

First Thing He Wants Is Christmas Dinner

WARREN (Mich.) — (AP) — "Lieutenant, don't give no bad news this morning," said John C. Sexton when an Army officer appeared at the auto assembly line worker's door before dawn.

"It's just the other way around, sir," Sexton quoted the officer. "Your son is in Saigon."

S. Sgt. John C. Sexton Jr., 23, has been freed by the Viet Cong after more than two years as a prisoner of war.

"It was somewhere between 3 and 4 o'clock this morning that we learned about it," the elder Sexton said. "It's the best news in the world, sir."

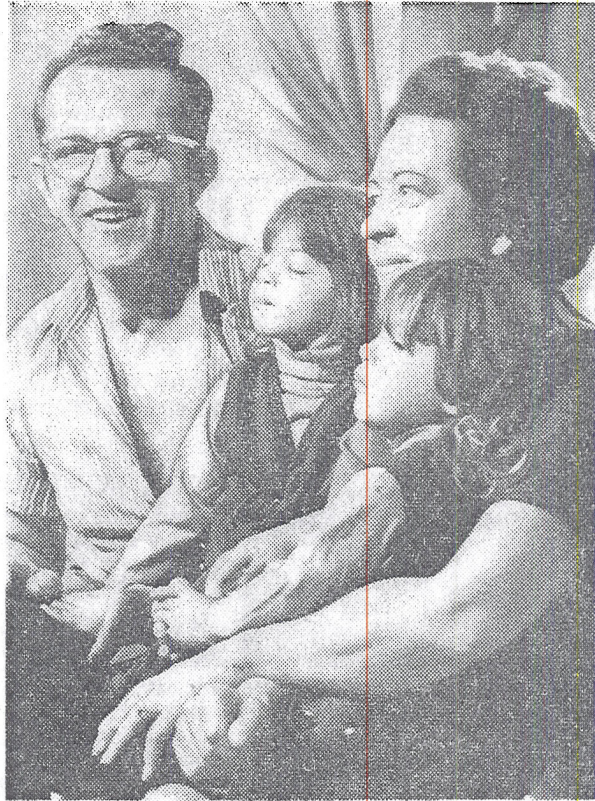
Two Hours

The sergeant called his father shortly after reaching Saigon. "I talked with him for two hours this morning. He said the first thing he wanted was a Christmas dinner with sweet potatoes and the works. I said you'll have that . . . it was mostly small talk."

Young Sexton didn't say why he was freed. He told his father, "They put me on the road and told me to go. I walked and walked and walked. My feet are plenty sore, but I'm all right."

Moved in 1945

The Sexton family moved to the Detroit area in 1945



The family of released prisoner: John C. Sexton Sr. and wife Mildred hold their twin grandchildren Tonya and Tammy Wenske, 3½, in Warren, Mich., as they answer newsmen's questions.

—AP Photo

from Barboursville, Ky., Sexton said. They have lived in Warren since 1953 and the sergeant grew up here. He was graduated from Lincoln High School just before entering the Army.

An employe at General

Motors' Chevrolet plant in Warren, the elder Sexton said, "I probably won't go to work for the next 30 days. I'm sure I'll get away with it. They ain't no happier family anywhere than we are," he said in an emotion-choked voice.