

***Diary of a Young Man: 1968-1969***  
*Coming of Age at a Cultural Crossroad*

REVIEW COPY

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Website: [www.dandana.us/fivepalms](http://www.dandana.us/fivepalms)

Email: [dan@dandana.us](mailto:dan@dandana.us)

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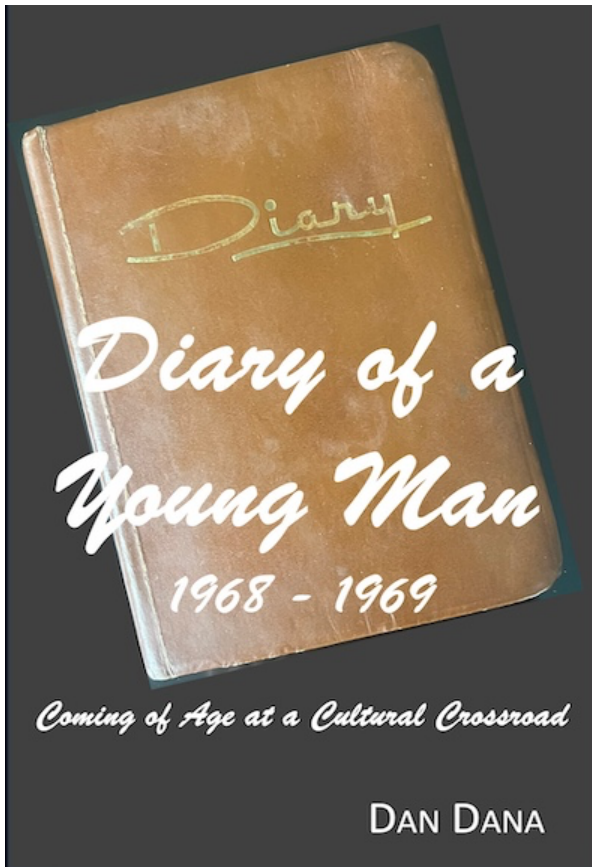
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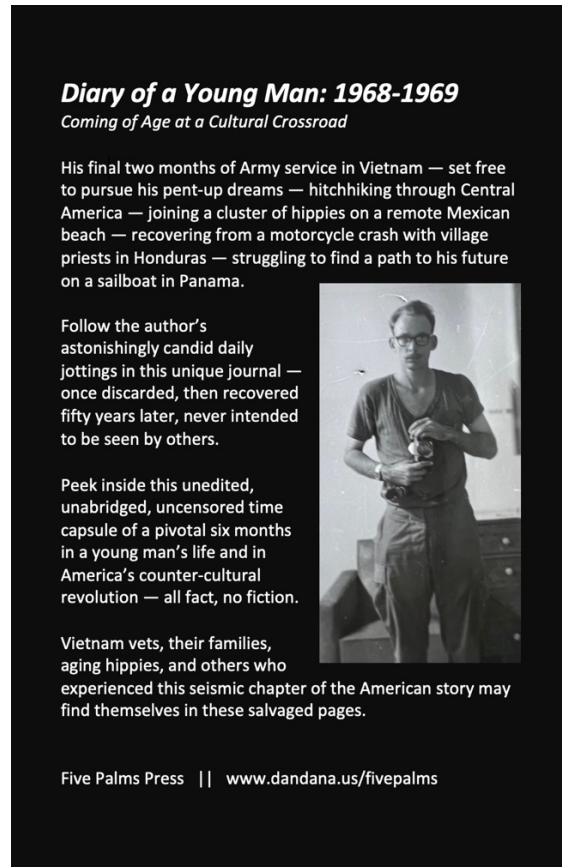
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Front over mock-up



Back cover mock-up



## Synopsis

His final two months of Army service in Vietnam — set free to pursue his pent-up dreams — hitchhiking through Central America — joining a cluster of hippies on a remote Mexican beach — recovering from a motorcycle crash with village priests in Honduras — struggling to find a path to his future on a sailboat in Panama.

Follow the author's astonishingly candid daily jottings in this unique journal —once discarded, recovered fifty years later, never intended to be seen by others.

Peek inside this unabridged, unedited, uncensored time capsule of a pivotal period in a young man's life and in America's counter-cultural revolution — all fact, no fiction.

Vietnam vets, their families, aging hippies, and others who experienced this seismic chapter of the American story may find themselves in these salvaged pages.

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## Introduction

Today is August 29, 2023. My 78<sup>th</sup> birthday is coming up. I'm in the process of preparing my Last Will and Testament, which tends to focus the mind.

Last week I was rummaging through "Su's box," a footlocker-size container into which, for several years now, I have tossed artifacts and mementos from my early life that I imagine may be of interest to the family I'll inevitably leave behind someday, hopefully not soon. Su's box is named for my 50-year-old daughter, my only child and mother of my two twenty-something grandchildren.

In the box, I found a weathered diary I kept from September 1968 to March 1969, a formative six-month inflection period of my life. I was 23, the age of my grandson today. As I paged through the diary attempting to decipher my scribbling — composed on bouncing planes in Vietnam and trains in the Philippines, in a hammock strung between coconut palms on a Oaxacan beach, while recuperating from a motorcycle crash in Honduras, and on the lurching deck of a sailboat off the Pacific coast of Panama — I realized I had not read it since I wrote it 55 years ago. As faded memories sprang to life, nostalgia stirred my heart, warmed by self-forgiveness as I became reacquainted with my searching young self.

At my wife's urging, I decided to transcribe the diary, unedited, revealing the private and, some might say, inappropriately revealing experiences and thoughts that were never intended for others' consumption. Nevertheless, as mortality looms on life's uncertain horizon, I've chosen to share this young man's private moments and dirty laundry with whomever may dare to reach into the pile. Readers will encounter parts of my life that are heretofore unknown to my family of origin nor even my closest friends today. (My wife knows everything.) I find this young man's youthful dreams and fears curiously predictive of the path my life has actually taken over the intervening five decades.

I beg your indulgence. Please tolerate, if not embrace, the raw bits spilling from my pen, a pearl-string held together by dashes as my hurried mind skipped from one jot to the next. English majors bent on correctness may too-soon despair. Pity.

Be forewarned: This journal is uncensored, unfiltered through revisionist sensibilities. I recorded thoughts and actions involving sex, drugs, and other matters of dubious legality. Some readers may indict me for moral if not legal transgressions. Fire away. I was an immature, full-of-myself, 23-year-old kid groping my way into adulthood during a tumultuous period, both personally and in America's evolving culture. Thankfully, I was grounded in a supportive nuclear and extended family, despite having strayed far from the path they had hoped I would follow.

As noted in the timeline of life events below, my father died when I was not yet ten years old. My mother, the embodiment of unconditional maternal love, did not remarry. So, there was no adult male in my home except my four-years-older brother. The insightful reader may discern episodes in my story where a wise man's guiding hand would have been helpful.

## Timeline of Life Events

Consider the inauspicious conduct of my young self, as depicted in this six-month snapshot, in the context of nearly eight decades from my birth to the present:

September 1945	Born into a farm family near Knoxville, Missouri. Youngest of three children.
April 1955	My father died of cancer.
September 1963	Entered University of Missouri as a freshman. Dropped out in January 1966 on academic probation.
February 1966	Enlisted in U.S. Army after receiving draft notice, choosing personnel to avoid combat as Vietnam war escalated.
October 1966 – October 1967	Served in Panama Canal Zone as a company clerk for the Tropic Test Center. Became proficient in Spanish language.
October 1967 – October 1968	Served in 527 <sup>th</sup> Personnel Service Company, Qui Nhon, Vietnam. Assigned to temporary duty as a clerk for the 25 <sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in Cu Chi, including the period of the Tet Offensive of early 1968.
Summer 1969	Re-entered University of Missouri. Attended the Woodstock music festival in Bethel NY August 15-18
August 1977	Received PhD in counseling psychology. My career involved teaching and consulting in workplace conflict management and mediation.
2012 — Present	Retired, relocated to Sarasota, Florida, with wife Susan. I write haiku quintets.

I changed, yet remain very much the same.

### **Editorial notes**

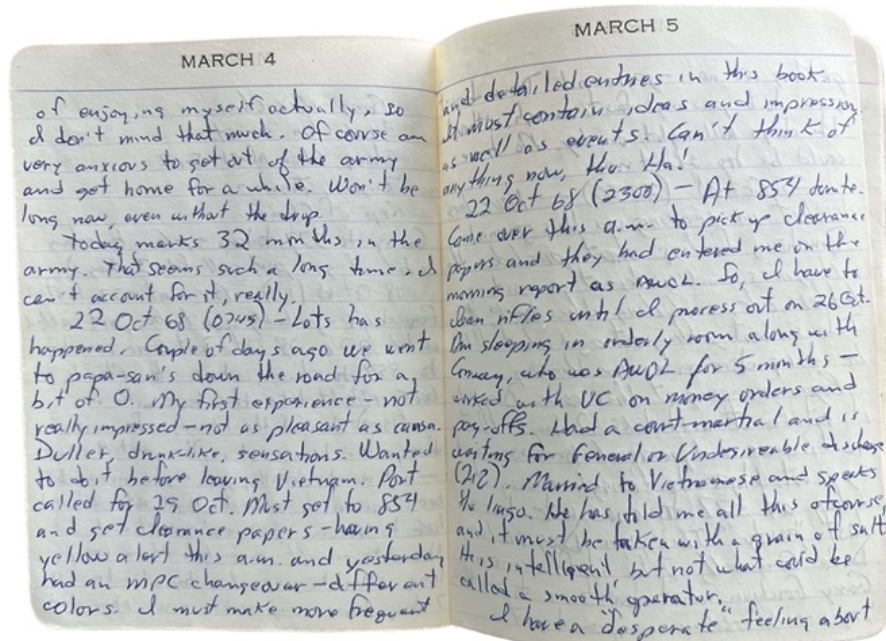
1. Transcription is verbatim with minimal editing for the typos of my pen. Errors of grammar, syntax, or punctuation are retained for authenticity and historical accuracy. This diary was never intended for publication. Read it as I wrote it.
2. One concession to editorial correctness is the insertion of paragraph breaks to aid comprehension. I wrote in stream-of-consciousness style as a personal journal, without concern for other readers, as I assumed there would be none.
3. Brackets *[italicized text]* are used to insert explanatory details.

## Cast of characters

- Mom — my mom
- Jon — my brother, born 1941, who has remained on the family farm in Missouri.
- Deana (De) — my sister, born 1939, lives in Missouri. I am the youngest of three full siblings.
- Bobby — my first cousin and childhood playmate in Missouri was in the army in Vietnam. Our tours overlapped.
- Butch — high school classmate and brother of my brother Jon's wife, was in Vietnam. Our tours also overlapped.
- Ray — my cousin who lived and worked as a civilian in the Panama Canal Zone at the time of this diary, born 1904, now deceased.
- Helen — half-sister living in California at the time, born 1904, now deceased.
- Grace — half-sister living in California at the time, born 1922, now deceased.
- Skip — army buddy in Qui Nhon. We've stayed in touch. In 2015 he organized a return to Vietnam for four of us who were at Camp Granite together, accompanied by our spouses.
- Ron — army buddy while in Panama Canal Zone before going to Vietnam. We have stayed in contact.
- Anais (Annie) — Ron's Panamanian girlfriend.
- Sherry/Selena — Panamanian girlfriend in 1967 before going to Vietnam.
- Bang Mie Chang (a.k.a. "Angel") — Taiwanese girlfriend on two R&R leaves in 1968
- Editha — Philippina girlfriend on R&R leave, October 1968
- Mai — girlfriend in Qui Nhon, an "older woman" at age 41
- Others mentioned were people I met "on the road"

## The Diary

A sample page (disregard preprinted dates):



### 8 September 1968

Today I'm starting this. If I ever want to quit and destroy it, I must remember how I would like to have an account of previous experiences. I must keep a journal indefinitely when traveling like I plan to do.

Present plans: Go to Panama in January or February 1969 (just finished "World of Quintana Roo" by a young Frenchman who walked the coast of Quintana Roo). May travel South America, Europe — foot, motorcycle, or boat. Would like to get a job in Taiwan, see Bang Mie Ching [a bar girl I met on R&R leave in Taipei in early 1968 and who I knew as "Angel"].

Too many things to do. Am not trying to decide now. Future events at home [Missouri family farm] and in Panama are requisite for decision. Sherry will coop only as wife, she says. Not upset.

Last four days have been playing pool and reading at Quincy Compound awaiting orders to 854 [Transportation Company]. 47 days left to 25 Oct. Am going as longshoreman, but think I



can clerk for them. Will go to Saigon for Philippine visa later this week. Set to go to PI [*Philippines*] on 27 Sep.

This evening got orders — to be longshoreman. Think I can avoid it though. Have had a sort of satisfied melancholy last several days. For a long time have been constantly dreaming of when I'll get out [*of the Army*]. Hope it will be as nice as I dream, but don't expect it to be.

### 9 September

Moved to 854 Trans Co about 1300 today — rather bleak, very glad I'm short [*GI-speak for nearing time to leave Vietnam*]. No cubicles in barracks, few light bulbs mediocre food, judging by first meal this evening. Am working in Orderly Room, as expected. As soon as I get leave orders, will go to Saigon to get PI visa — should be in a few days.

854 appears devoid of compatible characters, for me, that is. One fellow in OR nearly has MA in architecture from K-State, but seems rather “plastic.” I'm not really concerned about finding friends — haven't been for some time. Part of being short, I guess, or maybe my ego hasn't been punctured lately — getting built up. As noted yesterday, have been feeling dull, slightly sad, tolerant, maybe. Frequently thinking of getting out.

Received letter from Mom today, answered suggesting she and De might like to drive to west coast to meet me, visit Helen and Grace. Seems like a nice idea.

Absolutely nothing to do tonight, so am not attempting to be brief. There are more books where this one came from. While passing time at Quincy did quite a lot of walking — to and from STC compound — maybe two miles. Became much sturdier afoot. Also pitched softball a couple of nights. Exercise was enjoyed and felt better because of it. Author of “Lost World of Quintana Roo” said he forgot how to climb stairs after not having any practice for a month or so. Guess likewise I had forgotten how to walk. Will try to read more of Chichester's “Gipsy Moth Circles the World” tonight, even tho it's rather dark.



Am trying to find reasons to return to Taiwan to work. Reason says “no” — wish I could forget it. 'Tis not compatible with more reasonable plans. Also have desires to stay around home farm & family. Reason again says no. Just go ahead.

### 10 September

If I could write everything I've thought about today, it should just about finish this book.

This evening I sat in the sand behind the bunker and watched the sun go down over the water and Qui Nhon and the mountains. The breeze was such that it did not pass over the town or a nearby



latrine to pick up an odor. 'Twas quite pleasant except for the sound of a caterpillar operating on the causeway.

Was conducive to thought and I had a flash that might end my indecisiveness in the area of political ethics. For several months, I've held a "double standard," where my personal desires differed from what I thought was in the best interest of society, or mankind. While I value great personal freedom above opportunities for affluence, social benefits, I have thought that the moral political ethic, that which serves the best interest of the greatest number of people, was more socialistic or communistic, where life is regimented and the opportunity of acquiring great wealth is omitted in order to reduce poverty. In a leftist state, no one could be permitted the freedom to "bum," travel freely, live at any level he wanted.

This evening I saw two divergent methods for dealing with the impending (and present) problem of politics as compounded by increasing population: 1) communize or socialize in order to provide means of living for most or all people, 2) encourage regression to primitive, even tribal, society with very little government interference (no taxes, no draft, no welfare programs, only subtle guidance in forming protective measures (police, etc.). Strong emphasis on the family group. Must be widespread availability and use of birth control measures. Only the most basic facilities would be present, but such a system would have definite attributes, like being away from the ugly, industrialized, hectic, pressurized society, which would also be available.

That idea as an alternative just popped into my head and already I can see huge holes in it. I'm just looking for some way to avoid communism or strong socialism, which seems imminent. At least a capitalistic economic and social system could be retained. By tomorrow I'm sure I will want to tear out these last couple of pages, but I'll try to refrain. It will be interesting to muse on in a few months. No doubt it is caused at least partially by the frustrations due to the regimentation of the military. Maybe when I get out, I can recognize and follow pure reason.

Other notes on the day: wrote a letter to Sherry today, all in Spanish. Good practice anyway, even if nothing else comes of it. Also a letter to Ray. Been thinking today I might like to follow the jungle trails in Panama around for a few days at a time, somewhat in the fashion of the Quintana Roo traveler. Just a thought.

Read two articles in "Cavalier Magazine." Was greatly entranced and impressed by them, although now don't know why. One was about a Jewish psychiatrist who worked in regressive hypnosis. He made himself regress to 1913 in order to kill Hitler and alter the course of history, but had to "kill" him by suicide. Couldn't get control of Hitler's mind but affected him so as to cause him to hate Jews, thereby causing Hitler's massacre of the Jews. Weird. Wonder what Einstein would have to say about the time relationships?

The other story was about a rich old prostitute who bequeathed her entire fortune except jade beads, and the beads separately, to her first and last lovers, for them to decide who got which. The first took the beads but the last offered half the fortune for them. Rats! The story must be read to be appreciated. I failed to get the point across here. Anyway, the old man called the young man a fool.

### September 11

I don't feel the urge to write like I have the preceding nites. Maybe the novelty of this thing is wearing off.

Had a weird thought-session tonight. Went to the same place I did last night, with the guitar. Didn't sound good though — feel like giving it up. Feel frustrated, like time is not passing quickly enough. Have a very strong urge to “get away from it all” — lead the simplest possible life with a girl who quietly, gratefully accepts affection. Makes me want to return to Taipei. Hope I feel more spirited when R&R time comes again. Must forget Angel, to some extent anyway. Doesn't fit with other plans, although I'm trying to rationalize for it.

### September 12

No really record-worthy events today. Been looking at an atlas most of the day — South America and Europe. Pondering going back to Taipei. As passion decreases, I gradually decide not to. 'Twould interfere with a better procession of events.

Read the interview in September Playboy with sci-fi writer, director of movie “2001” — things that could happen in my lifetime are astounding — immortality, contact with other intelligent beings, communication with dolphins, interplanetary travel, etc. Sort of bemeagers my personal dreams.



### September 13

Today it occurred to me that I should be a little more conversational in Spanish before entering Mexico on the way south. I checked out a “self-teacher” book from the library and read it some. Should keep it up.

Got a ride back to the company with a truck driver who doesn't like Vietnamese because they are not adopting American traits fast enough. He noticed improvement now that some little girls are wearing dresses rather than the Vietnamese pants and shirt. He deplored their sense of color. It seemed he thought of Vietnam as a state in the US that was backward, rather than another country 9000 miles away. I've met several GI's who think similarly, and the vast majority I think are nearly so narrow-minded.

The people in this trans company are appalling in their ignorance. Haven't met one respectable person yet. The lifer-tendencies increase as IQ decreases.

Keeping constant count of days to go — 42 today. Looked at atlas lots more today. Food here is horrible. The whole place is bleak. Glad I'm leaving soon.

### September 16 (0200)

This morning I'm at the passenger terminal at Tan Son Nhut [main airbase near Saigon]. Got here about 12 from Qui Nhon via Chu Lai, Phu Cat, Nha Trang — An Khe had bad weather. Trip took 5 ½ hours — very uncomfortable.

Two days ago I went to the 527<sup>th</sup> and got my ETS [*Expiration Term of Service, i.e., discharge from active duty*] orders to leave Vietnam. Packed a bag that afternoon thinking I would be leaving that night (escorting an epileptic to hospital in Long Binh). No one I know is still at HTC and it has moved, so can't stay with them as planned. When it gets light I will go to Plaza Hotel BEQ and get a room. I'm not going on to Long Binh with Horton (whom I am escorting) tomorrow. He knew his way around Saigon better than I do. He's said to be an idiot and unreliable, but he seems pretty alert to me (soul brother — Black).

Nothing to eat or drink here in air terminal — not even water. Wooden benches not conducive to sleep. No one else seems to have much trouble though. Plan to enjoy these 4 or 5 days in Saigon.

(2130)

Am now at Hung Dao Hotel, Saigon — same one stayed at in December 1967. Smoked a joint and got off. Food at Ky Son across street seemed great, after that swill at 854<sup>th</sup>. Slept most of the day. Went for a ride with taxi driver this evening. Tired now. Can't write.

September 17

This morning went to Philippine embassy for visa. Then to Australian embassy. Will pick up passport in the morning.

Did a lot of asking around downtown. Saigon is beautiful, so many trees. Nearly all of the streets around downtown are canopied with huge shade trees. Rode in a few tricycle pedicabs to and from consulates — very pleasant. It has been five months since I left Saigon before. This afternoon I went to a restaurant I had been to before — had a salad and orange juice — very quaint place, calls itself a “pizzeria.”

Metropolitan Saigon is entirely different from the rest of Vietnam. There are American and European women with children walking the streets. I could hardly believe I was in Vietnam strolling in the city. These people seem to me physically beautiful. Better than Caucasians. Very pleasant, but if I were looking for someone who closely approximates my philosophy (realism), wouldn't go to the Orient. Can't imagine anyone but Americans and W. Europeans agreeing with me, and few of them.



Looking at Saigon today, I thought about what it will be like in 10 or 15 years. Probably will have communist government and can't be freely visited. 'Tis a shame. Like Peking, Shanghai, Lhasa, Hanoi today.

One of the house-girls from 2d floor of hotel remembered me, and I her. I also recognized a waitress from Ky Son mess across street. It has been 9 months. I remember last New Year's Eve spent here at Hung Dao with Dokes and Gary of HTC, watching the traffic below the balcony.

(2200)

Another guy moved into the room this evening — E6 [*rank: sergeant first class*] lifer, infantry. Married. Tried to extend for 6 months. was with ARVN [*Army of Vietnam*] at Song Be. Drunk. Retiring in about a year after 20 years. says he's going on the bum. Friendly enough. Weird.

September 18 (2330)

Today marks 31 months in the army — 37 days left. Picked up passport at Australian embassy and walked around town awhile.

While sitting in a park bench, was approached by a money-changer who eventually took me for \$26 — really irked me, felt so dumb, got quite melancholy. He had a slick operation that would fool 99%. Really made me feel bad since I was planning on getting a Seiko for Ray while here — am short on money anyway. I seem to get extremely dejected over injuries to my self-pride — makes me doubt my ability to survive where alertness and discretion are necessary (i.e., bumming). To be so smart, I sure am dumb! Had a strong desire to crawl in a hole and pull it in after me, but my ego has re-ballooned and I'm back to my pious self again.

September 19 (2130)

Had a very pleasant and eventful afternoon, following a morning of sleeping and lamenting about being taken for a sucker yesterday.

Just after noon, on a whim, I took a cyclo to the Saigon Zoo, thinking I should see it before leaving Saigon for possibly the last time. As menageries go, it wasn't too great — the only animals there were a large cage full of monkeys (some outside the cage) and a couple of mangey elephants. The grounds were very nice tho, and some old vine-covered buildings and several huge trees added a lot to the charm.

I was sitting on a bench when two Vietnamese men (22 and 20), a Vietnamese girl (19) and a 6-year-old boy came by. The little boy made a scene as they passed and I joked with him. Soon the group returned and struck up a conversation. The older boy acted like he was pimping for the girl, but it was all in jest. She is in high school and spoke just a little English, as did the older boy. We talked, exchanging information. She wanted me to write to her to practice English. Name: "Thuy". Very nice-looking girl and very pleasant personality. Her father is in

the VN army. The elder boy invited me to his home that afternoon, and I thought we might eat first, so there I am, in a street-side restaurant of strictly local clientele, having chicken and rice with two VN boys, a VN girl, and a lad of six. Although uneasy with all the attracted attention, I had a good feeling about the whole situation — different from escorting a lone bar-girl. Thuy left with baby-san and the other two and I continued to their home. The elder boy is from Qui Nhon and was visiting his friend. The younger's mother was very nice, spoke French is a school teacher, served us real orange slices. In fact the living room was filled with little desks and doubled as a classroom for kindergartners. The younger's older brother, a pharmacy student at the University of Saigon (21) arrived soon in his own jeep. The younger brother has a 50cc Honda, on which we three rode. He spoke English pretty well, also Japanese, and seemed very bright. Wants to study in USA but has a 20-year military obligation immediately upon graduation (officer) to age 45. Was not familiar with US politics, thought the South VN army could handle the war if the US supplied lots of war materials. I decided to try to meet the boys and Thuy again, so arranged to meet them at 0900 tomorrow. If they don't show up, I can still make the early afternoon flights from TSN airport. I'm booked for the 21<sup>st</sup> anyhow. I was driven back to Hung Dao about 2000 in the jeep.

In the TV room was none other than SFC Jesus Gonzales, my drill instructor at Ft Polk [Louisiana, for basic training] Feb – Apr 1966. I thought he had been killed, but there must be several SFC Jesus Gonzalez's in the army.

Incidentally, Thuy thought the paper we used to scribble words and diagrams on to illustrate our feeble conversation should be kept as a souvenir, so she wrote these words: “the zoo in the war at V.N.”

A couple of notes of interest at the restaurant: we had two cokes and 2 orange sodas — when a glass ran low, it would be filled up with whichever bottle was handiest — they didn't seem to notice they were pouring coke into orange and vice-versa. Also, when using a toothpick after the meal, one hand shields the mouth from view. In fact Thuy used a handkerchief. She is very delicate, both in appearance and mannerisms. Very feminine. She was born in Hanoi in 1949, came to Saigon in 1954.

#### September 20 (2100)

Am back at 854 tonight. Went to the zoo at 0900 this morning, strolled around until 0920 taking pictures, shaking off little vender girls, etc. Thuy did not show up — was secretly hoping not, actually — had very little money and felt obligated to get back to Qui Nhon today — good thing, because they were about to count me AWOL — thought I was to be gone 3 days, was gone 5. No sweat.

Finished “The Year of the Gorilla” by Schaller at TSN while waiting for plane. Had started it in Cu Chi [where I was during the Tet offensive] in Feb — sort of interrupted.

#### September 21 (2030)

Nothing really worthy of “petrification” today. Have toyed with the idea of going back to school sometime — not immediately. Don’t know whether I could be a “professional” anything. Thought about writing — possibility. I seem to oscillate a lot among various plans. I expect that trait to decrease when I finally have the opportunity to realize some dreams. I can’t really make a good guess about what I’ll be doing several years hence. Kinda scary.

Played a game of canasta tonight for the first time in years. Won.

Wrote to Thuy this morning, also Sherry — don’t know why. The box of most recent slides from Taipei, including the only pictures I had of Angel, disappeared while I was in Saigon. Really hate losing her pictures, though maybe is best — I shouldn’t try to see her again, even think about it.



Will put Helen’s address and phone here, since this book is probably the most permanent thing I carry: *[address removed]*.

#### September 22 (2200)

Thought some more today about going back to school — increasingly appealing. My interests are “intellectually” inclined, more or less, and I might enjoy school just for the learning involved. Must also bum some first. GI Bill good for 8 years after discharge. I have so many desires competing for immediate fulfillment — school, sailing, South America, Taiwan. Go Panama first, then let things happen.

#### September 23 (2030)

Turn 23 today. Each birthday seems increasingly less exciting — less worthy of celebration. Still young, though, although I don’t think I will be long enough to do everything I want to do.

Today it occurred to me to go to school in Switzerland — killing more than one bird with one stone — learning French, see Europe, possibly get Swiss citizenship. Must check into prices, admissibility, whether I can be bi-national. GI Bill wouldn’t help outside the States. John K. *[housemate for one semester at University of Missouri]* went to school there.

Got Marshall McLuhan’s “Understanding Media” and John Dos Passos’ “The Good Times” from PX today. Haven’t finished “Gipsy Moth” yet.

Nights have cooled off nicely last week or so. Very comfortable for sleeping.

#### September 24 (2220)

Made a plane reservation for the 26<sup>th</sup> today to TSN. Went to library and looked thru book giving info on all universities in the world. It is useless to try to make plans for a few years in advance until I get out of the army, go to Panama — settle down and get some traveling under my belt.

The last box of slides taken in Taipei disappeared while I was in Saigon, including the only pictures I had of Angel. Maybe 'tis better. Feeling very short.

#### September 25 (2200)

Well, I leave in the morning — flight time, 1120. Makes me feel that much shorter — will be in the 20's tomorrow. Seems like no time since I had 60. Getting out is constantly on my mind now — can't imagine how it will be the last 5 days — unbearable! Been reading an Air Force survival handbook today, concentrating on tropics — looks encouraging for running around the trails in Panama.

#### September 26 (2315)

Still in Qui Nhon tonite — monsoon was too heavy so my flight was cancelled. Probably could have gotten out if I'd stayed in the terminal, but didn't want to wait around so went to Quincy and played pool and read more of John Dos Passos. It is very interesting to note just how a real writer does things. He (and other intellectuals) seem genuinely absorbed by literature (or their field of study). I'm too fickle, maybe. I'm interested in many things but can't concentrate on one discipline for a long time.

Got a long letter today from Sherry — she's interested in finding a proper husband and start raising kids. I had misjudged her — she seems to have a very strong character and principles. It's hard to tell by letter tho, for sure. I'm dubious about just how contented I'll be bumming around for a long time without sex. Conversely, I wouldn't be satisfied if enslaved by it, i.e., marriage, even semi-permanent stuck with job.

Being in TSN a day late eliminates having a booked seat on Philippine flight. According to R&R office, there are 2 Hawaii and 1 Manila flights on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Might get to Hawaii. Think I might like to beach bum for a few days if I do. Might not work out.

About writing: It seems that ability to write isn't really the same thing as having something worthwhile to write (i.e., being original, having profound ideas). In fact, the two abilities may be independent of each other. Right now I'm having trouble recording accurately what I think about this very subject. Pen won't keep up with the brain (or brain can't slow down for pen). Dos Passos could write at a very early age, but didn't do much besides regurgitate information. Maybe I'm just blindly vain about my reasoning ability. It sure seems right, tho. I think I am more tempered and coldly rational now than ever before, although I have a way to go to my ideal. Keeping this record is helping and will help keep my reason in line.

#### September 27 (2130)

Tonite I'm at Camp Alpha, TSN. Flew down via Cam Ranh Bay arriving about 1430. Will probably go to Manila tomorrow — no flight to Australia or Hawaii until the 29<sup>th</sup>.

At the snack bar this p.m. I met DiCosimo ("Cosmo") whom I was with in HTC in Saigon. He was to go to Sydney tonite. He still cansas [*GI slang for smokes marijuana*] a lot, as we did before. He is a strange person — in appearance and in personality. His eyes, dark and deep-set, give the impression of being high constantly. I don't think his word can be believed. He said he mailed the little string instrument I bought in April and left with him to mail but it never got home, and I perceived a little inconsistency in his manner — seemed untruthful. No sweat, tho.

Been pondering the new student left — don't understand it, but I don't think it and I would be compatible. At least not the pro-Mao factions. Would like to learn more about it, talk with representatives. Not wanting to be an activist — just curious.

Talked with some Australian "blokes" this evening here at Camp Alpha. I gravitate toward them, all foreigners, more than Americans. They said Australian girls really like "Yanks" because of the accent. Same way in the States. While I was talking to him I could see him laughing at my accent.

#### September 28 (2230)

Am now in Manila at Empire Hotel with Editha. Left TSN about 1230 — arrived here 1730. Am being distracted by bites and tickles, so this entry may be a bit incongruous.

Have mixed emotions about this leave in Manila. Don't want it to be like the others, altho they were very enjoyable. Want to travel around some. Don't know if I can shuck off the temptation of staying here. See how tomorrow turns out.

#### September 29 (0800)

She's asleep now so maybe I can write some. The plane we came over on was an Air Force C-134 propeller. Was cold and noisy and the inflight meal was C-rations. Quite a difference from the other R&R flights. As far as I know, all others use chartered jets. No stewardesses, of course.

She took all the hairpins out last nite and we counted them — she in Tagalog, I in Spanish. There were 60. Thought she would never get them all out. She is very cute, but just a tad roly-poly. Very soft breasts and legs. She is very strong and active in bed. Also very dark. Costs 60 pesos/day. Wish I could always be so independent of sex as now. That dependence is going to be a monkey wrench in my bumming operation. Trouble is, libido overshadows rationality to a certain extent. I just need to lower that extent.

#### September 30 (0830)

Didn't get a chance to make an entry last nite — for obvious reasons — even tho lots happened. Stayed in bed 'till about noon. Then she went home for clothes and I lolled



around. Went to get new heels on shoes, and was taken advantage of again. Just a little over-charge — nothing major.

There have been communist riots in Manila the past week or so. I don't feel comfortable looking so conspicuous (tall and white), obviously an American, and not knowing the language. Might keep me from staying in the Orient.

Went to a Chinese local restaurant in the p.m. — had shrimp soup with a raw egg in it. Tasted pretty good after I finally got around to eating it. Also several other dishes served without chopsticks. Editha doesn't know how to use them. Philipinos use fork and spoon in opposition (eating with a spoon) like an American uses fork and bread. A policeman asked Editha to get a piece of American money, coin, from me “for a souvenir.” Of course, I had no silver, but gave him a 25-cent MPC note [*military paper currency*]. Probably was legitimate, I don't know.

Then went to her bar for a few minutes. It was strangely reminiscent of the bars in Panama. It catered only to foreigners, mostly Americans but there were two Norwegians there from a freighter. One told me he liked Philipinas better than any other women in the world — didn't like Scandinavians. He thought I had Scandinavian ancestry.

Then we went to a little beauty shop where we both got manicures. I'm not too impressed with the operation.

This morning I wrote my name on her right nipple and she wrote “EDITHA GONZALEZ” on my “junior” (not in inch-square block letters!). Plan to go to her province in the north this evening by train — about 12 hour trip. Should be interesting.

### October 1 (1630)

Am now in Legazpi City, Philippines. The train trip took 16 hours — 1930 last night to 1130 this morning. Cost 17 pesos each, 1-way (\$1 US = 3.89 pesos).

Yesterday pm we went to her “laundry's” where I left my big suitcase. The man and his wife live in a little shanty and are very nice — gave me lots of tips on pick-pockets, even acting out pantomimes. Their daughter of 14 babysits for the illegitimate baby of a girl that works in Editha's bar. Father is in US Navy.

The mosquitos there are of a carnivorous variety and gave me huge whelps on hands, arms, neck, ankles, etc. They didn't seem to bother the others, not even the baby, but they said they did. Didn't notice any strong reactions tho, like mine.

The train ride was long and it seemed to stop at every opportunity. We went 1<sup>st</sup> class and the trip was miserable as far as comfort is concerned, with the cars bucking, frequent stops, etc. I can image what 3<sup>rd</sup> class would be like — people crowded on hard wooden benches. Editha has always gone 3<sup>rd</sup> class, she says, and the bus worse than that. I'm not really complaining tho. I enjoyed the trip.

It was light awhile before we got to Naga City, so I could observe the scenery from there on north. The northern part of Luzon has wide, flat valleys, or rather, occasional ranges of hills. There are also 4 or 5 volcanoes more or less in a straight line running N & S. The one at whose base is situated Legazpi is said to be the most nearly conical volcano in the world, and is still active. The top half is shrouded in either clouds or steam vapor, or both. Reminds me of Irazu in Costa Rica. In fact, this whole area is reflective of Latin America.

The people look Latin and the language, Tagalog, sounds Latin — actually has many names in common with Spanish (manzana, fruta, naranjito, etc.). We had a sack full of fruits and some barbecued chicken which kept us occupied part of the time. Also bought a dozen crabs live for eleven pesos, and the hotel chef here boiled them for us and we ate soon after arriving. Very good. Editha handles the crabs very competently and wasn't snapped.

The only agricultural product I noticed was rice, and that was everywhere. It was laid out in every available sunlit place to dry near the owners' shanties. Banana and coconut palms are very plentiful. Coconuts or copra must be a major crop since the trees were set out in rows like an orchard.

The train went only as far as Ligao and from there we took a local bus to Legazpi. It was packed with people, packages, and bags of grain hanging out the doors. I didn't see one American face after leaving Manila. I attracted a certain amount of attention but wasn't ogled at like I expected. Americans aren't really common far outside of Manila, and when they do venture, it's nearly always by air.

Upon arriving at hotel, we had a love bout unequalled in my short career. 3 for me and 2 for her. My last 2 hit with hers. Very nice.

She has gone to her home a few miles away to see her mother — first time since June — who doesn't know how she works. I can't go there, therefore. The policemen all know her there since she was raped at 16 (19 now) by a Philippino. Says she hasn't been with one since and doesn't want to marry one. Of course she's only 19.

She has 18 pesos of mine with her. It had occurred to me earlier that she could bug out and be that much ahead, but don't think she'll do it, listening to how she talks. She's not that wily, actually, although very smart. Nearly all bar girls are. Must be to get along.

### October 2 (1930)

Am now on train headed back to Manila. Many beautiful things I would like to say but cannot write legibly. Perhaps at stops. Something about this trip is terribly romantic — rolling noisily across the island of Luzon, a luscious little Philippina as my companion, a group of people behind us chattering in Tagalog with intermittent spattering of English, the full moon shining on the passing rice patties and tall thin coconut palms, the vendors passing along the aisles with sundry non-synthetic goodies — the romantic feeling may be enhanced by my reading Dos Passos, who at this time is traveling around France and Spain.

Now stopped at Naga City, Editha asleep beside me, very cold in the air-conditioning (going 1<sup>st</sup> class de luxe — 27.45 pesos each). A few minutes ago I stood between cars with my head in the wind. Felt wonderful. The only other time I did that was enroute from Leesville [*Louisiana*] to KC after basic, so naturally I remembered it.

We have some treats to eat — sesame seed balls, some kind of nut (Tagalog – pinoi) I haven't tasted yet, hot dogs (one Vienna sausage between two slices of bread), the remains of the crabs. Generally, I'm enjoying this trip greatly, in a dispassionate sort of way.

Waited about 4 hours at Ligao for the train to leave. Editha and I couldn't get together much because someone from her town was there and she didn't want to be seen with an American, present the possibility of the fact being deduced that she is a pro rather than the hairdresser she claims to be.

Four little boys of about 5 were fascinated at seeing an American and set out to show me their English. A few words (butterfly, money, Americano, pop-eye, "luck" (good luck), "how are you," "what's your name," "my name's") were spoken with great gusto.

One of them followed very accurately the words of an English song being played on the juke box. It seemed to be about the only one played — very popular. Female voice love song that could very easily be played in a Latin American cantina. The boys were climbing on crates of various produce, bags of grain, etc, stacked all along the length of the loading ramp — pass terminal.

The air-conditioning is ridiculous. Everyone here is wrapped up in extra clothes, coats, towels, etc. The temp is just right without it. Just a status symbol I suppose — going 1<sup>st</sup> class. About a dozen passengers in this 52-pass car. 3<sup>rd</sup> class cars are packed. Train is beginning to move again so must close.

### October 3 (2100)

My ardor for the trip gradually cooled as I grew more tired, sleepy, and cold. The return trip to Manila took only 12 hours — a limited train — stopped half dozen times, more or less. Came back to Empire Hotel for the last nite (am getting up at 0430 tomorrow to return to Vietnam). Not with Editha tonite — must save some money.

Napped alone from 12 to 4 this pm, dreamed of being in prison, awoke in pretty poor spirits — not too satisfied with myself. Took a walk to watch the last part of the famous Manila Bay sunset — was very impressive, although the weather was cloudy.

Sat on the seawall and thought. Suddenly sailing was very attractive to me again. Had seen the yacht club — saw a boat that looked a lot like doctors Ben & Ken's boat that left Panama in July 67. Don't think it could have been them tho, since they spent last Christmas in New Zealand and Australia. Now feel like I would like to get a small trimaran in Panama and "make it." Must wait for further developments and changes in attitude tho, I guess.

In the news today, the big item is a dispute between Philippines and Malaysia over Sabah. There is a rising anti-American feeling in PI now being fired by the US's neutrality in the dispute. I'm really sorry to see the US becoming so unpopular all over the world.

Also in the news, of course, is student riots, especially in Mexico City. May cancel the Olympics, which would be a real shame. It seems to me that the demands of rioters all over the world are quite unreasonable. Of course, I haven't heard their side. Strange that I am not sympathetic towards them since we are of the same generation and I am quite radical in some ways myself. Perhaps I am more experienced and willing to accept the lesser of several evils rather than being so idealistic. But the military is a sterile environment in that regard — I receive no first-hand info on which to make judgements. Just 22 more days, tho. Short!

#### October 5 (2030)

Was with Bobby in Cam Ranh last nite and didn't get around to making an entry. Left Manila about 7 and landed in Cam Ranh 1130 approx. Finished Dos Passos — really enjoyed that book — hated to throw it away.

Bobby met Butch K. about a week or so ago at the NAF [*Navy Air Force*]. Butch has been coming in there for a few days at a time since last spring. There is a chance he'll be there toward the end of this month when I go back thru Cam Ranh — for the last time. He is based in Hawaii and flies P3's [*surveillance aircraft*]. Bobby said something about Butch mentioning that he plans to join the army after getting out of the Navy. That is very hard to believe.

Arrived back in Qui Nhon about noon today. Spent the pm at 527 and Quincy. Bobby and I talked quite a bit last nite, as we have before. I'm just not impressed by his attitudes and opinions. He fits into the army way of life pretty well — says he doesn't like it but I wouldn't be surprised if he re-ups after his 4 year hitch. He is proud of being an MP [*military police*].

I'm pretty sure I got a touch of clap [*gonorrhoea*] while in PI. Plan to go to the dispensary in the morning to find out. Don't think it could delay my departure. Not too anxious for those shots tho. Will be getting several anyway before leaving.

A package and letter from Karen were waiting when I got back — self-baked sugar cookies. She sent her measurements (34-28-36 ½) (5' 3" tall) for purpose of getting the Vietnamese dress, as I offered. Will do that thru my house-girl this week, along with sending hold-baggage.

According to Bielke at 527, I should get a 7-day drop, so could leave Viet on 25 Oct and Qui Nhon on 22 or 23, depending on when I can clear. At any rate, I'm short!

Looked at a map of the Philippines today and saw that Legazpi is near the southern end of Luzon, rather than north of Manila. Strange I didn't notice where the sun rose and set. Guess Editha didn't understand English directions.

#### October 6 (2355)

Went to the dispensary this morning and got a couple of penicillin shots and four pills. The burn and drip have just about stopped now. Dr Rosenberg isn't very patient with his subjects. Upon seeing on my record that I had been in with the infected cyst, he promptly and in a loud voice called me "a dumb shit." After a pause he mentioned that he "wouldn't care if I never saw another one of you characters again." He objected supposedly to the short time between having a sore penis and coming down with clap. I couldn't keep his invectives from bothering me for a little while, although the two medical conditions had no relation. I'm just not used to being yelled at like that.

Staying up tonite to listen to the 4<sup>th</sup> world series game — McClain vs Gibson again, I think. Starts at 0045 — might get too sleepy and have to sack out.

Is now the 7<sup>th</sup> — 18 more days. Am told that clearance papers are released 7 days prior to port call, so I could be gone from Qui Nhon in 2 weeks or less. I don't seem to be expected to be in the office much — will probably sleep in tomorrow. My army experience is nearly over!

#### October 9 (1000)

Didn't write the 7<sup>th</sup> because I spent the afternoon and nite at 527. Got stoned with Skip N., John H., Gwynn, and Steve B [*surnames removed for their privacy*]. Was interesting to do again.

Didn't write last nite because I played canasta 'till 0100 this morning with Laird D. I haven't been staying in the office much lately. Yesterday the 1SG [*First Sergeant rank*] came to the day room to get me while I was playing pool and told me he wanted to talk with me after the game. So, I went to the office and he told me to get to work typing. I didn't see anything to do so sat there talking with Tam, the VN office-girl. The 1SG came in and saw me idle and asked Erickson if he had any typing for me. Eric said no so the 1SG said, "Get over there and play pool then. I'd rather have you over there than in here picking your nose." So anyway I don't seem to be expected to stay in the office any more.

Yesterday bought a jungle hat with head mosquito hood. Hope I can get it sent home with hold baggage. Am waiting for the house-girl to deliver Karen's VN outfit. Not doing a good job of writing this a.m. so will quit.

#### October 10 (2340)

Stayed at 527 again last nite so didn't make an entry — am being a bit negligent with this notebook. Don't feel like writing even now.

"Junior" doesn't feel just right — hope the drip does not reoccur — would be disastrous.

Am behind on letter-writing, can't settle down to reading a book, feel very restless. ETS is constantly on my mind now. The time seems interminable. I must go to work eventually to get a boat. Today considered work in South America. Must compare wages there with Taiwan. This is barring a constricting development in Panama.

Last nite was stoned, as usual in 527. I have what seem to be brilliant thoughts in that situation. Last nite I seemed to divine the meaning of intelligence. It consists of seeing certain relationships between abstracts. Last nite I could think of examples — not now. I should take notes at the time.

#### October 11 (2140)

Got hold baggage sent this pm — hardly any inspection at all. The big suitcase wasn't even opened, but I hadn't tried to get anything thru so "mox nix." Now my belongings consist of 2 sets fatigues, 2 sets underwear, khakis, 1 set civilian clothes, 1 pair boots, 1 pair low-quarters, camera, and flight bag to carry everything in (also shave kit, of course.) Fatigues and boots will be discarded before leaving Vietnam.

This a.m. the platoon sgt noticed I wasn't at the reveille formation, so this evening I had to fill 50 sandbags (actually 40 — hid 10 in the sand). I feel too short now to be hassled with. They can't expect reprimanding me now to do any good. Actually, the thought of being held over by disciplinary action does sort of keep me from getting too drastic.

I am scheduled for guard on the 13<sup>th</sup> so I took all field gear over to HHC 5<sup>th</sup> term to be turned in. Unbeknownst to me previously, it must be taken out to Phu Tai in the valley. So I left it under the bunk of a friend at STC. Will try to clear supply without bothering with turning anything in. Therefore, I have no guard equipment, no rifle. This will be brought to the 1SG's attention on the pm of the 13<sup>th</sup>. I think he will be very glad when I leave.

I'm harassing the lifers as much as possible — sideburns, no hat, no bloused boots, being absent nearly all the time, etc. I always have a feasible, tho not really believable excuse for all shortcomings. I seem to get a certain pleasure from this activity — can't imagine myself being, or thinking, "straight."

The Apollo orbital flight is due to take off from Cape Kennedy in about 45 minutes — will get live coverage here — amazing.

#### October 12 (2230)

After reveille this morn, went to 527 to sleep and then spent the rest of the day at Quincy. According to the radio there is a revolution in Panama and Americans are being evacuated from the city. Don't know how this will affect my going down there. Must get details and advice from Ray I suppose. Sent Cely a string of cultured pearls from Japan today, as Ray wanted me to get her something with the money he sent for a Seiko watch. Cost \$20. Haven't cashed his check yet — won't unless I can find a Seiko — they're very scarce.

#### October 14 (1115)

Had to pull guard last nite anyway — with borrowed equipment — wasn't so bad. Stayed awake thinking about what I'm going to do when I get out.

More addresses:

Mrs Silvia Toussaint [*Sherry's landlady*]  
[*street address omitted*]  
Paraiso, CZ [*Panama Canal Zone*]

Bang Mie Ching  
[*street address omitted*]  
Taipei, Taiwan  
Republic of China

Going to 527 today — plan to stay until I get port call (1-3 days)

October 18 (1110)

Been at 527 last few days — probably won't be port-called until 27 or 28 Oct. Just came over here to 854 to shower, shave, etc. Plan to go back. Might take this book with me.

(1500)

Now at the library. So many things have happened in the past 4 days — not events, really, just experiences. Have been cansaing each day and nite. Would like to record seemingly brilliant thoughts — can't remember them very long. Might give it a try tonite.

A 7-day drop is impossible now. Am sort of enjoying myself actually, so I don't mind that much. Of course am very anxious to get out of the army and get home for a while. Won't be long now, even without the drop.

Today marks 32 months in the army. That seems such a long time. I can't account for it, really.

October 22 (0745)

Lots has happened. Couple of days ago we went to papa-san's down the road for a bit of O [*opium*]. My first experience — not really impressed — not as pleasant as cansa. Duller, drunk-like sensations. Wanted to do it before leaving Vietnam.

Port-called for 29 Oct. Must get to 854 and get clearance papers — having yellow alert this a.m. and yesterday had an MPC changeover — different colors.

I must make more frequent and detailed entries in this book. It must contain ideas and impressions as well as events. Can't think of anything now, tho — ha!

October 22 (2300)

At 854 tonite. Came over this a.m. to pick up clearance papers and they had entered me on morning report as AWOL. So, I have to clean rifles until I process out on 26 Oct. Am sleeping

in orderly room along with Conway, who was AWOL for 5 months — worked with VC on money orders and pay-offs. Had a court-martial and is waiting for General or Undesirable discharge. Married to Vietnamese and speaks the lingo. He has told me all this of course and it must be taken with a grain of salt. He is intelligent, but not could be called a smooth operator.

I have a “desperate” feeling about getting out now — paranoid. Time doesn’t seem to be passing fast enough, although the days roll right on by. No time could be too short now.

October 25 (2230)

Have been derelict in keeping up this journal. Somehow, feeling short precludes the willingness and interest in writing letters, etc., including this book. Ideas about getting out and what I’ll be doing dominate my thinking.

Began processing out this a.m. Dragged it out so it will take 2 days. Must do finance and personnel tomorrow, and sign out. Hope to fenagle a way to stay at 527 tomorrow nite — have a last “party.”

This p.m. Doug N., Dale C., John H. and Gary G, *[surnames omitted for their privacy]* went downtown to another “papa-sans” — blew away, and got a shot of leg (with protection) *[GI slang for a brief visit with a prostitute]*

Talked to Mai, the 41 year old bj *[fellatio]* artist with whom I stayed from May to July. She wanted me to stay tonight but I no-can-do. I promised to come see her for a while but have doubts about the wisdom of it. I don’t really need it, but hate to have lied to her. She has treated me well. All but Dale and I had bj by her today.

Dale is port-called on the same flight as me, but probably won’t make it because of court-martial charges for buying money orders for a civilian who happened to be sending them to Red China. The civilian (Sexton) has been charged with treason and is in a definite bind. Also on the same flight is Allen W. (Willy) with whom I went to Taipei in July. He has lost ALL his “lifer-tendencies,” which were quite prominent when I first met him in Nov 67 and again in May 68 upon returning from Saigon. He is the one who introduced me to the idea of Project Counter *[an illegal activity involving money that I considered but chose not to pursue. It will not be detailed here]*.

The fellow who was to buy my guitar didn’t come across with the money, so I reclaimed the ax. Don’t know what I’ll do with it, but won’t give it to him. He was evidently trying to get it for nothing.

Tonite I discarded the other uniform and dirty socks and shorts. Now have all my belongings in a flight bag —ready for light travelling.

Have gotten 2 short notes from Helen in the last 4 days — she seems to be looking forward to my visit. Me too, although getting out of the army and getting home rather overshadows it. Understandable, I think.



### October 27 (0900)

Had a big blow out last, including some pills that SFC Millerski distributed. I don't like them — I still feel drunk this a.m. Drunk is the effect — not high and sensual.

Finished clearing yesterday and sneakily signed out of 854. Said "bye" to only one person — Jim E. who is really a fine person (chaplain's asst now, HHC, STC). As I walked out the front gate I knew I would never be back and had a strong, sad, nostalgic feeling, which is silly because I have not liked it, and was there little over a month. Seems like the feeling should be the same driving down an obscure road knowing that you wouldn't see that sight again, but it's not. The only possible difference I can divine is that I spent a little more time at 854.

Sold the guitar to a Lt there for \$10. At Stonecipher's room in 527 this a.m. with Willy. He got caught "misappropriating" a jeep night before last and was dubious about being able to leave at the scheduled time, but was given an Article 15 and fined \$50, which probably won't make it to Ft Lewis anyway. We are manifested on a flight to Cam Ranh at 1530 today — be at airport at 1400.

Something still feels strange. Tom S., a friend here, told me this a.m. that this should be "the happiest day of your life," but it's not. Of course, I'm glad to be going, but I'm still here and in the army. I sort of suspect that the moment of getting out will be somewhat less than the euphoria I have long expected. Won't be long now till I find out.

### October 28 (1030)

At Bobby's in Cam Ranh this a.m. Arrived yesterday evening — Willy is here too. Bobby's roommate has a very nice Teac tape deck/amp that we are enjoying. Will go to 22d Repl [*the unit that processes departing personnel*] late tonite. Leave Cam Ranh (and Vietnam) at 1430 tomorrow — the time is drawing nigh. Waiting is much easier after leaving Qui Nhon. Said bye to most of my cohorts yesterday for the last time. Sort of sad but not unbearable, considering the alternative. Butch just left here 3 or 4 days ago. No other news from Bobby.

### October 29 (1530)

Am now airborne enroute to Yokota AFB, Japan. Lifted off at 1515 on a Seaboard World DC-8. Have a good seat at a window at the right rear part of the plane — weather is partly cloudy — very pretty. There have been no shouts of "short" or joy-making as might be expected from a year in Vietnam. I noticed the same thing when I went from Bien Hoa on emergency leave in March [*following the death of my grandmother*]. Pilot said the flight to Yokota will take about 4 ½ hours I have a bet with Willy that the total flying time to McChord AFB Washington will be more than 16 hours. I say yes; he says no. Will cost the loser \$5. Seems like my previous flights took 22-26 hours.

Went to 22d Repl last night about 2100 and processed. We had formations, police call, etc. today — senseless harassment seems to me.

Am planning to fly 2/3 fare, confirmed seat, to San Francisco, and then after visiting Helen a day or so will go 1/2 fare standby to KC. Am very anxious to get home and get everything in between over with. Am told that a minimum of 10 hours is required at Ft Lewis to ETS. They will be anxious hours.

#### October 30 (0400)

Have crossed the international date line so it is really the 29<sup>th</sup> late morning. Are about 5 ½ hours out of Japan on an expected 8 ½ hr flight to McChord. Got dark an hour or so before reaching Japan and got light again about 6 hrs later. Very weird cloud formations out now — mostly flat, what might be expected of polar terrain. Probably near and SE of Anchorage, by my judgement. After a few hours flying and nap or 2, I forget where I am, where I'm going, why I'm going there, etc. Very odd sensation. Apparently everyone else feels similar since there hasn't been a word said about "going home" lately.

Stayed at Yokota about 2 ¾ hours — much of that was ground delay after boarding the plane. Should be in the States in 3 hrs or so. Been thinking a lot about going back to school. Would seem the logical thing to do.

Slept just about 4 hrs. Wanted to more so I should not get sleepy during ETS processing. Sure I can stay awake though for something important like that!

#### October 30 (1700)

Hurrah!! I am now a proud civilian! Many times during the past 32 ½ months I never thought I could make a legitimate separation from the Army. Signed out of the Army about 2 hours ago and it gave me a terrific feeling. While riding in the taxi to SEATAC airport (where I am now) I shivered just thinking about really being OUT. I can't really realize the fact — maybe will later. Will finally realize that I'm not on leave and won't have to go back.

Landed at McChord at about 1530 local time (13 hrs flying time. Neither Willy nor I mentioned our bet, though we both were likely conscious of it. Sort of gave me a guilty feeling, but economics won out). Therefore, elapsed time from landing to actual separation was about 23 ½ hrs.

First was measured for a dress green uniform. Then went to orientation and then the famous steak dinner, which was good but not superb. Saw Willy for the last time there. Went on to do finance, personnel, etc. No hitches really. Drew \$603. Called Helen and told her I would not be visiting her now — maybe later. Would cost me an extra \$40 or so, could visit for just a day or two, don't have clothes to change, and am anxious to get home of course.

Called Mom at Deana's after no answers at home and Jon's. They seemed very happy to hear and to meet me at 0330 tomorrow at KC airport. Leaving here at 1850 tonight on United and switching to Frontier at Denver.

Am very tired and worn out after long time without much sleep about being tensed up about out-processing. There was no harassment but much delay and waiting due to under-strength out-processing crew. Also, there was another flight about 15 minutes ahead of us. Not really bad, seen in retrospect. Am looking forward to finally getting home, being free, and ending the seemingly interminable military "service."

#### October 31 (1000)

Home now, at last arrived KC airport 0330 this a.m. — picked up by Mom and Jon. Had waffle breakfast at De's this a.m. Don't think I can or really need to continue making such long, frequent, and detailed entries. Have many things to do — get VW running, motorcycle, see Ron Clark, write several letters, etc. Want to help Jon trucking now. Must get some rest now.

#### December 10 (1630)

Been a long time since I made an entry. Been very busy driving harvest truck — enjoyed it. Have been really happy at home even tho I have been doing without.

Went to Lebanon MO and saw Ron one weekend in Nov and he was here last Sat & Sun. Present plans: hitchhike to Panama, or to San Salvador, via Yucatan and Brit Honduras. Might stop in San Salvador and pick up Ron's Velocette [*motorcycle*], take to Panama and sell or use. Plan to come back around 1 Aug 69 for school — get small house trailer (buy). Might wait until winter semester, depending on how I get along in Panama.

Reasons for hitchhiking instead of driving: Have long wanted to travel afoot outside US and this may be my only chance before going to school. Also will leave me free to get a sail trip back to States when the time comes. Will probably get a cycle or something in CZ unless I pick up Ron's in San Salvador.

Finished picking corn day before yesterday — good season. Jon and I are closer than ever now. He wants me to stay on farm with him — may do it someday. Is appealing.

#### December 12 (2115)

No more news really, just things I left out. Have destroyed all connection with Project Counter. Jon knows, as he does about almost everything else. We've leveled pretty straight across the table. Will probably ride to Lampasas with Jean [*an aunt who lives in Texas*] if she comes here for Christmas. Wrote Helen this p.m. telling her I wouldn't be out this winter. Sort of feel bad about that. Think she was looking forward to my visit.

Jon suggested that I try to work out a trade with Ron with my motorcycle. Hadn't occurred to me but will try. Would depend on trust — I think Ron is dependable.

#### December 23 (1600)

Returned about noon from Ron's apartment in Jeff City. I will definitely try to pick up his Velocette in San Salvador. He will try to sell my Yamaha in the spring. He will send gaskets to San Salvador when he gets them. Talked a lot about Anais (Annie) Gonzalez. Think I might like her. Will look her up when I get there. Have picture.

Wrote to Ray Saturday telling him of plans to hitchhike. Doubt if he will approve. Heard from Helen today and she certainly doesn't approve. My actions aren't guided by intimidation or praise, tho. No sweat.

Got a surprise note from Pete Pranis [*an army buddy from time together in Panama Canal Zone*] last week. He is now at U. of Chicago working on PhD in Engineering.

I came back via Columbia today. Have doubts about returning to school soon — should, but would interfere with adventures. Probably will, tho. Hate to make and be bound by resolutions. Will leave in about 10 days unless I ride back with Jean. Haven't heard from her yet.

N/A Van Lines  
COMCA International  
3a Calle Poniente No 813  
San Salvador  
*[location of Ron's stored Velocette motorcycle]*

Anais Gonzalez  
*[address omitted]*  
Paraiso CZ  
*[Ron's girlfriend in Canal Zone]*

#### December 27 (1300)

Had a pleasant Christmas. Yesterday morning I was thinking I might as well not wait until after 1 Jan to leave. By the afternoon I had decided to leave today. Got travelers checks this a.m. and Jon started to take me to 71-bypass and Hwy 40 or 50, but was cold and rainy so I am going with him and Donna to Colorado where they are going to ski for a few days. Leaving this p.m. about 5. Might even get in a little skiing.

#### December 28 (1630)

In Colorado Springs bus station now, waiting for bus out of Colorado (Raton NM). We left Richmond about 1630 yesterday, had lots of snow and ice to Topeka then clear roads. Stopped in Oakley Kans about 12:30 and slept.

I got out at Limon Colo. Got 2 rides for about half the distance to Colo Springs. Then the police came by and charged me with "soliciting a ride." [*I was unaware that hitchhiking was illegal in Colorado.*] Was brought to Colo Springs jail and posted \$15 bond. Trial set for 3 Jan. The man who booked me suggested that I get a bus out of the state and forget about the trial since conviction would cost me about \$15 anyway and other states don't extradite for misdemeanors.

So here I am. I could have stayed in jail awhile, possibly have trial Monday am., but am in a bit of a hurry anxious to get into Mexico. Feel a bit uncertain about the success of hitchhiking down south. Will give it a try, I reckon. Have an idea that I won't really enjoy this mode of traveling.

#### December 30 (0020)

In Las Cruces NM now. Lots has happened — seems I've been gone for ages. Took bus to Raton NM, arrived about 2100. Couldn't get out that nite so I had to waste \$5 on a room, was very cold. Met a young (16) fellow from Houston going to Calif. Seemed more contented with bumming than I do, or did. Got a ride on a hay truck about 1000 for a few miles; certainly was cold. Then we got a ride, together still, to Santa Fe after considerable wait. Then we split and he left before me. Soon 3 very nice and very hip people (1 girl) stopped going to Albuquerque. Eventually picked up 2 more hitchers going to Springfield MO — both heads [*slang for pot smokers*]. Then a ride thru Albu with 2 hips who shared a very skinny joint with me. Not enough to have much effect. Wound up having to walk 4 miles or so to main road. Stopped by a fresh fruit stand — bought 2 apples and ate them. Then picked up 2 tangerines to buy but the man gave them to me. After the walk a couple of punks took me to Los Lunas. Was starting to get dark and I anticipated spending the nite there at an all-nite café. But, met an interesting old geezer about 45 in an old truck with home-made covered back in which was a bed, dresser, saddles, and many other things. Was from Va. But had about an acre of land at Belen, where we went at 30 mph. He was very agreeable and I was to sleep in his truck after trying for a long ride, which I didn't anticipate. However, soon a pick-up came along for Truth or Consequences so I took it. At a truck stop there two young fellows brought me here to Las Cruces. Young attendant here is very friendly and is helping me get a ride to El Paso.

Yesterday and this early morning I was very disenchanted with this mode of traveling, but after the latter of today's experiences, it seems more romantic.

Ate only once today, trying to make good time. Started out from home with about \$107. Now have \$77. Won't make it at this rate. May have to hole up in Mex City.

#### December 31 (0445)

Torreón now. Soon after dawn caught a ride to El Paso and walked across the bridge and got a "transmigrante" permit. Took a couple of local buses out to the Juárez airport. Waited somewhat less than an hour before 2-ton refrig truck stopped going to Monterrey. Would have made better time going on with them to Saltillo, but wanted to see new country. It was driven by a 23 yr old fellow with an 18 yr old companion. The elder was pretty sharp, both were very ok. We stopped in Chihuahua while they picked up some meat from a packing house. Then to a comedor and had frijoles y tortillas con sopa de carne. I really enjoyed that ride even tho I was, and am, very sleepy. Couldn't get comfortable with 3 in that cab. That's one reason I got off in Torreón. Am in the bus station now having coffee and waiting for traffic to pick up. Not really sure I'm on the right road.

On crossing the border, I was pretty leery about hitchhiking in Mexico, but those fears have been pretty well allayed by that first ride. I think nearly all rides will be with trucks, but they are easy

to get here. Maybe I'm judging too quickly but I'm not uneasy about going on south now; not as much anyway.

Jesús and Ricardo sang a lot while driving, and were very, very good, seems to me. Sang harmony. The Latins seem to have a self-assuredness about them, Jesús the driver very much. He was very interesting, even enviable.

(0830)

I couldn't get a ride out from the bus station, so got a taxi out to a Pemex station near the end of town. No traffic there either so I flagged down a bus to go to Durango or Aguascalientes. Found out it costs only 79.90 pesos, a bit over \$6, to go to Mexico, so I took it.

Now, the bus has had a flat and we are somewhere between Torreón and Fresnillo. I've been asleep. Was supposed to arrive in Mexico about 2230 tonite but now will certainly be after midnite — New Year. That's ok. I didn't have anything to do in Mexico to celebrate anyway.

January 1, 1969 (0001)

Have just checked into a flophouse near the bus station. Haven't even undressed for a shower yet. There are horns blowing and guns shooting outside so I guess the New Year has arrived.

(1235)

Just got out of the shower. No toilet paper, no fresh soap. Somehow there was hot water. This room is 22 pesos per nite without bath. Just got it for one nite, will try to find something more satisfactory.

In the morning I must find out if the BH [*British Honduras*] consulate is open and if there is a consular section in Mérida or Chetumal. I was going to write down some notes about the bus trip but am very sleepy and must get up in the morning. That shower made me feel good, despite the sleazy head.

(2100)

So much has happened today that I probably won't remember all of it. After getting up about 9 this a.m. I took a walk to the Torre Panamericana and on to the Palacio Nacional. Snapped a few pictures. The woman who worked at the hotel desk was from BH and said Mérida and Chetumal both would have consulates.

Everything was closed for New Year's in Mex City. I decided to take a bus to Puebla today so I could get an early start toward Veracruz and Villahermosa tomorrow. The bus depot was very crowded and I didn't understand how the ticket system went so I looked around for someone who might speak English. Saw a tall non-Latin-looking fellow so I asked him how the buses ran. He is German and has spent 6 months in Mex and 2 in Guatemala. Has M.A. in seismology from German univ and had worked in Alaska for about 2 years. I am learning a lot about traveling

from him. We are now in a nice hotel in downtown Puebla — 15 pesos each. He was on an earlier bus so we arranged to meet in front of the cathedral. He was waiting when I got there.

After supper we went for a walk around town and 5 local girls picked us up, rather started talking to us. One was from Spain. We stood alongside the street and talked for 2 hours or so. Norbert and I are invited to the home of one of them for dinner tomorrow nite. If they show up it will be a very pleasant evening. They seemed to be serious about it. Will see tomorrow I guess.

I had thought that I sort of wasted that part of the trip that I rode on buses, but Norbert brought up that you don't really save much money by hitchhiking, transportation rates being so low here, and the only way you can appreciate a place is by staying there a while. Sounds right to me. I might make the rest of the trip by commercial means. He is going to Veracruz for money and then to Puerto Angel on the Pacific coast, and real out-of-the-way place. Mota [*a Mexican term for marijuana*] is grown there. I might just go along and postpone other plans.

A few notes on the bus ride from Torreón to Mexico: 2 drivers took the bus all the way — 19 hours. A priest came aboard once to take collection. He seemed to expect about what he got from me. I am learning so much so fast, it's amazing. My Spanish isn't too bad — lots better than I expected. I am learning a lot about this way of life from Norbert. Might travel with him for a while.

#### January 2 (1700)

Today has been the first full day I have spent at one place since beginning this trip. When I woke at 0930 this morn, Norbert was already gone. I cashed a cheque and mailed letters to Mom and Ray. Sat in the park awhile and siesta-ed for a couple of hours. Went to the library and read some on Mayas and stopped at a couple of bookstores but they didn't have what I wanted in the line of Maya info.

Got back to the room a few minutes ago — Norbert back — he had gone to ruins at Cholula just outside Puebla.

An inventory shows I have \$61 American. Spent \$45 or so. Been gone a week now. Supposed to meet the girls at 1800.

#### (2330)

The girls showed up as promised. I had thought we were going to one's house for dinner, but we just went for a long walk to Paseo Bravo, a miniature zoo, had a few little snacks — on the girls. They are very pleasant. Maria Teresa, from Spain, is very beautiful. They want me to write to them; suppose I will. Addresses are as follows:

Mary Carmen Mantillo (plump)  
*[address omitted]*, Puebla

Carmelita Fernandez (tall)

*[address omitted]*, Puebla

Maria Teresa Cedorio Rojo (from Spain, best novia)

*[address omitted]*, Puebla

Mary Lupe de Oubudo  
Rancho Moratillo, Puebla

Blanca Mantilla (short)  
*[address omitted]*, Puebla

Norbert is very much ill at ease with women, it seems. Didn't display much cool. Says he hitchhiked down from the States w/ a girl, but she went back after a while. He seems to be 100% honest. Good fellow. He is going to Veracruz tomorrow and then to Puerto Angel. Think I will go straight to P.A.

January 3 (2130)

In Oaxaca now. Norbert went on to Veracruz this a.m. and I came down here by bus — 40 pesos. Was going to take the train, which is cheaper, but it leaves early in the a.m.

Nothing exciting happened on the bus ride. It was mostly over the route that I followed in June 67 [*I had driven my VW from Missouri to Canal Zone while on leave during my year in Panama*], which was interesting. I thought I had remembered larger mountains and worse roads than there actually are. It's not too bad. The soil is in many places a vivid crimson.

Several times while passing someone, I thought about the fact that they would be doing exactly the same thing if I had not made this trip; their actions are completely independent of mine. Kind of weird to think about.

Have a room tonight for 20 pesos — private bath, etc. — wouldn't be ashamed to come here on my wedding nite.

After checking in I took a walk to the mercado to look for a guitar, sandals, knife, etc. The only thing I bought was a little wooden comb for 60 centavos. Guitars were fragile and expensive — sandals too small — no knives of the right type. Maybe Puerto Angel has some things.

Walked around for quite a while looking for a comedor that wasn't tourist-oriented. Found one. I thought I was the only one there for a while — then enters a large American family and then two girls and a French woman. They invited me over to sit with them. The girls, one Chinese, are from Berkely — are traveling by bus. The French woman is flying. After thinking about it, I was probably gawking at them.

For some reason, I seem to think it should be a novelty to meet other Americans down here. They don't seem to think so. They meet on the street without even speaking. Guess I should do the same thing.



I'm enjoying this experience I guess. Have a strange feeling about it. I enjoy the feeling that other people are impressed by what I'm doing whether they are or not. Maybe a week of thinking and loafing on the beach at Puerto Angel will help me out.

#### January 4 (2030)

Went to the Zapotec ruins at Monte Alban today about 5 miles west of Oaxaca. They were impressive but rather a disappointment because of all the tourists. The buildings were put back together with concrete. Only part of the ruins were reconstructed tho. There were several mounds to the south that seemed untouched by diggers. Took several pictures.

Also am buying a pair of custom-made sandals for 18 pesos. The woman who is making them is supposed to bring them to this hotel at 9 or 10 tonite.

After dinner tonite was walking back to the hotel and passed 2 American men and 1 girl at a table. Sat down and joined them. For a while they were going on to Puerto Ángel tonite by bus. Seem like pretty nice folks. Will get together with them tomorrow p.m. probably. Plan to get up at 4 in the morning for the 5 o'clock bus.

#### January 5 (2300)

Puerto Angel tonite. When I got on the bus at 5 this a.m. Ed and Marsha were there also. Last nite's bus was full. The bus ride took about 9 hours. Road is paved to Miahuatlán and then deteriorates considerably. Pretty interesting ride tho I hadn't been this far off the beaten path in Mex before. Ed had a Darvon, which eased the pain. They have 2 caps of acid [*LSD*] — one for me they say. I'm really looking forward to it.

Puerto Ángel is a very pretty little place — water very, very clear. Went for a short swim this p.m. Might be here for a while.

I have some books to read and so does Ed. He goes in a lot for mysticism. Was a philosophy major at U of Florida.

This hotel is something else. The rooms are just 3 walls with the open side facing the ocean. No furniture — just a cot — costs 10 pesos per nite per person. Another American fellow here — Bob. Was in CZ with "Up With People" when I was there. Was doing a joint when Ed and I returned from a swim.

Slept from 6 to 8 or so — then got up and took a walk. Went out on the pier and struck up a conversation with Felix, a red snapper fisherman from Acapulco. He says I can go out with him about 10 Jan after other boats arrive from Pto Escondido. Boat at the pier was 31' long, diesel powered. Would be out 3 days. No beds. Would be roughing it. He says there is sandy beach all the way to Pto Escondido. Ed, Marsha and I might walk it if we can arrange for their bags to be sent back to Oaxaca via a friend. Maybe Norbert would do it. Strange how opportunities pop up and course of action is determined.

On the bus I was thinking about the difference between “us” and the Indians down here. There’s not much really, seems to me — mainly, access to technology and more extensive education. Basic intelligence must be about the same. On the surface there is a huge difference. They at first seem to be not much more complex than animals. Just shows how primitive man is.

### January 7 (1130)

Living on a beach about 2 kilos NW of Pto Angel now. Really a beautiful place and has some weird people. Ed and Marsha are living on the side of a mountain out the south end of this beach. I have a hammock strung up in a palm grove near the beach and others’ huts, or palapas.

Have been body surfing, or trying to, last 2 days. Have a few skinned places but it’s lots of fun.

Some weird people here. Bob and his girl Brenda are from Calif — have been here for 2 months — plan to stay on thru Feb — was here last winter too. A professional sax player from Toronto is here — long beard — really weird. Bob, a former “Up With People” came down by bus a day or 2 before me. Paul, an Englishman, and his French girl have been here a week or 2. Interesting, as nearly all Europeans I’ve met are.

The ones I’m mostly associating with are Steve and Elaine, married, from Calif. They are instructors at a “Summerhill” school, high school equivalent — extremely liberal — experimental — for bright kids who just don’t toe the line at ordinary schools. They brought 6 or 7 kids to Mexico — 3 went back — a couple are living in private homes around Oaxaca, and one, Russell, is here on the each with us. He is young and seems very unsure of himself, but is pretty bright and very independent.

Yesterday met a fellow from Germany and his girl from Denmark who are staying in the village. Also met an American about 45 who is here with the diving association. Sort of a meathead.

Bob (from Calif), Steve, and I go swimming in the nude. I’m a little self-conscious around the girls who don’t go in the nude — I’m hoping to get over it.

Last nite Steve, Elaine and I had a nice discussion, then I went over the Bob C’s palapa for a smoke [*marijuana, not tobacco, which I’ve never smoked*]. Didn’t seem that good.

Will probably be eating most meals at Steve’s. Went to breakfast this a.m. down the road a way. Had tamales and frijoles with tortillas and coffee. Pretty good for 2 pesos. Will probably be eating there nearly every day. Am waiting to extend my visa or get one for 6 months.

### January 8 (1400)

Just loafing today. Slept better last nite than the one before. Might get used to the hammock yet. Had a good long swim this a.m. Getting the hang of body surfing. Yesterday we were all, including Elaine, swimming in the nude. Several people, including 2 Americans, from Pto Angel showed up and watched for a while. Acted like they might want to get us off the beach or

otherwise cause trouble. Nothing has happened yet. Guess we will have to wear clothes from now on. Have had a nice long talk with Elaine today. Mostly about sex, growing up, etc.

### January 9 (1100)

Haven't been back to town since moving out to the beach. Don't need to. Steve goes in every day or 2 for food, etc. Going to Pochutla now and is mailing a correogram for me to Mom asking for a \$100 money order. Expect I'll need it before I reach San Salvador via Yucatan and BH.

Last nite we had a fish fry in the coconut grove. Wrapped fish up in banana leaves and put them under coals. Turned out pretty nicely. Smoked a little before and a lot after. Retired to Bob Saxaphone's (George Xylophone) and Up With Bob's palapa. Had a candle in the sand which added a lot of atmosphere. Ed and Marsha who live on the hill at the end of the beach were present and brought some little native instruments — recorders (flutes), a cheap saxophone, and a couple of harmonicas. Bob Saxaphone got out his real sax and really got going on it. Heavy grooving. We were all playing at once which really made some weird sounds. Bob California took some of the wax that ran onto the sand and set it on edge around the light. Made eerie formations like works of art, sculpture. Steve and I seemed to be grooving together on the same things — made similar interpretations of the sax pieces. Later Paul, Steve and I started the word game in which you say the first word that comes to mind. The series always ended with England, the Queen, sucks. I laughed hysterically most of the evening. Had a good time.

Have been going to the "Tortilla Lady's" for breakfast every morning. Very good food in a peasant atmosphere. Pigs and chickens walk through the hut. She cooks with wood of course and black pots, etc. Really quaint.

We all undress freely around each other. Lainey has very nice breasts. Stubbed my big toe in the surf this a.m. — is very sore and swollen.

### January 10 (1130)

Big toe got worse last nite but is better this morning. Last nite we had an extremely good fish dinner with tomato sauce and brown rice with tortillas. Paul and Jasee (Eng. and Fr.) fixed the fish and Lainey did everything else. The fire was fixed with 4 green coconuts and frond stalks laid over a grill. Had no plates and 3 spoons for the 5 people. Just ate with our fingers.

There are more arrivals on the beach. An old couple who were here before are back — from San Francisco. They are about 50's — smoke, etc. Pretty nice. I just got back from their palapa where a party was going on. Bob Calif has a water pipe made out of coconut shell. Very ethnic. Had a ball of opium in the bowl along with grass. A group of surfers came yesterday in a blue VW but haven't come back.

There is a lot of complaining being done by the longer residents of this beach about so many people being here. There are 14 now without the surfers. It's not too bad now, but could be thrown off the beach by the Mexicans. Wouldn't blame them really.

### January 11 (1400)

On acid today and right now. Don't know how this writing idea will turn out. Have had a good trip — compliments to Ed and Marsha. Went thru a very big intersocial thing — in large extent regarding sex. Am down somewhat, but still get "away" occasionally. Nearly all aspects of it have been pleasant. Some physical sensations no.

### January 12 (0800)

Yesterday was really a weird experience. Ed came in the palapa while I was writing so had to quit. I should try to record as many things as I can think of about the experience. Took a tiny tablet at 0830 and was starting to be affected by 0900. First was a sort of tingling sensation all over and even inside bones. Not really pleasant — sort of agitating. The same sensation lasted throughout the trip tho wasn't annoying after a while. Started smoking along in the afternoon but think the acid wore off by 1630 or so. For the first couple of hours it was really intense.

I felt a great need to get rid of all inhibitions and relate intensely with someone. Ed seemed to be most understanding. I felt I was on a higher level of understanding than all "straights" and also most of the acid heads. Felt a brotherhood with other "understanders."

Felt great need for sex experience — talked about it with Ed and Marsha. They were high too, of course, as were Bob Calif and Brenda and Bob Saxophone. Went for a walk down the beach and felt very alone — needing an intimate companion. Ed and Marsha were together — Bob and Brenda were together. Don't feel much in common with Bob Sax. Couldn't relate to "straights" because I felt they couldn't understand. Talked to Lainey for a while, who has never taken acid but has been around people a lot on acid. Was deeply concerned about self-consciousness. I felt no one was high but myself.

After about 3 hours I seemed to be coming down a lot. Went to Bernie and Betty's (the old couple). Was talking with Ed some there and got very confused as to what had been said and what had not. We found that at least one entire conversation (about 2 minutes) was entirely imagined by me. Could not stay concentrated on anything for very long — mind would wander on and on and I could keep control for only brief instances. In all, it was very pleasant and educational and I would like to do it again. Would be much better to have a girl at the time tho. Except for that, this was a near perfect situation to trip.

Steve and Lainey left yesterday for Oaxaca to meet her father. Will return Wednesday the 15<sup>th</sup>. Supposed to bring me a nice hammock.

### January 13 (1430)

Went diving this a.m. Nearly everyone on the beach went with Bob Calif in his VW bus to the next beach west. About 10 of us altogether. Was fun. My first impulse upon entering the water with the mask was fear. Water was pretty clear but a little murky. Ed and I pried some abalone off the rocks in pretty rough water. Also saw a moray eel about 4 or 5 feet long.

On the way along the beach we came upon a local boat with oyster divers. Bob, Ed, and I swam out to take a look. Oysters look like rocks growing on large boulders. Must be pried off with an iron bar just like abalone. Yesterday I bought a few oysters fresh from the sea and ate them raw. Rather tasteless — good with lemon or lime.

Bob has a tape recorder in his VW and played some Judy Collins and Bob Dylan. Really sounded good. Wish I had a guitar here to tinker with. There are 5 more people here — in 2 groups — from San Francisco — regular hippie types. Jason, one, has also traveled in North Africa. Says it is nice. Did some hash [*hashish*] with him last nite — first time. Seems to be just a concentrate of grass.

Guess I should describe the people here as I get to know them. Bob Calif is from Sacramento and is a professional dealer in grass, acid etc. No speed or hard stuff. Has been to Pto Angel for the past 5 winters. Really knows how to vacation. He and Brenda always have something new and different — frisbee, diving equip, cans of cookies and candy, grass, acid, etc. Nearly every nite have a fire outside and a peace pipe to pass. Norbert, who is not living on the beach but visits frequently, was born in what is now Poland — was Germany. Paul, the Englishman and Josee, the French girl, met in Isla Mujeres. Josee may be going to S. America in 2 or 3 months. Paul is going back to England. Feasible that Josee and I might travel together. A 2 or 3 week old puppy is my roommate while Steve and Lainey are gone. Very much of a pest. Crawls into my sleeping bag at nite and bites.

It seems it is impossible to extend my 30-day visa so will have to go to Guatemala before Yucatan. May go to Pto Barrios first, visit Tikal, then go to Belice and on to Yucatan. Thought about picking up moto first but would incur extra expense. Would leave here now but must wait until the money comes — another 5-7 days, I guess. Not unhappy here — just sort of anxious to hit the road again.

#### January 14 (0930)

Just got back from another breakfast at the tortilla lady's — noodle soup and frijoles and superb coffee this time. Frijoles are at every meal — sometimes with eggs or fish soup or cabbage soup, etc. It is always very tasty. Mrs Cruz (tortilla lady) and her daughter Susana (13, very pretty) prepare food for her family and give us the same. There are now 7 palapas in our immediate vicinity. So many people make the beach seem dirty.

A few days ago Lainey suggested that I finish school in Europe. If I could be accepted and the GI Bill would apply, I would certainly prefer it over going back to MU [*University of Missouri*]. Could catch a boat from Panama around either way.

#### January 15 (0700)

Steve and Lainey are expected back today — with my hammock. I must get this place cleaned up. I find I'm not much of a do-it-yourselfer — not inclined to build fires, cook, build palapas, husk coconuts — anything actually — just lazy.

My pen was “pinched” and this borrowed one seems out of ink.

(1000)

Have just been to eat at the tortilla lady’s — had rice and beans — very good. This pluma is borrowed from Bob Saxophone. He is a pretty sharp fellow, once you get accustomed to the weirdness. He has a long untrimmed beard, rimless glasses with wire frame, large nose, and a smile in which his eyes nearly close. He is practicing yoga. I passed his palapa and he apparently had just finished a meditation. I asked how the yoga was coming along and he replied with his smile and very slowly and softly, “Very well, thank you.” Really weird — from Toronto. Very quiet and unobtrusive.

I was talking with Josee at breakfast this morning and found out that her brother is on the French Olympic rowing team. He competed in Tokyo and also in Mexico while Josee was here. We talked some more about going to S.A. The idea of our travelling together seems ok to her. She is very pretty in face, very sweet personality, a little plump — doesn’t seem very sexual to me. I wouldn’t desire much sex while traveling anyway.

Yesterday Paul, Josee and I hitchhiked to Puerto for dinner. There was some sort of meeting at the restaurant for certain local people — think it was to discuss whether or not to build a better road to Oaxaca. Had a lobster salad and fried fish — very good. There was a local band there to parade music — 2 guitars, 1 fiddle, one trumpet and drums. A few people danced. A man explained that there are 7 different dances native to the coast — different from the ones in Oaxaca and the mountains.

Walked all the way back and stopped by Ed and Marsha’s house. Talked about the acid trip. It seems that I had a very strong urge to be completely uninhibited, but realized I couldn’t because of other people on the beach. This brought on a strong need to relate intimately with someone — also caused the self-consciousness. We talked about life and man’s place in the universe. Ed says he feels a part of the universe in the same way that a tree is — says it gives him great satisfaction. I get no lasting satisfaction from that realization. I don’t feel despondent or in need of being important and think of my life as a split second in eternity, one of decillions on this earth, this earth being a speck of dust in an immense universe. I just do what I need to do to care for my own existence — “looking out for number 1.” The universe is relative to my life; my life is not relative to the universe.

One of the new arrivals on the beach has a telescope. The others looked thru it last nite — I probably will tonite.

Bob Calif is getting in about 80 caps of acid in a couple of weeks. I probably won’t be around that long. In fact, I have to be out of the country 14 days from today.

January 16 (1630)

Steve and Lainey aren't back yet. Guess they'll be along eventually. Time is starting to grow short for me on this beach. A week more is the absolute maximum I can stay here. Min of 4 days traveling from here to Guatemala border. Hear a lot of nice things about Tuxtla and Las Casas. Might spend a couple of days there if possible.

Think I'll go on to San Salvador before going to Yucatan and travel by moto. That way I could more easily visit Copán, Honduras, and Tikal, Guat. Would have to ferry the moto from Pto Barrios to a road-end to the north. Might be a little more expensive.

Last nite we smoked some green stuff of Bob Calif's — I was totally stoned. Bob Sax was telling me all about mysticism, yoga, Hindu religion, etc. I'm not so impressed. Apparently, some people do reach another level of consciousness by meditation — haven't noticed any of them around here, although there are several aspirants. Bernie and Betty seem to be old pros. Bob Sax has been with it a year or so, Bob Calif, Ed and Marsha are studying it and Paul believes in it. I'm a bit skeptical, but don't kick it completely.

Yesterday p.m. I began and finished Anthem, by Ayn Rand. On the same lines as 1984 and Brave New World. BNW is by far the best. Also finished today Norman Mailer's The Siege of Chicago — an eye-opener. Mailer really has a way with words.

This a.m. read part of a little book on astronomy — I've had a hot flash for astronomy for a couple of days now. Would really like to look thru that telescope down the beach.

Haven't eaten anything today but two sweet breads and a tangerine — have no money at all except traveler's cheques. Must go to Pochutla to cash them. Maybe I'll do that tomorrow — just now thought of it really — been waiting for a ride. This beach environment makes me very, very lazy. Have known for some time that I must go to Pochutla but have been putting it off.

Not having very good luck reading the book in Spanish about the Mayas — very slow and tedious, must have a dictionary close by at all times.

Felt distressed in the large intestine last night — woke this morning with the runs — seems ok now. Is the first time I have been what could be called sick since beginning this trip.

Haven't been for my daily swim yet. 'Tis a necessity. I swim in the nude usually but leave my clothes on the beach. Others are more blatant. Many of the beach residents now are genuine hippy types. Is interesting.

#### January 17 (1600)

Steve and Lainey still aren't back. Went to Cholutla today to cash a traveler's cheque — checked the correo and found that a letter from Mom with a \$100 money order was there. Rather surprised, actually, at how rapid the mail is. Tried to cash the MO at the bank but they required the signature of a local person who would vouch for me. Rather than hassle with them I will cash it in Oaxaca.

Am ready to leave any time now, whenever Steve and Lainey get back. Paul and Josee are leaving Monday (20 Jan). Will go with them if I'm feeling better. Have had the runs since yesterday a.m. — have an ache in my large intestine, also gonads. Must lay off greasy, cooked food I guess. Perhaps a steady diet of coconuts, tangerines and papaya will soon straighten me up. Bob Calif eats corn meal, brown rice, sesame seeds etc. all the time and seems pretty healthy.

It occurred to me yesterday that I could deal in acid in CZ — talked to Bob about it. He said he could send me all I wanted at \$2 per cap. Could be sold for \$7 or \$8. Could run into quite a bit of money. *[Readers: I did not pursue the opportunity. I have never sold drugs.]*

Up With Bob left this morning — went to Pochutla with me. I was really surprised to find out he is in the Army. He is on orders for Vietnam as 11C20 *[an infantry position]*. His leave expires on 20 Jan, and he doesn't plan on going back. I sympathize with the idea. Gave him my address in the CZ in case he gets that far south. He is going home to San Antonio now for a few days, then is returning to Mexico. He has a lot more cool than I thought.

The waves have been quite large today. Last nite one came as far as Bob's palapa.

In her letter, Mom seemed very concerned about my activities. Said she has heard of Pto. Angel somewhere. Most likely it was about grass *[another term for marijuana]*. It gives me sort of a guilty feeling to think that she might suspect some of my activities. It shouldn't, since I don't do anything I consider wrong.

Also said it has been very wintry at home. The weather here has been perfect — no rain, no clouds, quite warm during the day, refreshingly cool at nite.

### January 19 (1963)

I don't remember any special reason why I didn't make an entry yesterday — just didn't get around to it. Went to Puerto yesterday p.m. with Paul, Josee and another Englishman here visiting the Sullivans, a resident American family in Puerto.

Had some ceviche at the restaurant — later went to a house rented by a young German and his Danish wife. They seem to be extremely sharp people. Hitchhiked from NY to Mex City for \$10, both. He speaks English with hardly any accent at all. They are very self-sufficient people. Will be in Ecuador for 6 months starting in July to do a photographic study of an Andean Indian family — in a village on the Panamerican hwy near the Colombian border. If I make it down that way I will certainly try to look them up. They made some anis with bulk alcohol — very stout.

Stayed pretty late and the 4 of us walked back to the beach about 10 o'clock. Had heard stories of hungry dog packs killing a donkey nearby and attacking a woman right in Puerto. There seemed to be thousands of dogs, judging from the barking all the way back. We were accompanied by 2 very good dogs — would really have been worried if they had not been along — was a bit anyway.



Went body surfing this morning. There have been really good waves last 3 days — large and smooth. Was a big one this morning and I fell out in front of it and landed on my head. Smarted a little; within a second after it happened the idea of going unconscious occurred to me. Would be curtains, most likely.

There are now 12 palapas and about 22 people on this beach — too crowded for comfort, really. Don't get in each other's way but it ruins the romance partially of being here.

Paul and Josee left a few minutes ago — hitching to Mex to New Orleans to Miami to Nassau. There is a plane unscheduled from Nassau to Luxembourg 3 times weekly — cheapest trans-Atlantic rate. Gave Josee my address in CZ and got Paul's family's address — may get over there in a year or so: T. Paul, *[full name and address omitted for privacy]*, Kennington, Oxford

Also got Calif Bob's:

Bob T.

*[full name and address omitted for privacy]*

Sacramento, Ca 95838

Josee told me about company FYDEP (Fomento y Desarrollo del Peten) in Flores Guat where one can have a free bedroom and shower and can catch a truck to Tikal. She said there is also a free place to stay in Pto Modesto.

Another student of Steve and Lainey's, Dave, arrived from Oaxaca last nite — said they will come back Tuesday. I was starting to get worried. They have 106 pesos of mine plus some clothes, including the jungle fatigues to be washed. Guess I will leave Wed a.m. — have 7 days to get to Guat. Dave said they have a hammock for me.

January 20 (0730)

Got Ed's address last nite:

Ed and Marsha D.

*[full name and address omitted for privacy]*

Redington Beach, Fla.

Don't know when I would ever see him again, but is a pretty good friend. *[I now live in Sarasota, Florida, an hour's drive from that address, where a new house now stands according to zillow.com. A reunion after 54 years would have been a hoot!]*

Last nite I had corn meal with Bob Sax. He is the weirdest person I've ever met, and told him so, trying to find out something about him. He does not try to be logical; meditates much of the time, reads the bible, etc. Will not try to explain a point so it can be understood, rather try to make it seem more occult, hard to understand. He is only 20 yrs old. The whole thing seems pretty silly to me. He has never heard of Kant, Russell, Sartre — seemingly no philosopher since Socrates, except for the people who write the books he reads on Zen, meditation, etc. Maybe I'm

just square, but I think truth can only be found thru logical and objective thought. I really tried to rationalize for his viewpoint last nite, but couldn't convince myself.

### January 21 (1800)

In Miahuatlán tonite. Steve and Lainey were supposed to return to Pto Angel today and I was going to get an early start tomorrow morning, but a fellow (John) who has been on the beach about a week was leaving this a.m., so I decided to go with him and flag down Steve. Never met them tho — must not have come today. John is in a bread delivery truck turned camper headed directly to Brit Honduras. Might go all the way with him. He wants some help on gas money — don't know how much — I can spare some. Had a flat in the mountains 'tween here and PA and are having the spare fixed now. Will probably go on toward Oaxaca tonite.

John is a regular hippie type — long hair to shoulders, takes no drugs (used to), heavy into meditation and Eastern philosophy. We talked about it some along the way and I get flashes of “almost understanding” the Zen viewpoint. It discounts rationality in the Western definition and science. Everything must be regarded as merely a part and indistinguishable from the whole, the universe. John was once an atheist, is very sincere, apparently has a reasonable understanding of Eastern philosophy — is an intellectual unlike Bob Sax. Went to Stanford U and graduated last June from Antioch College, Ohio.

Went in a local tienda [*store, shop*] here in Miahuatlán and got some pan [*bread*] — put cheese on one — honey on the other. Were very tasty. Also bought this pen.

The kids here are amazed by our appearance, mainly the fact that we are gringos. I'm not as uncomfortable attracting a lot of attention as I used to be. The experience on the beach really did me a lot of good, I believe, but still am anxious to get traveling again.

### January 22 (0800)

Camped out just north of Miahuatlán. John has decided to go back to the States instead of BH so I guess I will be hitchhiking for Guatemala as planned.

Been thinking a lot last few days about going back to the farm — is really appealing. There is no reason to travel — enjoy it, sort of, but is no blissful state. Main reason could be just to have been those places. John thinks the farm is the place to be — get a hip wife. I still think in terms of Oriental-type wife. Should shack-up for a long time and then think about it.

Had eggnog made with coconut milk this a.m.

Still haven't discussed with John how much he wants for my riding along. Have 12 pesos plus \$20 traveler's cheques + \$100 MO.

### (2300)

So much has happened I couldn't possibly get it all written down tonight. Gave John 20 pesos for the trip to Oaxaca (where I am now). Got on the road to Tehuantepec and hitched for about 15 min when Paul and Josee came by in a man's car going to Mitla. The man was going to Tuxtla, but I decided to stay in Oax with Steve and Lainey, whom Paul and Josee had met by chance here. Am staying at their apt now — really nice.

After supper went downtown (all). I met two fellows who are driving to Chile — leaving here tomorrow. Am supposed to meet them at 1000 tomorrow at the *zocalo* [*central town plaza in Mexican Spanish*]. Have mixed thoughts about taking the ride. If my visa were not about to expire, I would stay here for a while. Will find out at the tourist bureau tomorrow if I must leave the country to get a new visa or if it could be done in Mex City.

While talking with the 2 fellows, a French couple who teach in Lima, Peru, stopped to ask about magic mushrooms. Their address in Lima:

Colegio Franco-peruano  
Apartado 2343  
Lima, Peru

Steve and Lainey are pretty definitely planning to come to Panama — want to sell their 69 Toyota beforehand. I will ask around in San Salvador and BH. Their address:  
Steve & Elaine T.

*[full name and address omitted for privacy]*  
Oax, Oax, Mex

Am totally enjoying this way of life. Especially today, with so many things happening and doing with so many people. Too tired now to continue.

January 24 (0630)

The sun is rising now in Salina Cruz. Yesterday morn I went to the tourist bureau and found out that I could go to Mex City and get a 6 month visa, but decided to take the long ride anyway. Steve and Lainey are moving out of their apt and I wouldn't stay around Oaxaca.

Went to the *zocalo* at 1000 and met Bill and Jack. Got away about noon. Bill is a paraplegic — had polio at 5 — now has braces and crutches. Huge arms and shoulders. Both are really nice guys. A little less hip than the beach population.

Went to the ruins at Mitla again. They are even more commercialized than Monte Alban. About 40 little shops in 3 rows selling souvenirs. Americans coming and going all the time. My beard is getting to look decent now and I draw some condescending stares from the tourists. I'm glad I can look like a traveler now and not a tourist.

Arrived in Salina Cruz late in the afternoon — tried to find a good place to camp out. Stopped at a little bar on the beach. 3 shrimp fishermen were there — spoke tiny bit English. They were drunk but pretty orderly. Soon the conversation grew boring for me. Drove all over town and outside looking for a place to camp. Finally found the road up to the lighthouse and went on

past. Are now on a promontory looking over the sea — very pretty. Will probably go on to Tuxtla today.

Bill owns the Jeepster we're in. It is equipped with hand controls for gas and brake — has auto trans. Jack drives some too.

Went to the market last nite and had some panuchos — small round tortillas with lettuce, tomato and shredded chicken on top. Tasty.

### January 25 (2030)

Left Salina Cruz about 1600 yesterday. Soon after leaving I started feeling queasy, then nauseous with diarrhea. Had to stop about 4 times to vomit and crap. Couldn't keep down pills. Had to stay in a hotel — could hardly walk — had splitting headache. Feeling lots better now — no appetite, however. Couldn't figure out what caused it. Could have been a pork taco I ate in Salina Cruz but Jack had one too and didn't get sick.

Tuxtla seemed to be a very modern city — I was in no mood to take notes. We are now in San Cristóbal de las Casas. I had heard it was a beautiful town but I don't see it yet. The Indians here are very colorful. Different clothing from those toward Mex City. Different style hats also. We stopped along the way today and talked to a group of Indian boys. They spoke Spanish and their language (sounded like "Sosil"). They appeared very healthy and happy. Very handsome.

The Guatemala border is closed on Sunday (tomorrow) so we will loll around here tomorrow and go to Comitán tomorrow evening where there is a Guatemalan consulate. My visa is still good but Jack and Bill don't have visas.

### January 26 (2200)

In Huehuetenango Guatemala tonite. Left San Cristóbal this a.m. about 1100. Got to Comitán where there was supposed to be a Guatemalan consulate, but there wasn't. We happened upon a local soccer game that we watched for a while. Found out there wasn't a consulate and is possible to cross the border on Sunday, so we went on.

At the border there was a hassle because the official didn't believe that "Jeep" was the make of the car, instead of a style. Got that straightened out after a while. Jack and Bill got tourist cards rather than visas.

Passed thru some beautiful mountains after the border. Huehuetenango is a pretty place — gives the impression of being isolated but apparently there are a lot of travelers here. After a nice supper we were watching a marimba band in a balcony over the zocalo and I noticed some blacks walking by — smiled and waved thinking they were from the States. They were from Pto Barrios. 1 from Jamaica and 1 from Brit Guiana who had been traveling for 3 years — headed for the States. They invited us to drinks at a local cantina — had pleasant conversation. I really like to hear the Jamaican talk.

We are staying at a little pension for 50 cents apiece. (1 Quetzal = \$1) — cheapest place in town. Mailed postcards from San Cristóbal this morning to Mom, Ray, and Ron. Also met a couple — Swiss hitchhiking thru S.A. on way to States.

### January 27 (0930)

Was interrupted last nite by the black group, along with an American travelling in a 48 Desoto. They were going to a fiesta about 4k out of town and wanted us to go along. We got up, went to Reggie's apt (Brit Guiana) — nice place — rooms with a black Peace Corps rep.

### January 28 (1500)

Was interrupted again and haven't had a good chance to write. In Panajachel on Lago Atitlán now — arrived yesterday evening. Last nite I developed a huge set of fever blisters — even into one nostril — really miserable. Would really be enjoying this part of the journey if I weren't hounded by nausea, runs ("turistas") and these blisters.

Will start on evening of 26 Jan. Never did get to that fiesta. One of the black fellows had some mota seeds which he ground up and rolled into joints. Weren't so good. I had diarrhea aches all the time.

We went to a little cantina and had conversation. Victor Green (Vic, from Jamaica) really is a sharp person — an atheist from what I can determine, unmarried, supports concubine, son, and some other family from proceeds from radio repair shop. Has saying, "Despues de esta vida, no hay otra" [*English: After this life, there is no other*], so sets about enjoying this one. His abiding principle is love. Loves people who like him, not those who don't.

Had some sandals, almost shoes, made (\$2). Drove on to here last nite. Physically very pretty but definitely a resort town — not my kind of place.

Last nite met a weird group — 2 girls, 2 guys. France, Australia and U.S. They were evicted from Mexico because of suspected drugs. Hippie-looking types. The French guy and the Australian girl had been at Pto Angel during Christmas — knew Bob, Brenda, Bernie, Betty — seem ok. The other couple is different — the guy is really psychotic — worries about things. The girl told me she might travel with me, also Bill — got cuddly with Jack. Seems to want to affirm her sexuality.

I've been pondering whether to stay here awhile — the weird guy keeps saying he wants me to and meet some friends. One reason is the weird girl but I wouldn't really want her along — would be nice to jump on — she wouldn't do it anyway, just talking. We are leaving in the morning.

### January 29 (1400)

In Guatemala City having jeep worked on — lube, wash. Took about 3 ½ hrs to drive up here. Yesterday afternoon I strung up my hammock at the weird people's place where I slept the last 2

nites, and played their guitar. Really was pleasant — almost decided to stay. A German about 35 has been in Panajachel for nearly 2 yrs and spends some time with the weirdos.

We went to his house overlooking the lake last nite for dinner. Absolutely beautiful view — the 3 volcanos visible across the lake and thru pines. His house (Akim) is 2-room — open — adorned with all local things — really impressive. I was told he writes pornography in German and makes a living publishing it.

We had some very good rice, red beans, mushrooms and artichokes. All of us were there — the 4 weirdos, the German, Bill, Jack and me. Passed around a pipe — I didn't want any — took one puff — slight effect. Lighting was with candles — really nice.

I was in a pensive mood and thought some about art — the others seem oriented toward art — not much was accomplished. Came back late and slept in hammock. Would be nice in warm weather, but is impossible with blanket. I was pretty miserable — finally went to a chair. The night was very cold.

Did a lot of thinking. In my miserable state I was completely disenchanted with bum travelling — wanted to get back to farm. Have been thinking a lot about that anyway — the farm is very appealing — am pretty sure I'll wind up there eventually.

Camping on Lake Atitlán were several people — a couple who have been driving a jeep all over Europe, Russia, E. Europe, some of S. Am. A NZ fellow had been travelling 14 years. Most interesting is a Canadian-German who was in the Nazi army at Leningrad — seemed to have no ill-effects from it — told some interesting tales. Also a very nice German woman (with husband) — a child in the war. She says there is no poverty behind the iron curtain — speaks highly of the Red countries. There were several other campers there also — too many for me — also made everything expensive.

We are going on into El Salvador today hopefully. Guatemala City is pretty Americanized it seems. I'm going to a supermarket now to get some donuts.

### January 30 (2200)

In San Salvador at the cheap (\$1.20/nite) boarding house near the centro. Arrived in Escuintla yesterday and the wheel that had been worked on was overheated. Bill is very uptight about things, his car included, and irrationally insisted on going back to Guatemala City.

Arranged to meet Bill and Jack at noon today so I spent the morning sitting in the park and a little restaurant reading a paper — the headline: "Diez Guatemaltecas Asesinadas en Mexico" [*English: Ten Guatemalans Assassinated in Mexico*]. Actually, 10 girls had crossed the border at Tapachula and were killed. The headline seemed intended to stir anti-Mexican sentiment.

The border crossing into El Salvador was uneventful — ran us around a lot. I get rather short-tempered with these formalities.

When we got into S. Salvador we met the owner of a gas station, store, and 16 taxis — he led us around to good places to stay and to the telephone building for Bill to make a call to the States. He was extremely nice.

I treated Jack and Bill to supper and we parted — has been a long ride.

I'm not too happy with this place — will find another tomorrow — also found the United Van Lines office [*where Ron's Velocette motorcycle was being stored*]. Might be in S. Sal for a week or so. Lots to do.

### January 31 (1500)

Have changed rooms — now in a private home very near where the moto is (4 colones/day, 2 ½ colones = \$1) — room and meals. The moto seems intact. A mechanic is coming later this afternoon to take a look. The spare parts were here — should be no problem.

Went to US Embassy a while ago — got letter and \$100 MO from Mom. A young Chileño is here waiting on a van to Panama — good idea for hitching. Has helped me a lot in getting around town.

Fever blisters are starting to go away — still loose bowels. I have lost a lot of weight — thighs like ½ inch of touching when ankles are together. Just as thin as when I got out of the Army. I feel very weak and listless all the time — can't enjoy traveling in that state. Being home seems very appealing. Haven't decided yet whether I'll go back north to Tikal and Brit Hond — depends largely on how I get along with the bike. Seems awfully big. Also want to stay here and sort of convalesce for a while.

### February 1 (1300)

The mechanic came last nite and finished late this morn — cost \$8 — about twice what it should have been but he seemed to do a good job. I also paid the boss at the office \$6 for transportation to here from wherever the bike broke down.

When the gaskets set I can put oil back in the clutch box and it will be ready to go. I am a bit uneasy about riding that thing in traffic right off the bat — it's a lot bigger than the Yamaha. I feel very weak, too. I weighed on some good scales this morn — 141 lbs. Have no energy or interest in anything — been trying to decide whether to go to the Carib coast or on to Panama. In my physical state I wouldn't enjoy more travelling. Think I'll go on.

Have heard reports of new trouble in Panama affecting border crossing. Can find out more in San José.

The food here is very good — my appetite is back and always hungry. Perhaps my ambition would return if I stuck around here and ate awhile.

Tomorrow is Sunday and everything will be closed. If I could get the bike out I could go for a ride. Don't really feel like it. Must get visa for Nicaragua and maybe Costa Rica here. That means I'll be staying until at least Tuesday.

(1730)

Got some oil and put it in the bike — a lot of it leaked out — I don't know if I just overfilled it or if there is a gasket leak. Started to take it for a ride but didn't. I'm rather scared of it. The idea of riding it to Panama is awesome. Have been lying here on my bed thinking — am in pretty much of a daze — not cognizant of what is going on. If I had noticed what the mechanic was doing I would know where the oil is coming from. I watched him all the time — don't know where my mind was.

Read Norman Mailer's account of the Miami convention — finished a few minutes ago — got almost nothing out of it. Pretty discouraged, generally — not disconsolate — just dazed — low level of consciousness.

Fever blisters still bother me. Am a little self-conscious of their appearance. For some reason I avoid being seen in public — don't want to be looked at or seen as being different — American. The beard bothers me in that respect. Can hardly talk in Spanish or understand it. Don't like the feeling of being skinny and weak. The men in the office seem to be making fun of my greenness with the moto — could be my imagination.

It wouldn't seem possible that I would be homesick but I think a lot about home — all pleasant thoughts. Right now it doesn't seem feasible that I would continue travelling — especially hitching. Feel like going "straight." I'm sure these attitudes will pass, or at least modify greatly, but I want to get them written down so they won't be forgotten and misunderstood later.

February 2 (1900)

Have come out of my slump somewhat — still think it was partially a realization of truth tho. I don't have much desire to travel any more in Latin America, or in any poor peasant area. Think I might like to catch a boat to Australia from Panama, maybe work awhile to make it on around to Europe via India. Just a thought — no need to try to make plans.

Wrote letters to Mom, Ray, and Ron today — plan to stay here for replies — I need the nourishment from these steady meals — am feeling a little stronger and more energetic now — might start my exercises again — try to build up strength, poise, stamina.

Last nite in the TV room a lawyer struck up a conversation with me. He is Arabic but was born here — is married to a blond girl from Madrid — speaks some English — knows the States and Europe — in some ways seems different from the Latins although he looks very typical — less concerned with "properness" than I imagine Latins to be, not knowing them well. He said he thought I was "empty" in the head when he first saw me — then saw my book by Bertrand Russell — was impressed by my having been to Vietnam. He invited me to go to a movie along with his wife — Vivir por Vivir, or "Live for Life" — was in English — Spanish subtitles. Was



very good, I think. Such movies are beyond the realm of entertainment, although they are very enjoyable — they have a point to make and cinema can express it best. I didn't have any better clothes to wear and I thought he might be a bit embarrassed by my sandals, no socks, etc. Said he didn't care, though, and apparently didn't. I really enjoyed the nite out — time sort of drags around here — up to now haven't felt like going out wandering. "The Graduate" is in town, I think — might go see it this week.

Walked downtown with the 3 letters this afternoon — noticed 4 American-looking people going down a street. On the way back I went down the street to see where they might have gone — met a young fellow in a suit — he mistook me for a Peace Corp volunteer, which the others apparently were.

I don't enjoy just walking around a city with nothing to do — feel self-conscious — previously I have thought I should be rather ashamed of being American, but suddenly today I felt rather proud of being American, white, tall, etc. I wouldn't trade situations with very many people — especially down here. I have better opportunity for everything and also better attitude I think.

A notion I brought up in the letter to Mom today is that this trip is not supposed to be just for fun, but for experience — widening, education. I will be glad that I've done it, no matter whether I enjoy it or not. Still, there seems that there should be a limit to what you should do just so you will have done it. Every experience can be educational, no matter if it is tramping around the world or staying on the farm for a year.

### February 3 (1700)

The mechanic is coming tomorrow morning, presumably — I wish this thing was out of my hair. The thought occurred to me that I could leave and let these people resume charge, eventually selling it, but I should be capable of handling this situation. It would put Ron back in a bind if I didn't take care of it for him. Also, Jon has said that he had faith in me so that he could send me off to do something and be assured that it would be done well. That means a lot to me — perhaps it is not consistent with my existential point of view, but so be it. Therefore, I have resolved to ride that thing to Panama, or sell it for a good price. Will be much more satisfied with myself that way.

Went with Carlos, the Chileño, this morn to find out if anything is needed in the way of a provisional license for Salvador — it is not so long as I go straight for the border. While waiting for a bus I saw Bill drive by — flagged him down. He had been side-swiped in Honduras — gone on to Managua — chickened out of going to Chile alone — is going back to the States. Jack flew to Mex City from Managua — was very sick.

Plan to see "The Graduate" tonite with Carlos. Am feeling lots better — had a double meal today for lunch. 3 good meals a day are bringing me up. Weight 146 today with boots — was 141 before with sandals. Did some exercises last nite, should keep it up. Would like to go on a force-feed if the house doesn't mind.

Time gets rather heavy around here — nothing to do — don't get much out of wandering around town — need some social companions, I guess. Hate to think it, though. Might check out the U. of El Salvador, just to get an idea of its style. Also will get visa for Nicaragua — that's about all I've thought of to do. Always look forward to mealtimes — something to do. Strange. I enjoyed loafing at Pto Angel on the beach. Here, tho, there is no place to do it. Don't like to hang around the house with the women — don't like the company at the office. Will try to find someplace else tomorrow, maybe.

#### February 4 (1630)

The mechanic came this morning and just finished a little while ago — a general tune-up and adjusted the clutch. The clutch being too loose was the reason it wouldn't start. I guess it's all ready to go now. Might leave day after tomorrow early in the morning (less traffic) and have the letters forwarded to San José. I would just as soon leave this place — bored mostly, also anxious to get to Ray's. Am getting horny also — best place to remedy that is in Panama.

Went with Carlos last nite to see "The Graduate" — was pretty good, outstanding perhaps, but not really fantastic. Was a very pleasant diversion, tho. Have been eating double meals lately — am not hungry all the time now, but still look forward to meals anyhow — an activity.

Am more optimistic about riding the moto now — feel stronger. Still don't trust the mechanics of it tho. Will be glad to get it to the Canal Zone finally. Guess I'll just get on it early one morning and take off for Panama without any practice. Never can tell, I might really like it.

#### February 8 (2000)

In Nacaome Honduras recovering from the mishap. Decided to leave San Sal early Wed 5 Feb — there is a Nic consulate in Choluteca. That visa was the only thing holding me up. Left about 0530 — very little traffic — got on the right road easily. When I woke that morning my immediate sensation was fear — I was dreading the trip by moto even tho I was feeling much stronger and confident than before. Stopped at San Miguel for breakfast and soon arrived the Tica Bus for San José on which Carlos was riding. We talked a while and made plans to meet in Managua that evening. Met later at the border. Wonder what he thought when I didn't show up.

By the border, I had developed a great deal of confidence about the moto — was enjoying it greatly. It had been hard to start but I corrected that myself with a carburetor adjustment. The Tica Bus and I left the border station together and I was following it. The road is new asphalt, mostly straight, smooth, just perfect. I was exhilarated by the ride — was thinking I might like to do some traveling by moto after all.

Then the front wheel started a shimmy — lasted for maybe a second. Not being accustomed to the bike, or any bike, I did nothing by reflex except manually try to stop the shimmy, which of course didn't work. Perhaps rapid acceleration would have brought it out of it — I don't know, will find out later I suppose from a more experienced cyclist.

Anyway, I went off the right side — going at least 60, I believe — had been doing more than that behind the bus. Had a sickening feeling going off — knew I would be hurt, was conscious of being in Honduras, foreign situation. Don't remember hitting the pavement — do remember hearing, rather than feeling, a rap on the helmet, from which I apparently got the gash over my right eyebrow. The helmet has a pretty healthy abrasion at that place.

Next thing I knew I was rolling, stretched out, my arms against my chest. Didn't feel any pain — felt like a bale of hay which had fallen off a truck. Had several thoughts while rolling even tho it didn't seem very long. Thought of this as another experience which I could look back on later.

Heard the moto rev up tho when I came to rest it was dead squarely in the middle of the road just a few feet — maybe 10-15 — beyond where I was. I stopped rolling at the edge of the road beside some clumps of grass — I moaned some, not from real pain I think, but I thought I must be hurt. I knew somehow nothing was broken. I thought it strange that up 'til then I hadn't even thought of the possibility of death — when I went off the bike I just knew I was going to be hurt and laid up for a while.

A truck going the other direction stopped about the time I did and a fellow helped me up. I had to bend over several times to keep from passing out. Very soon there were 2 trucks, a car, and another moto stopped. They rolled the bike to a house beside the road — Mrs Ventura — didn't look it over very well at that time, but I don't think it's undrivable. Will check on it next week. Was sort of surprised at how well I could still speak and understand Spanish.

Got in the car with two men who drove me to the doctor here in Nacaome. By the way, the helmet was still intact, glasses were still on, tho they were at my chin. The pain started getting to me by the time we reached Nacaome — was quivering, especially in the legs.

When I got on the doctor's table he started washing my right arm wounds, which was nearly unbearable. Before that he had checked for broken bones and internal injuries, which was pretty painful too. I asked him to give me a shot to put me to sleep, which he did, but it didn't work — nor did the second one. I got sleepy but don't know if it reduced pain any — didn't seem so at the time. After he got through, I slept for a while. He made a few stitches in my right elbow.

Arrangements were apparently made for me to stay with two priests, where I am now. Was driven here by 2 nuns in a jeep. The 2 priests and all the nuns I've seen are French-Canadian — no English. It's very late now — I'll describe more tomorrow.

### February 9 (1200)

The first 2 days here were pretty miserable. Couldn't do anything with my hands — had to be fed, drinking glasses held for me. The Padre Bernardo even washed me — from the waist up. They offered to write a letter home for me but I'll do that later. Mom would worry unduly, I think, whereas if she found out about it after I was moving again, she would worry less. It has been a week today since I wrote so can't tarry too long.

The first 2 days all I did was try to find a position less painful — had to hold my hands up most of the time — got very tired.

Day before yesterday I found The Hamlet by Faulkner — have read  $\frac{3}{4}$  of it — will finish today probably.

Each day and night have been progressively more comfortable. Get around pretty good now — can sleep in several positions — can sit relaxed, permitting reading. At first my legs and hips were muscle sore — could hardly stand up from sitting position — is much better now. Also all wounds are crusted over with a heavy scab permitting direct contact with things, tho not very hard or rubbing. Left wrist is sprained a little, not bad. The heels of both hands were scraped pretty deep making wrist movement nominal and painful. There are numerous little chinks on the fingers, mostly right hand, which are healing rapidly. One scrape on left elbow, not bad now. Four or 5 quarter-size scabs on knees, also pretty good now. A few chinks on ribs causing very little discomfort. The main thing is the right elbow — all scabbed over now making it very stiff. The doctor cut out some rocks and put in a few stitches — says he will take them out tomorrow. The gash on the head has scabbed over well — starting to itch — healing, I guess.

Doc says I can depart by moto by Friday. I'm not so sure, due to the hands — also helmet fitting on head wound. I had thought it would take a month or so to be able to ride, so was thinking I would leave moto here with priests, catch Tica Bus to San José, fly to Panama. Could get a ride back here easily enough.

Think of my arrival at Ray's like a home-coming — very happy event. Am anxious to get there.

Now, if the bike doesn't need spare parts, I'll stay here until recovery. Don't look forward to the moto ride on, but am not horrified. Was actually disappointed when the doc told me I could leave by moto in a week. Now find myself secretly hoping the moto needs parts. Have resolved not to go over 35 or 40 all the way back. Another spill would be absolutely unbearable.

This has been rather traumatic but educational experience. Have often thought how it could have been worse. I shiver when I think I could have landed length-wise and slid rather than rolling like I did — or the bike could have bounced on me, breaking bones which the doctor would have set without anesthetic.

Also, the people who stopped and helped were very good — could have made off with things, or just left the moto on the side of the road. Also, convalescing at the priests' house is nearly perfect — could have been alone in a flophouse. The doctor is good too I think for a small town.

Assuming the accident, I have been very lucky. The educational part is that I have been reminded of what pain can be. Mine wasn't bad compared to what is happening all the time all over the world.

Since this happened, I have decided to go back to school in Sept, stop avoiding marriage, get back to the farm and family. Have even thought of building a house in SW corner of the orchard — other site being N Firebranch valley [*two pleasant settings on my family's farm in Missouri*].

Don't know how long this decision will last — don't know whether I should let fear dictate a conservative action — might yearn for adventure — I am about ¼ through with my life — lots to do yet.

Would like to always be able to remember the sickening feeling when I went off that bike tho — wishing I could be stopped and standing safely on the ground. Have trouble remembering it even now. I've had the feeling before, but didn't remember it until it happened again. Like acid, I suppose. Sort of a frantic wish for time to stop. Will probably feel it again at the time of death.

Am not having a bad time of it now — can read, keep notebook, good healthy food, comfortable place to lounge — rocking chair, overhead fan. Temperature is pretty nice — allowed me to dress only in shorts (boxer) until yesterday. Don't know what everyone thought of my running around nearly nude. These people are pretty straight-laced — realized tho that I couldn't put clothes over those open sores. Now am wearing cutoffs and blue short sleeved shirt — comfortable.

I asked what these priests thought of the Pope's encyclical on birth control and the change within the Catholic church — they are with the Pope 100%, credit the church's discipline problems to the easy American life, wanting more pleasures. They put great emphasis on discipline. The 2 here are 35 and 32. The 32 does most of the talking. Both look like they could be under 25. Have been here about 5 yrs. It seems strange to me how they can be so sure of the truth and so confident of their understanding of it to be so vehement in their pronouncements. They put no emphasis at all on experience as a means to knowledge. They don't seek experiences — only read the Bible and church publications — very little else, for information. Seems to me they are among the most ignorant of all people, yet are trusted to pronounce the truth. They are very kind, as they could only be expected to be, but the "information" they pass out would be better kept under a hat.

I really do appreciate the help they've given me. I'll sign over a traveler's cheque or so for it. The doctor will also be getting some. I don't begrudge that tho — without their help I would really be suffering.

(2100)

Have been walking in a circle here for about 2 hrs or more tonite — thinking — very conducive. Have thought about many things, took some notes. I think I'll go to Panama by bus — don't feel like taking the bike now — also don't think my hands or head would be ready in a week. Must get the bike here, then and check if it needs any parts. The only expense I'll be out is transportation to Panama. Can get a ride back, pretty sure. If I'm going back to the farm via school I won't need to be so frugal anyway.

Another thought: a rationalization for having a beard, mustache, or any other unusual ornament: "I want to present the appearance which most accurately communicates my attitudes or mentality." When I asked John, who took me from the beach to Oaxaca, why he had long hair, he said, "So people will know where I'm at." Says about the same thing.

Another thought: Why have a wife: 1) To get a son, or children, 2) To keep libido down, 3) To be my homemaker, 4) To satisfy a social need when in such a society.

I'm as close to being homesick now as ever before in my life; rather, home has never seemed so attractive before.

Finished Faulkner's "The Hamlet" this evening — found "Zorba the Greek" which I'll probably start tomorrow. Also a book of short stories.

### February 10 (1100)

The two padres have gone after the moto in their jeep. It should be quite safe here.

I think I should leave here early Wed morn, get Nic visa in Choluteca and catch the Tico Bus there about noon. That way I'll arrive in San José Thurs evening and can catch plane soon to Panama. Leaving Thursday, I might not arrive in Panama and Ray could be gone.

Doc came this morning and said he would cut the sutures Wed, but he can do that tomorrow I believe. He told me last week he would do it today Monday. Anyway, hope to get on my way soon.

I haven't taken many pictures at all on this trip. With my revised and clarified notions about traveling, reasons for doing it, pictures seem superfluous. 'Tis not my purpose just to see new or beautiful scenery, or even to become acquainted with other native people. It's for the effect that that way of life (traveling) has on me. Actually, it seems I'm thru traveling. I still have a vague urge to go to Europe, Africa, and Australia, but it is mostly so I can say to myself and others that I've been there. I'm on the verge I think of convincing myself that that doesn't matter. When I do, I can spend the rest of my life peacefully in Missouri.

Los Padres  
Casa Cural  
Nacaome, Dpto Valle  
Honduras

### February 11 (1100)

They got the moto back alright — it's skinned up a little and the front fender is bent. I can't kick it hard enough to start and can't operate the gas, but everything seems ok — don't think it needs any repuestos [*repairs*].

Padre Judas (35) cashed my MO at the bank yesterday, so now I have 5 US \$20 bills in my pocket.

He also called a Padre friend in Tegucigalpa and found out there is a plane leaving Teg for Panama Thurs p.m. at 5, arriving in Pan Tocumen at 9 p.m. — cost about \$65 — planning on taking it. Wouldn't save much if anything going by bus to San José — 2 nights in hotel.

Picked the entire scab off my head yesterday — it's ok now — not nearly so bad as I thought.

Possibly I could stay here a week or so and go on down on the bike, but will feel a lot better going to Ray's first and releasing the tension — seems that way now anyway. Find myself conjuring up excuses to tell Ray why I didn't wait and bring the bike — feel like I should stay, I guess.

Soaked my hands in water yesterday — were dripping pus. Thought I should soften the scab. Felt good for a while but when they dried out, they got hard and crisp again — really ugly — they are the only sores that hurt constantly now. The arm scabs will be coming off soon.

Been reading the book of short stories. I don't care for most of them — just tell a story. No matter how skillfully and technically it is done, there is little value in it for me — like reading a comic book. Some authors tho give real insights into human feelings — I try to tell how it feels to be in a certain situation. I have been sensitive to that notion all along this trip — especially after the moto accident. I think I have had experiences unique and valuable enough to be material for worthwhile literature, but I don't really know how to go about writing it down. Am getting insights from these stories tho.

Padre 32 left yesterday to visit a village — 2 hrs by car, another 2 hrs by mule. Would be interesting to get so far off the beaten path. I haven't done it yet, really.

### February 12 (1500)

Just guessing at the time — can't wear the watch and it won't stay wound without lots of movement.

The doctor removed the 4 stitches from my elbow this a.m. I had been wondering how much he was going to charge. When I asked him how much he wanted this morn he said just however much I wanted to give him. It was the best thing for him to do — could not have charged an exorbitant price since I was staying with the priests and he knew they would most likely find out how much it was. Leaving it up to me was a pretty safe way of getting more than his normal fee. All I had was Salvador colones — offered him 3, not immediately realizing it was only a little over a dollar. Saw he wasn't very satisfied so gave him 10 colones — \$4. Not very much really, although his expenses weren't considerable. Am kind of ashamed about first offering him only \$1. \$4 is fair enough — will ask Padres what they think it should have been — probably \$10.

Plan to catch a bus to Teg in the morn. Another French-Can priest was just here. They are all young, healthy, robust, handsome men — unlike those I would suppose would be a celibate priest. Except for no sex, it seems a pretty good life. 35 seems to me to be a real dough — always has a dumb, embarrassed looking expression on his face — flirts very mildly with the cook who looks like Jack Dempsey. They always say a little prayer or something before and after meals. 35 mumbles, looks around, brushes off his clothes, adjusts his watch, etc. during the prayer — doesn't give the appearance of being very reverent. The whole thing seems such a farce to me.

Have been reading a sort of autobiography of Albert Schweitzer yesterday and today — one of the worst written books I've ever read. Goes into some detail about his religious philosophy — does not impress me — writes in a subjective manner and apparently thinks so.

Have been thinking about school some more — philosophy. Until being thought about, a PhD in philos seems attractive, but actually there is little purpose in it for me. 3 reasons to do it — 1) would provide a source of income (writing, teaching), 2) for social appearance, 3) for genuine interest in subject. Reason 1 wouldn't apply to me. Wouldn't like the structuredness of professorship. Reason 2 would have no weight if I reached the level of understanding I seek. As for reason 3, I would have more freedom to study exactly what struck my fancy away from school and classes. Perhaps, however, graduate seminars might offer something unique. Can see about that after getting in school.

Also been thinking about writing — in the style of Camus maybe, unfamiliar though I am with it. Only valid reason for writing though would be like reason 3 before (all 3 would again apply). It might aid thought on the subject — better than just thinking alone. Here also, reason 2 might have more value. At any rate, might like to sit in on some English courses — ideally with no other classes — just English and reading.

(2100)

Padre 32 just returned this evening. It seems the doctor probably expected quite a lot more — I have left 13 colones more, in all a little over \$9 for the doctor seems sufficient.

Also gave \$15 to the padres for their help — about \$2 per day. This accident has been expensive for me — but educational. I can't recapture now the traumatic feeling I had before — perhaps it wasn't so traumatic after all. I have let it scare me out of more adventuring — the dangerous type anyway. I have no inclination now to do anything dangerous.

February 13 (1300)

In the coffee shop of the Hotel Lincoln in Tegucigalpa. Caught a VW bus up here from Nacaome — cost \$1. Am waiting till 1400 so the Panama embassy will be open — also the TACA [*airline serving Central America*] office downtown — something about confirming my seat.

Seems kind of odd to be out with people again — was completely isolated during the week with the padres. The bus ride wasn't too fabulous — had to protect my arms from bumps all the time.

At the airport saw a USAF C-130, camouflaged — strangely reminiscent of Vietnam. One fellow at the TACA desk spoke English excellently — said he spent 2 yrs at an aeronautical school in Okla City. Left my bag there before coming on into Tegus, as it is called here. Doesn't seem they would be too inclined to steal or permit to be stolen anything out of it, seeing I'm a paying customer. Gives me sort of a good feeling to be travelling "straight" — spending



money. I don't really like the feeling of being a cheap bum. I might get along pretty well back in the straight world. Am pretty anxious to try it — at school.

Have been daydreaming quite a lot about living at school — seems really attractive. Of course, at school I would, or did, daydream about how nice it would be to do what I'm doing now. No way to be satisfied, apparently.

This coffee shop is named after O. Henry — rather plush — English menu. Has lots of signs, pictures and references to O. Henry. Haven't read the signs yet, but he apparently hung out here. I had a café con leche — have developed a taste for it — with sugar even. The sugar all over CA [*Central America*] is brownish, very good, not bleached out white like C&H.

Have thought about Tegus being the old stomping grounds of Ray and home of Cely [he lived here many years before taking a job with the US government in Canal Zone; Cely is native Honduran whom he met here] — have no desire to go out exploring the city tho, like I would have before. I used to think I should get around and “see” a place because I was a traveler and had some vague obligation to be acquainted with places of interest. I suspect the same sentiment is shared by literally all “plastic” or bourgeoisie travelers, with their wives, cameras, and travel schedules. I feel self-satisfaction in “reaching” this seemingly superlative attitude. I am no doubt under some influence, negative, of the accident, prolonged physical ill-feeling, and just having been on the road for quite a while. Wonder how much wanderlust will return after being in CZ for a while. Would be convenient to be permanently disenchanted with it — perhaps could settle down peaceably on the farm — has all is needed except adventure.



### February 18 (2300)

3 yrs to the day since I joined the army. That early-out really seems like a long time — would have been discharged yesterday had I stayed in CZ for the entire tour.

Been pretty busy with Ray since arrival. Got ticket on TACA ok — cost \$65. Went to Panama consulate in Tegus but was closed so didn't get the visa. Didn't need it, as it turned out.

The flight stopped in Managua and San José for a short time. Young American fellow I sat next to to Managua was a writer — working on a novel. Was in CA as a tour guide for Americans. He said writing was something he had to do — didn't seem to have thought much about it. I was, and am, trying to determine the motive for artistic or literary productivity. Now have checked out a book from the library by Camus — “Myth of Sisyphus” which I think deals with that notion. Also have a play of his — “Possessed” — which I will read. Anxious to start.

Arrived in Tocumen about 2100 local time — had to buy ticket out of Panama before the CZ customs official would let me out — sort of reminiscent of army bureaucracy.

Called Ray to come after me — seemed glad to see me. Didn't mention the beard or long hair — got a haircut the next day — a little shorter than I wanted it — kept the beard.

Ray suggested that I have my wounds checked on — he knows a lieutenant at the hospital here in Howard [*U.S. Air Force base*]. Took an Xray of my sprained left wrist and found the navicular was a problem — went to Gorgas Hospital so now have a cast on my forearm. Will take from 2 to 4 months to heal — really pees me off — can't swim, ride moto, even handle sails well. In 4 months it will be nearly time to go back for school.

May have Cely's brother in Tegus sell the moto there — I apparently won't be able to finish the trip — for a long time anyway. Right hand and arm are still sore but much better — will be ok within a week. Would need transportation to get around the CZ — can't have moto while I'm here apparently, not with cast — cars pretty expensive.

I'm rather dejected and frustrated about the situation. Is tiresome to be around Ray all the time — talks all the time. At first I tried to pay attention all the time but gave it up.

Went out on Manureva [*the name of Ray's 30-foot sailing trimaran*] yesterday — was fun but the cast gets in the way considerably. In short am not so happy with situation — need to get laid maybe. Might have to spend time at Gloria's or Blue Goose [*bars in Panama City that I frequented while stationed at Fort Clayton, Canal Zone, before transfer to Vietnam, where prostitutes are plentiful*] instead of chasing free stuff. Hate to go see Annie on foot.



This broken wrist is going to be very expensive. In many ways the trip has been a flop, tho educational. Find myself wishing I were in school now where the cast wouldn't be such an impediment. Hate to look forward to 3 or 4 months in this thing.

CZ looks the same as before. Doesn't seem like 17 months since I left. Still don't like seeing all these lifers and DA [*Department of the Army*] civilians all the time — too reminiscent of the army. Feel like wanting to withdraw from reality — was too optimistic about the CZ. Of course would be lots better with trans[*portation*] and whole body. Feel screwed.

### February 20 (1100)

Going to Perlas Islands [*off the Pacific coast of Panama*] this weekend — leaving tonite — coming back Tuesday probably. Two acquaintances of Ray's — Ron, an AF Lt and Darrel, an AF GI — are going too. I'm looking forward to the trip although I'm a bit pissed I won't be able to swim or really be active. "Twill be fun tho. Went to the boat yesterday alone to read and laze around. Read some, but went to sleep later. [*Prescription*] sunglasses came this morning — will help a lot on the trip.

I seem to be becoming an introvert — not enjoying anybody's company — could be because I don't respect anybody's intellect around here. I get awfully tired of Cely — she has such mediocre ideas. I have changed my mind a bit about having a "servant wife." Couldn't stand someone like Cely — nice person but so different from me. Just want to be alone all the time now. Suppose I don't present a very happy appearance. Not extremely unhappy tho. Looking forward to going to Panama and getting laid. Good chance of finding an old car to buy and use for the next 4 or 5 moths. Could then go see Annie.

For the last week or so I have felt contempt or disgust for the Spanish language and Spanish people. Have no desire to continue traveling in Latin America. Have been thinking that I wouldn't really have to live on the farm all the time — could vacation a few months every year — perhaps Mexico. Still would require a wife tho. That is a major problem.

### February 22 (1030)

In the Perlas now. Anchored last nite near a little village on Isla Pedro Gonzales. Now are sailing on around the island. Left Balboa about midnight of the 20<sup>th</sup>. Arrived here early the next p.m. Ron and Darrel are aboard too — nice fellows — pretty ordinary — I'm not inclined to seek their company — in fact avoid it as much as possible without being rude.

On the way out saw a whale rising and spouting. Was pretty close to the boat at one time — very interesting.

I guess I'm enjoying this trip — very pensive. Would like to be all alone. Cely told me that I appear to like things just a little bit — not really enthusiastic about anything. Seems very true after I think about it. I seem to have changed in that direction — especially on this trip. So dubious about the enjoyability (actual) of life. Seems that humans are taught that certain things are fun and this indoctrination actually makes them fun, or at least the individual thinks so — no difference perhaps. I noticed that on R&R. Willy said he enjoyed himself immensely in Taipei, tho it seemed to me he could not have done so. The others on this trip seem to be enjoying themselves. Maybe they just think they should be, so are. Very strange, the "pleasure" notion.

Just finished "The Possessed" by Camus. I'm not sure I really understand it. If I do, as it seems, it is more shallow than me, but that doesn't seem feasible.

Met Carla R. at Balboa the 20<sup>th</sup> (tel: \_\_\_\_\_). Lives in Howard also now. Will probably call her. Not sure I will be able to carry on a normal relationship with a girl now — I have definite, very different ideas — actually way of life. Perhaps I will have to content myself with pros. I can't play the social games — meet requirements of free girls. Don't know if I could ever find a girl with whom I could honestly be myself — without being afraid of offending. Even so, a lifelong relationship might still be impossible.

### 1330

I have been reading more of "Myth of Sisyphus" out on deck. The shade disappeared tho and can't concentrate below with all the commotion, so will try to write awhile.

Reading philosophy has a strong effect on me. Am conscious of being on a much higher intellectual plane than others especially those on this boat. Find it hard, impossible, and totally repulsive to play social games. Just making an effort to be courteous seems so artificial, irrelevant, superfluous, just now. Even saying please and thank you is difficult. Actually, it has been for a few days. Want to be alone or with people who understand this.

Can imagine that taking a secret acid trip in this situation and company would be a horror. Seems like that is the reason anyhow — not sure. I feel strange — both ultrarational and crazy, mad. If others knew my thoughts they would think me crazy, I'm sure. Maybe I am.

Physical discomfort and impediment could be a partial cause of my mental state. Left arm has cast — right arm and hand still have sores — lip is blistered — have had a toothache for 3 or 4 days. Nice day though — decent breeze for sailing. Boat seems crowded — I possibly resent the presence of the other 2 young fellows. They do nearly all the work, since I have 2 bad hands. Have been sailing some, tho. Should feel happy — do, maybe, but am agitated, restless about something. Mostly want to be alone.

Camus says “Happiness and the absurd are 2 sons of the same earth. They are inseparable.” The absurd is the ridiculousness of life — exists only in human relationship to the world. Have been trying to get a better understanding of the notion of “absurd.” The whole essay concerns that idea.

#### February 23 (1200)

Just sailing around the islands. Fishing now. Yesterday caught 2 good mackerel, one 9-pounder — and a skipjack, which we didn't eat. This a.m. have caught a tuna and a bird — the kind that dive for fish. There were two diving at a lure. Couldn't get it in their mouths, but one got a wing caught. We drew it in and cut it loose — couldn't fly too well tho.

Has been a good breeze this a.m. — stirred up enough waves to make it a little rough — more fun than real calm water.

Ron has been handling the boat all morning. He is supposed to have lot of experience sailing but I fail to see the logic in some of his maneuvers — think I could do better. He is sort of obnoxious to me. He presumes philosophical superiority (adeptness, knowledge, ability, etc. — can't think of an accurate word), but seems pretty dumb about it to me. Perhaps I am the same to others, probably am, but still feel correct. Perhaps someday I'll realize the error of my ways. Was certainly in weird mood I was in yesterday when I wrote. I don't feel it was too wrong actually, just a little extreme.

#### February 25 (1000)

On the way back to Balboa now. Sea has been a little rough — no squalls, just a good breeze. Left this a.m. about 0600. Are using both sails and motor — making pretty good time. I was lying down in the cabin and almost talked myself into getting seasick — kept thinking about it,

just why one gets seasick. Didn't get nauseous but was feeling queasy. Went up and stood by the mast looking out over the sea. Seemed to cure the queasiness.

I haven't pitched in and helped much on this trip — the cast isn't a sufficient excuse. Not a good team worker, especially when the others aren't my type. Find myself conjuring excuses to give Ray. I hope it hasn't bothered him.

Still mulling over the question of what to do with my life, rather, how best to achieve happiness. If it can't be done as I strongly suspect, then I should reconcile myself to the fact and not futilely search for it. The most satisfactory reconciliation would be the farm, I'm pretty sure. Still have desires of doing many different things around the world — like working in Australia for a while — also Vietnam. The farm offers most varied opportunities, tho. However, once settled there, it would be permanent. Also must be married. In other words, I would be trapped there. Yesterday it occurred to me that I could find happiness thru drugs. Probably not permanently, but while in CZ this time. With acid and lots of sex it might be ok. Could pass lots of happy hours with music that way too.

### March 2 (1000)

Anchored at Isla Bona now. Came down yesterday — 4 ½ hrs enroute — 22 miles. Just the 3 of us this time.

Several things happened since the last entry (I didn't realize I hadn't written since returning from Perlas). Went out one night to see Gladys [*a bar girl I knew during my time stationed at Fort Clayton*] — went out with a taxi and had a joint. In walks Selena [*referred to as Sherry in earlier entries while in Vietnam*]. A shock. She seemed very glad to see me. I had imagined she would have completely given up on me, but she didn't talk that way. I was so messed up I couldn't make intelligent conversation — had to just be quiet — wished I could talk to her but could hardly act normal.

Had made a date with her for day before yesterday — called at noon to set time — 5 'clock. Were to meet at Napoli's but she didn't show. Rather pissed. Guess I'll call back sometime. Maybe after I get a car and house — don't think she really wanted to go out.

Anyway, after it seemed she wasn't coming, I went to Loco's Bar where Gladys works, then went to Blue Goose and laid a Playmate-type beautiful venezolana. I didn't make a good show tho — first time laid since Vietnam. I had \$6 — gave it to her in return for 30 cents bus fare. The experience was unsatisfying in itself but worthwhile in that I quit worrying about getting laid. Female bodies had become extremely interesting.

Went back to J&K [*the vicinity in Panama City where several bars are located where prostitution is legal and regulated*] — to a pool hall behind Loco's. Was about ready to go back to Howard and in walks Everett, whom I had known back in TTC [*Tropic Test Center, Fort Clayton*]. He had about a week left here. Meeting him totally unexpectedly like that gave me a feeling like being high — sort of like a "mind blow." We talked a while over a drink (on him) at Loco's. He left (plan to meet there Wed nite) and I was about ready to go — asked the fellow next to me the time — struck up a conversation. He is a Panamanian (DeLow), Swede ancestry,

speaks perfect English, educated at Sorbonne and U of Madrid, is an editor for McGraw Hill Publisher in Panama. Said if I had a degree I could get a job immediately as a representative of McGraw-Hill — travel around CA and SA. Sounds inviting.

He is very rich, as are his friends — went to J&K to get away. I went with him in his MGB to the Hilton, now El Panamá, for another drink. Walked in the bar and he started talking to Lt Ron, from the sailing trip to Perlas.

Before we left Loco's I sort of took DeLow for gay — we got to talking about it at the Hilton Bar. Come to find out nearly everyone in the bar was gay according to him — pointed out some millionaires — gay — the rich class of Panama. That was another mind blow — meeting Ron (who is gay) and finding all the others. DeLow took me back to J&K about 2 a.m. Gladys wasn't there so I came on back to Howard — hitchhiked, no buses.

While at Loco's, it occurred to me that I might write Steinbeck-type books (Cannery Row, Sweet Thursday) about J&K, Gladys, the pool hall, etc. Need to learn how to write. Should take a notebook down with me, maybe stay high. More beautiful ideas, thurs.

Have a line on a 57 VW for \$125 — needs a little work — don't know about engine — will check it out soon.

### March 3 (1600)

Anchored at Taboga now [*a small island near the Pacific terminus of the Panama Canal, which I had visited many weekends while stationed at Fort Clayton*]. Didn't move the boat all day yesterday — just lazed about — read a little. Left Bona pretty early this a.m. Tried sail but lost ground — unfavorable wind and current. Took about 6 hours to get here by motor as opposed to 4 ½ hrs from Balboa to Bona by sail.

Rather interesting being back in Taboga — everything looks the same — still haven't rebuilt the pier that was blown away while I was in Panama before. We are anchored in a spot that gives an almost identical view as the one that I took and had made a wall picture for Dee. Pleasant.

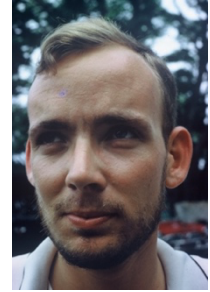
I don't think I have mentioned that I've been thinking about getting a job with Pan Canal Co and possibly staying here next winter and go to school at CZ College. I must get my own apartment and car — not at all satisfied with living at Ray's — grossly inhibits sex life and drug life. Going to get to work on it as soon as I get back to Panama. Going to cut off the beard also. I'm a little self-conscious about it. Shouldn't be, if I really believe my beliefs. Maybe I'm hypocritical. Can't figure out how, tho. Could graduate from CZ College with about 12 hours I think. Don't have to decide about it for a while. Think I'll apply for the job tho.

# # #

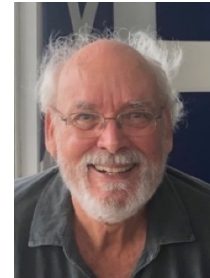
That was my final diary entry. I don't recall intentionally deciding to discontinue this journal. However, my ruminations over its final weeks offer clues about the further course of my life. Read on ...

## The Rest of the Story

In June 1969, shortly after discontinuing this journal, I returned to the University of Missouri-Columbia where, thanks to the GI Bill, I completed the PhD in psychology in 1977. I taught at the University of Hartford (Connecticut) 1977-1985 and lectured at institutions on six continents. In 1985 I founded Mediation Training Institute and operated the enterprise until its acquisition in 2012 by Eckerd College (St Petersburg, Florida) upon my retirement.



During my career, I authored two books on conflict management and mediation. Since retirement, I have published a series of volumes of “haiku quintets,” including a memoir. I composed an appeal to reason titled *The Reason Revolution: Atheism, Secular Humanism, and the Collapse of Religion*. The travel aspirations expressed in this diary have led to my visiting over 85 countries and all seven continents.



I have one daughter and two grandchildren. I live with wife Susan in Sarasota, Florida, where I shall remain. Life is good. More at [www.dandana.us](http://www.dandana.us)

## Stories in Haiku

In retirement I’ve taken up the hobby of writing “haiku quintets.” I penned a memoir containing over 150 of these compact poetic creatures titled *A Life Mostly Lived: True Stories in 85 Syllables*.

What’s a haiku quintet, you ask? Rooted in ancient Japanese poetry, this adapted form consists of five stanzas of three unrhymed lines, each having five, seven, and five syllables, respectively, summing to 85 syllables. A photo illustrates and completes the finished piece. This derivative structure is my own humble creation. The “life snippet” variant reports actual events as I recall them.

Following are sixteen life snippets selected from the memoir that address the subject and period of this diary.

## Tet 1968

was I even there?  
memories succumbed to age  
or, suppressed by fear?

three stuporous nights  
minigun fireworks traced sky  
choppers pounded air

silent tunnel maze  
beneath my senseless slumber  
Viet Cong cooked rice

mortars shook death's door  
fickle fate skipped my bunker  
by pure random chance

today I wonder  
this surreal lifetime later  
was I even there?



Setting: Cu Chi Vietnam, January 31, 1968

Photo: Inside a Viet Cong tunnel beneath Cu Chi on return visit, May 1, 2015



## Clerks Ran the Army

good old Uncle Sam  
in his paternal kindness  
thought of everything

gave us GI's weeks  
of Rest & Relaxation  
in exotic lands

chartered flight, hotel,  
poor man's VIP treatment  
once per year, they said

a mere records clerk  
went to Taiwan, Philippines,  
and Singapore too

I could do favors  
a "lost" reprimand, perhaps  
—clerks ran the army



Photo: In Singapore on R&R leave from Vietnam, 1968

## Green Lake

good old Uncle Sam  
in his paternal kindness  
thought of everything

gave us GI's weeks  
of Rest and Relaxation  
in exotic lands

chartered flight, hotel,  
poor man's VIP treatment,  
our choice of women

they clustered shyly  
awaiting our selection  
what drew me to you?

my sweet one-week friend,  
do you still boat on Green Lake?  
I still think of you



Photo: On R&R in Taiwan, 1968, photo by Angel

## Getting Short

we started counting  
the day we got in-country  
how many days left?

serving our country?  
our job was to stay alive  
get home in one piece

days of typing forms  
nights of music and good weed  
“coffee” break boosters

“hey, how short are you?”  
we always knew the number  
“Fuck The Arrmy, Jack!”

the bird’s lifting off  
Cam Ranh Bay’s behind me now  
gone back to the World



Camp Granite, 527<sup>th</sup> PSC, Qui Nhon, October 1967-October 1968  
Photo source unknown

## My Lai

no way could she know  
if I killed her family  
a lifespan ago

I wore uniform  
of the invading army  
that slaughtered her kin

I want her to know  
I was a harmless typist  
in quiet Qui Nhon

what guilt do I bear,  
an innocent Nazi boy  
swept up by events?

I wept by the ditch  
she had met many of us,  
perhaps the killer?



Photo by Tom Moore, with whom I visited the site of the My Lai massacre on 27 April 2015, and with whom I served in Vietnam in 1968. The solemn but gracious caretaker of the site witnessed her mother and other family members die at this ditch on 16 March 1968.

## Escaping Saigon

“are these seats taken?”  
thus began conversation  
we told our stories:

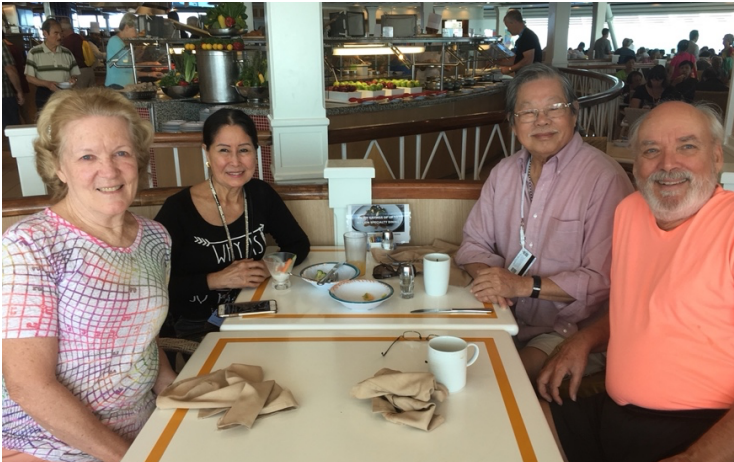
as Saigon collapsed  
he was Nguyen Cao Ky’s pilot  
to a U.S. ship\*

she came with three kids  
among the last to escape  
on later chopper

a sailor saved them  
son vowed to thank him, when grown  
their lives hung by threads

two rapt hours later  
we bid them, “have a good day”  
my story was brief

\* USS Blue Ridge, April 30, 1975



Aboard Seattle-to-Sydney cruise, October 16, 2017  
Newspaper photo of the mom, her kids, and the sailor



## Hanoi Haircut

the sidewalk barber  
invited this old GI  
had we been foes, once?

his improvised shop  
mirror hanging on the wall  
with tools of his trade

cyclos streaming by  
narrow street's pedal traffic  
amused riders watched

fifty years ago  
beyond my imagining  
“wow! I'm in the North”

he did a good job  
his paltry fee's not enough  
—hundred percent tip



Photo: Hanoi, Vietnam, 3 May 2015

## Some Other Place

if no GI Bill  
you would not be reading this  
I'd be somewhere else

on my one-way trip  
no other path would lead through  
life's maze of crossroads

not exactly here  
no MTI, no haiku  
no books on my shelf

no Susan, no Su  
no Seamus, no Claribel  
no Sarasota

counterfactuals  
would have mapped my route  
to some other place



Photo 2022. I received GI Bill educational benefits for veterans from 1969 until completion of my PhD in 1977. Otherwise, a different life.

## Vietnam Afterthoughts

I came and I went  
different people, it seems  
a fork in my road

opportunities  
some seized, even more wasted  
but what might have been?

death seemed far away  
I never saw body bags  
in my bunkered mind

war can be good, eh?  
only lessons learned, too late,  
in history books

war can be just, eh?  
saved us from Hitler's Nazis  
Vietnam, not so



Photo: Qui Nhon, 1968



## Finding Myself

wanting to get back  
to where I had never been  
to find my people

for three restless years  
trapped in army's stifling cage  
the world changed—me, too

I found some hippies  
peaceniks on a peaceful beach  
they seemed much like me

skinny-dipping fun  
hitchhikers shared campfire tales  
tripping on acid

old shackles cast off  
I had heard of these people  
now I could be one



Photo: Puerto Ángel beach today, source: windows10spotlight

## Motorcycle Mishap

I rolled to a stop  
in grass beside the asphalt  
hearing myself groan

opening my eyes  
bike lies beside me, running  
it slid, undamaged

disc brakes had heated  
rusty from months in storage  
I flung myself off

escape tumbling bike  
I thought the safer option  
novice rider's goof

two passing farmers  
in their dusty pick-up truck  
stopped to rescue me



Pan-American highway (then a narrow asphalt road), near Nacaome, Honduras, January 1969.  
Photo 2020 same road, source: trip-suggest

## Motorcycle Mishap Sequel

two weeks with two priests  
recovering from mishap  
scrapes and broken wrist

a friend of a friend  
returned to scene of the crash  
to check on my bike

a roadside peasant  
had kept it from thieves and knaves  
tethered by a string

his toe to its wheel  
not knowing its true owner  
each night for a month

doing his duty  
honor-bound to keep it safe  
wish I could thank him



Photo: A hut similar to the home of my motorcycle's caretaker  
Source: Architectural League

## **I Have Survived, Somehow**

so many close calls  
this seventy-eight-year romp  
lucky twists of fate

motorcycle crash  
Honduran priests saved my butt  
kept souvenir scars

year in Vietnam  
hazy memories survive  
pot smoker's Bronze Star

now, safely cocooned  
in Sarasota treehouse  
for the duration

few dangers ahead  
except the one that kills me  
... waiting ... patiently



Photo: Self-portrait

## Around the World in 48 Years

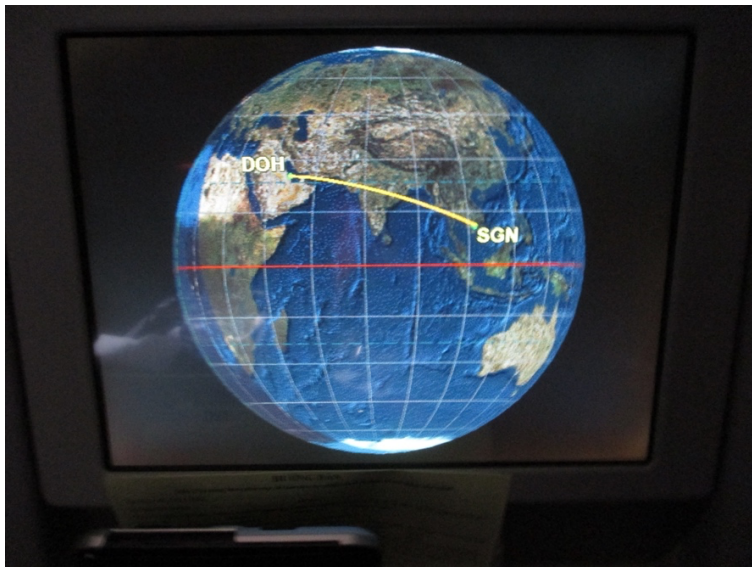
Saigon to Saigon  
beaucoup side trips on the way  
spaghetti-pile route

a youth-blind soldier  
westbound over Pacific  
guest of Uncle Sam

eastbound final leg  
what's changed these decades later?  
what was left behind?

if life is a trip,  
what's my real destination?  
and ... am I there yet?

bucket trek's checked off  
that pesky itch has been scratched  
think I'll stay home now



I went to Vietnam in 1967. Susan and I returned in 2015.  
Photo: Seatback route map, 13 April 2015.

## I Got Off the Farm

in this life I've seen:  
South Africa, Vietnam,  
Japan, Honduras,

Peru, Uruguay,  
Antarctica, Uganda,  
Ukraine, Panama,

Israel, Qatar,  
Lebanon, Ghana, Fiji,  
Kenya, Korea,

Latvia, Hong Kong,  
Australia, Brazil, Taiwan,  
and most of Europe

why list these far lands\*?  
I simply want you to know  
I got off the farm

\* More than 85 total



Image: Nations Online

“Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness.”  
—Mark Twain

**Lucky Life**  
**1945 – 2025\***

born at World War's end,  
lived till democracy died\*  
—my life's perfect plan

ancients' pains relieved,  
royals' comforts far surpassed,  
no predator's lunch

goods and services,  
luxuries beyond wonder  
with middle class means

great while it lasted,  
location and timing worked  
—one lucky bastard

future turning dark  
as human story unfurls  
—I mourn children's fate

\* My life's term might continue a few more years, but I may survive American democracy.



Photo: Mismaloya, Jalisco, Mexico, February 2024

## Other Books

### Post-retirement:

- A Life Mostly Lived: True Stories in 85 Syllables*
- Haiku Quintets*
- Love, Death, and Atheism: Haiku Quintets*
- Songs of the Pandemic: World Haiku*
- Science and Secularism: Haiku Quintets and Other Musings*
- Common Ground: Haiku, Mediation, and Police Reform*
- Resisting Trumpism: Haiku Quintets*
- The Reason Revolution: Atheism, Secular Humanism, and the Collapse of Religion*

### Pre-retirement

- Managing Differences: How to Build Better Relationships at Work and Home* (MTI Publications), in seven languages
- Conflict Resolution: Mediation Tools for Everyday Worklife* (McGraw-Hill), in multiple languages
- Talk It Out: 4 Steps to Managing People Problems in Your Organization* (Kogan Page)

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