

22-4-42.

Dear Mum and Dad,

I'm just back from that fortnight's leave I was on when I last wrote, so of course have a bit of a "Monday morning" feeling, even though it is Wednesday night. I had a great time up in Cumberland, and could have stayed there much longer.

Mrs Coward and Mrs Huddleston, Peggy's aunts in Millom, are both very nice, homely folk who did all they could to help me. Because I hadn't had much chance to let them know I was in the country I didn't like to drop in on them without warning. I stayed at a hotel there, but saw a lot of them.

I don't know whether I told you all this before, but Millom (if you can find it on a map) is right on the edge of the famous Lake District, so there was much more to see and do there than I had expected. I borrowed Harry Coward's cycle most days, and pedalled miles out into the country in search of lakes, scenery, and old ruins, and found plenty of each. All told, I did something over 200 miles in trips of 40, 50 or 60 miles a day; I don't want to toot

my own trumpet too loudly, but that isn't bad going because it was all over hilly country, just like home. You either puff up one side of the hill on foot, or you are tearing down the other side at breakneck pace. Billy Huddleston, home on leave from the Army, came with me one day and pointed out where Mr High went to school near a little place called Bootle, which I suppose he remembers very well.

Much of the scenery in that part of England is not unlike New Zealand - green fields, rolling hills and so on - but there are some features about it which are totally different. Nearly all the fences, for instance, are made of carefully-stacked stones, and most of the farmhouses and outbuildings are stone, too. It must be a real work of art to put up those stone fences, but they told me there that at the time they were built the wage was only one penny a day; not at all my idea of a soft job.

I stumbled across all sorts of odd things in the course of my ramblings, so now I am hoping for some good results from all the film I shot off. It's odd being in a country where a building is new

until it has been up for two or three hundred years old - ah, that's improved the colour of the ink. Hope you have been able to read it so far.

I was in London again for a few hours in between trains this morning, and was in Leicester Square when the usual morning queue was forming up, at about 9 a.m., for the 10.15 a.m. session of "Gone With The Wind," which is now in its 105th week in London. The people were two deep for over half a block, and the "House full" sign was out when I looked later in the morning. That more than doubles the previous long-distance record run of 49 weeks, held by "Ben Hur."

There was another familiar face here when I arrived back this afternoon - remember the Jack Christiansen who was originally in the same course at Levin? He has just been here a few days after coming out from N. Z., and he, too, has a commission. I didn't have much trouble recognising him, although he has sprouted a moustache to go with his P/O's stripe.

Well, I really think that's about all for this instalment, so love from
Arnold J.