

31 October 1944

Dear Mom:

The days pass slowly out here in the front - all too slowly. We are still on the line and seems as if we will be on for quite some time as yet. The men need the rest but guess there are others too who are just as tired.

Received your letter this morning written on the 13th of October which should be pretty good time inasmuch as letters do take longer to this front. The papers said yesterday that our mail will take longer too - so please don't worry if you don't hear as quickly although the letters probably will come in bunches. Also received this morning a Christmas pkge - fruitcake from Chas Hisatomi and wife and another from a Takako Saito, 120 W 21st St NY. I don't know who the latter is unless it might be the sister of one of our boys who was killed. Anyway I sent both of them thank you notes.

The day is cold - with grey fog clouds which threatens snow or sleet - gunfire is gradually getting farther away which proves that the Germans are retreating. However, one can't be very optimistic or careless as last evening they sent over some very huge shells which bang around quite a bit here and we all scurried for cover. Hoping all the time that while scurrying the shell and we wouldn't meet in a tie or the shell decide to take cover with us in the same place. It would be "par bon".

This fighting here is terrible - the terrain is awful and as always the Germans have the advantage over us due to their knowledge of the ground and a retreating army can always choose the spot to defend. Thus once they are entrenched - it costs a lot in lives and everything else to root them out. However one can see the manpower shortage in the German army - for the soldiers we capture are either too old or too young. According to our paper, they have also a convict battalion made up of prisoners of the reich and criminals. Seemingly they are throwing in everything they can get hold of and still they come - the rumor is that they have women in their army but as yet have not seen any - or heard of any hereabouts.

Being a last ditch fight for them - they really are fighting fanatically - and thus the fight seems to be much harder than in Italy.

As for the French people - the men seem to like the Italians better because they were easier to get along with. The French don't seem to be very eager to make friends - and besides we don't stay in one place long enough to meet people in combat. When we come into a town - the people would be all away as it would be still in danger area - and they turn up after we leave. Thus it's only the rear echelon soldiers - those whom we jealously and sneeringly call "PBS" (Peninsular Base Section) who get all the cream of the so called French hospitality.

Our boys are making out alright - and are regarded as one of the best outfits hereabouts. A few days ago one of our companies made what they jokingly call a "banzai" charge through the German lines. The enemy was also attacking - but our boys were much more ferocious and the net result, when I went over the hill later to pick up some of our dead bodies which were but very few - I counted over a 100 dead Germans sprawled all over the place. The Germans retaliated a few days later with a "Heil Hitler" charge - much to their regret for again they left beaucoup jerries on the field. Thus our boys are doing a grand job cleaning out the jerries -

However it makes me sad to think of the casualties we take. Some times when I get to hear of certain boys being killed or being wounded - it makes me want to turn back and go home away from all of this - I am not used to it as yet.

I wrote a letter to Larry Tajiri the other day. I have always disliked the way the Kibei group in the US was being blamed for everything. Anything that threw any aspersions on the Ja's were blamed on the Kibei group. We have a group of Kibeis in our outfit now - and they are real fighters and brave fellers. a bunch of them charged a machine gun nest the other day - one of the wounded was brought in and the first thing he says is "oi yarareta do" - then goes off cussing the Germans in his broken English. He was wounded pretty badly - but poohed, poohed his wounds - its about time Larry and his stay at homes give the Kibeis some credit for they too are fighting and dying for a better world and also for the JA's at home.

I saw a lovely picture somewhere of a backyard griddle - it had everything, when we get our new home we must also include a large fancy griddle in our backyards where we can have charcoal steaks and everything. Wouldn't it be fun.

Received a sample form from the government concerning after war education. The government will pay \$75.00 a month for veterans with families wishing to study - its only for men under 25 but also includes chaplains I believe who wish to spend some time studying before going back to their civilian pastorate. I would surely like to take advantage of that and study in NY for six months after the war with my family. Oh well - time will tell.

We'll probably have to move forward again soon. I hate these moves at it leaves you open for shells and mortars and everything else that isn't nice. But guess - we'll have to. I have my fingers crossed.

Take good care of yourself - don't worry if you don't hear from me so often as more than likely we will be quite busy right along -

Love to the children.

Love

Don