

Interesting Letter From India

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us. It was a grand feeling to see land again after being on the boat for so long and under such conditions. Our stay in Australia was several weeks but that was not long enough for us. It was such a grand place and the people were so nice that we regretted leaving there just about as much as we regretted leaving home. Many of the boys I am sure will want to go back there some day after this war is over. I for one am planning on making another trip.

When we left Australia we had no more idea where we were going than we did when we left home and we were a surprised bunch when we landed on the shores of India. "India," the land of mystery. In Australia the people were so much like ourselves that we did not feel like strangers but when we set foot on Indian soil it was a much different story. The people looked so strange to us. They bring to mind characters out of a story book we have read at some time or another and wondered if such places were really true. Believe me they are. I guess we were just about as strange to them as they were to us and we sure looked each other over well. The people dress different, they speak a different language, although many of the people are able to speak and understand a little English, their ideals and standard of living are different, in fact everything was so different it was just like entering a new world.

Our first trip into town after getting settled in our new camp was really quite an experience. I guess the first thing that we noticed so prominently was the number of beggars on the streets. They crowded around us like ants around a bowl of honey. We were millionaires to them and believe me they have a pretty good line. "Bakhshiah Sahib, no Mama, no Papa, no brother, no sister, Bakhshiah Sahib." When you hear that continually all the time you are in town it begins to get pretty tiresome. We were not used to their money and before we knew it we had spent, or given away more money than we realized. That was a mistake because the more you give the beggars the more they want and the merchants raised the prices on everything when they saw us coming.

In India the Cow is a sacred animal and we found them walking in the streets and on the sidewalks just as if they owned the place. In a way they do. No one will ever drive one away. If it is in your way you walk around it. They will not move an inch. To shoo a cow out of the street here has just about the same effect as kicking your friend's favorite dog back home. It just don't go so well.

The sweeper is about the lowest caste of people in India and they are kept busy in the streets cleaning up after the sacred cows. Incidentally the cow dung is not thrown out. Every bit of it is taken out and made into little patties and dried in the hot sun for use as fuel. Fuel is very scarce in this country and they save everything that can be used for that purpose.

There is a pronounced class distinction in India and there are many castes of people. All the way from the lowest sweeper up to the richest people in the world. It is hard to believe that a country with so much wealth can have so much poverty.

There are over two hundred different dialects throughout India. The people are very religious and everything they do is based on their particular kind of religion or belief.

Since I have been here I have seen much of the country and I can say that I have enjoyed every bit of it even if at times the going is rather tough. There are many ancient temples, sacred rivers, palaces of rich Mahrajahs and so on and I guess I have seen a little of everything.

The Burning Ghats are not exactly a pleasant sight to see but interesting none the less. They are places where Hindus burn the bodies of the dead. There is one thing I have not seen yet but hope to before I leave and that is the Towers of Silence where the dead bodies are laid out for the buzzards to eat. A gruesome thought but none the less true.

There is no water in this country that is safe for drinking until it has been purified by boiling or by the use of chemicals. The same goes for food. Only the fruit and some meats can be eaten safely and all others must be cooked before eating.

The death rate among the Indians is very high from sickness of many kinds. Malaria is the cause of more deaths than any one thing. Over a million people a year die of that alone.

Sanitation is something that is almost unknown. In every Indian village is what is known as a Tank. It is nothing more than a large pond scooped out of the ground. The dirt is used in making mud huts in which the people live. The water in the Tank is used for drinking, washing

clothes, bathing, cooking, disposing of the bodily waste produce, and even washing the family cow. There is no inlet or outlet to these tanks. They fill up only from the rains. It is no wonder there is so much sickness and death yet they have been doing those things for centuries and no one seems to be able to make them realize why they should not.

We have to be very careful of our health. I have been inoculated so many times for so many things it's a wonder my blood is not pure serum. There is no such thing as being too careful when it comes to our health.

They still use the ancient old ox cart over here and I guess they always will. The old Ox sure gets it in the neck. They balance tremendous loads on two-wheeled carts and slowly wend their way down the road. The average Indian is not a very robust sort of person but if they can get it up there they can carry very heavy loads on top of their heads. Everything they carry they put on top their heads, never carrying anything in their arms. On construction jobs through out the country, the women seem to do all the hard work. The men will use an implement much like a short-handled hoe to fill a basket with dirt and the women carry it off on top of their heads. If they have a very long haul they will use the relay system. It is a very slow work but they seem to get it done. Labor is so cheap it would be foolish to use any other method as long as there is no hurry and I have never seen any of them in a hurry to get anything done. They do not use a shovel or a wheelbarrow. I have not seen one since I came here.

One quick way to insult an Indian is to call him a "Native." They do not like that. One must always call them "Indians" and not "Natives."

Most all the Punjab and Ghurki men are soldiers. The Punjabi is very tall and stockily built, while the Ghurki is very short and wiry. They make good soldiers. An interesting thing about the Ghurki is that they would rather fight with a knife any time than with a gun and when they are doing sentry duty the rifle is chained to them so they will not throw it down and lose it. He seems to have more faith in his knife than the gun. They carry a very good looking knife and are very good when it comes to using it. Woe be unto the man who tangles with him. The Sikhs are also very good soldiers and never cut their hair or beard. In civilian life most Sikhs are taxi drivers from what I have seen. One of my most treasured souvenirs of India is a genuine Sikh knife.

Well folks, I guess I shall have to sign off for this time. I will try and tell you more about India and its people some other time. Until then I shall say, "So-long Sahib." With love, Frank.

Thoughts of being cast into the ocean at the mercy of sharks haunted the life of Adrian Smith as a sailor. But when the Carey youth actually found himself in the south Pacific supported only by a life jacket after the sinking of his ship, the U. S. S. Northampton, in the Solomon islands battle the fear of sharks never entered his mind.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. Jess Smith, who is home on his first leave since enlisting in the navy in April, 1941, told of his experiences in the battle. Asked what was his sensation when he realized that the Northampton was sinking, Adrian, a first class fireman, said: "I had only one thought—that of getting off the ship. I even forgot the \$400 I had in my locker."

He said that he floated around in the ocean for 12 hours after the midnight order to abandon ship. He was rescued by an American cruiser. "Sharks never entered my mind

Thought Of Sharks Never Entered Sailor's Mind

until I was aboard the cruiser," he stated, "and I probably wouldn't have thought about them then if someone hadn't asked me if I had seen any. I was barefooted and someone suggested that they had eaten off my shoes; I had to tell them that I left them on the deck of the ship."

Asked about the morale of the Japs, he replied: "They don't know what it is to quit. They are sent on a mission and if they don't do it and return they lose their lives anyway—so they just do or die."

Adrian said that the natives of the Solomons are large. "Many of them weigh over 200 pounds," he stated. "They are black with red hair. An interesting thing about them is that they seem to capture Jap snipers bare-handed. You never see them carry any weapons when they go out for Japs, but most always come in carrying one tied to poles as we do deer. They will not kill the Japs but they mutilate them before they bring them in."

"The marines started out to make private bids of 75 cents a pair of Jap ears, but natives brought in so many the boys were soon out of funds. Consequently their offer was changed to cigarettes and canned goods."

"The natives just can't seem to understand how food such as peaches and tomatoes can come out of a can and still be good to eat. Many of the

people talk very good English and yet some can not speak the language at all. They have a great respect for the American men and salute them and stand aside while they pass whether they are officers or not."

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how the West is doing its part in the national war effort, we publish here the list of "E" Award winners in the ten Western states.

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- North American Aviation, Inc., Inglewood, California
- Solar Aircraft Company, San Diego, California
- Vega Aircraft Corporation, Burbank, California
- Vultee Aircraft, Inc., Vultee Field, California

CONSTRUCTION

- Guy F. Atkinson Co., - George Pollock Co., Long Beach, California
- The Austin Company, Seattle, Washington
- Barrett & Hill, Mare Island, California
- Ben C. Gerwick, Inc., San Francisco, California
- Macco Construction Company, Clearwater, California

MANUFACTURING

- W. R. Ames Company, San Francisco, California
- Automatic Screw Machine Company, Los Angeles, California
- Axelson Manufacturing Company, Los Angeles, California
- Bakewell Manufacturing Company, Los Angeles, California
- Byron Jackson Co., Los Angeles, California
- Chemurgic Corporation, Turlock, California
- Clayton Manufacturing Company, Alhambra, California
- Columbia Steel Company, Pittsburg, California
- Consolidated Steel Corporation, Ltd. (Naval Ordnance Division), Los Angeles, California
- Eitel-McCullough, Inc., San Bruno, California
- Electric Sign Refractory Co., Portland, Oregon
- General Electric Company, Ontario Works, Ontario, California
- General Metals Corporation, Oakland, California
- Gilfillan Brothers, Inc., Los Angeles, California

SHIPBUILDING

- Albina Engine & Machine Works & Shipyards, Portland, Oregon
- Basalt Rock Company, Inc., Napa, California
- Bellingham Marine Railway & Boatbuilding Co., Bellingham, Washington
- Bethlehem Steel Company Shipbuilding Division, San Pedro Yard, Terminal Island, California
- Bethlehem Steel Company Shipbuilding Division, San Francisco, California
- Fulton Shipyard, Antioch, California
- Harbor Boat Building Company, Terminal Island, California
- Hubbard's South Coast Co., Newport Beach, California
- Mare Island Navy Yard, Mare Island, California
- Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation, St. Johns, Oregon
- Puget Sound Navy Yard, Bremerton, Washington
- Seattle-Tacoma Shipbuilding Corporation, Seattle, Washington
- Tacoma Boat Building Company, Tacoma, Washington

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

- Climax Molybdenum Company, Climax, Colorado
- Naval Ammunition Depot, Mare Island, California
- Naval Ammunition Depot, Puget Sound, Washington
- Naval Ammunition Depot, Hawthorne, Nevada
- Portland Woolen Mills, Portland, Oregon
- Red Cross Blood Donor Service, San Francisco, California

Tribute To A Young Man In The Flying Service

Willis W. Marshall, son of Mrs. N. E. Springer of this city, who was recently graduated as an aviation cadet at the Merced school in California, is now taking an advanced course. The following poem was written for him by the wife of his employer, O. Lynum, at Klamath Falls, where Willis was a manager of a service station for him:

Last Christmas on our Christmas tree I named one light for you And then I said a special prayer For God to see you through. I prayed that when the holidays Return to us once more, That wars may end, and we may have Our boys that we adore.

Remember, please remember While you are far away The heart of me is with you In all you do and say, I wait with faith undaunted For every fear I smother Until you shall return to one Who loves you as a mother.

Your friend, Mrs. O. Lynum.

Townsend Club

At 6:30 p. m. Tuesday, twenty-five members enjoyed the "sack" dinner and at eight o'clock the meeting was called to order by the president, Mr. Tilghman. Opening included Lord's Prayer, song, "America," and Flag Salute.

A visitor, Mrs. Alexander, of Roseburg, was present; we were also glad to see other members are improving and can soon be present.

Caravan dinner and meeting in W. O. W. hall Sunday, Feb. 28 at twelve o'clock.

The following took part on the program: Mesdames Hatcher, E. Westbrook, A. Dean, E. McCue, Fred Von Pegert, Wimer and Mr. and Mrs. Tilghman. Mrs. Schroeder and Mrs. Dean were the lucky ones to draw prizes. Assorted salads will be served next meetings. Come out and enjoy the evening.—Press Cor.

Calling cards, 50 for \$1.00.

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The names in this list were obtained from Public Relations Offices of the Navy and every effort has been made to make it complete.