

The Seaman School
El Monte, Cal
Oct 11, 1942

Dear Manny.

It was a long time ago that I told you that I was almost in the army, but I can't remember now at exactly what stage I left off with the story. Anyway I received your card of congratulations and your good long letter of Sept 10. I'm not at all sure that congratulations are in order considering my own scepticism regarding motivating forces at work in the world today. Anyway I'm now a cog in that great uncontrollable mechanism. The only question is, can one possibly play a counterbalancing rôle at the same time?

I believe ~~for~~ I told you that I was accepted for enlistment in the 907th Engineers, (Air Force) at March Field (about 50 miles south of here. [The 907th are the advance scouts for the air force, planning building + camouflaging the air fields in the areas of military operation.] That was during the last week of Aug. On the day that my San Luis board received my request to be released from induction they sent me my orders to report. To gain time and perhaps make an appeal I had my induction transferred to El Monte where I was ordered to report on Oct 8th instead of Sept 10th. I stayed on here at the school until Sept 10th, giving art lessons mixed with a bit of natural history geography or what-have-you, to the nit wits, and at the same time using them as subjects for my own studies. Then I returned to Avila to settle my affairs there. I was shocked to find that the house had been broken into and thoroughly looted of food, my best clothing, radio, all my Avila photos

riding boots neck ties, electric plate, copper plates for etching, Chinese
Sung bowl, shirts etc. What I regretted most were a box of
trinkets some of Mother's and Dad's, Grannies and including that 17th
century Rajput miniature of Joseph Loughheed's - a lot of old
letters which I valued - and the photos. I suppose the suits
were of greatest monetary value for me, but in a way it was
a relief to be rid of them just to avoid packing. I sold
what I could of the furniture dishes etc in the house, gave
away a lot to friends and church rummage sale, and
left the rest to the Ravens. I had an offer on the land
(cash \$3500) but held out for \$4000. so the deal was
not made which perhaps is all for the best. In fact I
would now buy an adjoining lot which is in a key position
in relation to my acres if I could get it at my price.
I rented the house for a nominal sum (\$60 for the year) since
I got the check in advance, and the people are reliable
and wish to use the place only as a week end cottage.
The 'lower' house is rented to my old lady who looks after
my cats which are now the handsomest in the county.
The four garages are rented for the moment but I don't
know if it will be possible to collect while I'm away.

I spent my birthday very pleasantly visiting about
between friends in Oceano, and was very pleased to
have your and Stan's telegram. The weather was at its
best during those last three weeks and I acquired a deep
healthy, perhaps too healthy tan on the beach. I had
frequent visits from Lord Spencer Churchill. (Winston's cousin)
whom I have known slightly for some while. (He has been
living in Beverley Hills writing a book on ^{the} contemporary

British ruling class and politics) It was most heartening at this time to have a deeper acquaintance with a man of broad critical judgement and at the same time a humanist. He gives the worst rap to his own people in England.

Last Wed evening I drove down here again and at 6.45 AM Thursday went in to Los Angeles with the draft group from El Monte for my physical examination. We were pushed thru the medical maze in no time at all and Uncle Sam found that I was a satisfactory physical specimen. The rest of the day was spent in sitting around waiting to be sworn in, which occurred at 5 PM. We were given a choice of a fortnight furlough now or at the end of the war so I took it now. On Oct 22nd I report at Fort McArthur. We are not told where we go from there. It is not permitted to keep any personal possessions there so I am leaving a small supply of art materials with friends in S. Cal. to be sent to me later if I have a chance to use them. My trunk and a wooden case of my pictures are being shipped to you from San Luis. They will come freight collect with \$1.00 charge for storage, since I did not want to send them off until I was sure that I was accepted. Please let me know the charges. I took all the pictures out of their mats to reduce bulk as it hardly seems worthwhile to send to exhibitions at this time. I shall send along the trunk key by separate letter. Will you please open the trunk and put in moth balls or flakes which I neglected to do.

Today I sold my car so am now practically free for action, tho I may still be sending along one more box or suitcase of odds and ends to you. Raymond and Raymond Gallery in Beverley Hills has done

nothing with my pictures so far, but I am leaving them for the present. Yesterday when I called at the Perls Gallery next door, Mr. Perls who was to have put some of my things in a group show this month was closing up shop. He will be at Fort Mc Arthur one day ahead of me. He hopes to be a cook. He is large fat and jolly so will at least look the part to perfection.

It would be swell of you to knit me a sweater but I'm too dumb to be able to give you exact measurements since sweaters have a curious way of changing their size after wearing. and I can't give you length of front because I don't know the cut. Why don't you measure on Stan and make the sleeves (I'll need sleeves if I go to North Dakota) maybe $\frac{1}{2}$ inch longer and make length about 1 inch ^{over} longer, but remember that my skin-deep waist line is between 28' and 30 inches - chest about 36' - 37'. If it's Alaska, the sweater might have mittens and hood but these sections can be added when you know where I am. With so many things you're up to it looks as if you'd have to do the knitting in your sleep.

Gretta Cousins recently sent me a bundle of papers from India, all cultural news not political: The bulletin from the Uday Shankar Center in the Punjab, Ram Gopal's Christmas (last) Week program in Madras, announcements of films, lectures and Gretta's music recitals. On Oct 3, at St. Stephen's Eps Church (San Luis Obispo) Ladies pie and apron sale I gave a talk on "Ladies of India"! and got a free supper!

Must go now to look after the idiots

Love

Tom