

THOMAS S. HANDFORTH

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Menlo Park Calif  
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Happy New Year to Nannie & Stan!—

And many thanks for the elegant and beautiful shirt which was just what I needed for Christmas - my last Christmas gift - by far - since Santa didn't bring me too much - except too much good food - two big dinners, one right on top of another - one at the Frank Deveneck's Hidden Villas Ranch way up in the fog-tipped hills - about 35 guests - the other with the quiet family of a bank clerk who does the most beautiful cabinet work on the side, and collects Ming porcelain. ~~But~~ Before and after the meals I went right on packing to fly the next day although I had already sent the telegram that I was not coming. I had worked myself up thru several weeks to a painful and crazy state of irresolution, tumbling this way and that until I couldn't think at all, so at the last minute I followed the precept of wise Ch'ien Lung whose motto was "Woo Wei" = "When in doubt do nothing", and cancelled my reservation. However this is just a postponement. When I do arrive it may be with a Chinese Theatrical Troupe which would be more spectacular than by plane - but more of this later. This may occur about a month from now.

Yes, I have not only scuttled my Avila property but lost most of my friends for having sold it. For the last two months I've had daily nightmares about it, and I realize what a terrible mistake it was, if for no other reasons than psychological

ones. Claire Frankelstein went that I had not sold it to her but when I asked her to offer \$1000 more (\$9000) for it at once and I would pay \$500 of that she wouldn't act. There's human nature for you!

The purchaser said he was going to hold it as an investment so I hope you will get awfully rich and buy it back at any cost into the family.

Then maybe I'll be able to sleep at night. But I do think it's nasty of everyone to jump on me now when they know I had been talking of selling it since <sup>almost two</sup> years ago and had quoted a price of \$7000. The realtor sold for \$8000 which will clear me, after taxes etc about the \$7000.

I suppose I might have had \$10000 at the moment of sale because it was just about the peak - but I didn't realize it. There was quite a bit of furniture left in the two houses and I gave it all to some friends in Haleyon. (near Oceanos). In a way

I would like you to settle in Santa Barbara or more South so I could come to visit you and go swimming where the water is fairly comfortable! And although the 4 acres of Ravens-Cliff were undoubtedly the most beautiful on the whole Pacific Coast, you would not have many congenial friends there although the population in that region is increasing by leaps and bounds.

Maybe I'll just give up trying to cope with housing (and with friends) and return to some remote place like India. That persistent publisher Julian Messner is still urging me to go.

By the way, what about those ill-advised

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American Store stocks? I've never received notice of dividends.

You see, I am feeling crabby and cranky and sour. But strangely, since 1947 not quite so miserable as for some weeks before.

But San Francisco is always a willing city to be near. I don't go up often but I'm never disappointed. Now in Winter, when it is a bit chilly in Menlo it is beautifully balmy there, and a real city with such a variety of interests within a compact area - not at all like the blatant village of Los Angeles.

Well I do hope you had a grand vacation and were glad to get home to a merry Xmas and I'm sorry I wasn't with you today, New Years.

However there are so many things I want to talk over with so many people from N.Y. to Washington that I must come before long.

And may every day in 1947 be a happy one for you both,

Tom

PS . I have only now checked up on the American Stores dividends which I should have received:

April 25, 46 to July 1, 46 — about \$ 11.00 —  
July 1 to Oct 1 ————— 21.00

I am writing to American Stores to see if these checks have been cashed, also to have them sent in future to Corn Exchange N.Y.

If you can recollect if you have forwarded checks to me it will help.

This last came in an open envelope, and as they don't have my signature a forged one would not be identified

Sorry to trouble you, but until now I did not know what arrangement had been made for payment

Tom

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