

## Letter from Tsuruno Meguro to Fumio Fred and Yoneko Takano, June 21, [1945]

Yoneko and Fumio,

Thank you very much for sending Papa tobaccos and newspapers. Papa is thankful for them. Since he is working now and does not have time to write to you, I am writing to you for him. He says that he is going to try to write to you on Sunday. He works, watering cantaloupes. He says that his current job is much easier than his older job in Las Animas, Colorado. He wears not boots but shoes, and pumps up the water from the well electrically. Ben uses a tractor and does \_\_\_\_\_.

The place we live is the town of Saugus, [Santa Clarita, California]. Even though it is called a town, there are only one store, one garage, and one Western-style restaurant. It looks like \_\_\_\_\_, Colorado. The railroad goes through and there is \_\_\_\_\_. It really looks like \_\_\_\_\_ in Colorado. There are big cotton trees everywhere. Since we have a big yard, I have planted vegetables. I heard that the farming field is three miles away. The owner of the farm provides a car and gas. He also provides a house including water, electricity, and gas. Then, Ben came here with a contract earning 150 dollars a month. I do not know how much Papa earns here. On [June] 28, it will have been one month since he started the job, and we will know how much he earns monthly.

Papa applied for the insurance and received 21.50 dollars a month during the past two years. We saved the money, went to Los Angeles, and deposited it into a bank. We have never touched the money from Ryo. We saved Ryo's money from last June to December. He used it for his train tickets and his own allowance. We saved the money after December and deposited all into the bank. We have saved 700 yen. Yoneko, you do not have to worry about us. Ryo earns 37.00 dollars.

When we left the camp, a white man told us that we should apply to receive 68.00 dollars if we were going to Los Angeles. As we were instructed, we sent an application letter. Then, someone came from the office in San Fernando for investigation. We do not need the money but we applied for it just because we would like to leave some for Ryo. I told Ryo to apply for it by himself since it makes things go faster. We can earn enough to make ends meet. Yoshiko sent us 100 yen the other day. I thought we did not need it but we accepted it since I did not want to disappoint her. We appreciate her for caring of us and that is enough for us.

We also received a letter from Ryo. I was glad to know that Ryo got a job relating to his favorite mechanic work. I also got a letter from a boy who is from Hawaii and was hospitalized in the same room with Ryo in France. He writes from a hospital in Texas and tells that we do not have to worry about Ryo since he no longer needs to go to war. I heard that Mr. Ino's Jimmy got injured and has been hospitalized.

Because Yoshiko and Misako also want to join us, we will have them come here. They are all tired of working. Probably we will move to Los Angeles when the vacancy is available in the fall. Even you go out, there are no meat or eggs available. We use rations

to shop, but it is very inconvenient. However, food tastes delicious if you cook as you like.

When you become free, come to Los Angeles. Ben brought our luggage from \_\_\_\_, borrowing a truck from the farm owner. It was a good decision not selling our icebox and washing machine. Nothing was damaged. We bought a gas stove and a bed. It is a really good place without any inconvenience.

Looking back the past, the day when we were leaving for Pomona three years ago and the life in the Heart Mountain camp, I could not imagine that I would be able to come back here. I felt like I am in a dream. Mr. Shimazu encouraged us to leave the camp and rent his house as soon as possible, and we did not have a chance to stop by anywhere. We stayed in Denver for eleven hours and in La Junta for three hours since the trains were delayed. I thought about calling Mr. Hirakata, but it was at 1:00AM and I did not call him. We stayed at Mr. Shimazu's place for eleven days and came back here. Anyway, since we were thinking about staying in a hostel, I do not mind, but I found out that Mr. Shimazu says one thing and means another. I do not want to speak ill of others, but I heard that people in the Heart Mountain camp were complaining about him.

The temperature went up at 100 degrees for two or three days, but it has been cooler since yesterday. I planted cucumbers, green onions, radishes, beans, corns, and cabbages. I am looking forward to harvesting them. Because the climate is good here, kids do not catch cold. They run around and play well. If Yoshiko and Misako join us, it would be much more fun. We do not know when they will be able to move here.

I was able to come back to my longing place, California. My heart is full of happiness. I pray that you will be able to come back here soon. Give our best regards to your in-laws. Good-bye

Mama

June 21

Fumio and Yoneko