

Letter from Tsuruno Meguro to Fumio Fred and Yoneko Takano, August 17-20, 1942

How are you, Fumio and Yoneko? We are all well.

We departed from Pomona to Arizona. The train climbed the mountains with two engines, and it went so slow that I felt like we were walking. After passing through Arizona, it ran with one engine. It was not hot until noon but it got hot in the afternoon as if we were in hot water. I kept drinking ice water. All I could see outside were the mountains after mountains. It was really hot when we passed through the Parker Dam and the fields around there. I feel sorry for the people incarcerated in the camp in Arizona. It was a desert area where I did not see any trees. I do not know what they were constructing, or whether they were constructing practice fields for soldiers or not, but I saw something like a big structure being built by using oil. To the half way from Arizona to New Mexico, pine trees were growing everywhere and the scenery was beautiful. Truly no matter how far we go in the U.S., we see the fields endlessly to all the way.

We arrived at La Junta, Colorado on [August] 19 at 6:30 AM. I did not even imagine I would come back here. Since I am not allowed to leave freely, I sent a letter to Mr. Yamada only. I remember this place, and felt nostalgic about the old days. We passed through Rocky Ford, Arizona, and New Mexico. I think Colorado had the best fields and crops. All corns, onions, radishes, and hay, are good this year. They can make good money. It seems that the farmers are packing cantaloupes. I did not see any Japanese there. We stopped at the train stations occasionally but were not allowed to leave far from the train. Although I wrote a letter to you and was going to mail it in Denver, Colorado, I was not able to make it. We arrived at Cheyenne, Wyoming at 8:00 PM. After the sun rose in the morning, I saw the fields extending to the horizon and also saw deer and pheasants occasionally. When the train passed through tunnels between the mountains, the inside of the train got dark. That made small children start crying. I saw one of the children who was about three years old asking her/his mother where and why they were going.

The train was bustling. There was a kitchen in the train where a Caucasian cook and an African American waiter served. They were very nice and kind to us. I had meals with turkey and chicken for the first time in three months. They were delicious. We had oranges and cookies between the meals. I never had such a long trip in my life. It was quite cold in the train during the night. While passing through the mountains, I viewed the nice scenery and saw the area where the steam was coming out of the ground. There was a river two hundred miles away from the camp. The farmers were growing ____, radishes, and wheats around the river. The camp is located at the edge of Wyoming, forty two miles away from the train line. The river has enough water and provides the good conditions to the crops.

Written in the train

We finally arrived at the place to live at 6:00 PM. Our house is very clean and furnished with a coal stove. I do not have to worry about the cold weather. We are separated so far, and I miss you. The mess hall and bath are well constructed, and they provides an

individual bathroom where you can take a bath, laundry, and wash your face in one place by yourself. Now, I will be busy, setting up my house again.

It took us four days and three nights to get to the camp. Anyway, we arrived at the camp in Wyoming safely. Please do not worry about us.

Please take care of yourself and get along well.

Good-by,

From Mama

To Fumio and Yoneko,

Yoshiko will write to you soon.

[Written in the train and at the Heart Mountain camp]