

6-10-44

S/L A.N. Cascahen C2066
RCAF DHQ. CMF.

Dear Mother and Tebe.

Much water has passed under the bridge since I last wrote. It would be more correct to say that much sand has passed under the car - & much territory under the aircraft. I have been on my first leave since embarking from Canada. I did not write when away because my letters would not have reached you sooner than this.

Cairo: Famed all over the Middle East and Central Mediterranean for its smells, dirty thieving wogs, high prices and near space time conditions. Oh yes, the pyramids are there too. I was not very impressed by them - although I can't forget them yet since my legs are very stiff from walking in a crouched position up one of the long dark inclined passages inside. However saw it more romantically in the full moon with 2 French Red Cross girls my friend J. Brosseau & I met in Jerusalem & at the ^{Dead} Sea. In Cairo I wallowed in Coca Cola Ice Cream, steaks and expensive meals. Fortunately was not there very long. The Moussky is very interesting but not as clean & well organized as the Bazaar at Damascus. It is larger than the Kasbah at Tunis & seems to have less of an oriental aspect. I am very leery about buying things in these places as you always can take it for granted you are being ripped. Only satisfaction I got was in being able to haggle a wog down from 350 piasters to 180 on a leather bag (overnight size). Spent most of my time looking in shops & doing errands for various people from Rome to Naples. ("Get me a bicycle inner tube." "Please try and find some angostura bitters." "I wish you would buy me some film.") Brosseau & I took out our French friends two evenings. They were very charming well educated cosmopolitan girls. Had dinner at Mena House (where Churchill & Roosevelt conferred) near the pyramids. She and I danced at the Gazira Club (\$3.50 closer to town). Next night we went to the ultra swanky (& expensive) Royal Shooting Club. It is an open air dining & dancing club on the Nile. Literally rubbed shoulders with King Farouk as he was dancing there too with a shapely looking bint. That means "good looking dame" in wog.

Tel Aviv: Quite a modern town & clean. Bustle & bustle. The air of a perpetual resort town. Lovely beach & swimming. Good food, Canadian beer, Ice cream & Jews. No wog section (i.e. no Kasbah, bazaar, medina or Mareshky). Prices high. A very nice little Canada House there run by the R.C.F. Hostess is a young Maltese lady who married a Canadian airfare officer.

Jerusalem: - Bethlehem, Bethsane (sp?), Jericho the Jordan and the ~~the~~ Dead Sea. Jerusalem is a dirty wog town. True there are a few nice buildings like the American YMCA and the

King David Hotel. Then of course I saw most of the places of religious interest. They are small, ornate and in very unfortunate surroundings. Did only a small amount of shopping there. Bought four things but the shopkeeper stole one of them back when he was wrapping them. The black Dead sea was fine. The guide said it was 1384 feet and four inches below sea level. A large sign on its shore however says it is 1292 feet. It hurts like the mischief to get it in your eyes. You can draw in your knees clasp your arms around them & float around in with ease. You can't sink. It gets pretty hot & stuffy there too. The Jordan is about the size of the Blindman river and is almost half as muddy as the Nile.

Damascus: A very interesting city located on the first water we see in a long time. In a fertile appearing valley.



ARMED FORCES
AIR LETTER

AIR MAIL

If anything is enclosed in this letter it will be sent by ordinary mail.

TO: Mrs. S. N. Carscallen
21 Neville Park Blvd.

Toronto, Ont.

M. Carscallen

FROM: S. N. Carscallen
M. Carscallen
73066
KCA 7 CM 7
(Sender's full name and address)

- The characteristic mixture of very modern buildings and native shops & shams. The Bazaar is very large - covers many blocks of narrow streets & buildings that connect & interconnect. Each ware has a particular locality with about 200 textile shops in one series of a few buildings and then a concentration of silver with shops & leather goods etc. Specialties are brocade & silver filigree. Mailed you a parcel today which contains the following little things that I would like you to wrap for Xmas presents if you will. 1 small bible from Jerusalem for Gord. An inlaid box for Earl (from Damascus) and 2 olive wood camels from Jerusalem for Bill. Also a small silver filigree pendant from Damascus for you. Beirut, wasn't there very long. Spent half the night trying to find accommodations. A large busy city. No particular impressions. Hope you are all well. Love, Alan.