

May 10, 1943.

Dear Kazuo:

Well, you beat me to the draw - I fully intended to write you tonight. Seems ages since I have sent any word, but honestly, we are busier than we ever dreamed we could be. We never come in until it is too dark to work outside and then there is everything to be done before going to bed - makes it pretty late.

May 12 - Here I am again - couldn't get back to this all day yesterday so decided to work on it as I did Lloyd's last letter - whenever we come in to fill the spray rig I run up and type a few more words. I just know I won't think of half of the things that have transpired since I wrote last, but I will do my best and if this letter doesn't connect up, you will know why. Joe just hollered for me to go.

One more out - gosh, it's just starting to get windy, but we have never stopped for wind this year - time is too precious. If we had stopped for wind we would never have sprayed because this has been the windiest spray season I have ever seen. It is windy early in the morning usually. Well, we got on the calyx spray and are now busy putting on the first cover. We are going up to Forestville tomorrow afternoon and I hope everything will work O.K. so we can go right after it. The reason we didn't go there before doing this one is that Joe had hoped a good deal of the thinning could be done before putting this on, but as luck would have it we will have to go ahead without much of the thinning being done. Sam has been at it for some time, but isn't getting very far alone. Another guy was supposed to come back with him - when we went to see what had happened he told us that he just couldn't leave the hope job right now. I know the trouble - he is getting \$1.00 per hour there and we offered him only 75¢. Gosh, I don't see how we can pay more than that - we have no idea what apples are going to be worth and the labor is taking the cash so fast. Sam came back for that amount - I don't know whether he did it reluctantly or not - I'm sure I can't tell how he feels about anything. Anyway, he said he would try to find a couple more Saturday, but we were there Saturday night and he hadn't found anyone. Sunday I went to see a fellow that used to work for us, but who has been working steady for another grower for the past year or so. He told me that his boss had no thinning to do and they would be through spraying about the middle of the week so he would come right over. His son thinned apples last year, too, and he wants to come along, so I told them to stop in here for gas when they need it and to start whenever they could. The poor devil has a B card, but his old jalopy burns a lot of fuel and he couldn't drive from the other side of Sebastopol to Forestville every day for what gas he can get. As long as he keeps it to himself I will let him get it here. A few weeks ago I went to the ration board and raised heck about not having enough truck and tractor gas and they loosened up and gave us enough. I listed your tractor as being operated by us and got gas for that, too. I'll have to explain the reason for that: We didn't think it advisable to have gas put in the tank up there for various reasons, the main one being that they steal every gallon that hands can reach. The other reason was that we had no idea just how much would be used during the season and could not give an accurate estimate. This way we had the coupons issued to us for tractor use and get the gas here then mark down whatever we take up there each day that we use the outfit. When we did your winter spray we didn't have coupons for your outfit and had to use ours so had to get yours registered in order to get that amount back and get additional fuel. We have been using your own oil each time. In connection with the tractor, etc. I will have to start at the beginning and tell you just what has happened. We got through with the winter spray and then the first chance Joe had he went after the outfit and took it into Berglund. He left instructions to fix up just the necessary parts and not to put too much money into it. They were busy as heck and didn't tear it down for a few days and Joe went in the day they had it all down. They showed him all the worn out parts in the rear end and he just about had a fit. When

he came home and told me about it I wished we had never taken it over there. However, it did sound terrible the last day we used it and the foreman there said that something was sure to have snapped had we used it to do heavy pulling. Well, anyway, they had to order oodles of parts and told us right off that it might be a long time before some of them could come through. A long time was right, we were ready for your calyx spray and still didn't have the outfit. Joe went to see about it and they told him it would be out in a few days if the part came in that day. Well, they called up a few days later and told us to go after it. I went on over and when Joe started it to load it he jumped straight up - the clutch was slipping and the engine sounded terrible. Of course, all they were supposed to do to the engine was put in new rings and work it over lightly so it wouldn't cost too much. But boy, it really was noisy. I called the foreman and told him that we wouldn't take it the way it was and asked him to have it fixed right. He apologized for the kind of help they had and said they would tear it down right away and fix the clutch and take the noise out of the engine. We couldn't wait any longer for that so we came home and moved our tractor and sprayer up there and did the calyx spray right through. Two days later we went back after the tractor. I just drove it on and off the truck and although Joe didn't think it sounded as good as he expected it was much better and the clutch was O.K. this time. I used it when Joe went up to do the cultivating and he says the steering was O.K. and the grabbing was gone from the clutch, but the radiator started to leak and the engine just got noisier and noisier all the time. The foreman over there told Joe right off that the engine was in need of re-boring, etc. but of course, when so much was necessary in the transmission we didn't feel equal to all that expense. When we used it the other day for the spraying I had a heck of a time keeping it running - something has gone wrong with the governor. Joe says he thinks they jimmied that when they worked on the engine, but he says ~~xx~~ it can be taken care of without much expense the same time the radiator is taken care of. If anyone but Joe had handled the tractor I would blame it all on the driver, but goodness sakes, he has handled all kinds of them for nearly 15 years and should know something about the care of one. There will be only one more spray and one more cultivating up there so I believe we can get by, if necessary we can take our outfit up to finish up. Floyd worked on the engine of ours before he left and we never had it work as nicely as it does and believe me, it is doing plenty work, too. That poor little devil has been going almost steady for six weeks. This kid we got to drive it is fine, he understands machinery and doesn't know when to stop work. Everything was sailing along fine until last night when he came along with his left eye all bandaged up and told us that he had to go to the eye doctor on account of a limb hitting him in the eye last Thursday. He mentioned that fact when he came in Thursday night, then Friday he didn't say any more about it and Saturday he had to stay home to clean chicken houses so we didn't see him again. He said it hurt awfully bad on Sunday and he couldn't sleep all night so he finally went to the doctor yesterday. Of all the luck! We are already about ten days behind schedule with the cultivating jobs and Joe hasn't worked two days in the dryer yet, then this had to happen. I have driven for all the spraying and drove for a little bit of discing here after had cut close to the trees, but I don't feel equal to the entire job and I don't know what we will do if he doesn't get back within a few days.

I just noticed that I went right on with the let or without telling you that today is the 18th and so I went back and marked it so it would make a little more sense. Lots of things have happened since I left off on the 12th. We sprayed your place, of course, we sprayed Johnny's, the kid disced a couple of small places near Johnny's, got his eye hurt, we have attended a couple of labor meetings - the last one being last night on Mexican labor. Tomorrow night there will be a continuation of that meeting so the growers can sign up for the amount each can use and determine definitely how they will be housed and make arrangements for a hearing on the wage scale to be paid them. The thing has grown so critical that something will have to be done or the crops will be lost.

There are absolutely no thinners to be had, which brings me back to the situation at Forestville. I'll tell you that I am in good health physically, can sit in that tractor ten hours per day and not feel too tired to do about four or five hours' work around the yard and house before going to bed every night, but mentally I am in bad shape. There are just too many things piling up in front of us around here and not enough hands to help out. I spend every spare moment looking for someone that might be able to help out, only to find that he is working somewhere else or has too much to do on his own place. The two fellows that were going to help thin up there haven't shown up and I suppose when their boss found out they could work somewhere else he found something for them to do so they wouldn't get weaned away - and I don't blame him, either! I know they would have come if that hadn't happened. Sam has worked steady since he came back and is progressing nicely, but he told us the other night that since he has thinned apples on that place this is the biggest crop he has seen. I'll tell you that nearly every tree has clusters of from 4 to 8 apples on it, and not only one or two of those, but lots of them. It is a beautiful sight, but a sad one, because if we can't get the thinners we are going to be sunk. Sam finally told Joe that if he hadn't promised us to come he would not be there, but as long as he said he would do it he wanted to be true to his word. He said that he left a \$1.00 job to take the 75¢ and that he is losing \$2.50 each day which is very true. He said that was why none of the other fellows would come to work and that the cheapest any of them are getting even at the seed farm is 35¢ per hour. Joe told him we couldn't pay the dollar under any circumstances, but we would do what was right by him and if he stayed on right through the thinning we would give him 85¢. He seemed a little more satisfied, but said he was sure he could not get more help at that. Gosh, it is a problem - Archie Hull has one man and is paying him 85¢ - Harry Pride has none, but is offering \$1.00 for all he can get and I heard that Roy Crawford would pay almost anything to get men. The situation is bad, as evidenced by arguments brought up last night and from what they mentioned there I gather that as far as 75¢ is concerned we had just as well forget that unless the Mexicans come in here. They do hope to get them for either 65 or 75, but will probably pay them by piece instead. Now I have a new idea and I am going to find out how far it will get within a few hours when I go to town. I heard that the agricultural class of the high school is turning out boys to do thinning and that they have been very satisfactory. I intend to see Overman and if at all possible I am going to get about 10 or 12 of them just as soon as I can. I already have the promise of some 10 foot ladders from Harry Silva for them to use. Different growers I have talked to said it would be much better to reach all possible from a 10 foot ladder than to let them go on account of not being able to get help that will climb higher. That came up due to the fact that it was mentioned that high school girls had gone out and done swell jobs. They used only 8 and 10 foot ladders, however. Joe and I both decided that in the case of your place it would be a great help to reach all possible from that height, after all, your trees are not so high. I know I could reach any limb from the top of a 10 foot ladder, and as far as I am concerned I would rather carry a 10 foot all day and stand on the top step than carry a 12 foot and go up only 10 feet as is usually done. Well, I will report on that when I get at this again. I am going to do all possible to get some boys up there this week. We are caught up with the work that I can help with around here and for a couple of days I could go there, too and watch them, etc. I wouldn't have them there any other way, because I don't think Sam would take the responsibility of supervising the work. He is always reluctant about anything like that. It is our only out and if I can't get it done that way, it just won't be done. This labor situation is like butting your head against a stone wall. The Hillies are getting nigger rich in the hop yards and in the valley I hear they are making as high as \$25.00 per day so they have us over a barrel. Our only hope is the Mexican labor as much as I hate to see it in here. Nevertheless, those Hillies have to be taught a lesson and the sooner the better. I think they are

going to see the day when they will be sorry for their smartness, as I told them last year in the dryer. We have had a number of them ask us for dryer work already, but when we talk wages they grin and we can tell they are thinking of better than a dollar per hour. We told Sam the other day when he was telling how much he was losing that we couldn't afford what the Pillies are thinking about for dryer work and they had better look for something else. He said right out that they are considering at least a dollar would be right. From the way things look right now I don't think there will be chance in the world to rent out the dryer up there. Everyone is so done up about this labor deal that they won't take a chance on tying themselves down on a deal of that kind. The cooperative dryer at Kobuke's is planning on Mexican labor throughout. I talked with the foreman the other day and he told me that he thinks he can make dryer men out of some of those fellows and the Pillies can ~~xxx~~ go to hell, as far as he is concerned. They are in a position to house those fellows and we are not so there is the difference. I don't want them as close as Johnny lived and we have no other facilities around here so we would have to get ours ~~xxx~~ out of a central camp if one is established, which we hope will be done somewhere close.

Gosh, I have raved on here about all the gloomy side of life for so long. I had better give you some encouraging news. The trees up there look grand - I imagine the nitrate did it, as we ran out of it before we finished on the other side of the ditch and there is certainly some difference in the foliage. The crop on this side of the ditch is wonderful, every tree is plenty heavy and every one needs thinning, but near the pollenizers the crop is just too thick for words to describe. I don't care what kind of a tree the gray is near, the crop is heavy. That is what makes the other side of the ditch such a sight. You have so many trees planted in for mixing - it is truly a sight. As I drove for spraying the other day I thinned all along the rows while I moved up and caught hell from the boys for leaving the hoses pile up or stretching them too tight all day long. I just felt so sorry for those limbs I couldn't go past them without taking some off. Joe did a grand job on your ground up there too. He is crazy about your disc - says it does so much better work than ours, especially in that kind of soil. It will certainly look like a garden when he goes over it both ways once more and then harrows it. We want to do that just before we prop which will have to be pretty soon from the way the limbs are hanging. Well, I see it is time for me to get ready to go into town. I have a lot of work to do at the bank and I want to be sure and see Overman. We have a little bright spot to look up to in the fact that Lloyd's dad quit the road and as soon as he has caught up his work he can give us a hand once in a while. He told us he would gladly go up there and thin if it wasn't that his work is so far behind and he must get over his ground before it is too dry. I imagine in a week or so he can give us a hand if we need him badly. I hope to be well on the way by that time, however, if this pans out at all.

Sorry, I have to do this in so many spurts, but I imagine you would rather have it that way than just a line or two without any information, so I will continue when I get back on this evening, more likely.

Well, here I am again, and it is the next morning. Got home from town later than I expected to and found Buck here to visit before going back to Texas so spent a lot of time doing that. After he left there were all the chores to do and the garden to water so it was dark again before we came in to get our supper. It's always the same story - by the time we are through with supper and doing the dishes it is 9:30 or 10:00 and then the kids always need cleaning up before being put to bed. For no reason at all I was just dead tired last night and couldn't drag myself up the stairs to continue with this. I'm up early this morning and intend to finish it before the rest get up. We have quite a heavy fog and I am glad we are not spraying.

I want to see Twomen as I explained before and could not get the boys due to the fact that so many have signed up for them, but he is letting me

have five girls this afternoon at 1:00 and I am going after them. I expect to be there with them all the time and I feel sure that they will make it O.K. At any rate, it is the only out and he told me that if they didn't do the work as it should be done or if they didn't do enough of it there would be no dispute when they were brought back. He said different farmers had asked for them, but he was reluctant about letting them out because there were no women to oversee them and he didn't think the toilet facilities were adequate in most places. When I told him that I would be right with them and would take them and bring them back in the evening he was tickled pink and he said he knew he could get plenty husky kids for me because they had felt hurt when the boys were let out for work and they were denied the chance. When I discussed wages with him he told me the boys are receiving 65¢ and that all the ones that used them said they earned it, but he didn't think the girls could handle the ladders so well and wouldn't be worth so much. He said that was up to me - I could tell how they got along better and could pay them accordingly. I am borrowing some 10 foot ladders this morning and taking them up there - in fact, I am getting 2 - 8 foot ones also just in case some kids can't get along with the others. There are plenty trees that can be thinned almost completely with an 8 foot ladder. I intend to have them reach all they can with those and then I will follow up with the 12 foot if necessary to reach the high ones. The thing is that it is going to be a lot better to reach all possible and leave the highest ones than to let them all go as will be the case if we don't try something like this. As I said before the situation is critical and it is pretty hard for me to sit here and put it down on paper - only seeing is believing. I imagine Sam will have a good laugh when I get up there with the kids, but maybe I can show him that someone else besides the guys who think they are indispensable can handle the job. I am going to take his wings down also by telling him about the Mexican help that is coming, and I hope he tells the rest of that gang about it pretty quick. Maybe their ideas of how important they are might change some. Oh well, Sam is decent, anyway. He promised to come and did it, regardless of the fact that he was losing plenty money, but just the same, he had more or less agreed to take care of the thinning help and he isn't able to do a thing about it without our paying out of reason wages. This trial of mine may not work at all - if it doesn't, I am going to get those boys as soon as they are free which may not be for a week or 10 days - that will be better than nothing, but the stuff should be getting off right now. This morning I am getting the ladders and going up there to set them up and talk with Sam about where the girls should work - perhaps where the trees are a little lower than most. At 1:00 I am going into town with the car to get them and by tonight I will know how bad the try was.

Joe went to town yesterday for some lumber for the floor of the peeling room and couldn't buy a stick of that kind. He had to go to Santa Rosa and he brought back some redwood and pine. It will have a double floor being it is pretty close to the ground. The stuff is just plain 1x6 - surfaced and it cost over \$33.00 just for that floor. He finally got started on it and when I got home he had a few boards laid. The injured boy was here and his eyes are much better - the doctor removed a piece of bark from it and took off the bandage so he thinks he can come to work this afternoon. That was good news! If he does show up then Joe can go on with the dryer until we have to spray again. He is so far behind with it we will have to hire a carpenter (if we can get one) for a couple of weeks or we will never be ready for the harvest.

Oh yes, there is one more thing I want to mention - we cannot deliver to the packing house in your boxes and will have to do something about getting the use of somebody's lugs. We ourselves haven't enough, but I think I can rent Bennett's for the season because Walt offered to rent them to us last year. I don't imagine they will charge much as long as we give them back in good shape and pay for the missing. If you have any ideas let me know as I really don't know of any other out. I intend to ask the Union manager if they have any to rent before going to Bennett, but I don't believe they have. If we have to hire Mexicans and pay them by the box they should all be the same size and getting them all from one place would be the best.

Guess I have belly-ached enough for this time - I know a lot of this will sound fantastic to you so far away, but I want to tell you that it can't be pictured properly - the only people who are really care-free and getting the right amount of sleep are the laborers who have nothing to tie them down. The farmers and business people of the community are all dragged out and worried looking...no help, and what they can get is no good, consequently the bosses are worked to death.

I got the things you asked for the other day but I haven't had the time to box them. I say I got what you asked for, but I can't find the things your Grandma wants. I got the tea pots, but as far as those little things in the cabinet are concerned, I don't know if it is just me or if she put them clear out of sight. All there is left in that cabinet is a small fan and a gold colored wooden dummy or something about six inches high. It has no place for a candle and has no birds on it so I know it isn't what she wants. I remember sending her some of those papers when I sent that other stuff some time back and I don't find any more of them. I looked everywhere you told me and even in the china closet and the kitchen cupboard but can't find that bird affair. I hope we have all of your radio - it was all in that box and there doesn't seem to be any more of it in the closet. As soon as I can get a suitable box and can get Joe to nail it I will send it to you. I imagine within the next two or three days. In the meantime I had better sign off with best regards from us all to both of you. I still have a letter from your folks that I should answer but I simply can't do it this time. Tonight we are going to that labor meeting again and tomorrow night to my niece's graduation so I don't know when I will sit down again at this machine. I say we are going to the graduation, but I mean we promised we would go - something will probably happen so we can't make it. Gee, the relatives have had birthday celebrations and farewell parties for the boys and we haven't gone to a thing. I think they quit inviting us now, because we haven't heard a thing for ages. Easter Sunday was the only one we have taken off this year. We actually cleaned up and went to church and then to dinner. Oh boy, it is a great life if you can't weaken!

Write me when you have time and please make some suggestions about the place - I feel so inadequate and helpless and all the help and suggestions I had hoped to get from Sam are lacking - he just won't make a suggestion and pretends to know nothing at all about how things should be done. I always have to ask him how you folks did it and when you did it.

As ever,

Lea Perry