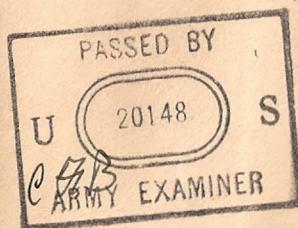


Pvt Edward J Thomas
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APO 948, c/o Postmaster, Seattle, Wn.

AIRMAIL AIRMAIL AIRMAIL



Mrs. Victoria Thomas
17457 Filer Ave
Detroit (12), Michigan

M

December 12, 1943

Dear Mom & Harry:

Both of your airmail letters came in a couple of days ago and I enjoyed reading them very much.

Judging by the dates on the envelopes, it takes most of the time about six to eight days for airmail to get here. Regular mail ordinarily takes about seven to ten days longer.

This is Sunday and my day off. I went to the theater this afternoon dressed up like a mummy. The hood of my parka covered up my head, mouth, and nose. Goggles covered up the remaining part of my face. Going up there, I forced myself ahead bending forward at a 45° angle. Coming back I sailed, bending backward at a 45° angle. Have you ever heard of a williwaw? See if you can look it up and tell me what it is.

The picture I saw was "The Fallen Sparrow" (or something like that). It was one of the craziest pictures I ever saw. I believe the author who wrote this story was inspired while writing it by continuously sipping Micky Finns. It was a crazy old-fashioned detective story odorized with a few typical Nazi characters. John Garfield was the hero who fought with his life and the life of his friends, not for something big like honor, liberty, democracy or freedom, but for a little old emblem of some sort. It could have been a better picture by being a poor comedy if the characters did not pretend to be so serious about that good for nothing emblem. Thank God, though, all the pictures aren't like that. A couple of days ago I saw "Holy Matrimony" with Monty Wooly and Gracie Fields. This is a picture from Arnold Bennet's novel and it's one of the best I have seen in the Army. It doesn't take much intelligence

to see how a master story writer can put life into a story and how a hick writer can take it out. If both of you haven't seen "Holy Matrimony", I would say that you have missed something. The pictures to be shown this coming week are "Hostages" with Louise Rainer, "Winter Time" with Sonia Henie, "Claudia" and "Girl Crazy". This group seems to be better on the average than any I have seen for a long time. "Girl Crazy", though, doesn't sound as ~~as~~ if it will be good. I saw this as a stage play at the Michigan Theater in 1930 or 1931 and at that time it really was odorous.

I am writing all this on my double decker bunk. Fortunately I have the top bunk and can expose myself to the free space up above me. Some prefer the lower bunks, but I don't because the top bed is rather low and when crawling into the lower bed I'd have about the same thwarted feeling as a piece of ham between two slices of bread.

Before I could finish this letter, I had the wind carry me to supper. On my way back, however, the wind charged me heavily for that lift to the mess hall. When I came back, I settled down in my bunk to read Sinclair Lewis' "Prodigal Parents". When I got tired of it I played some Chinese Checkers and as usual I lost. I guess I have played over 25 of these games so far and have lost all of them. It doesn't matter whether my opponent knows the game or not, the result is always the same. After finishing the game it was about time for me to wash up and shave. To do this I have to go through a process that is quite different from the one I went through back home. First it is necessary for me to make sure that there is a pan of hot water on the stove. Then I have to make sure no one else takes it before I am ready to use it. In the next step, I place the pan on a chair or the table if no one is using it and proceed with my ablution. All this reminds of the days I spent on the farm in Free Soil during the good old days.

I am explaining all this in dry detail to give you an idea of just what my off-days are like.

After shaving myself, I settled myself on my bunk again and continued to write this letter. Right now some of the hut mates are in bed asleep, some are reading, and others are talking and listening to the radio which is on the bunk next to mine and which I can hear very clearly. The fellows in this hut represent quite a few of the big cities in the 'old country'. The one who is below me is from Los Angeles, another is from Washington, D.C., and Albuquerque, N. M., another comes from St. Louis, and a couple are from Chicago and New York City. I am the only one from Detroit.

If you could look at the walls of my hut, you'd find them plastered with pictures of pin-up girls, most of them taken from Esquire and movie magazines. These pictures make the hut look like an art gallery. On the wall across the aisle from me are pictures of Paulette Goddard. They were the pictures which were transferred from the wall above my bunk by the boy who had the bunk under me but who moved across the aisle because he had the chance to claim an upper bunk. When he moved, he took his Paulette Goddards with him. I didn't mind it so very much because I was getting to a point where I began to wonder how Paulette felt when she saw me going to bed with my long Johns on. I felt more at ease when she was taken away by her ardent admirer.

About those photographs I sent you, I knew the first day after mailing them that you would get only six instead of eight because the two that didn't pass the censor were returned to me. They had backgrounds which revealed too much of what is on this island.

It was good to hear about the beauty of that Black-Cross we bought. It seems as if it was a pretty good idea in cancelling the order with Ingham because it's doubtful if his Black-Cross are as beautiful as Roy Jebb's.

Also it was good to hear that arrangements have been made for Gladfelter to take care of our mink another year. I understand that ten platinum females will be kept. What will happen to those which will not be kept? Will they be pelted or ranched somewhere else? I suppose the easiest solution would be to pelt them. No doubt, there would be complications and trouble which would take up too much time in ranching surplus mink somewhere else. Anyway I'd be interested to know just what your plans are in regard to this.

It was a surprise to me to hear that Richard Barrigar is in the hospital. He answered my letter quite some time ago and my reply is long overdue. I've just written him, however, and perhaps will find out why he is in the hospital.

My copies of Readers' Digest came to me very late. I received the October & November issues just a little while ago and found they were delayed because my APO number was not included in the address. I am mailing the correct address to them.

Mom & Harry, I don't know whether this letter will reach you before Christmas. Anyway, I'll assume it will and am wishing both of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Give my holiday greetings to Izzy, Mac, Gertie, Gene, Genie, and Wayne. If Wayne can't understand, just tickle him under the chin and say 'hoochy coochy'.

With Love,

Eddie

P.S. This letter was written in shorthand Dec. 12 but I didn't have the chance to type it until the night of Dec. 16.

In one of the Sunday Detroit papers I noticed that the book stores are selling "Rogues Gallery" by Frank Scully. Could you buy a copy for me and place it in with the other books in my bedroom?