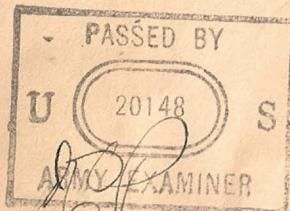


Pvt E. J. Thomas
36576155
Service Co., 153d Inf.
APO 948, c/o PM
Seattle, Wash.



AIRMAIL

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



Aleutians
March 15, 1944

Dear Mom & Harry:

On March 1, I celebrated my first anniversary in the Army by eating one or two extra candy bars and counting the days in the past year to make sure there were only 365 instead of 3,650 as I thought.

Way back in May of 1941, I made a bet with that Chinese engineer at the Ford Motor Co. that the Nazis would be completed defeated by May 1 or maybe it was May 31, 1944. For the first time I'm beginning to doubt whether I am going to win. There are only two months remaining and now it appears as if only a miracle will bring the European conflict to an end in such a short time. The only cheery thing I can see about the whole mess is that I may be able to visit Detroit before the war is over-- maybe even sooner than you expect. I should have known anyway that as a gambler I could do much better by trying to sell milk to cows. A few days ago, under the influence of beer, I gave my gambling luck a very small test to see whether in a crap game it could stand up on its rubber legs, and I came out with no legs at all. I lost the great sum of \$4.00. This was disturbing enough to make me mumble over and over to myself that gambling doesn't pay. Most of the fellows around here, though, aren't affected that way. Some lose as much as \$250 with a few rolls of the dice without seeming to care very much. Occasionally a man may win as much as \$500 in one night. There are rumors going around that some, through a period of a few years, have won enough to insure themselves independence for the rest ~~of the rest~~ of their lives. In this land greenbacks are nothing but chips.

Recently I was looking through the Ad Section of the Sunday News of January 9. I had the idea that prices of farms went up quite a bit, but in looking them over they seem to be the same as ever. There were a couple that caught my eye. One was 60 acres with a 5-room modern house, 1000 ft. lake frontage, live stream, 8 miles from Pontiac, \$8000, with \$2000 down, advertised by Roy Annett Inc, Pontiac. This is something I would have tried to see. The chances are great, however, that I would be disappointed as usual in getting my first glimpse of the property. The house on the property usually turns out to be an eye-sore. Probably by the time we are ready to buy, there won't be any need to worry about getting a modern home. I read an article in "This Week" about an architect by the name of something like Dhalberg who is expected to do as much for housing as Kaiser did for ships. His predictions are that in the near future it will be possible to put up prefabricated houses of both simple and elaborate designs in about 1/30 of the time and at about 1/2 of the cost of present homes. Basements would not be required because a compact central heating system or unit heaters could be installed in wall recesses. \$10,000 would build a mansion with every modern feature and gadget obtainable. This sounds like a solution to our problem. We could purchase land without buildings at a pretty low price, and then when the time is ripe we could call up the contractors on a Friday, have the house put up on Saturday and Sunday, and move into it on Monday. I don't know--the idea sounded all right when I started to tell you this, but now it seems as if my mind jumped the track on some sharp turn. You had better write to me in regard to this and set me on the track again.

With love, *Eddie*

P.S. I just received another letter from Izzy. I'll try to answer her and also Gertie & Gene.