

February 22, 1944.

Dear Kazuo:

I have been asked to write you about your washer up there and since it is raining cats and dogs outside I might as well do it now. We have had three days of real rain, night and day. Just as the ground was drying out enough to get the outfit on it for spraying. Well, that is the way it goes, every year, it seems. Your tractor is still laid up, but we will use ours when necessary. That Berglund outfit is worse than ever and Joe finally blew up a few days ago and went after them tooth and toenail. Gosh, they are damned dumb - when he tackled the office manager he went right to the phone and found the gear we need right down at the San Leandro plant. The shop foreman told us they didn't have it there and that it was coming from Los Angeles - that was his excuse for making us wait so long. When the other fellow phoned he found they had ten of them on hand at San Leandro and they would send one right out. Now, we will see how long it takes to get to Santa Rosa. Honest, things are in such a shape, it is almost disgusting to make plans for the future. Joe was talking to a neighbor today who told him that he had ordered a new spray outfit from Stevenson's and they promised he would have it this month. A few weeks ago they advised him they couldn't have it here before next Fall so he proceeded to look for a second-hand one. The Bear man located one for him on a farm near San Jose and he is going after it tomorrow. He said he paid a couple of hundred dollars more for it than a brand new one would cost him, but he needed it desperately and had to take it. They have ceiling prices on new articles, but the second hand ones go hog wild. In this connection, I asked the party interested in your washer what price he felt it was worth and he told me that there was a ceiling price on those and that he would have to contact the manufacturers to find the price.

Well, I promised the guy I would write you immediately and let him know the answer as soon as you let me have it. I always feel so funny to ask you people about selling your property, but I've been told by certain ones that I stick up for you people and that they would bet that I never write what I agree to write, etc. so when you answer this, please make it so I can show it to the fellow. This party needs a washer badly and the Cutler agent told him they are not manufacturing any at present and at the same time told him about yours being not used, etc. etc. Last year this same agent came to the ranch when I was there and asked me if he could show the outfit to a fellow who was down from Washington. He introduced me to the old fellow and we went in and looked over the washer. The fellow was interested in one just that type and had no idea what it looked like so he was just getting acquainted with it. At the same time, the agent asked me if I thought it would be for sale later on and I told him I didn't think so, or at least, had no reason to believe it would be. Now that he is being hounded by this other party for one, he evidently steered him this way, hoping he could keep him satisfied. Just write a note giving your answer to this question separately from what you care to tell me, if you don't mind.

Since I wrote you I have made two more trips to see Geary and finally after making a date with him for 9:00 o'clock one fine morning I went there and ~~waited~~ waited until 11:30 before he talked with me. He wanted to know how much time I put in there last year and just exactly on what kind of a deal the ranch was run. I told him there was no deal made, because I understood I couldn't make one, and that I just ran it as though it belonged to me. I had my book with me and showed him how many days I spent up there in 1943 and the exact amount of hours I put in there in actual work. He didn't take any of my figures down, but said that the statement spoke for itself and that I would be asked to appear in court when Judge Comstock reviewed the report and that at that time he would ask for a certain remuneration for my services rendered in the capacity of guardian for 1942 and 1943 and also for a special amount for operating the place in 1943. The Judge has just returned from Washington, D. C. so I imagine he will have the hearing sometime within the next two weeks. I hope they don't pick a day when I am driving the tractor for spraying.

Yesterday Joe and I went up to the ranch to see how things were coming along. The fellow in the house is trimming the limbs and is going to use the wood. Of course, Sam would like to have the wood, but at the same time, he got through pruning there and immediately went to work for someone else, even though he promised Joe he would come down and do our peaches and young tree which we agreed to pay him \$1.00 an hour for doing. Then he told the fellow who helped us all last summer that he would bring a couple of other fellows and help him finish his place so he could help us with our spraying when we get going. So far he hasn't come here and the few times that this fellow has seen him around the joints he has continued to promise that he would be ~~down~~ down in a few days. At the same time he told him that they must leave for the hop field on the 1st so there isn't much time left. He asked Joe to be sure and save our calf for them and Sunday he left word at the store up here that he didn't want the calf. He went right by on his way to town but didn't stop in to tell us himself. In view of all this, I can't see why I should pay out one cent towards furnishing him with wood or anything else. I think it is enough that I pay out of the account for the electricity they use in the cabin whenever they feel like staying there. It is O.K. while they work on the place, but when they are working for others all year round with exception of a month or so, why should the ranch furnish them with wood and electricity? I can act just as nasty as he can and as long as he finds fun and amusement in seeing me struggle like hell to get the work done and at the same time trying to keep this labor situation from getting too much of a strangle hold on the farmer, he can just figure I won't do a thing for him.

Well, we finally hauled three tons of Nitrate of Soda up there last week and stored it in the dryer. Two carloads of the stuff came in very unexpectedly and Archie gave us a crack at it, because we were unable to get as much of it as we desired in 1943 and he knew we wanted that badly this year if it was at all possible to get it. They had been notified that there would be none this year, then all of a sudden they got notice that they were entitled to 2 carloads. I am sure that 3 tons of that stuff will set that place in good shape. We feel that it helped immensely last year and one thing about that stuff, it can be put on late, just before the last rains. That helps the situation a lot when we are so busy with the spraying program. Joe and I got four tons of it for ourselves, also.

We are going to use elgetol at your place again because where we used the lime and sulphur last year considerable aphids showed up and you have no scab at all. Here we intend to use elgetol over most of it, but in the back end where there is considerable scab we are trying lime and sulphur. The elgetol agent says that it will do as well for scab as lime and sulphur, but Joe doesn't believe it. Poor old lime and sulphur is almost completely out of the picture around here now. This other stuff is so much easier to mix and put on and it is some cheaper - its best feature is the way it kills all traces of aphids....it is amazing.

The people in the house told me again how comfortable they are and how pleased with everything. Everything looked lovely inside the house and he was busy digging in the flower garden. He already had stuff planted near the tank house and had purchased 50 feet of hose to use for watering. I wanted to stop and talk with Mrs. Norton to find out what they thought of their neighbors, but just didn't have the time then.

We finally organized a Dried Apple Association for the district and believe it or not, our membership will be 100%. Even Andy from Forestville joined up. We hope to be able to have some influence on these government agencies as a group instead of individually. So many regulations are coming out and we are afraid of them. The worst one of them all is the work the Pure Food Administration is doing in regard to having the dryers clean up and make changes before they can operate next year. Some of the things they expect are almost hopeless and we are going to have to fight them. They expressed the belief at our last meeting that there wouldn't be two dryers operating next year if they stick to those restrictions, such as concrete floors under the peelers so they can be flushed daily, concrete or asphalt driveways all around to prevent dust, washing all apples before they are peeled, completely covered peeling bunkers, sewage disposal, certain type toilets. The dried apple bins must be lined inside and completely fly-proof.

A group of the operators who rented from Japanese are going to meet with the officials and make the plea that they will not be able to operate due to the fact that they do not own their dryers and that the Japanese who own them will not put out the money to fix them up due to the uncertainty of their position. They believe they will be able to make them come down a peg or two in their restrictions and I hope they will, because it will go pretty hard on us here after putting all that money in it last year. Andy told Joe at the meeting that he couldn't begin to fix the dryer he is operating for next year therefore would have to look around for another one. He asked if I had rented the one at the ranch and said he would come down and see me sometime and perhaps look it over to see just what improvements were necessary there, with the idea in mind that perhaps he could rent it. I always hate to see him coming towards me, knowing the feeling that exists on your part and if he does come down to talk with me I will just have to tell him that I can't do anything about it without consulting you on the matter. Last year Sam gave Joe to understand that there was no ill feeling between you folks and Andy- he said it was just a misunderstanding on some work undertaking one year and that you had no right to get mad about that. I never did find out if he was inferring that I did not want to do business with Andy or if he really meant it. I couldn't argue about it because I don't know any more about it than what you told me when you left. I did check on Andy's reputation around Forestville and found that everyone who did and is doing business with him trust him implicitly and his credit is tops with the business houses there and in Sebastopol. I do not fear him in any way along these lines, but do want to respect your wishes and if you say 'no business with him' that goes with me...regardless of what your grievance is with him.

So much for business. Our nephew, Lloyd's brother, came to see us yesterday- home after almost two years in the South Seas on a sub tender. Gee, he was pretty close to where Lloyd was a time or two, but they never met. He is home for 30 days, then off on a new tender being sent on that as instructor in his particular job. He is a storekeeper and likes it fine. Lloyd wrote me about two weeks ago and again spoke of you people and asked to be remembered to all of you. He is terribly lonesome and blue and would certainly like to come home for a spell. Bob Herring is in England and feeling swell. I wrote him, but haven't had an answer as yet. His brother, Edgar, is still here in the States and a Corporal.

I had better end this and start on another one I owe. It isn't very often that I have the time to sit down and write a letter straight through so I had better make hay while the sun shines (or while it rains!)

I know the fellow interested in the washer will be anxious to hear what you have to say so let me have it as soon as you can. The same old gag goes on and on around here - that all the equipment locked up here and there should be put to use when the factories are not putting out the stuff, but so far there has been no order to that effect so you have nothing to fear there as yet. Of course, one never knows what is going to happen when enough pressure is brought to bear - we see it all the time, you know. Some people think up things faster than others can digest them, but it is a crazy world and one must expect anything from day to day - justice seems to be standing idly by and as far as personal pride and honesty is concerned well, you are just a damned fool if you still believe in it! I do get disgusted and down-hearted about even some of my best friends when they try to tell me that it doesn't pay to be honest any more, that everyone else is crooked and you might as well be in line. Gosh, I hate to think of my boys growing to the age of reason in such a money mad and intolerant world. I only hope they will not let it sway them from what they are taught at home and what is bred in them.

Hope everyone is well and happy. Will let you know the reaction when I pass on your answer on the washer. In the meantime, so long.

As ever,

Lea Perry