

31-10-41.

Dear Mum and Dad,

The last letter I wrote was posted airmail a couple of days ago, and since then we have had a wonderful time. We were given shore leave at Honolulu, and had a really remarkable example of American hospitality, for the local Red Cross filled the wharf with 150 cars ready to whisk us off all over the island.

Thomas was very independent and wouldn't come on the trip, preferring to look out for himself rather than be "stranded on some beach for the day," as he put it, so while he went out to do his own sightseeing I put my faith in the American Red Cross - and it certainly was not misplaced. Another Taiari chap and I hopped into a brand - new Super deluxe V-8 station wagon with four others. The driver was a Mrs Sack (pronounced Sark) and before we knew it we had his round our necks and were on our way. The Taiari chap, Henry Cotton by name, went halves with

me in a camera and some film, and I hope I'll have some results to show you. We reckoned we just couldn't go on that trip without a camera.

Well, we saw just about everything there was to see. Our hostess was a friend of people named Castle, large landowners, and she took us there early in the day to see a beautiful Honolulu home. They had big dog-kennels full of Great Danes and lots of other varieties - it was a full-time job for one native boy to look after them all.

For lunch we ended up at Kailua beach, which puts in the shade anything I can remember in New Zealand. We had a swim there, then came out to a regular fiesta. There were crates, piled high, all full of soft drinks; a long table with huge bunches of tree-fresh bananas just waiting to be eaten; a staff of volunteer cooks spent all their time handing out hot-dogs.

and hamburgers as fast as they could make them, and there were cans with real pineapple juice on tap. I never in all my life saw anything like it. If anyone saw you walking round empty-handed you weren't allowed to stay that way long. And in addition to the spread there was one of Honolulu's crack hula dancers putting on a show to music by three of the men from a well-known dance-band there.

After lunch we stopped off at a picturesque ice-cream shop where you just took the horn and out pops a girl to take the order. It was here our two lads nearly had a fight with a chap who wanted to pay for the ice cream; he just wasn't allowed to, so there! We had a look at the Blowhole, too, where the sea drives in and spouts up through a hole in the rock just like a Whaka geyser. One of the chaps got a bit too close and was thoroughly soaked, so we had to hang his khaki shorts out through the back window.

Mrs Sack took us to her home for a drink, and as she lives next-door to the Honolulu estate of the famous Vanderbilts we had a look over part of that. It bit more sight-seeing, and we ended up having a look over the famous Royal Hawaiian Hotel, which faces the equally famous Waikiki Beach. We were over half an hour late getting back on board, but even if there is a fuss about that we all six think it was worth while. It was a wonderful day's outing they put on for us, so just stop anyone you hear running down the Americans. They're great.

When we were sailing into the harbour early in the morning six fast single-seat fighter planes gave us a wonderful display over the ship, "shooting it up" from all over the place. The local Air Corps had word of our arrival, and sent out these chaps as a welcoming party; that was typical of the way we were made at home.

By the way, you may be interested to know that the V for victory sign is, if anything,

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more popular in Honolulu than in N.Z. You don't find it plastered all over shop-windows but everywhere we went people made the "V" or "thumbs-up" sign with their hands as we passed. It was a universal greeting.

And now here's a technical point or two specially for Father: the V-8 we were in had steering column gear-shift and a quite unreadable, though modern, instrument panel. On the island petrol sells at $23\frac{1}{2}$ cents, which at the rate of three dollars to the N.Z. £1 (current exchange rate, in case you didn't know) is about $\frac{1}{7}$ a gallon. Mrs Sack said the Station wagon cost about 1500 dollars, and was formerly only about 1200. And a roll of film is 35 cents - about $2\frac{1}{4}$ d, and therefore at least 6d. dearer than in N.Z. I have seen a Schick razor advertised in American magazines on board, and will buy and post one as soon as I can. I haven't forgotten stockings, either.

Closing now with love from
Anda.