

9/12/41
My dear All,

At last I have a chance to drop you a line to let you know of some at least of the latest news.

As you may know, we only docked on Sunday (towards evening), and as you may guess, all — oh sorry! It was Monday we docked. That's right. And from 12pm till 1.30, I was occupied in packing numerous parcels, seeing customs (I won't put a capital "C") and duplicating (writing out by hand) very lengthy crew lists and data. I did phone Mother, but reception was so terrible that I hardly heard what was said. I shall make another attempt in a few minutes. I know

you will understand when I say that I am "up to my teeth" at the moment, and cannot spend too long on this though I should like to.

You must forgive the number of scrappy parcels that will (I hope) arrive.

during the next few days, but paper shortage is painful, and so ~~it~~ ^{are} decent cardboard boxes. Speed has been another necessary but "killing" factor. Many tales have been heard of pounds & pounds of parcels having "disappeared" both when sent by rail & G.P.O., so in order to have at least some check, I am sending them all registered. The extra being easily compensated for by the safety of the goods which I do so much wish to reach you.

This morning, after doing ~~two~~ two terrific 100 yd sprints in about 100 secs each(!) I went to Lpool to see about my teeth. I called on friend Corner of the R.O.C. and he gave me the encouraging news that leave was quite good, and I should have no difficulty in getting my full "wack" in April. Nice work eh? I had better mention here that I have received your very nice parcel, for which many thanks, and ~~because~~ am therefore able to say that

all should be well for the possible holiday that you mention. It strikes me as being perfect! Oh boy what a rest!

Well, I have just returned from phoning you, and now I must "get cracking" or I'll never get finished.

My teeth appear to be worse even than I suspected though I don't ^{want} to make you anxious if you know what I mean! After seeing Mr. G. — without an appointment etc — I went to a Mr. Gee to whom he recommended to me, and though it was mostly "inspection" and ^{arranging of} future appointments, I did get two teeth started. You remember the tooth to the left of my centre teeth which Tommy remarked upon don't you? Well, he drilled that for a while and said, "Doesn't that hurt yet?" So I said, "No. Keep it up!" after a while the drill suddenly sank into the centre but still I felt nothing. Then he said that it was a jolly good job that I came when I did, or that tooth would have caused a lot of trouble — abscess and other unpleasant

~~as~~ things — as it was dead. Altogether he said I needed 10 fillings, and ~~needed~~ he wished he could meet the dentist who had been attending me! He wouldn't believe that I was 18½. So much for that.

I am sending, as I said before, all kinds of parcels. They include, 2 boxes of chocolates (separate), 1 big box containing butter (5 lbs), mince meat, (3 lbs approx.), 3 prs stockings, matches, wool, some drawings, a few pictures, a couple attempts at Christmas cards (one unfinished), and some stencilling which ~~was~~ ~~a~~ I used for a cover for something for the old man. (Included to show where my time was taken up). 1 bottle of scent.

Another parcel will follow with some ~~to~~ more drawings, a bit about Houston, ~~and~~ some postcards (2 to be exact), possibly some lipstick & powder, given me by Mrs K. (The dark for Renie & light for Iris). I say "possibly" because it may come in a separate parcel. I hope you enjoy everything

as much as I love sending them to you. I have paid little attention to arrangement of the presents as regards personal gifts, as I have been busy this trip (strange though it may seem) so I thought that if you could sort things out, so much the better. Maybe you could give Mary a pair of stockings that I fancy were left over from last time. I have already sent a bottle of scent (haw! haw!) like the one you will have, but I should like her to have a pair of stockings as well. By the way, Mrs K. got those stockings for me from a Wholesale place, and they're the best you can get of ~~these~~ their kind, though I got them even cheaper than last time! I hope you like them. I also have some marmalade (4 lbs) but as yet I don't know how to wrap it up! There is a chance that I will send some money home, but I can't swear to it. (Dentist's bill?) I am very satisfied with the way my work

has gone up to now. I've done approx. 215 questions from maths book no. 1 besides several drawings. I also camouflaged a very large metal aeroplane for the old man, which he was giving to his $3\frac{1}{2}$ year old son. Oh and I drew Mr. when he had his beard and moustache on. (He is keeping that). Besides these things, I have written a few notes which I would very much like Iris or Mary to type - If it could be arranged. I have included typing papers. Paintings have been out of the question through lack of proper paper.

I had to take weather reports in the Gulf (in case of hurricanes), and the speed at which they were often sent was 28 to 31 words per minute! As you can imagine, writing at that speed is not easy. We were definitely forbidden from using any broadcast wireless sets on board, ~~so~~ so I also had to get British official London press for "all hands." This lasts for one hour or even over, and that

the speed varies from 24-25 w.p.m. Writer's
cramp was common. Unfortunately M.
can't receive accurately at above 22 w.p.m.,
which of course is understandable.

It is good to hear that all is well,
and it will only be two more trips before
I am home for at least a little while!

So glad to hear that singing sessions
are in progress. Nice work! No doubt
I had better stay at sea!! By the
way, just fancy "Hans to m-o?" Ohhh!
terrible. Renie has hit people over the head
with plates for less than that!!

Thank you Iris for your welcome letter, it
arrived safely, and even though there ^{may be} ~~is~~ no
news, I do still like to hear.

Please explain to Grandma and the others
if I am unable to thank them for remembering
me, but as you know, 4 days is short.

Oh! and many thanks too for the
"Patience" piece from the paper. One does
need to read something like that now & again.

to remind one, and keep one up to scratch.

I fancy that just about covers everything. Awfully sorry I couldn't see Frank. Nothing I would have liked better, but as we say to the Chinks, "No can do."

So now once more cheerio and Harko again. for everything & good luck,
Your loving & affectionate son & brother,
Len.