

4 June 1944

Dear Mom:

Have been preparing my things all morning and now have a few moments for myself. Nothing suits me better than writing to you. I don't find so much time to write now a days due to the fact that I have no office and have to pretty near turn up my baggage to find paper and typewriter or ink as the case may be. This place is certainly dusty and hot. There is no sense in trying to clean on e's things as dust gathers on it the next minute.

Cigarettes seem to be the medium of exchange here. The people prefer to trade in cigarettes instead of money - perhaps because it is a commodity and easier to trade with. Cigarettes to them must cost about fifty cents whereas with us it is very cheap. One rather pay his laundry in cigarettes than to give them a half a dollar as it is much cheaper for us. However, I have been paying my laundress in money as I feel it is much proper. She has several children all of course on the Mussolini Bonus plan. They are very nice to me and although we speak two different languages have more or less adopted the "prete" (priest) in their family. I really don't see how these people live with wages so low and things so high. The father only makes about a dollar and a half a day and the two older boys about seventy cents apiece. Bread cost a dollar a loaf and not such a big loaf - when one realizes that they need several loaves a day - they don't earn enough to buy food, much less bread. I believe they eat twice a day. Yesterday I happened to drop in during their evening meal and they were eating fried onions and bread. They are rationed to one pound of meat per month when and if they can get it. Matches are unheard of and they have one family in the block keeping a light on then borrow flame from them.

It is really a lesson to learn how people in other parts of the world live. However, they seem to take their suffering with a shrug which makes me think that they are hardened to suffering. I took some pictures of the family yesterday and they really love to have their pictures taken.

This seems to be wine country with vines all over the lot - if they would spend more time on vegetables and less on wine perhaps they could eat better but they tell me that the crisis for Italy as far as food is past and from now on any change will be for the better. Just think how much Greece and other countries must be suffering in this war.

I do hope you have been receiving my letters - you should be getting my first ones since arriving here about now or perhaps in a week or so. Shigemi sent me a V mail on the 12th of last month. Your letter mailed later arrived here at the same time so that it is about even.

I am sending Peter a few things for his show and tell class provided the censors allow these things to go through. He will have a grand time telling his class about these things I am sure and will be an education in geography for him. The children in Italy do not get very much education - at a very early age they become apprentices in their father's trade. The little boy a year or so older than Peter of the family go out with the father daily to work and learn the trade - such a tender age to have to work and miss all the fun of childhood. Peter and the rest of the American children are indeed very fortunate.

The populous here must think America as the land of plenty - the way we eat and spend our money. Daily we find little kids rummaging for food in the garbage can grabbing anything eatable. Garbage is garbage anywhere but guess our American garbage is almost real food to these people.



The officers have been buying cameos to send home. I thought of buying one for you but will wait until a real bargain turns up as I am afraid I do not know enough about them to depend money on them. However, when we hit a town where no soldiers have been heretofore perhaps I can find a good one for trade.

Perhaps from now on you won't hear very much from me as I suspect I will be very busy but just don't worry about me as I will be ok. I wonder if the people at home realize how awful and terrible war is - I understand people there are worried about being drafted. The boys really growl when they hear that and I don't blame them. Every evening a few of the boys in this company go foraging out for food - a vegetable here, a fish there, and make up a pretty good meal without soy. They call me to their fire and we join in eating and just reminiscing about home. I have a grand time with them.

In a few days, I hope to see Takeshi and will give him your aloha when I do see him. Captain Sullivan is around here somewhere but haven't been able to locate him as yet.

Perhaps we will be able to find a chicken somewhere and have a real good meal when I see them.

Take care of yourself and tell Peter of all my doings - he will be interested to hear of all these places. Tell him I enjoy all the stories he has been writing and that dad is real proud.

As for Dunny's offer. Tell him that for the present my only interest is Waipahu and don't expect to leave the church for quite some while as yet. I built that church to what it is and it isn't half finished for I have great visions for the town and church.

Take care of yourself - love to all

love

*His*