

BANGKOK

Sherman left Vietnam and sailed up the western coast into the Gulf of Thailand. We entered the mouth of the Bangkok River and sailed inland more than twenty miles to the most beautiful city in the world.

Once in the muddy orange river most of the crew came up on deck to see the famous river temples and were intrigued by the intricacy of their design and the grace of these towering monuments to Buddha. We knew then how much there would be to learn of this country.

The river was busy with boats, both small and large. We passed a few of the ships of the Thailand Navy and passed honors, as all hands on deck saluted. Large wooded barge-like vessels, sitting very low in the water, are the homes of many river born families in Thailand. There were smaller boats also, very long and narrow, which are the river taxis, and school buses for the families that live on the river.

When we moored we were amazed at how well these boats were maneuvered, even in close spaces, as the drivers haggled for prices for tours of Bangkok.

From the pier, our roads diverged, but most of us toured the temples, visited Timland, saw the floating market, and gasped at our first taste of the spicy Thai food. Timland was the greatest collection of Thai culture that we were exposed to. Each of us has his own version of what we saw.

