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December 18th 1941.

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My Dear William:

I am writing this letter with the hope that you have arrived safely in Lagos and that it may reach you by Christmas. We have just found that there is a new air service from Miami, leaving on Saturday morning to San Juan, Puerto Rico and then they change to the 42 ton Capetown Clipper which will carry them to Bathurst, British Gambia then to Lagos. The trip is made from San Juan via Port of Spain, Trinidad for an overnight stop and on Sunday to Para, Brazil then on Monday the clipper hops to Natal, departing that night on the 1832 mile crossing to Bathurst, arriving early Tuesday and Lagos will be reached on Wednesday. So here is hoping that we may have a much closer communication with you then we had expected.

It will have been two weeks tomorrow since we received your cable from the boat, place of origin not stated "Sans Origine" and we have figured that if you left London on November 16th and the trip would take 28 days that you should have arrived by this time and I have delayed this letter with the hope that we would have a cable by this time, but must get it off this morning if it reaches Miami in time to catch the clipper on Saturday. We think that you must have had a close connection with the boat in London or we would have had a letter by this time from there. Hope that you were there long enough to see something of the city.

We have asked the Western Union for cable information and they are asking New York but as yet I have not had a reply from him. We think it possible, that since the declaration of war that it might not be possible for you to cable us. Our hope is that you have arrived and are safe on dry land once again. You must tell us all about your trip when you have the opportunity.

It has been quite a time since we have written and I do not know where I left off in the last letter which we sent to Nigeria. The developments of the past ten days have upset the country considerable and all of the talk has been about the conflict with Japan. The Pacific incident simply upset the country and it would seem that our men at Pearl Harbor were not on the alert. The news this morning says that the high command of the air force and navy have been removed and that an investigation will be held. It is too bad that you sold your radio as it may not be easy to obtain another under present conditions.

We are having a very hard time to obtain merchandise and it is going to be tougher as time goes on. We have had a car of nails ordered since the first of August and have not yet received them and it looks as though we would not get them now. We can get no satisfaction from the company in regard to shipment. Almost everything else is just as hard to buy and it looks as though we would not have much to sell the next year if some change is not made. We are not in a defense area and consequently cannot have preference for building materials. Our industries do not have much defense work and it is hard to obtain priorities from them for our class of material.

I had a letter from Janie the first of the week and she has obtained a position with a new store in Rutland, Vermont, as interior decorator, she is going to go to work on the 5th of January and expects to come

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the day before Christmas, so she will have a nice visit here during the holidays. I do hope that she can make a success of it and I think that it will be a fine chance for her, it being a new department in this store.

In the last letter that I wrote to you, I believe that I told you about Bud Francise being close to Legos, I have not talked to his grandmother lately but think I will call her now and ask if she has had any late word from him, just called her and they have no word since the the letter that he sent back on the clipper upon which he went over. His address is Accra, Gold Coast.

Just received a letter from Janie and she will arrive home on the evening of the 23rd. She is going to buy your Christmas presents for you. I am being interrupted so much that it is going to be hard for me to make much sense to this letter.

This morning I took a box to the Post Office to mail to you and they are not so sure that it will go through, if it were not for the fact that you were in the government service they would not have accepted it, but they are going to send it on to New York and I hope that it will reach you eventually. We sent six pair of shorts, six bars of soap, three tubes of shaving cream and a can of powder and a fruit cake. I have just remembered about the tooth paste and I do not believe that she put it in.

Over Thanksgiving Sarah and I took a trip to the Great Smoky Mountains in Tennessee and spent Thanksgiving evening, with dinner with Mr. Ned Lutz and wife, Ned is president of the A.T.A. this year. They have a very lovely home on the outskirts of Knoxville and we had a wonderful time with them. Friday we went through the Smokies and had a beautiful day, but it rained all day Saturday and on Sunday until we arrived at Huntington. The Lutzs' raise some dachshunds (dachsels) and Mrs. Lutz sent Sarah a nine months old putty, she is as cute as she can be but I am afraid that she will be quite a nuisance to us as Sarah is so busy with school work.

On Christmas we are going to have Herman, Betty and the children, Aunt Bertha and Esther, Harold and Lottie and Uncle Gary, so we shall have quite a crowd. Janie said in her letter today that she had met a nice boy in the navy and she wanted to bring him home for Christmas if he could get off, but I am advising her that I do not think it would be best on account of the crowd we are having.

We are all as well as usual and have been having some real cool weather but not bad for the time of year. I think I told you that John Montgomery was in the Cavalry officers training school and likes it very much. On Tuesday night Sir Hubert Wilkin spoke to the Executives Club on the conditions in the Far East, he had spent the summer there and had much interesting information.

Well my dear boy, we all wish you a Merry Christmas and it great hope is that you are and on land by the time this reaches you. God bless and keep you and bring you back safe is our prayer. I know that I should write more but if this goes through we can get word to you much oftener and keep in closer touch. Write when you can and tell us all of the news.

Love and best wishes,

Daddy.
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