

THOMAS S. HANDFORTH

40 AKANA

1046 Victoria Ave
Los Angeles 6 Calif
Christmas Day [1947]

Dear Nannie -

The Akanas had their Christmas tree this morning and went off to dinner with relatives in San Fernando Valley. I go to dine ~~later~~ this afternoon with the Two Hills and James Lee. and being alone in the house I have just come in from a long spell of sunbathing in the secluded garden. The last three days have been as hot as summer, and even up in Tujima near the snows. I hear that it has been warm even at night. This from Daisy Brown who shivers when the thermometer drops below 65°. Last night she dined with the Akanas and myself at a shabby little Chinese restaurant at 9th & San Pedro near the market - which again proved the rule in re. Chinese eating establishments, the shabbier they are the better the food. After that we toured the town looking at Xmas decorations - those of the big AAA building on Figueroa and Adams were by far the most beautiful - so another feather in the hat for your AAA.

Then Daisy and I tried to get into the old Mission for mid night mass. A crowd of pious Mexicans was patiently waiting at the entrance, but the priest sent word from his bed for them to come back in the morning. Because of the disturbing element of drunks who persisted in attending, midnight masses in the mission had been cancelled indefinitely.

So now I take pen in hand to touch it to this exquisite flaxen parchment. It is truly elegant paper and I hope it inspires me to be more diligent in my correspondence. There is only one slight flaw in its perfection, which is that I would have preferred to have had the initial S. omitted. Two years ago when you likewise showered me with stationery I had the same regret but was too polite to mention it, since it was irremediable and I had not presumed that I would be again so favored.

Your enormous box of treasures arrived on Monday and the small package, with candied peel soon followed. Your admonition not to peek was obeyed only until Xmas Eve, which was just as well, since without inquiring I would have mistaken the blue costume for a ski suit and not the pyjamas which I needed (having been reduced to nil in that item) for Christmas morning breakfast. The cookies have already been gobbled and the peppermints appreciated by the family here as non plus ultra. The fruit cake, thru its cellophane wrapping looks as if it might be a very rich plum pudding - (and home made I take it?) but I am not going to investigate until the week becomes leaner in goodies. I had expected to slip secretly thru this holiday season like a will-of-the-wisp without any one remembering me, as so your box was a great surprise.

Dec 26.

And the party at the Hills turned out to be embarrassingly lavish with a great assortment of

THOMAS S. HANDFORTH

for each of the twelve guests. From James a piece of "fingering fade" to be kept in pocket and rubbed to help one think - carved like a very primitive cat-animal - stained brown and cracked by long interment in a grave it is probably of the Han period (200BC - 200AD).

I should long ago, ^{have} let you know that the securities came thru alright - all accounted for, and are safely tucked away in a box at the Head Office (6th + Spring) of the Security - First National Bank of Los Angeles. The outside enveloped had been discarded when I collected them so I do not know what the mailing charges were or who paid them.

But I haven't yet bought the house of mystery: The Castle of the "Four Winds". All the time that I was in Santa Barbara, the brother-in-law of the owner, Mr. Stocoun, phoned and left notes for me every day. I eventually allowed him to call on me to accept my bid of \$17,500. but by that time I was able to evaluate the situation more realistically, my early emotions of covetousness having cooled down. Since even two I. I together could not get any bank loan or Veterans loan on the property I realized that it would be almost impossible to sell at a later date and that there would be few offers even now. So I told Stocoun that the maximum I had been

advised to pay was \$15,000. He walked out of the house cheerily laughing at me, saying that he had a standing offer for more than that. That was almost three weeks ago and I haven't heard from him since now have I been to the house to see if it has been sold. With that I jumps up and drives off to the house just in time to see the sunset over the city. The old witch (there's always a witch as well as ghosts connected with any genuine castle) who lives in the cottage (once the garage) is standing at the gate, and she tells me my god nothing is settle and my god she wishes it was because my god she can't keep her mind on her true confession story gnawed by jealousy she's writing for a prize competition. So maybe I'll have that pile of masonry anchored round my neck yet.

I've just done a very successful portrait of one of the idiots at the Seaman School: a good likeness, with all the imbecility left out. This should be a special line of business in itself. Mr. & Mrs. Salvas got back from their honeymoon in exactly two weeks and that included a chartered boat trip to the islands off Key West. In March they are going to Detroit to buy a school bus & drive it back via New York. And Mrs. S. claims to be a sick woman!

The headlines of the evening paper read, Heaviest Snowstorm in History in New York Area. Wish you were here to enjoy the best weather of the year.

Happy New Year Day and days!

Tom

As you say the power of attorney paper might as well be preserved for future eventualities