

July 11, 1944

Dearest Hiro,

How are you? Tonight's paper states that the 100th Infantry is fighting near Pomaja on the road to Livorno, and we can't help but worry about all of you, and hope for the best. Today I received your letter which you started on the 24th and ended on the 29th, in which you described your first engagement; I am so glad that you came out safely and hope that the casualties were light. I know how you all must feel now in actual combat—and we wish we could do something to make things easier for you, but I guess all we can do is hope and pray for the best. I know particularly how you must feel seeing all the young boys going into combat, and undoubtedly it will be tough going—but please know that we are thinking of you all the time; and praying that peace will come very soon.

I last wrote you on the 7th; I can't understand why my mail to you is so slow; so far I think you've only received my letters way back in May; have you got any of those I wrote you in June? They tell us to put six cents on all mail to APO's from here, so all of us are doing so. I don't think putting on a 20 cent stamp would make any difference, it is probably due to transportation difficulties. Anyways please let me know which letters you get from me, so I can keep tabs. The letter I got today, I noticed was postmarked from your APO on July 2nd, so it only took 9 days to reach me, which is very good time. I think I told you once I got one in 8 days from you.

I also wrote Mr. Finch on the 7th to thank him for the pin he sent me. He must be a very nice person; did he send them out to all the wives of the men, or just certain ones? Peter played at Dickie's house that day, and had lunch with them. Grace has been painting her living room and dining room a pale green color; she has been so busy with it, but found it too big a job, so has asked Kito to finish the kitchen and bathroom



( I just tore the paper on the carriage). I also got a nice letter from the mother of Sgt. Richard Hikawa, who lives in the Amache relocation center. He was one of the interpreters I wrote you about some time ago; I sent her a letter and a snapshot of her son with Bud Mukaye when they were here. Also do you remember my friend Wally, or Mrs. Wallis, who was teaching in New Mexico? She got her PhD in July 1st, and on the 18th plans to join the WACS so hope she will turn up here some day. who can say. I also got a nice letter from Mr. William Carr of Pasadena, who heads the Friends of the American Way group; he is among those in Pasadena who are trying to help the nissei and apparently is a fine person. Louis Meillette of the YMCA says he's a real estate man who spends his own money trying to give publicity to the achievements of the nissei and is trying to counteract some of the strong feeling against the Japanese in California. I weighed Jane that day, and believe it or not, she was 199lbs 11 oz! She certainly is a chubby butter ball, and such a darling. She rolls over all by herself now, and moves all over, so we can't leave her alone one minute. She already fell off Peter's bed the other day, and obachan nearly had hysterics, as it happened while I was out. Remember when Peter first fell off our bed when he was 3 months old? I was so scared then too, but I guess it didn't hurt him at all.

Saturday I drove Peter, Grace, Maaren and Dickie to the Y and Peter and Karen had their lessons in swimming; it was Peter's first; he looked so cute in the pool, but the water was rather cold, and all the kids were shivering-- but were good sports. I took my monthly report into the Y. Did a little shopping, went to the Haw'n Board to get some servicemen's New Testaments as aloha gifts for some of our boys who are being drafted. Picked up a couple of hats I had left for cleaning, left some shoes at the repair shop, and we got home about 1. Then took Grace to Waipahu where we marketed. I stopped at the OPA office and got my request for two new tires granted. So I went to the garage and had two new Grade 1 tires put on. Was very lucky to get my request granted-- I saw Mr. Dyson by the plantation store and he said he had approved both my gas request and the tire request; he asked about you. Also saw the big potato at the store; said he enjoyed hearing from you, and that he was interested to hear from you that there were so many Waipahu boys with you now; also he said he understood the Togashi boy was due home soon on his furlough from the 100th. The Waipahu people are so good to me, I know that living out here has its advantages although sometimes there are disadvantages too, like when you think of our children's education, etc. The garage people are so good to me, give me super service, and Mr. Hirota was so nice in fixing up the tire inspection quickly so that I could get my application into the local board. Mrs. Mikami said she had heard from her brother too; he is with you I presume. Everyone says that you're one of them, and that's what they like about you. Guess they must enjoy calling you "Blala". Is Chicken Yamada with you too, and will he be up for a promotion also? Peter is so proud that you might be promoted, you know how kids are regarding rank, etc. so I told him that rank means nothing, when you get fine boys like Dollar, Kiyoshi, Tadashi, Takeshi and others in the Army who don't hold any commissions. In the evening Peter and I went with Jiro to the church barbecue supper at Depot Pastures, Shigemi's pasture land, we had a grand time; everyone was there informally, including several service men. Billie Hamada Belshey's husband is now on the mainland, but his younger brother who is in the Navy was there that night, a very nice, clean-cut young man. The servicemen entered into the stunts around the bonfire and danced the hula with Ruth Takayasu! Shigemi was master of ceremonies, and per usual he was very good. Kats Miho was amazed at all the talent in our group, and how willingly each one did his share. They got everyone to get up and sing a solo, like Kenneth Mau, the Kikuchi boy, Goro, Takemi, even Horace and Joan did a dual number! Incidentally Horace and Joan will be married at our church on July 23d. I think Kats is going to officiate, at 7 p.m. As Leatrice is here she has been doing all the arranging for Jean. Her husband, is also here now from Kauai on his vacation.



Peter had a grand time, it was about the first time I was able to take him to a Church affair since Jane came; he sat with Mae and Noboru and his pal, Hide, and was soon telling everyone all about how much Jane weighed, how big she was, etc. If he isn't crazy about her. Each morning he crawls into bed with me, and brings his precious bon-bon, then talks to Jane who is in the crib alongside, and she just loves it! She gets so excited, she kicks all over, and beams. She is now in the stage of putting her toes in her mouth, and she is so cute. She gets a big kick out of the airplanes that fly over our house, and gets excited when they come. Also notices things now, and when I say "See the pretty flowers?" she looks up at the poinciana trees which are now in bloom in the front. The shower tree blossoms have gone by now; I took a picture of the tree in bloom, if it comes out, will send it to you.

I started Jane on mashed bananas that day; she didn't like it much, guess it was too slippery! Also I tried letting her sleep through her 10 p.m. feeling that night, and since then, have broken her of the habit, so now she sleeps from about 7:30 straight through the night, until about 6:00 a.m., which certainly is a relief. Although I automatically wake up about 3 a.m. to cover her-- obachan says she does the same to cover Peter, as you remember how he loves to kick off his covers.

On Sunday, we slept late; it is grand not having to get up for Sunday School these days. Then who should drop in but "Sparky" and his girl friend Mae Tanaka of Ewa. He is still a Sgt. and is certainly chubby, and looks well. He sends his best regards to you. We had a late lunch about 3; however, Peter was over at Dickie's so had lunch with them. Then about 5:30 we had the Church board meeting here; Kats, Horace, Shigemi, Molly, Kenneth, Carl, Jiro, Rev. Tamura, Harry Komuro, Mr. Tanji, Mr. Kikuchi, Mr. Nitta-- all came. And most important of all Dunny. The plan is now to make our church a real community church, under one administration with the English speaking dept, and the language depts, the kindergarten, clubs, etc. all under the one administration. Kats will be the minister for the English speaking group; Rev. Tamura will be for the older group. In this way we will have one budget, etc. Harry came out to represent the Methodist angle of it, since Dr. Fry is all for the idea it seems; also Dr. Fry has consented to let Kats live in the parsonage. Kats will get \$125 plus \$20 for car expenses as salary to begin with; Dunny said that was the Board policy now for all returning theological students, irrespective of nationality, etc. Kats already has your car; it needs new tires, but he won't have any trouble getting those. He will have to furnish the place himself, although the Board will try to help him with a stove, icebox and heater. It is marvelous how all the fellows including Kats have been there night after night after work painting the parsonage, putting in new screens etc, you'd never know the place now. Kats plans to have his mother come out and stay with him, until his fiance arrives. He is hoping she can get a teaching job in Waipahu, I hope so too. The more I know him, the better I like him; he's young yet, 26 I think; he said his fiance is 24 so they are really kids just getting started. He is excited now about getting the place fixed up for her, just like I suppose you felt before I came. He dropped into day and had ochazuke with us at noon. Was measuring our cupboards, etc, as he is going to try to build some shelves, etc in the kitchen for her.

I notified already Shigemi and the boys call him Kats, so I guess he will be like you, quite informal-- although he is I understand a serious minded boy, but not too much so. He wants to borrow some of your theological books until his arrive-- so am now in the process of tabulating them.

Then we went to church, and Dunny preached a fine sermon. I gave Nero Kawahara a testament for an aloha gift; he is being inducted on the 15th. I understand Mitsuo Tsugawa's two brothers are also going in; also Akira Kurashige, James Arakawa, Pump Kimura.



On Monday I went to the bank to draw out some money; also went to the OPA board and got my gas supplementation for my job-- they gave me enough to last until October 15th. I saw Mr. Tester in front of the office; he showed me some pictures of his boy, he's 9 months old now, and stands, and looks just like him, only is blond, and is husky. He sends his greetings to you. Then after lunch mama and I went to town to Dr. Marshall where Jane got her third whooping cough injection. Did she cry-- I suppose pretty soon she will begin to recognize him and will bawl whenever she sees him! Anyways he said to bring her back in 2 or 3 weeks for her tetanus-diphtheria shot; then 2 months later for her 2nd shot. She will certainly be immune against anything by then; did I tell you her vaccination took; he did it under her arm; it is a new place, I guess, as I never saw anyone in my generation getting it under the arm! I suppose its so the scar won't show on a female! Then we dropped into Sam's, as I had heard from Shinso on Saturday ( incidentally he is just about giving up the idea of getting called), that Sam was sick Shinso called it too much mah-johng! Anyways found poor Sam just up after a week of flu and he looked so pale. Elsa had a cold too, and poor Ai Young looked so tired out. They were anxious to hear all about you and Takeshi. Maudie isn't coming over this summer it seems, as she is sick again. We wonder what kind of sickness she has, poor Ets. She hasn't answered my letter I sent her recently, so must be quite ill. Sam is planning to come out next week sometime to stay over night again; Peter is so thrilled I left Peter at Dickie's that afternoon; he didn't want to go.

I went to the Y and had a conference with my supervisor, Miss Latimer. She said the Y wants me to work for them until Jan 1st, so I think I will continue and help them set up the Girl Reserve programs in the schools out here; They are expecting some new workers from the mainland by Sept, but last year they didn't get here until Jan, so they want me to to keep on for reserve. Incidentally did I tell you, they were going to pay me \$75.00 a month during the summer, as they felt the hours would be shorter; but I submitted my time sheet and it came to practically as much as before, so they will pay me \$85.00 instead. I really put in about 20 hours a week on the job, which is half-time to them-- of course all that isn't actually in the field, it includes, conferences travel, clerical, reports, preparation for crafts, etc. I am really enjoying it. I will have to see Mrs. Ottman this Thursday and put in a letter to Johnnie; she is sure she will give me an extended leave of absence from the Dept.

Peter received your V-Mail letter with the APO post mark of June 27; he was so thrilled to get it. Don't worry, dear about him; he only climbs the tree in the front, and hasn't gone in swimming this summer except for the Y, so there's no danger there. I know you must worry about him a lot, but you have many other things to worry about too.

The papers announced yesterday that Saipan was taken on July 8th; lets hope that will mean an early finish to the Pacific strife.

Today Kats came for lunch and chatted till about 2. Mrs. Dixon called up and asked about you. Her baby is thriving, but like all new mothers she is full of questions. I told her I would drive her and the baby in to doctor on the 24th, as both she and the baby have to be checked. She sent her regards to you. Then when I went to the post office I found your letter of the 29th; immediately I got out my map, and tried to figure out where you might be; it must be northern Italy; and we pray for the best. I went to Iguchi's and told them that Tani was with you; they were so relieved as they hadn't heard from him since his V-Mail of the 15th; Mrs. I. is so worried about Tani being in combat, I could see it all over her face. It is hard for all mothers and wives-- but we can take it. Moto is called for his physical this Friday; if he goes, it means Margaret and Michiko will have to hold down the front-- of course Takayo too. But financially they don't have to worry, as everyone is working. She gave me some gobo today; something very rare in these here parts now!

I got a letter from Alice yesterday; everyone there has had lots of company lately it seems. Paul Zaima was drafted and is at Shelby; Will was deferred. Is George Zaima with you? Also got a nice letter today from Betty Hiraoka, she is in Kauai; is her brother with you too? Another brother of hers has been inducted-- tough for these families.



Pretty soon there won't be any more young boys around these here parts, I guess.

The days go by so quickly; it just seems we're so busy all the time— but it is best that way. Tomorrow I go to Ewa for my class; Thursday I am going to town directly from my Aiea group, to be checked by Dr. Sakimoto, to see Mrs. Ottman, and have an appointment with Dunny too. I want to talk over a few things regarding the Church with him. Friday I have my Waipahu class. Saturday I will go to the Y.

Next week Thursday Mrs. Suzuki is giving a chicken hekka dinner at the Ikeda's for our three families; it is for Jiro's birthday I understand. It is Doc's day off, hence they chose the date I guess.

Those two families are such a help to us; I don't know what I would do without them; always helping me out in one way or another. And Jiro is such a morale builder in the Church; he is on the board, and goes faithfully every Sunday; he usually takes me so it relieves me of driving at night. The Iguchi's and Jean Masutani usually go along too, so he is sort of a Peal City taxi as it were for all of us.

I just wish there was something I could send you dear; do you need anything? Please let me know. I understand all packages from here can only be sent by boat if it is over 2 ounces— so it would probably take some time to reach you, but let me know, please.

Don't worry about us, dear, just take care of yourself, and dig an especially wide slit trench when those Jerries come around!

It is now almost 10:30 p.m., and am rather sleepy so will close now— goodnight dear,

Love,

*Kusakabe*

*P.S. The radio says Bob Hope &  
company arrived here today  
to entertain the service men.  
Also Jack Benny.*

July 12: Peter has just gone to the Kang's to play; he did some homework in arithmetic but could hardly wait to finish it so he could play! What a boy. Mr. Miyakaku of Waipahu was just here to fix our washing machine, the pump went on the blink. He is so nice to come way out to do my repairs; he's next door at Kito's now, doing some repair work there too.

I forgot to tell you I took Peter to the Arakawa tailor last week to be measured for new pants; ordered two pairs long khaki pants, and six pairs short navy blue gaberdine ones like before. He doesn't like long pants yet, so will get the short ones instead.

I made an appointment this morning to see Mrs. Ottman tomorrow; will send in my request for an extended leave of absence.

*P.S. Am @ post office, just got your letter of June 21.*