



Transcription of Letter from PFC Edward Woods

May 19 (I think)

Dear People,

Hi, it's me, P.F.C. E.J. Woods Jr. How is everyone? I'm sorry I haven't been writing but I was stuck in a foxhole for the last 3 days. Somebody has been shooting at us. Not attacking, but shooting from long range. We don't even know who it was. The Vietnamese Marines are fighting the Vietnamese Army, the Buddhists are fighting the Catholics and somebody is fighting the I Corps, another Vietnamese military branch. We don't know who we're fighting; it could be any of them or the V.C. The political situation is so messed up nobody knows what they're doing.

When they were shooting at us we had some sailors here. One of them went crazy. He kept saying "I'm only 22, I'm too young to die." He was crying all over the place. The captain hit him on the head with his pistol to shut him up so he wouldn't give us all away. I've got a soft head so I don't cry when they shoot at me, I just crawl inside of my helmet and smoke cigarettes.

All the stuff that you send doesn't get ruined. Only the jelly babies got ants in them. Nothing else got messed up. Over here, there aren't that many ants, anyhow. No, I'm not going on any patrols over here, now, there, I answered that one.

Hey, Mom, that picture you sent me looks good. You look skinnier. Honey your hair looks really good. You look almost good enough for me if you weren't my sister. Almost I said. You and Ree Ree had better write them guys. Don't worry, you'll never meet them probably.

I missed a lot of sleep the last few days and I didn't write any letters for four days. Of course it rained in my nice dry foxhole. When it rains here it really rains. It comes down so hard you can't see a foot in front of you.

I think I still have that cold I caught up in Canada. Hey Mom, remember I called you from there. You thought I was calling you from New York when you took the call. "Hey Mom, guess where I am, Montreal." That was funny. Until the car busted.

I guess school will be getting out about a week or so after you get this letter. I remember the bummers well, I used to go down the shore and then I'd call collect again. Only then I'd say: "Hey Mom, guess where I am Ocean City." The next time I call I'll say "Hey Mom, or Dad, or Honey, Ree Ree, [Jeanie?] or Joanie, guess where I am, Bangkok or Hong Kong, or Tokyo, or somewhere. That'll be the collect call of them all. I think now I'd better call someone to give me a light and a can of oil so I can clean my rifle. I'll sign off for now.

Hey it's an hour earlier than I thought. I'll write some more.

Misery is finding a rat in your foxhole.

Happiness is March 1969.

Misery is wet sand in your skivvies.

Happiness is canned peaches for chow.

Misery is liver for chow.

Happiness is getting mail from home.

Misery is insects.

Happiness is R +R.

Misery is not knowing who is trying to kill you (so is frustration).

Happiness is having so many people praying for you.

Misery is running out of soap.

Happiness is finding a new bunch of comic books at the P.X.

Maturity is realizing (finally) that life isn't one long weekend.

How do you like my literary masterpiece? Now it really is time to go. Bye for now.

Love

Eddie

P.S. Don't worry about me, see how high my morale is.