

From No: 29078

Name: Cpl. CRUTCHLEY, J.

Unit of [crossed out] Group: 454. - R.A.A.F.
Pacific

Date: November 26th 1944

Dear Lady Margaret!

That sounds nice and with all due respect to Mr Malval - Margaret is so much easier to write - and if it were necessary to break any ice - it should by now have melted.

[indented] I was so surprised and very pleased to receive your Xmas card & letter of Oct. 6th. Unfortunately the magazines of last March have not arrived - but thank you very much all the same. I am sure they were very interesting! I like reading about birds, flowers and Australian bush life. After the war I hope to buy a small property suitable for daisy farming in the S.W of Western Aussie [sic] land, somewhere around Bridgetown, I hope.

[indented] Often I feel sorry for myself, but I have such wonderful friends who write to me often and now that I am a little close to the Phillipines [sic] we hear some of the horrors of war. Apart from seeing a few dead Japs and lots of terrible accidents & explosions - I do not know what human suffering means.

[indented] I want you to know that I am glad for my experience up here - as they are teaching me the value of all that is good and gentle. I am not a married man - it is very hard on them.

[indented] Australia was looking her most beautiful self in 1940 - 41. I have seen quite a lot of Australia - & I love it's [sic] people. I like American's too -

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generally they are more cultured than the average Australian - but in fifty years I doubt if there will be a great Country or more God-fearing people than Australia.

[indented] I am Roman Catholic. Are you? I am a convert - after having wandered through life looking for a faith which really understands & dominates our intimate lives. I became baptised at Kalgoorlie on Sept 30th 1943 and was confirmed in the *Holmisalty* [?] [sic] Islands on July 4th - (American anniversary of Independence) by Monsignor Gearhard [sic] - Divisional U.S Head Chaplin.

[indented] On Nov. 23rd we had Turkey & peas, potatoes & apple pie & cream. We were able to buy beer too. It was a gesture from our American friends because I understand it to be their Thanksgiving Day or Harvest Festival.

[indented] I am English by birth, Australian by Nation. I came to Australia in Sept. 1934 and I am now 29 years very old - as this climate makes a man feel very weary.

[indented] I know some interesting people in Sydney & Melbourne. I hope you will let me know when you come to Australia after the war - you will find our social life has changed. The Universities are the hub of all young life. The A.B.C (Broadcasting) [inserted] is nearly as powerful as the Government! The better schools are becoming horribly English!!

[indented] But Australia herself as a country never changes - in spite of

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bush fires, drought & dust-storms - floods & extremes in everything. Even our old Government is as incompetent as ever & Jack Curtin is a wonderful leader. There are a great many things in our Industry & economic relations which are far from being Democratic.

[indented] Thank you for all your kindness - I am always very grateful for letters just by themselves, and I enjoy writing them too!

[indented] I am very sorry to hear about Mr Malval, and hope if he is interested you will give to him my kindest regards.

[indented] Best wishes to you both, God bless you.

Yours very sincerely,

John Crutchley.



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