

NAME: Orlan

RANK: Not Available

ORGANIZATION: U.S.S. Maryland

OVERSEAS WARTIME SERVICE: Asiatic-Pacific Theater of Operations

- The following excerpts are directly from two original wartime letters written by Orlan. These are two of many letters from Orlan in the site curator's possession and more will be transcribed in the future.
- The following excerpts are presented under fair use provisions for educational purposes.
- No controversial material has been omitted from the following excerpts aside from an edited racial slur and edited profanity for the protection of younger readers. No grammatical or spelling errors have been corrected.

Orlan writes a friend in the United States:

“12/19/41

I have at hand your letters of November 24th and December 3rd, but will have to let this one do for both answers. Glad that you like my letters. I am going to see that you get them for a good spell to come. I was only kidding when I said that I only use two fingers in typing. I can do about 32 words per minute if I feel good. As you know, censorship is in force, so letters must not be too long and must stick to non-Navy things to write about. Lewis and I are O.K. As to the later post date on his letter, xh that can be explained by the fact that mail doesn't run to the states every day, and that the ship has a regular branch postoffice. And as to xxxxsending you a playing card for each day of his enlistment up to the last of it, that was MY suggestion. It's a fact. Look me over, kid...that t also is an old Navy custom ;. just call a guy by any name, and he will generally answer to it...As to my harem of guineas in Seattle, I may have exaggerated a little. By actual count, there are only 14. Guess I'm slipping a little...Also, don't spend all that bonus in one place. Save enough so you can buy Lewis and me a beer when we come back. Also, any time you get the idea that you want to send some cookies, for the sake of a hungry (always) sailor, do it fast, quick!!!!!!!!!!!! Climate here is just as equable as ever. Plenty of sunshine and very little rain. Well, I'll post this and give Uncle Sam a chance to get it to you by carrier pigeon-modern style. It's not as long as usual, but I don't think that any of them in the future will be... that is if I want them to be expedited in delivery.....

Love, etc,

Orlan...”

Orlan writes his friend again in the United States:

“Sunday, Jan. 18 [1942]

This is the letter to end all letters from you that ask this, that, and the other thing; also, of course to

answer the two that I owe you that have been replied to only by the very scant cards I have been allowed to write.

Got in to Bremerton about three weeks ago, and it has been a really fine thing to be able to see the folks again, and I'm not kidding. They were sort of glad to see me too, I guess...

...Now about Lewis. After the 7th, on about the 10th, I went over to the Arena to look for him. I found out that he was all right, but had gone on a working party or something and so I didn't get to see him. Then on the 12th, I went over again and I found he had left the day before on the Lexington, to which he had been transferred. On both occasions, I sent as much as I could say by Clipper Mail as to how he was. They really held us down as to what we could say ... and no maybe...No information was to be given out .. but it so happened that I knew a fellow that could get it for me. And he had to go to a lot of trouble to do it. However, I hope that have heard from him since. I believe I am safe in saying that if his folks received a card dated after the 7th, that he no doubt went out to sea immediately afterwards and so hasn't been in a position to write any further. ----- And no news is good news NEVER FORGET THAT! I don't believe that I have to tell you how much your letters have meant to me.... There is one thing, however, In the future they may be pretty one-sided because of the fact that censorship (outgoing) is so much more rigid.... I'm mailing this ashore... You know, the grandest feeling of my life was when I first hit Seattle on News Years Eve and saw WHITE WOMEN on the Streets. What a grand and glorious feeling! When I went to church that night (yes, I did) and about a dozen or fifteen women gathered around me all at once with two or three men on the outside of the bunch trying their d __ _ dest to get in well that was really heaven with no holds barred. Coming on the range FIRE!! Ha Ha

My address in thr future will be Just the name of my ship and my name. No division number or anything. I can't say what happened in Pearl Harbor, but I can say this it was one h __ _ l of a place to be, but I am looking forward for another chance at them. The J _ ps, I mean.

When you write me again don't ask to hear what happened, we'll leave that until after the war, and with both Lewis and I at it you can be sure of a complete report. I don't know where we will go after we leave here. Again as to Lewis and the Lex. He is on a fine fast ship which has a large complement of planes that should give it supremacy in the air, which is about all that counts in the kind of sea battles they fight nowadays. If you write him tell him I have a friend aboard her...Tell him to look him up and pay my respects...

I am taking some chance in mailing this to you, but I hope it will get through O.K. I'm not supposed to say where we are or anything like that so keep it under your hat.

Well so long...and don't forget that when it comes to a showdown, I'd rather go out to a bunch of beer parlors and get drunk with you than anyone else I know.

Love,

Orlan"

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- Orlan made it through the Second World War and passed away in his 70s.
 - **For visual context, this link connects to an original wartime film in the public domain that covers the attack on Pearl Harbor which Orlan participated in (viewer discretion advised):**
<https://archive.org/details/NPC-3133>

- **For additional detail, this link connects to the Wikipedia article that covers Orlan's wartime organization, the U.S.S. Maryland (reader discretion advised):**
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Maryland_\(BB-46\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Maryland_(BB-46))