

% Fleet Postoffice,
Naval Advanced Base,
Noumea, New Caledonia,
Jan. 8th, 1943.

Dear Canfield Family;

Please accept my belated thanks for your Christmas packages that both reached me the day before Christmas. Thanks Randy for your chewing gum, candy and mints. They hit the right spot.

Thanks for the book of short stories and poetry, and the cute game of dominoes and chess. This is very fine work and will always be a permanent contribution to my collection. I was well remembered this Christmas and everything was here that day except one package that came a couple of days later. I have several fine books to read and a lot of candy to eat. Thanks also for the pictures of your three growing children.

I am permitted to disclose where I am living and you can see from above that it is a good sized island in the south pacific, which is ~~xxx~~ east of Australia and north of New Zealand. It is part of the French colonial empire and at present is governed by the Free French adherents.

I have been here nearly five months so am getting to be an old settler, I have very little contact with the natives, but use every opportunity I can to speak French. Yesterday I went with our Base Captain to call on the Manager of the local nickel smelter and act as interpreter. Everyone is quite thrilled when they find I am of partial French descent, and the interesting thing is that my French is coming back to me pretty well.

Our insurance business has remained good from the last reports, although we think that gas rationing will reduce sales. Ruth keeps busy at the home and office, as her sister Ethel is now working and living about 25 miles north of Salt Lake City, so Ruth is all alone. She has shut up part of the house and is considering renting out part of our house. I have urged her to do so.

Mary Frances is busy with her last year of college and does not come home very often account of gas rationing. Last year she came home or we went up at least every other week-end, and in fact we looked forward to those trips as a change. It is about 90 miles from salt Lake City to Logan, so it made a nice trip for Sunday after church, and take our dinner up there or enroute.

I am acting as Personnel Officer for the Navy at this point and as it is a busy place I am real busy all the time and generally go to bed early as I am tired out. I have kept well so far and although this is quite near the equator, it does get cool at night and I generally rest pretty well. Ruth has been sending me newspapers and magazines and writes me nearly every day, but mail is quite uncertain and usually comes in bunches.

Mother writes pretty frequently and apparently is getting along as usual, I think it is fine that she can do as well as she can, however I do think that we should insist on her living with some of us soon, she is 83 now, 82 according to her figures and 83 according to the correct research that Jay Bezinge did.

Pete Amstead wrote me recently and I have had quite a lot of miscellaneous mail from friends in Utah and elsewhere. I rarely have the use of typewriter, as ours in our office are busy all the time by the yeomen, however, I was able to catch this while a man was out to lunch, today.

Colleges are all being affected by the new draft law and more of them are giving training for the army and navy. Everyone out here is anxious to work hard and win the war. We are on a 7 day week basis, no holidays or leaves at all, but I would say the morale is high.

There is nothing in prospect of my returning to the U.S.A. at any early date, however I do hope I can do so after a year or so out here. This wouldn't be a bad place to be if the war was over, as it is quite pretty, but we are too busy to enjoy the scenery.

Thanks for your various letters and for your presents and I hope that 1943 will bring an end to the war and a return of normalcy in some degree for all of us. I have my eyes open for Lewis B. Jr. to be coming this way sometime. I enclose a letter from Edward, just received, he writes me quite regularly.

Love to each and everyone of you from your brother and Uncle,

Edward