

Nov. 25, 1943

Dear Mom:

Its almost twelve o'clock but since I hadn't written to you now for almost a week - must get this letter off. I have a hunch that by the time this letter reaches you - things will be happening at home. Take care of yourself - tell me who is going to watch over Peter and Obachan in your absence. Obachan will have to do all the shopping won't she -

Thanksgiving Day -- and who would have thought a year ago that I would spend it so far away from home. We just got in from a four night bivouac - its a sort of a maneuver wherein you simulate conditions one would meet in actual warfare. In the last few days I must have hiked over fifty miles - and it was hard. We ate on the ground - slept on the ground to wake up with frost all around us - washed from our tin helmets - and all this with the least amount of equipment. There is nothing as miserable as getting up in the morning at below freezing temperature in this god forsaken land of Mississippi - to go marching along through the thickets and the jungles through swampland in icy water up to your knees to ford rivers and run up and down hills - I have learned to take off my hat and respect these Hawaiian kids - you see 'em every day around you, these youngsters from the islands - packing machine guns and equipment several times heavier and bigger than they are seemingly, trudging along mile after mile and running when they have to. Then sleeping with just three blankets - so cold they can't sleep a stretch of more than two hours before changing positions to warm up again - going on night hikes - cheerful and joking as only these kids can do in their glorious pigeon English - and then on top of that breaking all kinds of records in the army tests. The haole officer said that these boys are by far the best outfit in the army - and the size notwithstanding have taken to the training better than veterans. These boys, in regular kanaka fashion just slop along until the tests and then crash through always with the highest mark the army has ever had.

I spent the evening around their campfires - and have so much fun listening to the mainland fellers speaking pigeon with them. Many a time I have made the mistake of thinking of a mainlander as a kanaka by listening to their English.

I hope to sleep late tomorrow morning - Scratchy Yamaguchi is one of the cooks here and he helps me out of difficulties when late breakfasts are necessary to keep me happy.

I sent a present for you by Alice but it came back as oversize. I will try to pack it again and send it in a smaller box.

I received a nice letter from Horace and from Shigemi and Dick Ikeda - he sent me a check for five dollars for my Christmas. I can picture you now all sitting around the fifteen pound turkey - Dick said he was going to save a seat for me and I appreciate it so much even for the thought. I miss him - tonight I kept thinking of our past dinners and the great times we used to

have in the past.

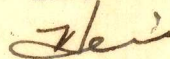
Yamada has gone on a two months maneuver to Louisiana with the artillery so that I have all the work around here. He is alright, but can't get to his "hip hip hoorah" stuff and his overbearance. However, console myself in thinking that I am in this only for the duration and not as a profession - that as soon as my duty is over and the war won, the army will be just a forgotten memory.

I will probably be going on maneuvers sometime next year - and as I understand it is going to be like our bivouacs except it is stretched up day after day for months. It isn't going to be fun but nevertheless good training for that way when we all go over. Army training isn't as is pictured in Life and the Newsreel - it is really tough. It isn't marching and drilling - its hiking and running with a pack on your back and a heavy rifle in your arms until one thinks his legs are going to break off. It isn't sleeping in nice barracks - its sleeping on the cold ground, with just three blankets (the officers have a bedroll which helps) and sleeping when you can get it. Its sleeping on your legs while waiting for the next move, digging a foxhole whenever you stop - eating when you can get it and generally roughing it. Its tough - but then this is a tough war.

I only hope the war will be over soon so these boys will not have to go over - but if they do, I know they will make a good showing of themselves.

Well good night for the present. Write soon

love



DEAR PETER:

THANK YOU FOR THE NICE CHRISTMAS LETTER. I REALIZE HOW MUCH YOU MUST HAVE WORKED TO WRITE SUCH A NICE LONG LETTER. DADDY FEELS SO GOOD WHEN HE GETS A LETTER FROM YOU. PLEASE WRITE ME ANOTHER ONE.* DADDY THINKS ABOUT YOU ALL THE TIME AND WORRY ABOUT YOU AND YOUR LETTERS ALWAYS MAKE ME FEEL SO HAPPY. I READ YOUR LETTER TEN TIMES ALREADY AND WILL KEEP ON READING THE LETTER UNTIL YOU WRITE ME ANOTHER. YOU DON'T WANT DADDY TO READ THE SAME LETTER DAY AFTER DAY, DO YOU?

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF AND ALWAYS OBEY OBACHAN AND MOM.

LOVE

