

Lorna Livesley Chambreau
letters from
Yakima
Gold Beach
Seaside
1939-1940

Letters from Lorna

to family

Yakima 1939

Gold Beach - Seaside

1940-

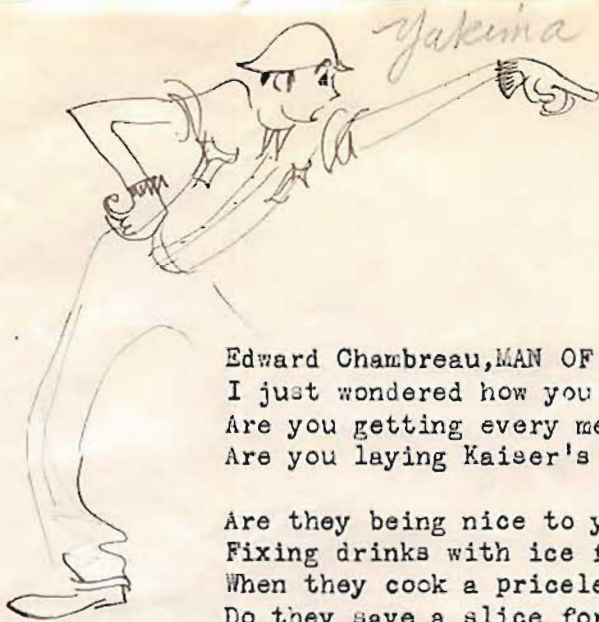
from Yakima
Aug 1939



Meeting of the Cousins



Yakima 1940



Edward Chambreau, MAN OF STEEL!
I just wondered how you feel?
Are you getting every meal?
Are you laying Kaiser's keel?

Are they being nice to you--
Fixing drinks with ice for you?
When they cook a priceless stew
Do they save a slice for you?

We will start our homeward flight
At the latest, Friday night--
Sooner--if that Doctor Wight
Gets my teeth plugged up all right.

Communique:
'He hammered at my "Cavite",
Waved his "Bataan" over me,
And where ivory used to be
Gold appeared--some Midas, he! "

Michael has a new, pink truss;
He wears it without "fuss, fuss, fuss";
But it makes me cuss, cuss, cuss
That one so young should come to thus!

Sis has gone away today;
Soon will be your "play-two-day";
I don't feel so gay today;
I'll come--just you say I may!

Love,
Lorna (the poetical one)

P.S. Thanks for the money!



Yakima 1948
Cousin Roddy has the sweetest toys —



I have a piano after
all —



They put me
in an iron
bed if you
can imagine
that —



Wow, it's hot —

Roddy and I have a personal
little table and chair in the
corner of the kitchen with a
private bouquet of flowers
to eat.

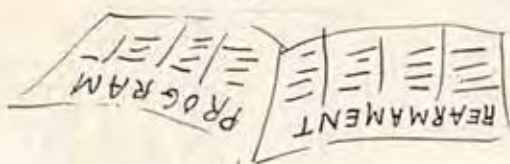


Mama says I am
a sissy 'cause I
didn't like the

hose -
LOVE MICHAEL



Couple of
thoughts ~~un~~attached



HIT-ALY

DIARY OF A SMALL BOY ON A JOURNEY



The mountains
played peek-a-boo
with me —

Mama and I
think the
"Columbia River" George
is beautiful at sunset!



I was so excited I
could sleep hardly at
all —



I am pulling a shy act and won't
sanction anyone but my mother —

Yakima 1940

CENSORED

OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE

[REDACTED]

We have advanced to the front and established ourselves in the enemy's front lines.

The infantry at first held out a strong defensive, but capitulated at noon yesterday.

When I think of you I [REDACTED]

The infantry is now taking steps, both ~~backed~~ in advance and retreat.

The weather is [REDACTED]

Latest report is that the Norwegians are advancing from the west. We expect to see their advance tanks (a million) sometime early this evening. A major battle is expected, especially between the infantry over ammunition and territory already gained by our boy. However our fifth column may have been at work and the Taylor Tot may be handed over without a struggle.

u

de

That above line is the official report of Lieutenant Chambreau.

With this you will receive a shipment of incendiary love bombs.

CENSORED

CENSORED

Captain Chambreau

La Grande Leavetaking from Sunday
Dear Maw —

Well, this is more like it - when I'm visiting + don't have to get meals + keep track of Michael all the time I've a moment. Even when it's the Harbors - even they seem rather calm since I've really discovered what housekeeping for a family is.

I meant to sit down on the Davenport to relax when I wrote this but the davenport, kitchen table and curtains have been donated to the tenants downstairs - a typical Henri.

I guess Henri was too busy to keep her kids in tow or else they're growing up because they're really more tractable - or maybe it was me or something.

Anyway here we are with Michael so attended and excited he will neither eat nor

Sleep, and Chambreau has already
wended his way to Gold Beach, &

The kids threw a nice
Martinis - hors d'œuvre party for
us at the Foley the night before
we left but I almost didn't
get there. It was a wild day
of course - moving ones always
are. I nearly killed myself
cleaning the apartment and
all so I wouldn't have to pay
for having the rug cleaned
as the manager was demanding
- he was very nice about it,
too. But that evening we
were frantically trying to get
everything done before going
to the party - Chambreau was
sitting in the kitchen writing

2 - Music - Michael struggling on the floor while his bed was trundling off to Portland - and I was packing our new tin truck we bought from Montgomery Ward's. Doron slammed the lid on my elbow and out went Lorna in what seemed to me like the screaming of twenty air raid sirens during a black out with Hitler's face jawing, jawing, jawing at me about something.

Finally came to to find Chamberlain shaking me + yelling at me - so he helped me to the couch where I immediately went out for another horrible buggy ride. That was the best proof I had that I was really as tired as I felt.

However it relaxed me a lot and in the dumb way mamma-

people have I tried to be gay + "noble"
+ went to the party + dragged thru
it. 1

The next day everyone else but
us got their checks so C, "borrowed"
on his from the bank + we
struggled down to the noon train
which had the indecency to leave
at 2:10. And Michael had
the indecency to not sleep a
wink all day long until we
fell into the arms of the Harknesses
at 10:15 that night. But I
must admit it was as good as
the proverbial gold + everyone
was remarking about what a
good traveler he was.

I guess I'll have to wait
a couple weeks till C. gets
paid again before we can

③ Embark on the 12 hour night bus trip it takes to get down there. In the meantime I should be chawmed to entertain all and sundry lies + so would my in-laws they say as they send their love. However I emphatically do not feel up to a week's trek home + back no matter how much I want to see you all the shining light of love glowing on Madeline's face at last [that'll get 'er.] Please excuse but right down I'm damned fed up with baby-traveling.

Chambreau is seriously debating - especially since my fold-up - taking the managership he was offered down there which means a cut but we'd stay at least a year I guess. Am waiting to find out before I

Start re-packing this horrible mess
of junk we're accumulating. Also
the house was full today of Henry's
prospective buyers — this time interested
ones — so I guess I'd better do
something definite about said junk.

Naturally four letters were lost
in the shuffle but I distinctly re-
membered something about a green
jersey dress which sounds very
enticing. Thanks! Hope Eliss will fix
it before sending it down — or am I
jumping at conclusions? Would
Sis' old rat-fur be available for
windy winter nights on the beach?

Must sign off — dunno why —
except this is Henry's stationery —
To be good + HAVE FUN!
Most scads o' love —

Me
Departure from La Grande

MAMA!

Gold Beach



Mamma picking

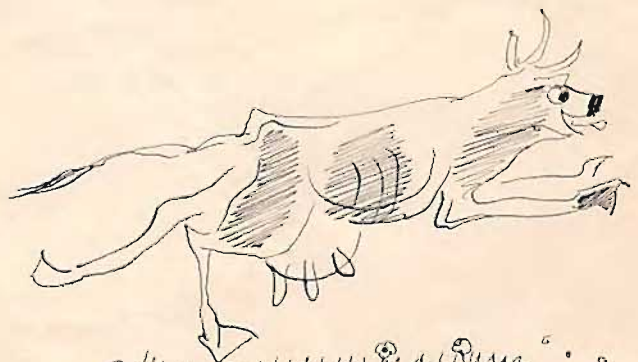
Gold Beach



I love picking up after children ----!



Michael and I and
the bird sanctuary -



One of the dairy cows galloping
down the daisy-dotted field outside our window

Gold Beach

Wednesday

Dear Twerps —

Well, here we are — half settled & very well — us, I mean.

It's really swell here — The sun shines & the ole ocean does, too. I understand their weather is very mild & Californianish. Zenia Buffington (isn't that an awful name) who has lived here 27 years is complaining about the winter weather while to me it seems like summer.

The Art Center is a fizzle & C. is very disgusted but as he says just getting a salary for being here is something.

The trip down wasn't as bad as the one down from Yakima really. Some nice gent took care of Mikes half the time & there were no

Messes! Also Michael slept a long time in the afternoon + from 8:30 on at night.

Our cabin is nice + big but awful shabby + full of goozy stuff. Compared to the Super-Super-glamour one I saw last night with a view ours is a tenement. But that one was way out + inconvenient with Michael etc. This is really a good arrangement for us + \$20 rent is not to be quibbled, eh?

Chambreau and I were awfully glad to see each other + he'd hardly let Michael go to bed. he got such a kick out of his walking.

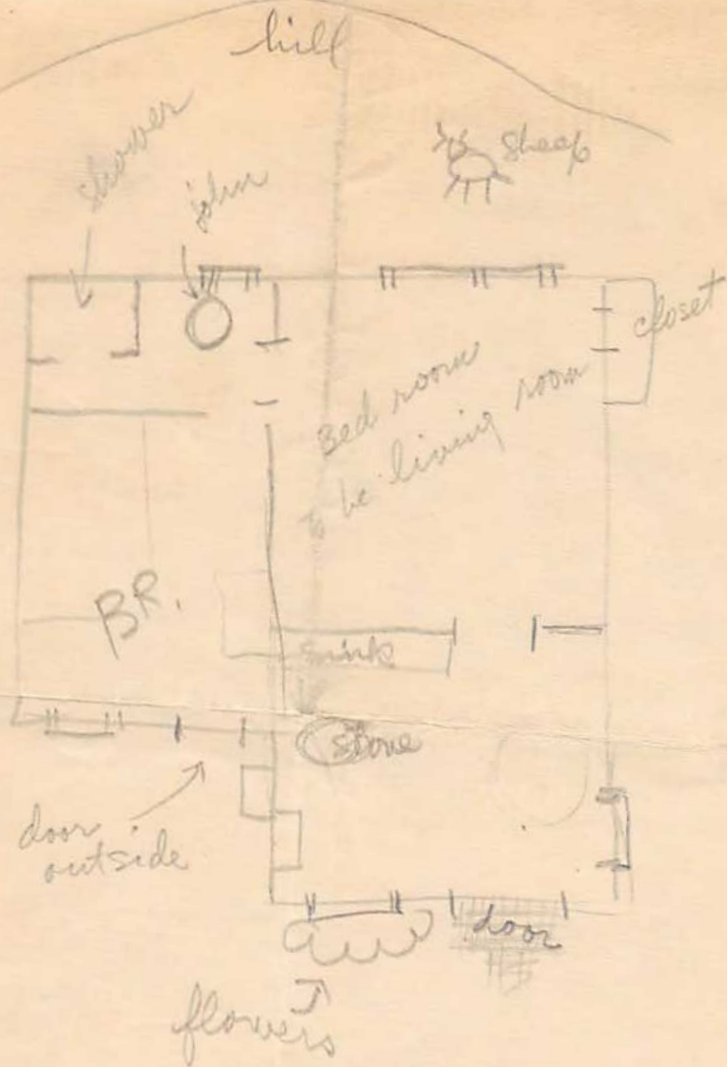
And now I'm waiting for the stuff we had shipped - which was supposed to get here yesterday -

And am I burned up! My hands
are absolutely tied with the crib +
high - chair + taylor - tot -

So everything's fine and we
like it. And Chamberlain says
he'd be tickled to death to have a
radio. Does that still hold good?
The reception doesn't seem to be so
bad down here - so if you really mean
it we'd LOVE it!! ??

Lots of love -

me + milk to
be sure misses Roddy +
somebody to play with,



Gold Beach

back of a garage

Gold Beach

Thursday

Dear darling, sweet, wonderful mom'n' pop!

Well, gosh! we couldn't wait! We were hoping, it would be one of the two packages, but we didn't know which one and then we got to thinking how swell it would be to listen to all the Xmas music — and ah heck! I just picked a little till I came to toastmaster box, which was a dirty trick. We were very disappointed tho could certainly use a toaster. I felt as if you'd kinda gone back on us or something. So, then, just livid with curiosity, we decided as long as we knew we had a toaster we might as well use it — and were we overjoyed + busy hooking up the RADIO!

So now I'm sitting here facing our newly-erected Xmas tree + listening to the symphony and being so damned cozy + contented while a hell-bath-no-fury-like-storm hurls itself about without and make the Xmas tree shimmy like a ship teaser.

The reason we have our tree up so soon is that we are definitely going to

Portland Tuesday morning to stay till
Sunday & since no one seems to believe
it and has sent all our Xmas down here
looks like we'll have to pull a Roosevelt &
have some Xmas Monday night before
we leave. Besides we can't very well take
Michael's wagon & rocking chair with us.

Also a Buffington twin went wrapped
in son'wester & oilskins and hauled in a
smallish tree for us - so! I've never had
a fresh-from-the-orchard Xmas tree & this one
was oh! so green and dripping & smelly. We
put it in a rusty ash can & high on a table,
of course, and it really looks pretty good
standing against the Paisley. < This, inc-
identally, always hangs on our wall now
where all the big-Art Center moguls can
slop over it. In the other corner hangs
a bleached horses' skull which Val
found on the beach & willed to us.
It's all decorated, too, with silver bells &
a sprig of fir tree. Very fine! I'm sure

(2) Sis would love it!

Poor Michael and I have been imprisoned for 2-3 days by a singular No. 1. Holly wood super-colossal wind & rain-storm. ~~See~~ Honestly- I used to think those kind never happened off the screen. I'm not kidding when I say the floor trembles under you and it hasn't let up a minute all day. Wow! I went a block to the store tonight & halfway home the paper bags gave up all their innards to ~~the~~ on the road.

(Ooh! there's playing all my favorite pieces and I'm just sitting here drooling with sentiment!)

I don't want you to think I detest the idea of coming home for Xmas and get mad and not come to Portland 'Cause I don't at all etc. But you will come, won't cha? ~~Even~~ if you have to wire us for money.

You must be awfully busy shopping, Ruth, from the number of packages and the clearth of letters coming this way. I've been waiting and waiting to hear from you

about what Sis' & Toe's addresses
are so I can mail these packages
~~that~~ before Michael has them completely
demolished. May have to send them to
you pretty soon.

Well, gotta turn off our nice, new
shiny radio and go to bed 'cause the people
who are very much next door partied &
kept us awake all night last night.

Just wanted you to know how
much we love the radio & how much
we want you to come to Portland so ~~you~~
can tell you all about it — or Mikko
could — with gestures!

Much much love —

See you SOON!

Lorna + Edward by proxy

Gold Beach

Gold Beach

Sunday

Dear maw,

Well, I finally found your little letter in all that mess ! I think it's swell and feels that way about Phyllis, don't you? I rather liked her myself--as they say in books--she's of the type that's tough and doesn't wear out easily. I must speak to her personally--will you send me her address?

Or, better yet, bring it personally, speaking of personally ! Some on, kids, we're all set for you and tickled to death. I've told everyone in town you're coming, so don't be surprised if no ones here when you arrive. Chambreau says to tell you to ask for Mateer's apartment. Or you go straight through town (unless you sneak up by way of California) across the bridge, known as the "fill", and turn left at the Red and White store, and you can't miss our stark, staring white abode. Now, don't go back on us. This is just like the lease-lend bill, you started it and now you have to deliver the goods ! We listened to the American Forum this afternoon with Sam Fish, Senator Wheeler and a few opinionated men like that there this afternoon and got a big kick out of it.

This has been a lovely, well-timed peaceful, happy week end full of nice moments I imagine I'll remember when I'm racking in the sun at the ripe old age of ninety. First, our check came on time and so did the two-week budget menus I sent to Goodhousekeeping for, because I'm sick and tired of trying to think of things to eat. So I just started right down the list, bought my groceries like they said and we stuck all the money we had left in the bank, so we wouldn't be tempted to spend it this week end.

I can just hear you laughing at me going in for Good Housekeeping pamphlets ! But, really, this one is a honey. We're having the BEST meals with no thought or effort at all. Today, for instance, we had STUFFED pork shoulder, stewed tomatoes, baked sweet potatoes, and apricot upside down cake ! I'll promise not to get too tired to cook you something like that if you come. Of course I've only been at this for two days--maybe I'd better reserve my opinion. Edward told me last night in the nicest little heart to heart talk we've had in many a moon that he thought I was doing an awfully good job domestically but he's sure be glad when we got to working on something together again !

Saturday we had one of our whiz weather days, with the wind scooting through town bringing sunshine, rain, and even rainbows in such rapid succession you got dizzy looking at it. But the sun shone with gusto just long enough after Michael's nap for us to go for a nice walk and the minute we got in the house down came the rain. That's what I mean by a perfectly timed week end. Nother example: Chambreau walked into the living room, turned on the radio, man says, "Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States" and old Franklin gave us a pep talk from the billowy deep. Just like that ! During our walk we chanced upon a pasture right across the street from us literally carpeted with wild strawberry blossoms and violets. So we picked a handful and came home to Good Housekeeping Budget Meal number 1.

2
After dinner we got Michael all tucked in, had just time to sit a minute before starting to mix the one drink we allowed ourselves for the weekend when right on time happened in a pleasant guest of a girl we know. So we spent a quiet evening at home playing "Who am I?" and such. Wasn't that sweet?

This morning Michael nicely slept till ten thirty; We got up to a nice, clean house; Chambreaux blithely helped with the dishes, etc. and sweetly minded Michael while I cooked my very successful meal. And the weather, being just as accommodating rained steadily all during the roast's cooking and Michael's nap, then cleared up to a beautiful sunset so we could go for our walk. We stood out behind the Sunset Inn which gives a beautiful view of the mouth of the river and the ocean and watched the sunset while the new bell on the church rang out in a very dramatic fashion. Then home with another quiet, nontrusive guest to help eat up the remains of dinner. Now she's gone quietly on her way, Michael went to sleep without a peep and here I am slopping on the typewriter.

Tomorrow will probably be a holler !

Now how could you resist visiting such an idyllic existence?

Oh yes, we got a letter edged in black this afternoon. On opening it we found a black piece of paper saying something about this will happen to you or something and containing a large glossy photo of a skeleton ~~sitting~~ sitting on the toilet. The return address was The Morgue in Fresno, Cal. Seems that the Ormsbys had visited a night club so named !

Chambreaux says this is getting to be a letter, so he must have peeked. So guess I'd better say something to talk about. Incidentally, we expect you to eat with us for a change while you're here. I've thought about giving you some shopping to do for us if you're coming, but if I started I'd never stop, so let's skip it.

We'll be waiting anxiously to hear your plans. Will you come straight through or stop to see Henry? Or what?

Lots and lots of love and let me know if I should order some weather.

norder

Gold Beach

Curry County Art Center

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GOLD BEACH
OREGON
Today

Dear Woos,

If you get some god-awful mail-order crap for Xmas it'll be because I don't know how to get rid of those horrors called sales-people. . . . I was going to spend the evening writing you all about our nice, new apartment and SHE came and SAT... if you don't know how, well....

Also you really can't expect me to know where your letter is after I've moved, so, unless I find it anon you won't get any comments on it in this.

Edward is sitting here pestering me so I can't concentrate-- make him quit, will you?

Well, I think I can be very happy here in our silver apartment in Gold Beach now, at last. We'll probably move clear out now. This one really is a honey, and well worth the effort expended in moving all our junk again. In fact it's better than the one in La Grande, I think. The only drawback which, of course, they didn't tell us before we moved in is that our next door neighbor through the thin, thin wall is the local band-leader and so far has been holding wailing, ANWFUL BAND (than which there is no music-less than) practice every night until midnight. And that, my dear Mrs. L. who lives in a town big enough for civil rights, is a community menace even if the band is supposed to be a local improvement.

Michael does not like that. Nor does he like his bed-room window opening on a lighted stairway. Nor do I like the battalion (we must be military these days) of over-sized cats that hover around the exposed cooler. But, truthfully that's all I have to kick about THIS time. I gotta do some. don't I?

The good points, and there are some, are newness, cleanliness, modern conveniences, seats of back porch to hang clothes on in their three day vigil of getting dry, AND a washing machine. The furniture is new and very good looking, and all in all I'm very pleased.

The first thing I did on Armistice day was to take advantage of Chambreau'd holiday and while he took care of Mike, I flew down to the strange washing machine and spend the day there. I sure got qualms, tho when I saw Mikko's cute Wynkem, Blymkem blanket way way out across the cow pasture. He loves that now. Has to point out all the "tahs" before he goes to sleep.

Gold Beach

The social elite gals of G.B. helped us move so we had a hen party with Chambreau and liquoredem up that evening instead of straightening up. Which was all right too. Or was it?

This week-end is the big Pinocchio production on the beach. From all signs it's going to be terrible. Chambreau's been very busy with rehearsals, not to mention his weaving. I often think what a fit Jake and Bill would have if they saw him puttering away at this loom. Down on the beach this afternoon he was standing silhouetted against the sky and winding a ball of yarn !

Burken and Mu are supposed to come up for the shindig, but we havn't heard from them. If they do we are going to ask them to stay for Thanksgiving. After all, we've got to have somebody besides strangers ! We're really quite panicky about it, and even if we don't have anyone here, we're going to attempt all the usual fixings, anyway. And maybe you don't think I'M panicky about that !

Meant to say that cooking on a wood range isn't bad at all. In fact it has its advantages after I got over the habit of reaching to turn off the gas every time I took a pan off. I'll never get over being surprised that things actually cook tho !

Well, I think Eddy wants to use the typie to write one of his business associated in Montana. He's getting all kinds of demands from past admirers for music. This one wants to pay his expenses up there for a couple of weeks to help put on something. However that's nothing definite yet.

Oh, I forgot to thank you you for your cute box with lamp. You sure can do things up brown madam. The lamp is swell-- a big improvement and helps us to feel more civilized. And the other things were much appreciated. Michael immediately proceeded to unscrew the duck and that's that. We both thought the book awfully cute. I have vague rembrances of having one of those myself in days gone by. Did you make them for us? I got quite a feeling what kind I don't know thinking of little ole ruthie sitting up there making that book. Michael really seems to enjoy looking at books, why I don't know.

Well, I am going now--gotta kink, so I guess the letter's llo long enough. Will write again soon, yes I will cause we have a work table now and don't have to refurnish the place to write a letter.

Mucho
and so long
me

Monday

Gold Beach

Well, Ruth, etc.

My. my. I certainly didn't mean to wait this long to thank you for that surprise Too TooToo box. But just as I got ready to write the toilet would start to overflow and all that junk you know. Gee, we sure were surprised to get that stuff--it was all so very badly needed as you know. Chamberlain didn't seem to mind that his pj's weren't glamorous he was so overwhelmed. As he says, it's beginning to be embarrassing. I happened to be remarking the other day that my Nybion's finally gave up trying to live up to their ballyhoo. And those things for Michael are so darned cute. We both just Oh'd when we opened the box and then when we read that Tiny had made them Chambreaus just about screamed, "oh NO!" Yes, as Fliss says, she's a smart girl all right. And gosh sakes did Mike need em. And gosh sakes thanks a hell of a lot.

Now this end of the line--what's happened? We've had one corker of a wind and rain storm to give us a taste, I guess. Boy, this little shack fairly creaked, not to mention clattered! But the next two days it was so warm in the evenings even that I began to realize how near we are to California. Guess it never does get cold here.

Mike and I steamed up a steep hill to see the girl with three boys one day and stayed the afternoon while Michael showed off how grown up he is. They have a milk farm (small scale) on one side of them and a family of deer in a huge pen on the other. One never can tell what you'll find in your back yard here, and I'm beginning to quit being surprised.

Saturday night we started out to go to the local Sat. nite dance, but stopped at the first real house I've seen since I've been here for cocktails and Lo! didn't get to the dance till about the time it was over. Just like a Groan's party. We sure groaned the next a.m. tho. We stayed up till four talking with Val and Zenia Buffington who is the woman with seven children. Quite a gal, too.

Last night we finally broke down and went to a show in the silly little theater here--it's decorated in orange and red! Saw "All this and Heaven, Too" (which title I never can quite figure out). Enjoyed it quite a bit being my first show in eons. Thought it followed the book very well.

Have just finished reading Sam, by John Selby--don't think I'd recommend it exactly tho it's entertaining like a magazine story.

I think the natives here think we are freaks because we spend all the time we can down on the beach. No one here seems to bother.

Chambreau's classes are pretty full here, too. Which really means more than it sounds like because that's one reason we were sent down here--they haven't been able to drag anyone in in the year the art center's been here. Can't blame them. I never get down there myself as you have to walk along the gravel highway, out of the city limits, past some cows and down another gravel road.

To answer your letter--- Yes, Nelson Eddy was really in the store. This is the California highway y'know--in fact our front lawn is practically on the highway. And the Rogue River is a famous fishing and hunting resort--they get all kinds of prominent people here I guess. Val was in the store at the time, so he tore out to his car and followed them to see where they were staying. It turned out to be a swank auto court up the road. He said he wasn't a bit good-looking--looked like a fattish, middle aged business man with White hair and his wife was kind of double-chinny.

We sent our washing to the local laundry who rates are exorbitant, but I think we shall continue to do so. I think it's a thrill, myself. Had them do rough dry, but they finished up all the flat work at no extra cost. I nearly died when I saw the place. It's just a shack on the hillside near the beach full of steam and overworked looking women.

Isn't that dumb about Bud's heart? Probably what Janeice's leaving did to him. Chambreau says lots of people have that tho and it's not serious. His little cousin used to, but she outgrew it.

Tell Fliss I enjoyed her letter or let the old fool read this. After all I can't write everybody! Gotta write my ma-in-law now.

So a lotta love to you all and keep me posted on the dope and dopes.

How was regeistrat on day? I could see the courthouse from my window and watch d to men drag themselves up the steps between the two stinky little flags. Impressed me as unnatural and unnecessary some how.

Goodbye again, love me

Gold Beach

Gold Beach

Curry County Art Center

GOLD BEACH
OREGON
Sunday

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President

MRS. C. H. BUFFINGTON
Vice-President

MRS. T. J. TURNER
Secretary

MRS. GEO. SUTTON
Treasurer

Poor dear Birthday Papa,

But you thought I'd forgotten your birthday--- well, I did ! I've been so busy trying to figure out why people would spend years in this joint that I couldn't think about anything else.

And there no use sending a present from here because there's nothing to send but driftwood and horrible myrtlewood lamps and candlesticks at prices even a tourist would balk at/ So we'll put this on the cuff (as usual).

COLLIER H. BUFFINGTON
Member of State Board
of Governors Oregon
Art Centers

And I'm in no mood to write gaily this morning even though I'm so glad you've attained the ripe old age of????? Have you ever had trouble with plumbing? The plumbing in this place must have been put in by the Gurlenheim Foundation ! And the plaster is falling off the kitchen wall--is now at least half gone. Oh for the carefree, tended days of my youth ! We've complained to George, the management, several times, but he seems to be the village shifless skunk and just shrugs his shoulders. We went up this morning to rant about wading through sewage all day yesterday, and Mrs. Manager and her three kids were all doiled up to go to church. She said, "Well, Mr. Stafford isn't here right now" and one of the smaller kids piped up and said "He didn't come home at all last night." !!

WPA ART PROGRAM

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Val insisted on having this Art Center here because he's from the east and he thought this is "the last frontier" and delightfully charming. Personally I'll take my frontiers in small doses. We've had a sample of one of the wind and rain storms, and I swear I've never seen anything like it except in the movies--"Hurricane", for instance, and I never believed that. We are buying Michael some knee high boots as soon as possible.

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Chambreau put on his first hurried performance last night at the school carnival. I didn't get to see it, but he said it was the best thing they put on and even then one of his performers got hysterics in the middle of her act.

All the teachers here have asked for their transfers. The art teacher, father of the three boys, has a howling reputation as the twon drunk already. One night he stole a horse and thundered down the main street, then lost the horse--his wife was home in bed. All that and more too is twon property. The weaving teacher is starving

and has no one in her classes. All in all it's very strange. Makes one think if this is a sample of the WPA, what has Wilkie to offer?

This is a sad sad letter I guess. Although I don't feel sad. I think it's very funny, when I look at it impersonally. One learns about life in the raw, raw, raw. When I think of huge, big cities like Seattle, Portland and Yakima, and places like the Meany Hotel and the Livesley residence where one can have heat at the pressure of a button it seems it seems like some unbelievable Buck Rogers world. After that wind storm I can understand the apathetic attitude of the people. The town is really inhabited by a powerful, writhing demon, the wind. And the people give in and apologize for being allowed to leave here.

Well, anyway there's a story for you, and I just meant to wish you happy birthday and say I'm sorry I forgot. Thought it might be fun for you to sit in the comfort of your classy living room and pore over those postcards.

Incidentally will you ask mom what we owe Rew-- if he's sent a bill or what?

Lots and lots of love from your
oldest baby,

Norder

Gold Beach

Gold Beach

Wednesday,

Dear Ranting Ruth,

Gee, kid, I'm sorry as hell I hamn't been a good girl about writing. I've discovered that my typing is getting rusty and maybe that's why it's more of an effort. So I'll practice up and write like anything.

Yes, that woman and kids who were burned were from here. She had just gone up to join her husband (so the town gossips say) very much against protest, because she had a job here. Sure was a shame wasn't it? They brought back the remains, tho I understand there wasn't very much and had a funeral here. It seemed so strange when the sun was shining so pretty to see these long faced women in black carrying wreaths all over town and refusing to smile at anyone just on principle.

We have had some swell weather but it's raining again now. Makes it harder to take after a taste of spring. Spring springs about a month earlier down here. We had big excitement over the week end because the IOOF had their convention here. So the townspeople broke their necks getting geady for 500 and got about 100. You should see this place come to life when there's promise of a few suckers. They graded the streets, put flags and Christmas trees up the main street; all the women had their hair curled; the drugstores put imported curios in their windows; the restaurants opened up and bought a lot of food. Why, they even had a parade! Michael was asleep when I heard the band start to play, so I grabbed him up and ran all the way to the corner carrying the big hunk. Got there just in time, too, because I met them right at the corner and it wasn't two seconds before they were all by. Chambreau kept the center open and had a record crowd of 50 people in.

I didn't see many strange faces, but the natives sure took it as an excuse to have a good time. We parked the Derr kid and Michael together and even went to the dance for awhile.

Chambr au didn't appear for lunch yesterday but I had to forgive him as he was out getting drunk with the band leader. Result--they're very chummy now and are going to have the band play for the art center dance, which may not sound like much to you, but it's a big feather in Chmabreau's new hat, because the art center and the band have been at sword's points ever since the beginning. The band leader and his wife have lived in the next door apartment all this time and it's the first time we've had them in!

One of Chambreau's bosses was in town today and she finally admitted she thought this center should have been closed a long time ago so when she goes to Portland next week she's going to see what she can do about it. Chambreau's about at the end of his tether as I've said before, and it's about time we were getting out of here. I think it's a good thing because he's figuring and planning on what else he can do and maybe he'll get into his own field yet before the army gets him. However

I don't imagine anything definite will happen until about my birthday when practically the whole staff is due for a lay-off anyway,

I hope you don't die when you see the picuter. C. doesn't like it at all. We both look like we'd been scared to death. Personally I think that's kind of cute, tho. It'd take a lot to scare me these days.

I've enjoyed the books you sent and have been merrily distributing them to the impatient people. Thanks a lot.

Michael insists on reading your letters with his meals as I've told you. Has a fit and won't eat until I hand them to him. Then he trots them all over the place and lies down and peruses them and jabbers. The other day I was coughing like mad into my hand and he watched me a minute and then daintily turned his head and coughed into his. They sure imitate everything you do, don't they? No, I'll have to admit he doesn't say sentences yet, but is getting along. He says there's too much talking going on in this world now anyway.

Sort of burns me up to have you keep sending that ASCAP stuff because Chambreau won't even look at it. But I sure can see the possibilities. That's what makes me mad. However if they do get it settled there is apt to be more chance for amateurs than there has been anyway.

I'm getting so sleepy I can't think. Chambreau came in and tickled me in bed last night and the bed broke down so I didn't sleep very well. Isn't that cute of him? I'll make a romeo out of that guy yet.

Maxine writes very cheerfully from her cot. I've been sort of directing my letters her way for awhile to keep her amused. Of course when she'll really want them everyone will be tired out.

Haven't said much, but hope you know what I mean. Say hello to Fliss and tell her I want to hear about the Seattle blackout.

lotsa love--- MRS.C

Gold Beach

Saturday

Dear MOM,

First, I think that's a shame about Jid'n, and I'm anxious to know how he is. Didn't he KNOW he had appendicitis? Tell me all the dope as soon as you can, and if he's in any condition to care tell him I'm rooting for him as many times as there are waves coming in down here.

Also enjoyed ant's little note--sort of a personal touch--guess that's as close together as we're going to get. And me living her hectic, moving life all over again. I really should see her and get some pointers! Has she gotten all her teeth yet? I don't know what we're going to do about Chambreau's--they're so rotten he can't even eat meat without spitting out hunks of them. Besides there's no dentist down here if he would go, which he wouldn't. The dentist moved away a few weeks ago because he couldn't collect any money.

I'm sorry my letter to pap was such a flop. I knew it was a hell when I wrote it, but I was glad to get something off anyway, I felt so dumb about forgetting his birthday. Seems as if no one interested in my poor little troubles--even Chambreau--every one wants the other guy to keep their troubles to themselves, so it won't upset them. All very dumb. Anyway I don't think dad's such a sissy as you make him out, are you, dad?

The outcome of that hellish week-end spent wading through shit, and I do mean shit--in case I didn't tell you, was that after much debate we moved next door into another cabin that really was no better except the plaster wasn't falling off the wall. Well, that was as much work as moving from Portland. And I'd no more than gotten everything settled than the sink over here refuses to drain!!! Oh, was I mad!! You can imagine!!! So for three days I've been pouring drano down the damned thing with nary a result--and having no wash basin we cannot wash our faces, dishes, or children! The land lord, tho informed of our circumstances, doesn't seem to give a damn--I haven't seen him tho I've been pestering his poor wife. Also there hasn't been any wood for days--he keeps forgetting to order it. And it's been raining constantly all week.

But it's all very funny ha ha ha ha ha I'm laughing!

I have never seen such rain. There is always a drizzle and every time you stick your head out the door it gathers its forces and pours bucketfuls down your neck. Everything drip, drip, drips. The walls are always damp. Nothing ever dries. The ground is a perpetual mud puddle. In fact it's like living in a hole in a lake.

But it's all very funny ha ha ha ha ha I'm laughing!

Did you ask me how I liked living in a summer resort in the winter? And did you ask me not to worry you with my horrible troubles? hah ha ha ha ha ha But I think they're FUNNY !

So I'll tell you some more. Moving made me sick...don't know why, but I spent a day doing nothing but being sick to my stomach in the midst of chaos--and I'm not pregnant,,,,,I HOPE ! That night was a farewell party for the Prices, so I couldn't go--went to bed, but Chambreau went--and dragged the Prices in at four in the morning and I got up and cooked them the oysters we didn't have for dinner--and they said they were terrible. Sounds like the neglected wife, doesn't it? Well, for a while I thought so, too, but it all turned out right and sweet in the end. And after all all's well that ends well, n'est-ce pas? I have found it amazing what can be accomplished in marital relations by refusing to indulge in self-pity and making a hell of a try to ignore things that very well could be a point. And pretty soon it gets to be a habit and very easy especially if one's husband does the same thing. Or am I boring you?

What else of trouble before I turn to the lighter side which more than makes up for the other? Did I tell you Michael fell against the stove and got an ugly burn on his arm? It's practically healed now though and strangely it didn't seem to bother him at all. Guess it wasn't very deep. He thinks it's fun--calls it his "ow" and is very solicitous over it/

I'm sending Tiny the belt at long last. But just noticed in your letter that she has gone back, so not knowing where she is will send it on to you anyway. Maybe someday it will get to her. Seems a hell of a lot of trouble for such a wreck of a belt.

Got a kick out of bud's letter. Sure does like the dames, that guy.

We're very relieved about the Emery-Madeline Alliance as we French say. Especially Chambreau--he though all the debate rather unfeeling. Wish we could make it, but just can't. And wish youse gus could make it down for Thanksgiving, but I suppose not. Henry doesn't think they're going to be able to either and we're getting pretty worried about our lonely little Thanksgiving without a turkey. We have no oven, y'know. Geez ! is it that time of year already?

We made Michael a Jack-o-lantern which he loved. He called it "Dack". Is trying very hard to talk--mimics everything you say. And that's something !

Yes, Edward missed the draft. Hope it missed him/-----That lamp sound like something we'd want--no good, I mean. We just wanted one to leave here y'know. However suit yourself. What about Rew? Did you get a bill or what?

This is getting to be quite a letter but then I'm so talkative, and have so many TROUBLES..... Besides we're making a book of Pinocchio to submit and my typing has had a lot of practice.

I fancy the Art Center will get it in the neck if your candidate gets in. Nice thing, voting your son-in-law out of a job! They've already had drastic orders to cut the personnel, which Val assures us doesn't mean us.. He went up to Portland for a conference last week and told us we'd be here a while longer.

Ruth, let's not ask "does one HAVE to put up with things in Gold Beach" One DOES ! There are three cabins in ~~the~~ town big enough for us. We've already lived in two and the other which the Staffords also have they won't rent altho it would be ideal as it is much newer than these. Seems they are only managing the dump for the old man and he won't let them rent the new ones steady because he can't be bothered with redecorating them. There are no furnished houses of any kind, the only apartment is full, so what's a poor supervisor to do? The only plumber in town moved away yesterday too. He would, what with our sink. The fancier cabins rent for 35 and we have to save money for the next move--besides Michael would have to sleep in the garage. sooooo

Well, my family is yapping for food--you know how--so will have to cease this carming chatter--but must tell you we picked huge fresh mushrooms out of the cow pasture next to the Art Center last night and fried them for dinner. Altho we had an expert along we still weren't comfy about them till we got up healthy this a.m. Must say they aren't worth the trouble..... and worry.

We are going down this afternoon and string the loom for your xmas present. Everyone is going to get some hand loomed material for xmas from us. They won't know what to do with it but they'd better like it....

lots of love till next. If you want to shop buy Mike a picture book or and educational toy he says. Can't get but one book here and he's read that.

me in a hurry

Private, not for Sis....what does she want. Are you getting anything we can chip in on? All we have to offer here is hand loomed junk (very limited) from the center and myrtle-wood such as salad bowl, lamp, tray or what. What's the color scheme of their love-cottage?

Gold Beach

Monday, washday, to

Dear Ruth,

Can't say I'm in any mood to write this having been up and about --definiety--fill five a.m. Saturday night. And I haven't recovered yet. Occasion? The second birth of Pinocchio. But I guess I'd better, cause I don't want you to be mad at me just 'fore xmas !

Edward has gone out with his toothache to send a telegram to the Ormsbys and get us some ice cream we don't need and can't afford. We're wiring the O's because afterall we've just gotta have somebody from our familiar past around for Thanksgiving. One just can't spend it with strangers & Are you having the real Thanksgiving or a Franksgiving?

Well, as I said, Pinocchio has bit the boards again and in spite of it's being very bad it was a huge success, figure that out ! Chambreau and I know it was bad but the dumb natives thought it was so good that people who refuse to go near the Art Center have right-about-faced. They had a dance afterwards, but we didn't stay verylong came home and un-laxed and waited for people who never came. So about one we went out to look for them and found them--that was the sad part of it. It all ended up in a ten-pin alley where Chambreau insisted on falling in a heap on the floor every time he threw one of these little balls.

Ha !Ha !the day I got your letter telling about the snow we had the most beautiful balmy, sunshiny day and Mrs. Bugffington took Mike and me for a ride around the countryside. In fact, we have had beautiful wather for a week thou we read that the rest of the country is freezing. Pretty nippy today though. I nearly froze even though the sun was shining when I hung the clothes out to snarl--which is what one does in this country.

Our fine friend Mr. Clear, the boss, has finally opened up at last. Seems his boss is quitting--you can't make an artist out of a Laman--and Val gets his job so he wants Chambreau to stay here and be manager at no cut. But we haven't decided yet. Can't see any reasons why not--nor yet any why. Would save all this moving around. This is a hell of a place for two city urchins like us. Could you come down by next spring?

Michael is fine and sassy. Loves having clean clothes for a change. We're getting along swell on the training just at present. He grabs a magazine and trots in and grunts like anything. I want Fliss to know though, that he has been saying "dark" for weeks as well as a lot of other things. One would really say he is talking, even if one were not too doting. He builds fires, puts his toys away when told (sometimes) brings me my shoes, etc. We finally got the pictures. So you want me to send you the negatives and have you send them back? Or wait another month till we get some more prints?

I tried out the oven yesterday in preparation for the feasting and turned out a diasy of a meat loaf and an apple pie. Truth is some people came in and started to pick at the pie and ate it all up. Never dreamed I'd like a wood stove.

That sure was a shock to me about Jack, too. But you shouldn't feel so badly, should you? I thought he was kind of half well anyway--I mean feel personally about it. Can see what you mean tho.

It will always be a big fat regret to me I won't get to that wedding. Sure gonna feel blue sitting here trying to imagine it. Sounds like some affair--what are they going to sing? Is she still going to have "Going to Heaven on a Mule?" I take it they've taken a duplex--you never said.

Tell Jid'n lots of things for me. Still mean to write him. And I'm glad he's getting along so well.

I'd love to have the dress, OF COURSE. Tried to get it when I was home, Y'know.

Well, I've just gotta go to bed, I'm bleary-eyed. sorry. I hav n't the ambish to capitalize me sentences.

Loads of love to all---

me

Think we'll send Sis some money toward her silver--o.k.? Maybe that'll tide over till we get the weaving done. Seems you can't cut any off till the whole things do.

phooey
g'night .

Gold Beach

Gold Beach

Gold Beach of a Tuesday

Dear Anybody who's left,

So I sat down at the typie after just getting home from a lovely impromptu dinner at "the Boss's". Steak, fried right on top of the wood range without the decency of a pan under it; a huge fruit salad with everything in it but papaya; fresh crab cocktail; hot garlic bread; rotten Roquefort cheese; baked peanut squash and a sorted guests. Not to mention the "whimsical" touches of our host who is sort of an arty Swede, such as a bleached hosres' skull which he found on the beach and hung on the wall with red geraniums in the eye sockets; and bowls of penny candy which he professes to love.

But we had to leave early, thank God, to put Michael to bed. Wal h has a penchant for inviting guests of all ages and professions, making the conversation at least difficult, especially when these hill-billys get into their raving feuds on politics, and I haven't seen them yet when they don't.

I think small towns do have a charm in a way though. Everyone's sort of thrown in each other like in a war or major catastrophe, and gets sort of friendly about their mutual predicament. I have already carried on long conversations with the grocer about his wif 's tumor. He lives right in back of us, surrounded by vegetable garden. In fact he refused to let me pay for a squash because it was just a little something he'd grown in his yard. And to show you how near we are to God and all his creatures, a deer wanders into his garden at night and nibbles. Chambreau and I were wondering what that gnawing noise was!

Back of his house is a pasture full of sheep so that you can't make two remarks in our living room without having a Bahhhhh! Inserted. Michaels picture book is practically a talkies because you get to the picture of the cow and a cow moos and so on.

Anyway, it's all very healthy or something. Thing's seem to be running very serenely for some reason. Chambreau and I even are getting practically lovey-dovey. Maybe there was more strain to partying, heat, rotten bed, and cooped up apartment than I realized in La Grande. But, as the pessimist's theme song goes, things are always brightest just before the storm and tomorrow is registering day!

I can't tell you how sweet you are Ruth. Or shall I? Your latest package arrived and everything in it was more damned fun. The suit for Michael is a honey and fits perfectly and the hat is just what I meant. I've "redone" the whole awful kitchen a la Fliss in the oilcloth. And Michael and I spent a whole afternoon trying to find where the bubbles went when they went out. How did you know I love to blow bubbles? The clay I'm saving for a rainy day. Thanks a million, but I still say I fully intended to pay and all you have to do is say how much. You'll make me afraid to ask you to do anything and I had several more things in mind, because altho we do have several little shoppes as you say, it's always the thing you want they don't have.

(for draft)

Wednesday

Dear Ruth and Clyde,

Well, how do you like it? Queer, ain't it?

If you wanted to see a couple of lonesome, bewildered, disgruntled and broke kids, you ought to take a look! Wow! living takes a lot of doing at times!

That day I sent you that card was sure a heller--I wouldn't go through that ~~day~~ day again for anything. We got here about two o'clock in the afternoon after cramming the bomber so full it couldn't squeak. We sure roared and tinkled down here. Chambreau put Micheal's piano on top of everything else and every move the car made it jingled merrily. There was some snow and ice on the Wolf Creek road, but not much, and it was a swell sunshiny day, else we would have been bluer. We spent all that afternoon looking at places and even consulted a real estate man, who, like everyone else was completely discouraging. So we finally went back to the first place and here we are.

We have a complete house all to ourselves with two bedrooms, such luxury. But we also had all the initial expense that goes with a house. Ther 's one oil burner in front of the fireplace--so we had to buy oil. There's a wood range to c ok on--so we had to buy wood. We had to make a five buck deposit on the lights. Also a deposit on the thirty a month rent. And to top it all the furniture is crummy and the woodwork is orange and bright green! The dame that runs the place has a row of swell modern "cottages" that rent for forty-five, but she wouldn't let kids in them. Then a very small house and two like this. Cute from the outside, and really a nice arrangement, but sure seems expensive after GB, but what wouldn't?

We came to the conclusion that the town had no "permanent" section, but finally discovered it across the river away from th ocean. There isn't even a grocery store on this side... nothing but cottages and summer homes. They ask exorbitant prices for these damn cottages and they certainly aren't equipped for winter. Besides that the woman here said we'd have to move out by May as she rent to summer crowds at \$35 a week then! And they all said the same thing. We're going to look around som more, but everyone says there isn't a thing for permanents. Quite a problem!

To top it all, as I said Michael's cold reached a new low the day we moved in--the third time since we've left Gold Beach. I was really terribly worried about him--and he was so ornery--really! Worse than Roddy! Sur was a miserable little guy, but he's a lot better now. I think, though, all in all we'll give up going back to Portland this week end, though we sure left and forgot a lot of things.

Well, this is sort of a pacifier until I get more organized.
If we can only get through this month..and I do wish Mr.
Roosevelt would quit adding insult to injury for a while !

Haven't seen any Japs or bombs. Quite a few soldiers. They
drive right be the house with all their guns and stuff to
"change the guard" just like Bunkingham Palace--only different.
Th poor guard has to stand out on the circle at the end of
the "prom" all the time.

Chambr au wants to write his mama, so will quit now. Much,
much love, you cute people, and oh boy ! how I wishs you were
here !

Bye,

norder

Can you see if Tiny found Mike's
galoshes?