken that
Tommy gun you gave Jimmy for
his 10 birthday ~~but~~ the ball
is intact (~~don't~~ ^{know} ~~what happened to~~
~~the blue boxing gloves~~). You will
be happy to know that the

M. letter sweater ⁽⁵⁾ is in an honored place in our closet. Someday if he lives through all the punishment he takes around here he may be a ping pong champion too.

Who won the tournament?

Your letters are fun to read, Delores. You have a wonderful way with words. When I'm low I like to hear there's a place still at the clinic for me. Sounds like Medicare hasn't caused the revolution every one thought it would, at least at our house. How many extra hands does it take to do the book & paper work?

Dick, congratulation on your
good news postop. You sound
happy and content. Please don't
let the fat ladies get too fat —
have forgotten my line and will
have to start all over again. Also
haven't seen a GD bleeder or
a pulmonary edema or coronary
or any geriatric problem since
I've been here. A fellow (retired
master ~~sergeant~~ ~~sergeant~~ sergeant
(I'm sorry — never did learn how to
spell these words. Still want to
put Cornet for Colonel) — came
in with a stroke and we just
stood around wringing our hands.
— trouble enough diagnosing it
let alone treating it. You lose

a little seeing ⁶ only children
and women & pecking rumors.

Speaking of that — yes I
plan on coming back. Don't
know where the rumors came from.
True I'm surrounded by specialists
and they're doing their best to
brain wash me. Funny how they
always have to be reassured I
will ask when I'm in doubt.
They must have been told some
horrible stories ~~and~~ about GP's
when they were in school. I
enjoy getting dogmatic answers
from one from New York, then getting
another dogmatic answer from

Someone from Texas diametrically
opposite from the previous answer.
I keep my humor to myself
naturally.

However, I'm still not sure
where the SP fits in in
the new Medicare picture.
Would like a comment or two
from the SP element.

Does your building a house
mean your plans have changed,
Dave?

Sorry to hear about the people
who have left. Especially Kathy
— we had been working together —
Congratulations to Darlene —

is it really isn't as ^①bad as
I painted it, is it? Thanks
for your letters many times over.

Enjoyed your comments, Jeri and
your notes from time to time, Ruth.

As you may or may not know,
there's a lot of mucky mouse in
this service deal. So much so
that every now and then, it
gets you down (me, that is.) Maybe
that's why happy hour is so
popular. Yes, I've succumbed
but only occasionally. At least
one or two little notes on my
desk every morning about seat
belts in my car, or my bike

light left on after 9⁰⁰ clock AM,
or trimming my lawn or
some odd thing — the latest
drive is LBJ's Bond-a-month
drive. Most buy them and
then cash them in 2 mos later.

So far I've resisted but that
may mean another pile of notes
on my desk, or a court martial,
or something pretty horrible.

The crowning blow was when
they put D.C. COLON on my
house to ~~to~~ identify me.
Just out of spite I'm going
to leave it there. Anyway,

I enjoy your letters and comments
— sometimes they come just when

P.S

No plans to come to N.Y.

til next June. Uncle Sam,

has severely limited my bimonthly
supply of money. Suggest that

lawyer go on without me.

Wouldn't enjoy spending my
vacation in a court room.

D Conlon

⑧
• They're needed most.

Thanks many times over for
your wonderful letters, Grace.
Enjoy them very much and will
answer separately as soon as
I can.

Enough of this. You may be
interested to know this letter
has consumed 2 hrs, 2 cigars
and one quart of "Lone Star"
beer. — the only Minnesota beer
here is HAMM M M S and I
can't stand that stuff. Incidentally,
have quite a headache also.
Love from all of us

Dan Coulon and
P.S. — our family.

①

21 Nov 66

Wichita Falls, Tx

Dear People,

Many thanks for your letters especially from Lauren, Delores, Grace and Kathy. Very welcome and needed down here in spite of the fact I'm not answering them very well.

Hope your Christmas party is a huge success like last years. We'll miss this one and next years but hope to make all the rest.

A little hard to believe Thanksgiving is in just a few days. 80° F today. And a "cold snap" down to 74° over the weekend. Can always tell when the really cold air is coming - can get WCCO on the radio then. Didn't like Hobbs House when in Mpls but it's welcome here.

Am still in OB - 36 deliveries to date counting the two today. There are now

six OB men counting myself. I
may become expendable soon the way
things are going. Our Commander has
plans to have the GMO's (GP's) run the
dispensary and the ER on a shift basis.
They are tapping the GP's regularly here
for Viet Nam of 4 mos or so. So far
have convinced them they would be
wasting a wealth of talent by sending me
to the leper colony (dispensary) but any
day the blow could come. Sure love
this Air Force life - shades of Medicare.

Very interesting political discussions
re board qualifications, etc for GP's
by AMA & AAGP. Maybe we'll have
to go back to school and take social
science, economics, etc and get our
degree in social work to qualify for
family practice - Still have not heard
any comments from Messrs Howland, Wilson
and Swanson about this. I'm isolated
from GP's as you know so am working

"in a relative void." (2) However, the more I see of the specialists' life, the less I like it. Never really get to know these people, their real problems, family structure etc. Makes it sort of tough to decide why they're "tired" or "nervous" or have "low blood" or "headaches," etc. Refuse to believe the GP is dead - can find lots of reasons why he is needed. Don't think ~~that~~ there is much rationalization here, either. So much for that.

OB is fun - have to say that. But so was Peds and Ortho. Have been able to read a few textbooks down here so will be loaded for bear when I get back. Sorry to hear you guys have stopped taking OB cases. Sort of enjoyed that part in spite of the fact it destroyed the working schedule now & then. By the way - how is Fran Costello doing? You'll probably never take a referral

from me again after that one.

Fattening up my fat people? Must
tape record that lecture again - including
the arguments with Arne. Haven't learned
any thing really new about obesity since
I got here - although I'm getting old I
guess.

Am into Vol V of Churchill's WWII
and we're finally starting to win some
battles. By the way, Lauren, have
heard of Fletcher's Situation Ethics
book and it's on my list to read if
I can find it. Very interesting philosophy
and a valid one also. As you once
mentioned and I've quoted many times
out of context - the older one gets the
more gray there is in all those neat
black & white situations of childhood.
How's that for plagiarism?

Would like to send an article I
think most of you have read from

Medical Economics⁽³⁾ Oct 66. Have been
able to coolly view the situation and feel
that sooner or later the subject of incentive
will come up again. This article seems to
me to point up a solution to the problem.

I know I have lots of nerve from this
far away suggesting any thing - but that's
one benefit from being so far away - I
can suggest and don't have to duck.

Don't know how things are going at all
there so if this just opens old wounds,
discard the article, please. By the way,
Don - page 84 is not the 1st page - I
reserve the right to give the lecture on
child beating in person when I get back.
Haven't beaten any children here yet - never
get to know them that well.

Glad to hear you branched out to
pache Plaza, Jim. How's it going?
Haven't had any good joke sources except
re since I last talked to you. Have
old my meager supply so many times

I'm getting bored with them and many I've forgotten. Also had to introduce Polish sausage and sauer-Kraut into our home menu to get any. No codfish on toast here either. You're going to have to break me in all over again when I get back, Lauren.

Plans are now that we'll start taking the Medicare overflow from the city hospitals. This ought to get us into the geriatric practise again. Will be a good thing for all of us - altho I'm sure we'll be working harder. Will have to crank out my pulmonary edema orders again.

I want to announce that I shot a 54 for 9 holes the other day. Another ten years and I'll be a real threat on the golf course. How's the ping pong champ - or I should say - who's the ping pong champ? Enjoy your glory till

I get back. I'm also very good
at fiddly winks.

Believe it or not, I miss the
rat race of the BLC. — also the income.

Almost forgot. Kay (that's my wife)
had her appendix out 10 days ago. Took
myself and two others to force her to
stay in the hospital to have it done
— she wanted to go home and fix supper
and put the kids to bed first. The next
morning she ate breakfast, then lunch
— regular diet — before anyone realized
she shouldn't have it. By then it was
obvious she could handle it. On the
3rd day postop she went home and
on the 5th day she was back in the
kitchen doing dishes, clothes, the beds,
laapers — the whole bit. Good thing
— yours truly was having a hilarious
time taking care of the house & the
kids. Smart kids — they told me

where their clothes were, where the
bread for sandwiches was, the cereal,
their socks, the diapers, etc. Learned
a little about why housewives invariably
say they're "tired." Well I was beat!
was glad to get back to work today
where I could tell a nurse or aid
to get things for me.

I've got a real tiger in this boy
so far. He spits in my eye when
I spank him. Eats 4x what the
girls eat already. Also digs teeth
marks into the new piano when he
runs out of other things to chew.
When he starts to walk I'm going to
teach him a few things about the
gentle art of protecting himself from his
sisters - especially our 20 mo Megan.

Grace, you're a honey. Thanks for
your many letters and notes. We
really enjoy them.

As you mentioned ⁽⁵⁾ before I left, Don -
many very warm and interesting people
here. Some good friends already and
we're meeting new people all the time.
Am especially impressed with the grace
and genuine warmth of the people
from the South. Didn't realize we were
so brusque in the Midwest till I
became acquainted with some of these
people. A real joy to be with. None
of the phoniness or rigidity we're led
to believe exists have I found so far.
Aside from their one prejudice (which
they admit to freely and it's not entirely
without justification) they tend to be
the most open minded people I've met.
I hope I don't offend any one when I
say that in general I'm negatively
impressed with the general cynicism
and smugness and provincialism of the
people from the East. A few exceptions

but very few - and they're like
oases in a desert. It's ignorance
of what's going on on the other side
of the Hudson mostly - but being
in Texas hasn't changed them at all.
Enough said. Of course - the people
from Mpls (we're the only ones) are
the most cultured, friendly, human
and all around nice people here.

Still haven't mastered this saluting
jazz and my shoes usually need a
shine. Once a slob always a slob I
guess. Yes the cigars are still
burning and I'm inhaling. Will have
this whipped soon mostly because the
bank account can't stand it. There
is no extra check or incentive plan
here - and you can sure tell it by
the attitudes of the men who've been
here more than a year.

⑥
Congratulations to Kathy. Happy Harry
will never be the same again. How's
his BP now? Thanks for the stamps,
Jeri. Hello to everyone. Keep with it
Ruth. - miss your sexy voice in the
morning (that ought to cause a raised
eyebrow or two!) Congratulations on
your grandchild Delores & your 5# wt
loss. Glowing reports about your work,
Dan. Bet most of those brown envelopes
are mine. Has Byron Larson contributed
anything yet?

And how ~~is~~ is Lynda Frye doing?
She should have had her baby by now.
Hope everything went all right.

Will, I miss our chats every now
and then. Could use your observations
and advice at times.

Hello to every one.

Love, Dan, Kay, Colleen 6, Kalla 4½,
Erin 3, Megan 1½ and the football player
(Jimmy Simon)

MOON OVER DIAMOND HEAD . . . Waikiki Beach in the moonlight . . .
just a sample of romantic Hawaii.



NU·NUI^{*} natural color CARD

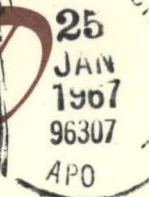
Say "New New-y" — It's Hawaiian for "Very Big"

Number 78

Return Address:

Capt Daniel C. Coulton
633 Cmt Spt Sp (PACAF)
APO San Francisco 96307

8c
AIR MAIL
5c
FIRST
CLASS



23 Jan 67
5 AM

Hi People

Finally got a flight out of San Francisco. Lauren will be happy to know I was consistent — 5 minutes late for my flight — got bumped and had to wait standby for 36 hrs. Slept on the floor for penance. Maybe someday I'll be on time. Enjoyed practicing medicine again — all those people will be coming back when they find out the prescriptions I wrote don't work. Good thing I didn't take call. Keep up the good work. Did Dick Adams ever call? How about this

* NU·NUI TRADEMARK REGISTERED 1947, HAWAII, U.S.A.

The Bloomington - Lake Clinic Ltd.
3017 Bloomington Ave So.
Minneapolis, Minn 55407

free trip to Hawaii all expenses paid!
Only got to see the Komond actually.
Saw Diamond Head by moonlight, tho. Looks better than the picture. Also Pearl Harbor all lit up around the sunken battle ships.
Okinawa next stop. Love, Dan Coulton

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(28)

Pleiku VN
24 Feb 67
4⁴⁵ PM Friday
USAF Dispensary

Hi Folks,

Sorry to be so long in answering your letters. Am hoping you've been reading some of the letters I've sent to Kay. As you know spend a lot of time writing her and am pretty tired and drained when I finish her letter. Am ~~trying~~ trying to record my thoughts each day in her letters - will be interesting later on I'm sure.

Have now started my second month in this strange land. Feel like I've been here much longer than I have. Every now and then forget where I am until leave the base and see strange looking faces all around

me - little people going about
their business. Then I realize we're
only intruders in a land settled
many thousands of years ago - with
their own customs, laws, taboos,
language, etc. Makes me wonder
sometimes what the hell we're doing
here any way. Of course I know why
we're here. There are huge battles
going on just 20 miles west of us
(killed in action)
- the 4th Division took 100 KIA and
200-300 wounded last week, the II Corps
has been taking it on the chin and
my montagnards are also getting a
beating out at Plei Djieng (about
15 miles from here). Saw a 2 cell
(each cell is 3 52's) B52 raid on the
radar TV 3 days ago - they dropped
282 tons of bombs 20 miles west of

here. An ^{(20) (2) 5476}awesome sight. Am
involved as you know in these
Montagnards. Am invited along with
Jack Rudy and 3 others to a
water buffalo sacrifice - very sacred -
in honor of King's grand parents next
Tuesday. Should be very interesting.
Much bizarre sickness here by U.S
standards - have had to dig deep
into the textbooks around here to
find the diagnosis & treatment of
many of them.

You may be interested to know
have started an AA group here with
the help of Jim Martin - the only AA
man on the base - he's been dry
7 years. Got the first candidate
yesterday and today another walked
in wanting help. Sounds promising
and also a great need for some.

Just finished writing Mike &
Mary Ann.

Could use anything you
can collect in terms of money,
clothes, soap - anything. Would
suggest, if you're interested, to
label the project some fancy name
like "Operation Blue to help Pleiku"
for instance. Let you be the judge.
Can use anything you send one way
or the other. Just got through trading
27 shirts and 27 ties (for the medic
Montagnard graduating class at the
C camp of green berets) for 20 bags of
rice, 18 bags of corn & 10 bags of
corn flour to feed a starving
village on the other side of Pleiku.

Am learning all kinds of tricks
here I'll never ^{think} of using in the

states.

(28) (3)

24 Feb

Have \$1,500.00 worth of Supp hose
got as a contribution through
Catholic Charities - a great mystery
what to do with this. Have given
200 of them to the Missionaries
who take care of leprosy here - they can
use them to control the edema
these people get.

I'm running off at the
mouth again. Am taking good
care of my self except I'm smoking
too much. Sleep like a log with
a mosquito net over me - take my
malaria pills every week.

Thanks for your letters.

Love,

P.S Can use your ^{Dan} prayers.

over →

P.S Thanks very much for all
you help with the kids and Kay.
She sounds like ~~of~~ she's holding up
very well. She's a wonderful gal
—am proud as hell of the job she's
doing. She really appreciates the
lift you've given her from time
to time with the kids.

Thanks again

Love,

Don

(106)

2³⁰ Sat
PM 8 July 67
MAEV, R.V.N
Pleiku

Dear Mary Whitlock

I must apologize immediately for not writing sooner - as you see by the time above, this is the usual time I get a chance to sit down and write.

Your soap is put to immediate use usually the day I receive it. I can say without reservation that it has undoubtedly saved lives - besides making many Montagnards very sore-free and happy. The lack of soap here causes huge sores that fester so badly sometimes the infection ~~is~~ overwhelms the child and literally kills him.

Have finally found a "cause" - something we all look for but rarely have the chance to get involved in. And having a very challenging, exciting year; but will be glad to return to the U.S.A when this year is up.

Thank you for your contribution - appreciate all you have done - hope you can see your way through to send more.

We now have a trained oi hia drow

(doctor) in each of 6 villages - about 4,000 Montagnards involved - who do most of the sick call - consult me only when they are over their heads.

We also have a light industry established and a means of a "money crop" for the villages - they make & sell cross bows - lethal weapons - for me to buy and sell to the troops. We're gaining momentum. Eventually should be able to sell 100-200 a week in all parts of Vietnam. Eventually I envision a crossbow, sword, knife, basket, blanket, loincloth, etc industry that will be a real source of wealth to these people. With the money they may be able to buy herds of water buffalo, cows, pigs, and other domestic animals and become same-same big time farmers & ranchers. There is also a lumber industry potential here - rose wood, 4 or 10 kinds of beautiful mahogany that could be developed.

Big plans, but we have the momentum now. One year ago they didn't know

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(2)

8 July

any thing at all about buying & selling - had a hand-to-mouth existence. And very happy with the progress so far.

Have learned to eat & drink their food and rice wine - actually enjoy it now. Got very sick for the first 2 mo but now am okay. Get very drunk on this stuff - have to drink 3 or 4 quarts - sometimes gallons - of rice wine at a sitting. Have learned to vomit and come right back and drink some more.

These are very wonderful, honest, friendly people - very brave and personally loyal to a man once they claim him as a friend and member of a village. Have grown to love and respect them very much.

Will talk more when I get back. And afraid no one will be able to shut me up.

Thanks again for your help,

Love, Dan C. Coulson

⑤

about it later.

So long for now, ol' buddy

~~oi~~ ya drao Conlon

1:30
PM
MAGV, Pleiku
Republic Vietnam
8 Nov 67

125 8 Nov

Dear People,

Many apologies for not writing sooner. From the above you can see that my spare time is very sparse.

Thank you all very much for the very thoughtful and welcome gift you presented through Will to Kay. Quite frankly would have been on very short rations without it for the rest of my tour. We had a very enjoyable, but short, time in Hawaii. Could have met in Alaska in the dead of winter for all the sun we got. But Hawaii was very nice and was as suitable a setting as any. After this mess is over, will go back some day and have a honey moon right.

Have been thinking about home and the BLC more and more as my time gets short. Hope to start practicing again in or about 1 Feb 1968 if I settle down by then. Don't want to make any firm commitments until I know

for sure.

Have had a very different year than I thought I would have. Will not have any slides to show and I'm afraid my talking will sound very pessimistic and boring to you. Have written great volumes to Kay almost every day, but found out in Hawaii that my experiences will remain pretty much my own no matter what I say.

We now have 6 Montagnard medics practicing fair medicine ^{even} if a little too energetic with the penicillin, vitamins, etc.

Have ~~to~~ gone from hating the Vietnamese and loving the Montagnard, to knowing individuals of both kinds and preferring the Montagnards to becoming disenchanted of both and treating them like children. Have, in spite of myself, reached quite a stature among my villages by being there constantly, speaking their language, constantly advising & pushing them, etc. Have a total of 10 ~~&~~ sons and innumerable

(2)

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8 Nov

brothers by "blood brother" sacrifices of water buffalo, pigs, chicken, dogs & horses. Have learned to speak a broken Jarai - Rhade - French - English - and Vietnamese language of my own making so can get along quite well without an interpreter most times. Have 4-5 very good friends who have put their life on the line at least once each and, in Roblan Lich's case, many times for me. Have many adventures that I will cherish but that don't make very good print. Have seen one very good friend murdered by the V.C sixteen days before he was due to return to the states. Another brilliant man, John Watson, run over by a tank who lived and will probably go to medical school some day.

Have grown up a little but I'm not real sure I like the new "me". My wife assures me I haven't changed that much and I'm glad of it.

One thing is for sure. My medical knowledge has certainly suffered unless it be in the field of V-D, battle

fatigue, fungus infections, alcoholism, leprosy, malaria, worms, etc. Did I mention before that 13-16% of the Jarai have leprosy? In some villages I'm told that as much as 30% have leprosy.

This would be a beautiful, beautiful country and the work very rewarding for a missionary like Chapman or Stolle or the Swansons if there were we was here. Unfortunately my job is to wage war here — that's what the US government is paying me for. Medicine is just an excuse to go into the villages. Find myself spending more & more time with the Special Forces. We are setting up an intelligence network in my villages. In the word of my good friend Mao Tse-tung — we are making the water hospitable for the V.C fish and hospitable for the American fish. Thus the cross bow industry, the loom industry, the medicines, and all the rest. Eventually we will use these villages to set up ambushes for the

765 8 pm

"Viet-munk" (as the Montagnards call them). If the N. North Viet names (there are no "V.C." in the high lands here) cannot procure supplies or get rest or sanctuary from the Montagnard villages, then they will be exposed and eventually will die. Our job is to win the villages over to our side by one means or the other. We chose to do this by living with them - out guerrillaring the North Vietnamese if you will - beat them at their own game. So far we can claim about 10,000 of the Montagnards around here. And, before I leave, there will be more villages that will succumb. The crossbow industry is one incentive. The fact that we have taken the trouble to learn their language and eat & drink their native food is another. I do every thing (and there are about 15-20 others who do likewise) but marry their women to convince them that we are for them. The "V.C." are not willing to do this and because of this are losing out here. And convinced this is how our particular

part of the war in the highlands will be won.

Find I have become quite wordy again. And sorry. Meant only to send a thank you note for what you collectively and individually have done for me and Kay and the kids through this year. It has been a hard and challenging one for me but twice as hard for Kay and she has stood up well for all her troubles. I gather she has moved into the house again that #4 daughter tried to burn down.

Thank you again very much. If I can clean up my language, stop smoking 2-3 packs of cigarettes a day, cut down on the rice wine and booze, and quit squatting and sit in a chair naturally — should be ready for work come Feb.

Love to all of you,
P.S. prayers please. Dan Conlon

17 Nov 67
1⁰⁰
1^{PM}
USAF Dispensary
Pleiku, RVN

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17 Nov

Hi Folks,

Am sitting here trying to collect my thoughts. The sick call has died down, & almost everyone has decided to go to bed finally, have some peace & quiet for a change.

Only 50-60 some odd days to go in this strange ugly-beautiful country. Am anxious to come home - try not to think about it too much. Still much to do before coming home - probably will not get them all done before then.

Received your very thoughtful and much appreciated sausages, sunflower seed and candy. Hope you don't mind but have shared this stuff with my comrades, the Air Evac people, my friend Lich Rahlman and the bunch of people I live with.

Could run for mayor of Pleiku and win with that fox bribe material

Will sit down with you when I get back and try to explain what we have been doing here in detail. Am beginning to get philosophical and nostalgic already about this place. It has been a very good year

for me in many ^{ways} years. Feel I have contributed my share to what we're trying to do here. Have found many friends - more than my share - among the air force men, the Special Forces and the Montagnards. The Yards have already started their series of "sacrifices" that will go on now until I leave. These are remarkable ceremonies that I'll describe in detail later. They resemble the blood brother rituals of the American Indians - all the gods of the earth, sky, ~~water~~^{wind}, water, house, fire, etc are called upon to bless, protect and make strong the one prayed for. Very impressive, solemn occasions - capped off by presentation of a bracelet and gallons of very strong rice wine.

Three of my montagnard medics - Jui, Chell & Inlem rode down 30 miles into VC country to give 345 plague shots.

(Now it's 2³⁰ pm - have just had my favorite cook bring over some hot peach turnovers he made for us nite people in the dispensary - good bull session. Also had a drunk come in who fell down and hit his head)

About the three medics. Some of the fruit of our work here. Inlem was a witch doctor - incantations, mumbo-jumbo, etc

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17 Nov

10 mos ago - now he's got 3 mos of intensive training at Special Forces, and an "internship" out in our villages - and he arrives by helicopter to give plague shots to Plei Betel dressed in a uniform with a stethoscope hanging out of his pocket. And he knows what he's doing with the plague vaccine. Quite a transition - and are they proud of themselves!

Still don't have any looms up here but it looks promising as hell. - probably won't get them until after I leave here. The cross bow industry expands every day - spent over \$1,000.00 out there last week. Have advanced from 5 bow makers to over 100 now in 5 separate villages. They, swords, baskets and other things are just beginning to take shape - takes a long time for them to catch on to an idea & ~~then~~ make it their own. They still would much prefer their hand-to-mouth existence and drink "numpai" (rice wine) instead of work full time at an industry. We're just barely into the "cottage industry" era.

out there. — Something our people went through in the early 500-600 AD in Europe. Meanwhile we're stealing these people from "Charles" (the V.C.).

Sorry for the disjointed letter. Must also apologize for no card on your anniversary. Said a prayer for you on the 11th though. Must be hard for you to imagine but am on the go pretty much all the time. Leave the dispensary around noon and head for the village — get back usually around 8-9 PM, eat supper and get involved in much politics. Have quite a few people involved in "Civic Action" here — impossible to put a letter or note together until 1-2 PM. Am usually so full of rice wine or beer or both couldn't write anything worth while anyway.

Usually have to wait for a call note at the dispensary to get anything decent down in print. Lately this has been busy also — (it's 3⁰⁰ PM now) — so that hasn't even worked out. Enough of the excuses. Am sorry.

The R&R was good, but short. Was good to hear your voices — thanks for accepting the charges — must have come to

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17 Nov

a small fortune. Was amazed at how easy & how clear the phone call was.

Kay says people are amazed at how ~~primitive~~ primitive the Yards look in these pictures I've sent home. And beginning to realize how different things are here from Stateside. Hard to describe. Guess I'll have to take some pictures so my word pictures will make sense. Don't think I will ever forget what it's like here — but have resigned myself to never being able to convey my memories to other people.

My good friend Jack Rudy has gotten bored with life as Assistant District Attorney in Wash. D.C. and is coming back to Pleiku-Kontum in some CIA role. Another good friend — John Watson — is starting to walk again after 2 mos since his tank accident. — He also wants to come back. A retired Special Forces man has just come back as a USAID man. Don't think this will happen to me — ~~but you~~ but have to

admit there's a challenge here like few other places.

Big battle north of here by 20 miles. Largest since our involvement in Viet Nam. You'll soon be hearing about Dak To if you haven't already. At least 6 N. Vietnam regiments involved. The 4th Div, 173rd Airborne, 1st Cav, 101st division, 2 ARVN ranger divisions, a ROK division and Lord knows what else. Hand-to-hand fighting. Little kids about 13 yrs old all hopped upon dope & booze fighting for the NVN. 5-8 plane loads of American & wounded going out of here a day. Helped load 81 on a plane last nite till 1³⁰ PM. We think this is HD's last gasp up here in the highlands. Peace marchers and beatniks & flower people to the contrary (to say nothing of Walter Lippman) - we're winning both phases (fighting & psych-guerrilla war) up here in the highlands. Will get involved in explaining this when I get back if you're interested.

Am really beat, folks. Feel good. Have gained back some of the weight I lost. Anxious to get home to speeding cars and smooth roads and milk.

Love as always,

Dan

5:00 PM
17 Dec 67

USAF Dispensary
Pleiku, RVN
Sunday

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17 Dec

Hi you wonderful people,

This will have to suffice as a Christmas card as we're slightly short of this sort of luxury item. Beer and cigarette they manage to get up here, but Christmas cards are way down on the priority list.

Thank you for all your beautiful cards, notes and remembrances.

It helps the morale very much. Thank you also for taking such good care of my wife and children this year. We've been overwhelmed by your kindnesses, especially Dick Howland's who has seen one of my tribe at least every other week for the last year. Hope there was real disease every now and then to keep things interesting, Dick.

Will be a bad guy and not send individual letters out in answer to the many I've received. Am on call this weekend so have some time for myself. Packed my hold baggage, have my orders for discharge out of McCord in Seattle and my port call for 21 Jan 67 9³⁰ PM (2130 hrs) out of

Cam Rhan Bay on the Bird of Paradise.
Will take some days off when I get home to ① sober up ② learn how to drink American booze again ③ meet my boy ④ learn how to sit in a chair instead of squat on my kaunches ⑤ and various and sundry personal things.

Plan to go back to work when the money runs out which may be very soon, indeed. Would like to take a gen'l practice residency with Ed Nelson (pediatrics); Don Woodley (intern med); Dick Jones (ortho); Joe Teynar (ENT); Jay Olsen (gyn + OB); and some follow-along nite call with our outstanding S.P.'s in the clinic before I attempt to take on practice again. Maybe it won't be as hard to get back into the harness as I think. Will have to clean up my language considerably but Kay will shape me up in that department, I'm sure.

There's a ~~pspe~~ wax 0-3 ^(that's an airplane) swinging around the base playing Christmas carols from it's loud speaker — sort of an attempt at morale boosting. Most of us would just like to forget about Christmas. It should be just another day of work here — too many memories. We're like Alice in Wonderland here and we'd prefer sometime

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17 Dec

was to be reminded of what's on the other side of the looking glass. That's was really true, of course, but it sort of chokes us up to have all the trimmings of Christmas without the home, family, snow, etc that goes with it. Hear they're thinking of another truce — just more chance for Charles to build up for the day after. So much hog wash as far as we're concerned. You won't find me out in the village during a truce — the best time in the world for the V.C to come in close and put a bullet in your ^(my) head.

Sorry for the short note. My private little war goes very well. Plan to take chief Tien, Hien, Hongan and my friend Lich to Saigon with me end of this month and live it up on an R+R. This to pay them back for all the sacrifices of friendship, brotherhood and thanks they are having and will have for me before I leave. Very embarrassing but heart warming. These are very noble, strong, hard working

and generous people in spite of all the hard ship they contend with daily. It has been a real experience dealing with them and being incorporated into their way of life. A little embarrassing when they pour the rice wine on my lily white feet during a sacrifice and all around me are dark brown skins. Feel a little bit like apologizing as they stare at the obvious whiteness, but they don't seem to resent it like we do the Negroes' skin in America.

Have a man hyperventilating will have to see. Will close now. See you soon.

Love,

Dan

P.S. He was hyperventilating — no wonder — Tom is his last nite on perimeter guard duty and tomorrow he heads for home. Probably will do the same myself when my time comes.

Dan