

Across The Sea

David Robinson



Brothers and Sisters Like These
Paired Reading and Writing 2020

What a journey for me
to cross the sea,
to have known the
things that I had to see.



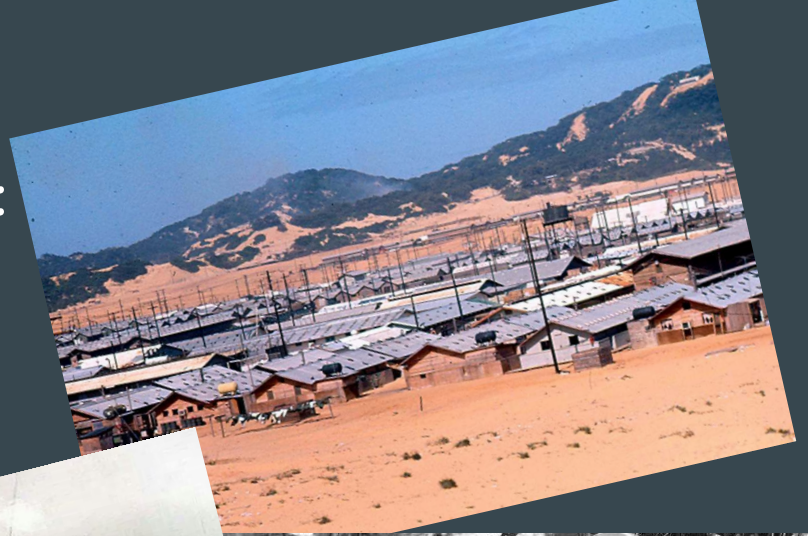
First was a man they called a V.C
and he was trying to kill me.





Oh, the training they
gave as best they
could,
but it was much
different across the
sea,

things I had never seen,
names I had never heard, nor could say:
Long Binh, Da Nang, Cam Ranh Bay,
Chu Lai; and many more:
frag, M-79, M-60, Claymores,
C Rations, Gunships, choppers,
fire base, and NVA.





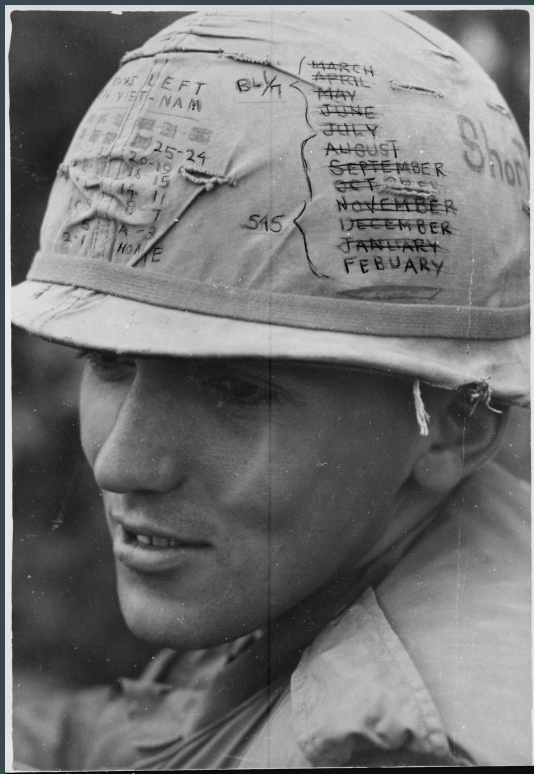
This was so different across the sea,
especially for a country boy like me.

Names of things like *dust-off*,
evacuation,
hospital, *amputation*, *K IA*, *medevac*.
How those names scared me



because I knew there would be names
of comrades, friends, buddies; and,
yes,
brothers I would never see again.
How sad we didn't have time to weep
or mourn.
We had to stay alert and on guard and
pray
there would be no more.





There came the day I could go back
over the sea.

What a welcome sight this was going
to be
Back to a land I call home.
They would be so glad to see me;



But, when we landed on shore,
there were people who acted
like they didn't like me anymore.



I heard names I had never heard
before:

war monger, baby killer and more.

I thought, No, *I'm back across the sea.*

These things should be familiar to me.

Then I thought: *I'll forget it all,*
so I hid the reminders: the pictures,
the uniforms, the Ho Chi Minh
sandals, all the rest.
I'll not talk of all I've been through,
so it will go away.



But the memories
and dreams: they stayed and I started
feeling
I'm the only one this way.



Then thirty years or so I
heard about a reunion.
At first, I thought *I don't
want to go.*
But I decided I would
and so glad I did.



It was mind-boggling and too hard to
explain:
all these brothers and we all felt the
same.
How could I ever forget brothers like
these?



To meet their families: what a joy,
and remember we met when we were just boys.
To talk of the good times we had
and very seldom speak of the bad.



I think of what would my life be
if I'd never had to cross the sea.
But if I had not,
then I would never have met
brothers like these.

