

Dear Mom:

I feel very much like the prisoner of Chillon in Byron's poem. Have been in this tub so long it has become just like home - funny how one gets used to crowded conditions and primitive ways of living so that after a while one does not realize anything better than that. It has been a long while since you've heard from me and no doubt you are worried no end. I can't be there to reassure but please don't worry about me for the children's sake. You have to be brave.

Had a very nice program on the boat this evening given by one of the Company's. It started out with Hawaii Pono and then Hawaiian music right through. It was most enjoyable and made us very homesick. At the end of the program the whole group sang the National anthem and beyond us was a full rainbow, a sign of good luck in Hawaii. One can never realize how much such songs as "Across the sea" and "Aloha Oe" means to a Kanaka unless he himself is an islander, far away from home. The Kanaka kids are really talented - many here that reminds me of Hide and Shigemi when it comes to giving a show. How I miss those church parties we used to have at home - most of them are married now or are going to be but hope we can keep up that yearly Christmas party for the church kids as long as we are in Waipau. Believe the kids enjoyed it as much as we did.

The V-mail that I wrote to you will be kind of hard to read inasmuch as I have written them single space. If you could buy yourself a magnifying glass believe it would facilitate reading a lot. I really don't know how much time I will have for writing letters once I am at my destination but hope that I would have time enough to at least write a letter a day. This ship life is kind of dull inasmuch as there isn't very much to do. Manage however to get my daily exercise via a punching bag that the sailors have in the stern of the ship. For the last few days, had a very bad case of dysentery but am better now. Guess that's one of the things we have to be careful about but the army takes very good precautions against it so that one does not have to worry very much about it.

The ship is getting detective conscience. Each man in the outfit was given a couple of these twenty five cents pocket book and all seem to be reading detective stories which are passed from hand to hand. Much interest is taken as to the outcome of the story and who murdered who almost to a point where the characters take genuine life. Funny how men's minds react to things like that.

I suppose you are haunting the postoffice wondering if there would be any letters for you and each day getting lower and lower in spirit when you find none. It's the same way with me but this time I know that letters will not come as one wishes but will be far and few between. The way I have it figured you won't receive letters from me for at least two months since the last one I wrote you from the last camp.

On my furlough, Charles gave me a pamphlet of easy phrases in Italian and German. Since it's the only book of its kind on the ship, the pamphlet is very popular. Who knows but I will come back speaking several kinds of foreign language - at least I will know how to say "I am hungry" and "Give me rice". Speaking of rice, it seems that all our conversation turns to food. We sit down and begin by talking about something else which inevitably turns to food and what we would like to eat when we come home. Then when I am around it also turns to fishing and picnics and things. We are a bunch of homesick lads but nevertheless realize that home is a far away for us as yet.



In about two months or so your leave from the territory will be over with. Have you decided what your plans are. As far as I am concerned it does not make any difference to me as long as you can get along and as long as you are safe and happy. Don't bring money in your consideration as I don't think that is worth my concern over your well being and health. Jane will need you at home and Peter will too - As for Peter's future - we can worry it out some way when the time comes. Peter's talent for writing amazes me - he is indeed a bright feller and a prodigy. Guess it does show a mother's training and patience in reading to him nightly. Jane would probably be teething about now and worries you all no end, I suppose. Last night I dreamt about her as I do nightly of the family.

Did the draft take many boys from the islands? and did it take many from the church? Not having heard from a long time from home - suppose there has been a great change in the status of our friends there. The ones at home have to carry on a double load in the place of those who have gone ahead no doubt. Soon if the war lasts longer, every one will be in some kind of a uniform or another. When I entered the army, really did think that the war would be over shortly but now feel as if I am just in the beginning of the whole mess. However, Germany won't be able to stand many more months of the terrific pounding she is getting and the awful drain on her manpower. Wonder what Europe will be like after this war with so much destruction and with the cream of her manhood maimed or dead. It will change the course of history and the evolution of society no doubt. Often times I think of Madame Schurer who visited us many years ago. At that time she was worried over her boys - no doubt her home in Hamburg is just a mass of rubble and perhaps she herself dead. When I think of her I realize that our enemies too have homes and are worried about their children and their future.

Today I was showing your picture to some of the boys and one of the kids from LA said "isn't she Hank Watanabe's sister? Certainly looks like her" - his name I believe is Maeda and lives somewhere in LA on Manchester. There are several other boys from LA and I spend my time with them talking over mutual friends. Nice kids. They all are amazed at the generosity of the islands kids and their guts. These island boys would fight on a drop of a hat whether the opponent is twice their size or not and then would give the shirt of their back for friend or stranger. As one of the Captains said to his company today - this is the only outfit he has been with where money does not seem to be important and its given away. Sometimes their generosity even amazes me, who have been living with them so many years of my life. The mainland boys and the islands kids are learning to appreciate each other more - and I certainly take my hat off to the mainland boys for they had to come more than half way. The island boys will not unbend for nobody - either they are accepted there way or else. The mainland boys had to make all the adjustments and am proud of the way they did it. Learning to play the uke and sing the Hawaiian War chant and other Hawaiian tunes and speaking Hawaiian English and generally living rough and tough as many of these islanders do live. Unfortunately we have the bums from Kakaako and Palama as well as the cream of the islands - and as usual the mass is judged by those who act like bums. Oh well -

Write soon -

love

Dad

HELLO PETER - PLEASE GIVE JANE A KISS FOR  
DADDY.