

Civilian Cade

Dec 23, 1941

Dear Mammie -

Here Christmas is upon us and I had almost forgotten that there was going to be such a festival this year. However about ten days ago I did send a box to you and Stan from Monterey which I hope has reached you in time.

I suspect you've been wondering what has happened to me, and I have made efforts to write you but have torn them up. I am just back from three weeks in Monterey and before that two weeks in San Francisco. As you know I was wavering between Guatemala and S.F., but as a result of the hysteria in Monterey and Carmel I am doing neither. In Monterey I bought myself a car which I couldn't afford - a station wagon, which is in itself a movable studio for sketching expeditions - and useful for other things - such as evacuation! While about S.F. I motored with friends to the quiet towns of the "Mother Lode" country and what impressed me much more, the Mendocino Coast to the north. After the rains I am hoping to

go back there to shelter. For the moment I am
wringling for an invitation to a large ranch
near Santa Barbara. If that doesn't materialize
I may go farther south. but in the meanwhile
not attempting to rent my main cottage as it
will remain good head quarters. I suddenly
feel myself more than ever attached to this
Coast and must do something more about
recording it.

The war is awfully near to us here. This
morning an oil tanker hit just a few miles
away. Soldiers are camped about everywhere
and there are guns on the seawall over our
pleasant beach. But all is not so grim.

The nice old lady who is my tenant is surround-
ing herself with chickens, rabbits, pigeons
and goats and is planting a vegetable
garden, giving the place a homey touch.
Of course there are blackouts every night and
every one is examined coming in & out of town
but one soon becomes used to that.

In Monterey I staid with old friends from
Paris, Peking and Tunis. They are depressed and
distracted by the situation. but on the other

hand I find that the tension clarifies and stimulates
our ideas. (except how the new car is going to
be paid for). However I find it dangerous to express
myself on the international situation - since
as you may remember, I prophesied this
years ago when it seemed fantastic, and
for the coming years my prophecies still seem
fantastic.

I hope you didn't write the Shera Tribune that
I was on my way down there. My sister
friend even came up from Guatemala to
Mexico City to meet me. Now I do not know
if it is even possible for a tourist to get
there. At present I am just a glad to be
right here in the midst of it all.

I suppose Wilmington is humming with
activity and that you will have had a
gay Christmas. I go to dine with the Cartmurs
in Orleans - otherwise very quiet. As you see
I didn't even get around to making a greeting
card. However my wishes to you and Stan are
still of good coinage. For all possible cheer
in the year to come with lots of good things
in your stockings.

Tom