



JEFFERSON BARRACKS
MISSOURI

Pvt Thomas S. Handforth
39260192
Headquarters 31st T.S.S.

[110 December]

[1942]

Dear Marnie -

This will have to do to strike off the account with you for all the letters and numerous packages from you in the last few days. I've had good intentions to reply earlier but this week I was put on a special job of bringing Xmas joy to the boys at the barracks. As a result none of my own Christmas greetings have been sent out. The little mementos which I am sending you and Stan will be late. For which I trust you will accept excuses.

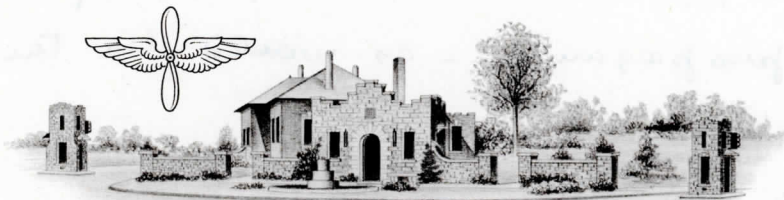
My job was to construct and paint a ten foot Santa, with sleigh and reindeer of like proportions, and an immense Merry Christmas banner supported by ropes, which have been placed on either side of the 25 ft. Xmas tree on the Parade Ground; another Santa, stepping into a fake chimney, placed on the roof of the main Service Club, and a third Santa for the Negro Service Club. The Parade Ground cut-outs have special flood lights on them and are very effective.

My will was too weak to resist opening the Xmas packages and they were lots of fun.

20 Dec 42

There are such a fabulous number of parcels of edibles coming thru the mails for the boys that I'm sure I won't be lacking of good things on Xmas day. Yours alone would last me for weeks, but we do have a few coyotes in every barracks who have no bottoms to their stomachs in spite of the excellent 3 meals daily we get at the Mess Hall. The knife was exactly what I wanted. I was just on the point of buying one. and the sandwich spread and crackers were handy last night when I was too tired to go to chow. Three nights before I ~~from~~ ~~from~~ wanted to save time so made a supper of grape fruit kind. You can never send too much of that delicacy for which I have an unquenchable craving. The evergreen [?] was fresh and shiny on the packages tho the holly was a bit wilted. The plum cake and candies are now hidden under my soiled clothes in my barracks bag as it is against regulation to keep food stuffs, but at this season I suspect the inspecting officer closes one eye.

Thanks so much for sending Percy Rainford's address with photo list, it was the right one - ~~from~~ - 44 W 57 only you mistook my 5 for an 8! The photos arrived some days ago &



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have already achieved their purpose.

It must have been since I last wrote you that the "Dissemination Group" of Military Intelligence in Washington offered me a place at once in the Cartographic Section. This did not come thru military channels but direct from an officer in that department. I accepted, but have not heard further tho it has been almost two weeks. The transfer of course would be thru military channels and that may be consuming the time. I hope it has not bogged down due to investigation, since it seems to me it is just about the best part of the service I could be in if promotions do go thru rapidly as they promise. I have concluded that it is just too stupid for me to be in the army without position and will ask for release unless the future holds hope of using what I already know.

Larry Sickman is already a Captain in the 38th Fighter Squadron at Pendleton, Oregon and is crazy about the whole set up and having to get overseas. He is M.I. officer with his group

which is, in that situation, mostly social service
- not propaganda - as would be the case in
Washington.

yes I could use a money belt -
Peq (Margaret Lawson) Steele succeeded in getting
a message to me by phone 10 days ago. As a
result I spent last Sunday with them. Bert S. works
at Atlas T.M.T. Plant, and they have two nice
boys Bill age 12 and Bob age 9. Today the
boys ring with the Presbyterian Choristers and urged
me to come in but I'm trying to send Xmas
greetings instead. (At this moment I'm surrounded
by a mob of coyotes because I mentioned Kankam^{er}
Kulu Smoked cheese and crackers). I shall
go to the Steeles for Christmas dinner - if we
get off - They've asked me to bring any number of
soldiers to please the boys - as if uniforms
were still a rarity.

Arthur Carl Lawson is a Pvt at Fort
Eustis, Virginia # 32632225, Battery D
13th Battalion Barracks 1723

I'll try to phone to you Christmas
afternoon 3-4 P.M. from Peqs. Easier there
than on the Post where there are waiting lines
at the phone booth, and all the Jan will
then be gathered at 604

Meanwhile, a jolly good time to you
and Stan and those assembled under the roof.
And lots of thanks for the Xmas "stocking".

Love Tom