



Letters by Ernest Kuhn. 1969

Kuhn, Ernest
[s.l.]: [s.n.], 1969

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05 Jan 68
1968

Dear Mom, Dad : Jim -

Here is a quick, long overdue letter. I hope the holidays were pleasant - mine were rather lousy. wish I could have been home this year again. The 3 weeks prior to Christmas I spent with General Vang Pao in Sam Nuea as he tried to retake Phu Pha Thi. Finally on Christmas morning I gathered up - there just was no progress made on the mountain that I came back to Sam Thong and Pop sent me down to Vientiane for 2 days. First time off in 6 weeks. On morning of the 29th I was at #221 - Hanoi Market - when the enemy attacked at 0600 hour! I had to walk out for 2½ hours and late got picked up by chopper. I lost my sleeping bag, winter coat (the green one I bought last Christmas at Saigon) and a new pair of John lens binoculars. I did get my new movie camera out OK. Went up to #215 Hanoi Hn Sa for 2-3 days. New Year Eve we slept half dressed - inclding boat as we all expected an attack then anytime. I now have over 4000 refugees at Hanoi Hn Sa - and over 8000 in the entire area.

(2)

Things really look bad. This was the enemy hit where I was, they attacked 7 different villages or military posts the same night. 2 places - where I was and another village just north of the Plain de Jor, Phu Vieng, *06, fell - the other place held. I have really been going on nervous energy recently - I know. Have lost some weight also. I have a beard now - gained one month. Kind of like it's apt it's a little itchy under the chin. Today I came down & cut, what I guess is the Boen plus - Laos variety. And all over, eyes now hurt etc. - am taking medicine now and I'll be back to work again tomorrow. Have a full day work and a choppe up more.

Dad Pop wrote to you all just before Chatur? He come up to see me, maybe a week before Chatur. I didn't even know what the date was - it was already too late to get any cards sent. He said he would write to you immediately and explain what had happened. As usual I had good intention regarding Chatur present for everyone - I think

now I will just wait till I get home. I
fed up a mail gift to everyone so I travel home.
Maybe difficult to get a present in Mac.

I should leave D.C. 03 March 69. Plan to
spend my week in Burma and a couple of days in
London looking for books. Well see this lotte
of March. Had planned a return to D.C. on
5 May to 12 May for regional conference there, and
then straight back to D.C. on 13 May. But I may come
home for a week before going back over seas.
I can't decide if I am doing the right thing or
not. I guess 2 more years overseas won't hurt me
that much. I'll be 31 then and I guess I'll still
be able to put in a 102 for masters. Oh, I can
always resign from AID after one more year. Hadn't
really thought of that before. If the military or political
situation over here really got bad and I guess
wouldn't want to stay longer, I could go to
school in Sept 1971.

I got roughly OK - rough - power, sleek
and chiseled. The return will be fun to do
but it will a while for I am on my spot long

9

last enough to let them dry! The cheese
was really fine. I'm eaten about & I guess
caught up with him came on boat and
we had beer and cheese. I got the boat,
not the OK. I ordered the wrong size next time
I need a small and this was too big. Ours
should be tight and this one was easy to loose.

The "thermal" sweatshirt is really warm. I
recommend the boat very highly if you know
anyone who is about to buy boat. The colors are
really good - no fear.

Had my first 2 roles of movie film back.
Not bad (?) I guess. ?

Well I'll try to write more in a
couple of days. I have to go to church on Sunday
for home leave physical - as much I can
work from Vientiane

Love
Ernest.

03 March 69

112

Dear Mom & Dad,

^{4 P.M.} Sorry I haven't written sooner - did
write 2 weeks ago but never mailed
it so I'm trying again. Everything has
been going from bad to worse military
wise and I suppose I should be glad to
be getting out - although I do feel bad
about not being around to help.

Two night ago a good friend (never
thought much of him as a military commander)
but he got along with people (civilians) well
was killed at Na Khang - when Da was killed.
He was a Da, Col. Phan and also governor
of Sam Nau. Na Khang fell so everything
is really a mess.

Well now for the really big news
which I hope you all will understand
and accept. I got married last week
to a Da girl in Sam Thong. She is the
niece of the Governor's wife in Sam Thong -
her wife was killed in that bay please

cash last Nov. that I wrote about.
 She was born in South Asia but has been
 raised by the government in Hong Kong since
 she was 3 or 4 years old. She graduated from
 teacher's training college 12 years ago and
 has been teaching school at Sam Thong.
 She knows French so hopefully it won't be
 too hard for her to pick up English. She is
~~21 years old~~. I won't go into details now
 about the entire thing, because it would
 take page to describe and explain.
 However we did ~~have~~ to get married in a
 Las Vegas ceremony and it's probably the
 worst kept secret in South East Asia.
 You see I cannot legally marry a Las
 and remain in Laos. So we have not
 filed any papers with the Embassy etc -
 will wait until we come back in
 May and begin everything. Papers will
 probably take a year and then I

will probably be transferred - hopefully to Thailand. (I can work in Thailand well. I do wife a Lao with a Thai wife but not have a wife from the same country I work in.)

I hope everyone will understand what I did and accept her as part of the family. She is very intelligent, but very quiet and a little shy among several people - but then this is the traditional way. Her job should be. Food will be no problem as she has eaten western food along with Lao food at home and in school.

Phythoune (former student) and I are leaving at 3:55 this afternoon for Geyon. Will be there one week and go to France where she has several courses studying. After day there and then to London to see a friend of mine and then home,

(9)

I don't know any definite date yet
but we will phone from Possor
probably London.

We'll write again in a few days
from Cylex. See you all in a couple
weeks.

Love
Ernie

P.S. I will have an ~~\$250~~ worth of
checks coming in a few weeks so please
~~make sure I have enough in my checking~~
~~account to cover them - Thank.~~

①

Xiang Dat X

7/11/69

~~accidental abortion and that the continual bleeding was a consequence of this. I surmised~~
~~that by her several people, including~~
~~Chinese, I arrived to find that they say that~~
~~is a relatively common here and not really~~
~~serious. On the contrary she went to a French~~
~~gynecologist who examined her and he~~
~~apparently didn't find any evidence of that, at~~
~~least nothing that would indicate a partial one.~~
~~Now she is on oral contraceptive for 21 days and~~
~~then she goes back for another examination. The~~
~~"frog" doctor suggested to be good but I asked~~
~~Dr. Welsh and he said the diagnosis sounded OK~~
~~to him and the pills are often used as a form of~~
~~contraception regularly and for me not to worry. I~~
~~see a red now since she started the pills and she~~
~~feels fine now, although I think she lost a~~
~~little weight, although Phaythai says no.~~

11 July 69

Back again - Oh. please send me that 12 page
 info sheet I have at home - can't buy them over here.
 All the boxes arrived here OK - nothing missing or
 broken. Situation in Laos is not too good now. My
 old area of Sam Neua is compressed down to one little
 area with 13,000 people squeezed together.

Last week Muang Laoi L108 much of Sam Thong,
 fell to the VM/PC after a week of fighting. It has
 really put Sam Thong in a spot. For 3 days the
 wounded came pouring into Sam Thong. Muang Laoi
 was a neutralist area. When the military pulled

They were needed of several thousand civilians. I went up to Xeng Dat 1526, near Muong Laoe & evacuated people to Vang Vieng, L16, by C-123 and charabancs. Everyone was terrified. The Neutralist soldiers were terrified - some guy even threw away their weapons and dressed up like women and tried to sneak on the planes.

We just lost sites US 197: 253 NW of Muong Laoe which put large groups of refugees over here until of muong Laoe in boat ships. US 57, Phou So is being hot today. V.P.'s men are trying to take Muong Laoe back but the Vietnamese are really dug in around the area. I could go on and on but most I would I make much sense to you. You might call Barrett or Pop will probably be interested when he comes through.

If there is no problem at the bank - withdraw it, and you don't need the money to pay any of my bills, I'll send me my next paycheck at Angel. They are in Dad's name. Well, just my checking account and if we knew the amount so I want to open a checking account in a local bank in Vietnam for Playlayne so that if she is in Vietnam by herself she has a way to get money if she need it. May also put some in the Chinese Bank in Bangkok so that if we change over have to leave Thailand first, or if Thailand should make US dependent, leave she would have some money available. Just precautionary measures if and anything should happen. Don't offend it, though.

26 July 69

8/3/69

Dear Mom, Dad : Jim.

Now that I have the time I had better write now. It is 0900 hr and pouring down rain - the whole place is engulfed in fog so we can't do any flying.

Got your letter of 13 July 2 days ago. I've been reading in the papers about the heavy rains in Ohio. ~~Any news about Jim - what did Dad~~ decide? Remember the insurance policy Dad had ~~stated~~ on me when I was home? I think you had both got that for me - although I'm not just sure ~~now~~. If I get killed or die here does Phyllis called any benefit etc. I think I'd better have some insurance of some kind quick. ~~What did Jim do with the draft board?~~ If he has to go, will be bad enough, but the way Nixon is going in Vietnam, maybe Jim will be lucky like Tom Vois. Actually, even though I've probably been shot at more than most GIs (take all US troops in Europe, Africa), I still regret that I didn't serve 2 years in the military. I often wish I would have picked the West Point thing more, but then I would never have done a lot of the things I did for the past 11 years and I would never have ended up in Lao At. so I guess I can't complain. But nevertheless I wish I could have put 2 years in some where.

About your question - We have a horse at Lam Thong - the same one I had picture of. ~~Phyllis~~ can read most English although she does. I know the meaning of most of them. I have been trying to teach her English words. I am I am still interested in

2

pattern is that I can change a word or phrase
for entente } Today, I am going but.
like this } Tomorrow, I am going to Vientiane
} Yesterday, did you go to the market?
Yes, I went to the market.

she picks up the words real fast and I really
love to listen to her talk because she uses lots
of tones with the English so that an English sentence
has a real lift to it.

③ I think I said in my last letter that you can
officially announce the weddding. PHAYTHOUNG
SENGCHANH - However ~~a very nice name~~
~~her mother's name is~~ I think her father's name was
~~or son but I'm not sure~~ ~~Maybe you don't need that~~.
~~The Lao don't use last names anymore~~. Here, Phaythoun
is "Madame Ence"! The wedding was 20 Feb 88.
and the sponsor was Dr. Gen. ~~but they~~ VANG PASO.
The wedding was conducted in the ~~the~~ tradition of
XEV'S KHOUNA ^{AND SAVANNAKHEM} Province - Various parts of Laos have
different ways of doing it.

④ Phaythoun at first said ~~she~~ she wanted her coat,
then she said no - but I think if it's possible to
send it, it would be good. The cold season will
start in Oct.

Oh, Phaythoun says that she can't buy needles
need large enough to make rugs. Can you get
her some and send them to her? Thanks.

Everything here is about the same as before.
We did lose 2.S 80 last week which was bad
but nearly all the people got out OK. You might
tell Pop that and also Ban Talat who we need

out 4 days ago. They are building a big dam there on the Nam Ngueum and the enemy wiped the base camp out - I still haven't heard how many injured or killed they were. The American and his family got out OK but their house was blown up. Most of us here at Sam Thony feel that sometime Sam Thony will get hit by rockets and mortars because for nothing yet. V.P. has not yet been able to retake Maung Saui, north of here and the neutralist soldiers are worthless.

I've had Phaythaiene buying silver from a lot of the new refugee coming into her. Got 2 large silver bars (climacs) for \$40, 2 Thai Phuan silver necklaces (similar to the ones at home only pure silver) plus 6 pairs of silver bracelets and a little bag full of old French pictures - also I bought one can which has on one side a Greek statue-like woman holding a spear and shield with a ship in the background and one Dalla with a & and the obverse Chinese and Arabic writing. Paid \$1.20 for it. Blaine told me that he has seen one other like it and that is to a an old French trading dallas which the French used in Arabia and in China. He says that it looks like worth about \$500. - However I'll have to have it checked.

Well that must be now - ~~will be~~
~~Phaythaiene~~ is ~~thinking~~ ~~about~~ seeing the doctor again. She ~~hasn't~~ had any more trouble since she ~~first~~ started taking the medicine - she stopped ~~having~~ ~~had~~ ~~had~~ no ~~to see~~ the doctor today. I'm going down today for 2 days. Now that we have diplomatic relations

well Cambodia, American can travel to
 Cambodia. We are going there the end of Aug
 for a week's 10 day before sh has to start
 teaching in mid Sept.

Well - bye for now

Love

emmi

PS please send me the wedding slides as I can
~~get back much and then new moon film~~

PSS. 9/2/69 ~~M. Ed. Jon's~~ jacket

~~found yesterday~~ - I had to get ~~back~~
~~the value as I was~~ ~~slit hem to pay~~

~~stuff~~ ~~itself~~ ~~entirely~~ ~~that~~
~~do not have~~ ~~which~~ ~~one~~ ~~already~~

emmi

12 Oct 69

12 Oct 69

Dear Mom, Dad; Jim,

refugee

Hi - Let me ~~let me~~ tell you in ~~my~~ letter to
see if you have any questions I'll answer.
Playhouse and I are both OK. I ~~go~~ to the
doctor again next week. Everything has been
quite regular since she has been taking
medicine and I let her try should finish
the miss I hope. We got all the ~~toys~~ I think.

Playhouse and I found ~~for~~ ~~for~~ Kay and
~~a boy~~ ~~with~~ ~~the~~ ~~guitar~~ etc. It was really hard.
took us about a month to do it. I'm giving
it to one of my bosses in Vientiane and his
wife is going to send us some of their old
ones they have worked before.

About the Geographic. I think we are
doing this whole thing backwards. ~~Can~~
~~you~~ ~~write~~ ~~them~~ and ~~charge~~ ~~the~~ ~~money~~
~~RCI~~ address here. ~~I~~ ~~then~~ when I ~~read~~ ~~and~~
I'll send it back to you. With more sense
that way than you mailing them to
me and me returning them back for
storage at home. I'm still working on the
insurance papers.

~~Would you check on my debt over~~
~~the top drawer and see if you can find~~
~~a letter from a man named Kishler in~~

(2)

~~Sweeden~~ with a lot of stamps, attached to
~~rest of paper~~. If so, please mail them
~~back to him caveman~~. For some reason
after 12 years he ~~say~~ sent me more stamps.
I tried to buy from him in High school!

~~About the parading - It's OK to go ahead
but I hate to have you do all the work.~~

Nixon's traps withdrawal? Do I know,
but I would doubled our troops ^{two} years
ago - I think we could have really wiped
them out and cut down on the number of
men killed in the long run. Johnson was
pretty stupid - a rather gen Westmoreland
was stupid, really stupid. He played the
probts real well and came out of Vietnam
and many here when most feel he never
did a very good job.

If Jim really likes flying why doesn't
he join the air force or Navy or even the army
program. They have plenty of pilots - not
fighter types but support planes.

^{getting} The shock of so many friends of mine
killed in such a short space of time has
finally worn off. After we came back to far
I really didn't feel like going out in the

"haendock". Before I got married I averaged about 20-25 days a month out in the field. This year Jan to Aug I totaled 4 nights in the village. I guess the fact that I was married really hit me when we came back here. Things weren't the same as before and it was easier to stay at Sam Hong with Thaum and get three good meals a day, rest etc. Then too I had the terrible fear of airplanes - something I had never had before.

However, in the past 2 weeks the has worn off and I've been out quite a bit - 6 out of the past 8 nights. I'll probably be gone all the coming week. The work has suddenly become interesting again.

The RLG has just, in the past $1\frac{1}{2}$ months made some tremendous gains. They have captured the entire Plain des Jarres - Xeng Khauny Ville (the capital where Thaum lived for 4 years), Phong Savan, Lat Houay (where Pop lived in 1959-60) Muong Phouk etc. Some real bad news reports came out that American and Thai combat troops were used in the attack. This was 100%.

entrae and was really too bad because it took a lot of the credit away from the SoS and those who did the job. I suppose the papers at home are full of the Senate investigation of US involvement in SoS. Ben Mampfield spent about 6 hours in SoS and really went home with a burn in his pants for some reason. Then, before that, 2 congressional aids, Pinsky and Paul (sounds like a mudcloth act) came over. They seemed real sympathetic to the program here and several people made some very candid remarks about RPP in SoS. These 2 returned to DC and started raising Cain also. As a result 6 people from the mission here have been recalled to DC to testify before Senate hearings. One guy, Loren Waggoner, was supposedly doing a real tremendous job in one area. 2 months after everyone walked into the village, and started shooting up his hands. He has wife and kids back under the house in a hut all night while the PL blew up his hands. He had been touted as real young "comer" with RPP. - However he snouted off to Pinsky and Paul

that the villagers didn't like the R.L.B.
Then when the enemy came into the area none
of the villagers coerced him to leave or tried
to protect him. So, it would I surmised that
he probably wasn't so well liked and his
best programs weren't so great after all. He
was recalled to testify in DC about the
attitude of villagers to the R.L.B. The front
Office is furious at him and he should be fired
in my opinion. Congress is really looking
for excuse to cut back the G.I. program.

~~Do you anyway that we can get my
friends - side? I want for the \$4000 I put in
the Park bond 2 years ago, I don't know what
I have. Dad said there was about \$1200 in the
Park Savings. On Aug 14, \$1100 in the checking
account (this must be about out by now) I
need a bone figure to rebalance my checking
account and some small checks. Oh, I
would like to get the \$4000 in the Park
bond changed some way because they are
guaranteed and 1 year due I think. The
Royal deal seems better because you do
have the chance to withdraw the money
any 90 days. But these bonds like the Park
they are just one big account. I also wonder,~~

as the whole 100% of the money tied up
on big bank or are the amount individually
rewards as of, say you puts in \$1000 per
month for x month of month, after the first
3 months you could withdraw \$1000 or as
every month if necessary. If the Royal does
a ~~big~~ big job, then even though money was
just in ~~lucky~~ every 2 weeks, the which they would
~~always~~ be ~~the~~ down to 90 day, can money
deposited 9 months before. Do you understand?

The reason I ask is that Phaytham ^{and} I ~~want~~ to
go to Japan next spring to see Neil and
Kathy and want to make sure we had
access to some money. We never got to
Cambodia due to plane, but hope to go
the end of November. Also, are there any
~~advantages~~ if the country we need to go in
will cut more. If I would get killed
~~would that save~~ ~~please~~ any instance
~~toys~~? Also, would it cut down on any income
~~tax~~ for me? Do you a tax consultant in Newark
who is reputable and charge reasonable rates?
A friend of mine is married to a Thai girl.

X 7
They have 2 children and his wife has 2 more
I believe by a previous marriage. Anyway,
~~Jack~~ is from California. ~~The law~~ ~~he~~ ~~has~~
about spaces sharing everything 50-50.

His wife is a non American living abroad
not subject to US income tax. So, he divides
his income in $\frac{1}{2}$ and pays taxes on $\frac{1}{2}$ of his
total income, the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ he lets as his
wife's. He has done this 3 years now, I think
and the tax people in the Consulate say it is
legal. However not all the states have this
law.

Also I want to open a new checking
account - against account. Include a
sample of Playthorne's signature. Don't the
banks do any better job than they do now? Can
they print the name and address? Maybe we
should open a regular checking account like you
have. I suppose the address should be ^{the} new one
or I suppose Vicksburg, MS would do if the
Homewood one was too long. Anyway, ~~Playthorne~~
~~needs to be on the checking account because she~~
~~often times goes to Homewood without me and~~
~~she may still have got money from the bank~~
~~when she needs it.~~

8

Wen - Phaythorne has dinner about ready.
I stayed home all day today - Sunday - felt
good to rest a day. Bye for now

9

Amen

Erni Phaythorne

PS wrote Granddad any job lost week
and will try to get letter off to everyone
this week.

19 Oct 69

Dear Mom, Dad : Jim,

Let me check your letter of 6 Oct & answer questions. Please send me all film. You should be getting very soon 8 or 9 rolls of movie film. Look at it if you want to, but please send it to me as soon as possible. I bought a Cannon projector last month. It's real nice - the lens is really the main thing. I would also like the movies I took at home to show the people over here.

We got all the boys - coat, puzzle, snout and syrup. Whatever happened to the Bardines? Did they try to buy back their cabin?

Things in Laos are really popping over there. The big trouble is coming from Washington. We have gotten some real bad publicity lately - mostly false. Rumours are that there are U.S. combat troops fighting in Laos and that the recent success up here in the Plain of Jars was due to Thai troops. Both are false but Washington is really hopped up about U.S. involvement. The Prime Minister Savannama Phaounma was in the state last week and so probably read about that.

ERNIE BOMBED 11-206

2.

We had 25 newspaper reporters
and TV crew men here this week so
you might keep your eggs green on the
newspaper. I'm not sure about NBC
but I think ABC was here. I stayed
away from them the whole time they
were here.

Here's one for you and Dad and Jim
only. I was out in a site, 206, last Monday
night with "wanduhi" type fire show.
We had a generator with an electric light
bulb. About 9 in the evening 2 planes
began to fly around us and about 9:15
they started dropping flares to light the
area. I got worried because we were
10-15 miles from an enemy road coming
out of Sam Neua and any light the planes
see on the road are open targets. I called
Hinton on the radio and said, "I fear it
the Air Attack" has finally got Dr. Welden.
He couldn't find the Ambassador or Mr. Mann
the AIA director, but did get Mr. Stern, the
DCA and gave him the Air Attack's number.
While I was talking to Dr. on off the
plane came over and dropped 2 bombs.
One was way short but the other was near.

the war (baddest temp). I got on the radio again and called Doc to get the plane out of the area. They bombed again this time white phosphorous (wp). I had gone down away from the house into a bamboo thicket. I could hear the shrill whistle as the bomb came down - it hit less than 50 yards from me. The W.P. buzz burned all around me in the brush but nothing caught on fire and none of the WP got on me - it makes real bad burns. Went back up and got on the radio again and was talking to Doc when they dropped a couple of CBU's - a bomb that explodes in the air sends out thousands of little "fall hearing" size bombs. Finally at 10:30 the air attack's office contacted the planes and told them they were over a friendly site. Finally they went away. I thought for sure I was going to get killed. I've been through the lot of shooting - both on the ground and in airplane but never bombed before! By some miracle no one was killed or even injured. I went to Vientiane the next day and visited H - with the air force and the Embassy. I don't know

4.

certal, if anything, will come of it. The
Air force did agree to reduced the War and
anything else I thought necessary. The
guys in the Embassy were really upset.
I made sure I got my point across -
that the Air force pilots are lazing bombers.
I had maybe 500 people more clustered
around a lights bulk and the closest
they came was 150-200 feet and one
bomb was 2500 feet away. I said that
much bombing here was unnecessary
and even in case of confirmed targets,
the air force missed their target or
often as not.

The P.D.J. (Plain of Jars) is leveled. Then
some 10 building left standing except in
Khong Khai. Our road had a big wooden
bridge across a stream. They were above
30 bomb crater around the bridge, but
no direct hits. Finally the south
end of bridge collapsed, but not from
a direct hit. I certainly feel that a certain
amount of bombing is necessary, but
after a certain point it becomes unnecessary
and wasteful.

5.

Anyway - keep the above quiet. Thanks.

The Plain of Jars gets its name from those strange stone jars. I have gone over there a couple of times to study them and collect stone samples. I'm going to get the press consigned. Many different theories as to what they are made of and how they are made. I hope someday to write a little article like in the Popular Sunday section - on the jars. Another of the many things I am ^{always} trying to do! Oh - have any packages of books come for me?

One a History of Laos by Mme Leila Chavany and Histoire du Laos français by Baaloyra from a bookstore in DC? If so, please send them home immediately! Thanks.

I paid \$36 to a bookstore in DC to have them order the books, and mail them to me but I have not received them yet. Anybooks which come for me, please send them.

Phaythoun is working on a couple of rays now. Guess we won't get any more to sell this year - has hopefully

next year. Do you really think anyone would buy them? He could ~~go~~ just about do "custom" made as to colors etc anyone wanted. He worked the 2 we have been using and they came out OK.

Well not much else. Pop is in Bangkok and should be up in a few days. Should be rather interesting.

Things have really changed and I hope that Pop can adjust. I'm still keeping my eye out for some place else to go work - but first I need some more information about San Nera. That still seems to be a good chance, possibly to come to Luang Prabang, the royal capital. Will see.

Well, so long for now. How is Jim along in his flying lessons? Funny, I've got a few thousand hours in Thailand but never had much desire to actually do the flying myself.

Love,

Ernie & Phay Thaune

29 Nov 69

Dear Mom & Dad,

Over Now everyone is OK at home. Thelma and I both picked up cold again, but just in the head, not chest.

I forgot to tell you - when you send the film all of you have already sent it mail first with outside because sometime the you'll see X-Ray to check on packages and this swim film. Have gotten back quite a lot of film so far. In going to buy a splicer next week. These rolls are 50 feet, (3 min. 20 seconds) and its a pain in the neck to change reels. I can run 400 feet on my projector. It's fun to look at the movie but its a pain to lug that big camera and case around.

I went to Bangor last month to get some snails. Phyllis and I angles feed cake so I bought. I found a pen in Bangor - has now I think it is a jello mould. Anyway I got a package my and we mixed the yeast together.

~~but you can't wait for the pan
so we poured the mix into a pan
like you make cakes and baked it.~~

~~After I had baked for a while I peaked
into the oven and the bath had
run out of the pan nearly as high
as the pan was deep. They baked the
right time and I took them out. They
were just like soap powder in a
washing machine - just like cracked
rockles! The raised pan one didn't
get bad. Thayne ate that but the
other "coffee cake" pan never did get
any. That ended the angel food cake
baking for a while. You see we are
near 4000 feet here and it's hard
to bake things - although cakes
mostly do OK. On Thanksgiving I
made butter cookies. We didn't have
turkey because I forgot to order one
but Thayne fried frog legs and then~~

stuffed the bodies with a pork "post" and spices. Was really good. We really eat well here, but I haven't seen more back to the states - I hate to even think about the food bill! The frog cost 10¢ a piece - green beans are 2¢ for a bundle etc.

I've been in contact with Neal - I've been sending him pieces of rock from the strange jars on the Plain of Jars. He has been trying to analyze them. I don't think that we are going to Japan. one from here to Japan and back is a lot more expensive than I had thought. Second, we should go now, because in March I expect to state in Osaka (near Kyoto where Neal lives) and he says that already ~~the~~ the tourists are bad and that hotel space is booked up in advance already for the next year! Besides it's winter in Japan now and rather cold (until record snow). We were there in February in 1860 and it snowed several places.

The operation on the PDJ is going fine so far. I just hope that Dr Yang Pao can keep it up.

I don't know now what I will be doing. There are several other places with openings in the next 3-4 months. I may move from Sam Thong, although don't discuss it with anyone yet. I am getting tired of the kind of work and being married I don't feel like being alone in the trouble spots for a week or so at a time like I do now. There will definitely be an opening in Savang Prabang, the royal capital, in about a month or so and I am somewhat interested in that.

I'm just getting disgusted here in the Sam Thong area with the increase in Army and Air Force people. There are no combat troops here, but plenty of other military types who, in my opinion, don't know what is going on. In May the PDJ was bombed the summer is think the And of course Xiang Khouang Valley under Phaythai lines was completely flattened. It was said to have been the

most beautiful town in Laos.

There was a guy from CINCOPAC here the other day and he supposedly told Blaine Jensen, "Well, we'll screwed up in Vietnam, but now here in Laos we have a chance to make up for it." I don't see how a policy of bomb, bomb, bomb is doing anything much different than they did in Vietnam. Oh well - This is just between us -

Things are still a little confused over Christmas. Not everything has been mailed yet and we don't even have Christmas cards so -

Anyway. Enclosed is a check for your Christmas present, on the condition that you will actually buy it. I don't have the picture yet, but anyway, Blaine and I want to get you the kind of stone you want for the cabin. If the check does not come the kind you want, take out more money from

the bank. "My informants think it
is about \$130 ?? However, there is
one other condition - that I get the
old stone or else you sell it to me
for whatever anyone else might have
paid you for it. OK?

Really wish we could get
back to Ohio to a while and go down
to the cabin. Do you know what the
guy who has the land next to mine
wants for that land per acre?

Also, is there anyone you could
contact about looking over the pond -
the condemnation dept or someone and
see if anyone can find out exactly
what is wrong?

Well, by for now.

Lane

Tommy: