

P.S. The enclosed is my curtain + bedspread material. I thought you'd be interested. I have a Mexican on my waste basket too. Thank you for my nice letters which came yesterday - I was the envy of all teachers.

Tuesday night 6:45 PM

Dear Family,

I'm sorry this letter is so late, but I have been doing something every minute. This is typed more for legibility than speed--I'm afraid that if I used a pen it would simply run away with me there is so much to tell.

I'm not sure when I wrote last, was it on the train? As you probably noticed I took the Pacific limited to be sure of connections at Wells. But there was no need. The train was supposed to leave at 10 AM so I settled myself contentedly for the three hour wait after getting breakfast and buying nail polish remover and fixing my nails. Wells is a wide spot in the road with wild, bare mountains on each side. It had been 18 above in the morning but by noon it was too warm with just my woollen blouse and skirt. To be brief, it developed that the train would be late because the law requires that the crew have 8 hours between runs and the same crew were to take it back to Minidoka and they had gotten in late. The clerk said they couldn't start till 12:30 and that by the time they got the train ready to go it would be at least 1:30. Then then would probably wait for the two Challengers (East and West bound) which were also late and wouldn't be in till about 3. After they had come and gone, he pointed out an ancient coach on a siding across from the station and said that was mine and I could get on--it was all by itself--no engine. I got on and the conductor apologized for the dirty seats--the windows were all open, there was a stove in each end of the passenger part (the rest was formerly baggage car, now crew quarters) and an ancient oil lamp was in a bracket ready for use even though there was an electric light in the ceiling. Soon two trainmen got on. One of them went to sleep in the seat behind me and started to talk--odd little scraps including "Come up and see me sometime". Finally the conductor came down to me and said I'd better get something to eat because they had to wait for a load of sheep and probably wouldn't get to Twin Falls till 9 or 10.

We sat in the car and stewed in our juice until the sheep arrived and they bunted the car all over the lot hitching us behind the fragrant string of 12 sheep cars! We were off at 4:30 (when we were due in Twin Falls!). It turned out that the trainmen--a third had joined them--were all pretty happy. It was rather an appropriate introduction to the wild and woolly west to be the only passenger on a freight train with three intoxicated trainmen returning from their day off in town! Two kept to themselves but the biggest one was most attentive and volunteered to protect my interests in case anyone wasn't a gentleman! I managed to keep him at bay until finally the conductor was through with his duties and offered to show me how high we had climbed. That kept me occupied the first hour of the trip and then the men got off.

It was a beautiful climb up across the wastes of northern Nevada in the sunset. There were lovely mountains which turned amethyst and glowed as only bare mountains can. Then there was an abrupt change to volcanic formations and rocks. All along was grazing country and loss of cattle. Finally we had a beautiful moon in a clear sky. The conductor chatted with me in his spare moments and told me about keeping his son in the U. of Chicago medical school and life on that railroad and the kind of country we were going through. There were two other very nice crew members who were in and out. When it began to get dark he explained that we could have lights whenever I wished but it was

easier for them to see where they were going in the dark. So we rode in the dark. By that time it had gotten cool and we had the windows shut and the stove going.

Just to cap the climax, we had to go on a siding 15 miles out of Twin Falls to give the other train the right of way on the single track! We sat there from 10 till 11! I arrived in Twin Falls at midnight. There was only the clerk closing up and no taxi. The conductor was just like a father and carried my bags in and phoned for a taxi for me!

I was practically negroid by the time I could bathe! The next morning (Wednesday) I phoned the Project at 9 as I had been instructed Mr. Stafford the Director said he would contact Mr. Pomeroy and make proper arrangements. So I proceeded to wait--until 3 PM. By that time I was reconciled to just sleeping until called for.

A Mr. Graves came out with a staff car (he is in charge of transportation here). He is a nice big, hearty man. He helped me by telling me about the country and something of the development and history of the project.

Mr. Pomeroy turned out to be a very fine man--very approachable and kind with a good sense of humor. Jerry and Mildred (high school and elementary principals) were there too.

But I should go back and tell you that in the 20 miles from Twin falls you go from one world to another. South of the Snake river where they have irrigation the land is very much like Michigan except that you can see mountains on the northern and southern horizons (the southern ones are only about 50 miles away and look nearer, the northern ones are about 100 miles away). There is lots of fine stock, alfalfa, potatoes, beans. The land is very rich if you can just get water to it. The Snake river cuts through a deep gorge in volcanic rock. On the northern side you go immediately into the typical volcanic rock and ash country. From there on it is desert--sage brush as far as you can see on a rolling valley floor. And dust which blows some outside of the project. Of course all the construction and clearing of sage brush has loosened tons of light dusty dirt for every stray breeze. Nothing is sacred to it! They say it has been much worse and I can see a difference just since they paved the main road this week.

As you approach the project you are not so much aware of the police function. You drive at least a mile in from the main road to the project which is 9 miles northwest of Eden and due east of Gooding. There is a sentry station called "Little Fort Custer" and everyone is supposed to have a pass, but they soon learn the regular customers. The teachers who were here had just moved out Monday of the previous week and some of the men with families are still living in town for lack of family quarters. Jerry light and his ^{wife and} 4 boys manage out here because they have a trailer.

My first stop was at the education office. Then I signed up for the pay roll and filled out some more papers. Then dinner which is served from 5 to 6. Until the Administrative mess is opened we eat about a half mile down the hill in one of the block dining halls where all WRA employees eat in addition to the block residents. It is a cafeteria affair. All the buildings are tar paper and beaver board, unfinished inside. Heated by coal stoves.

Perhaps I should explain that a block is made up of 12

barracks buildings 20x120 with 6 apartments for families of various sizes. There are two each 16x20, 20x20, and 24x20. There is also a dining hall, laundry with stationery tubs and ironing boards and showers; a recreation hall, and community privies--one for men and one for women. There is no water in the houses, and hot water isn't available in all the blocks yet. All have electricity and stoves (these are still being set up by crews working 24 hours a day so some people have been called out of bed in the middle of the night to have their stoves connected--you don't dare say no because you can't tell when they might come back to do it.)).

Unfortunately they have had to use the recreation halls in many blocks for other things--offices, single men's dormitories, cooperative enterprises (canteens, laundries, barber shops, shoe repair, etc.)

I moved in after dinner. The teacher's dorms have rooms about 10x12 with a 32" iron cot and two army blankets. We have hot and cold water and flush toilets. Eventually we are to get furniture which used to be in the Empire hotel in San Francisco--now taken over by the Army or Navy. It is in the warehouse, but those of us who are oriented know that doesn't mean too much. It isn't worth while unpacking much because, in spite of our crew of little Japanese ladies who clean twice a day, we're dusty.

When I arrived there were about 6 of us here--I moved into the dorm with them because the dorm I am ~~to~~ live in was still occupied by workmen. I'll move in a day or so. All of the pioneers were simply wonderful people. There are two Japanese missionaries (Baptist and Episcopal), a girl from ~~xxxx~~ Emmett, Idaho, one from Boise, two from Minnesota, one from Kansas, and Mildred ^{Emmett} and me.

The set-up for education here is really fine--the administration see eye to eye on the finest progressive slant. Education is under Community Services (Health, food, police, recreation, etc.). As an introduction to the life here they had teachers start to work with some community agency until Workshop began yesterday.

Thursday morning Jerry Light took me around and introduced me to the key people and gave me a wonderful build-up as having social work and clinical psychology background and especially secured for my viewpoint in the actual teaching situation. I found my niche in the Community counselor's office--the welfare service--they handle all kinds of problems other people don't have facilities for. There are three of the finest Japanese young women as case workers under a very fine young man (Mr. Sandoz) who reminds me somewhat of Donald Evans. They handled funerals, permissions to leave camp (only in emergency), marriages, housing difficulties (there is a housing office, but the counselor helps iron out wrinkles), student relocation, etc. I worked with that office till Saturday noon. Thursday morning they were giving out relief clothing and I sat in on the interviews--all six were old men over 70 so they had to speak in Japanese. Then we went over to the dininghall which had been converted to clothing supply for workmen and relief cases. It was pathetic to see the pleasure of some of the old men who had only the clothes on their backs getting 2 suits of underwear, work pants, sox, and coat. The clothing is slightly used stuff from the last war, most of it.

In the afternoon I went out on a call of my own--it took me way across the project which covers 2½ square miles of inhabited area (there is a total of 68,000 acres in the project). I had two other calls at the other end of camp, but I made those in a car. I also had a ride

out to the cemetery to see that a grave would be ready--it wouldn't be, because the earth was too hard and the men hadn't had sufficient notice. There were two little wooden, Japanese markers already--off in a wilderness of sage brush. One interesting thing about funerals is that it is practically a Japanese requirement--at least a strong tradition that they must have a photograph of the funeral to send to the relatives in Japan to show it was a decent burial.

Friday was the dustiest I had experienced. In the morning I went to the north side of the project with Frances Maeda (pronounced my-da) one of the workers. She is a college graduate and has worked with Girl Reserves--she has a position waiting in the missionary offices in Boston as soon as she can be released. I wish you might know her. She has helped me a great deal to really see life from the Japanese angle. I have eaten with her at lunch a couple of times and she has introduced me to a great many of her Japanese friends. The afternoon was rather quiet because it was so dusty out so we went to call on some people whom she felt needed the lift--a wife whose husband is studying in the east and a mother whose only daughter is leaving for school. We also met the director of the protestant young people's choir. I was really flattered when the mother we called on immediately offered to make my curtains and give me one of her window shades. Incidentally, while we were waiting for it to be late enough after lunch to call on people with small children, the three case workers and I sat around a table and talked about things in a Better House and Gardens Frances had bought in the canteen. From there we naturally branched into their life in the camp and in the assembly centers from which they had come. It was a wonderful experience. They even progressed to camp gossip which I felt was rather flattering confidence in me.

Friday night the Lights organized a trip to town--we saw To Be or Not to Be--it's a good comedy. I was also able to buy some necessities such as soap and kleenex.

Saturday morning I went out with Mrs. Suzuki, another case worker, who is wife of one of the doctors here. She has a dear little 5 year old boy.

In the afternoon those of us who were staying here for the weekend went to town (Twin Falls) to shop. For \$5.50 I bought just about everything I needed--mirror, curtain material, waste basket, etc.

Sunday afternoon Iona, the Idaho girl (Emmett) who has a car offered to take us for a ride. The same five of us were on deck. The car is a Plymouth coupe--we put two folding chairs in the space behind the seat. Then two of the fellows were unoccupied so we took them too--in the baggage compartment behind--we tied the lid up and they propped it. One of the men is a native who is typical cowboy western type with tall tales--he has railroaded in this part of the country. The other was Jerry Jensen of Stanford the guidance director (by the way, I was very glad that he got the job--we click perfectly and he has been simply wonderful about consulting me--our experiences seem to be complementary). Instead of being a little ride, we went first to ~~xxxxxx~~ an ice cave just north of Shoshone. That was out in the midst of a lava deposit--very interesting--not very deep. It was very hot outside and just down 10 or 15 feet there was a frozen stream which made a floor of ice.

Then we went on across the desert to the Wood River which had very interesting pot holes in the rocks around it.

Soon we started climbing into the mountains. The country was not so dry. There was a nice stream with trees and a railroad. Soon we were in Haley, a little oasis of irrigated land--no that was Shoshone. Haley was a quiet little town, mostly along the highway. The mountains closed in closer to the road all the way from Bellevue to Haley, then we were in Ketchum, the railroad stop for Sun Valley. It was just about a mile off the highway to the whole scene we had seen in Sun Valley Serenade, except there was no snow. It's a charming place out in the midst of nowhere--just mountains. But the scenery was best from there on--we bought food for a campfire dinner and proceeded on into Sawtooth National Forest. We climbed up over the mountains into Stanley Basin. Most of the trees were evergreen and aspens so the mountains looked as though a forest fire were creeping down them with yellow and orange foliage cropping out unexpectedly--it was breath taking. There was a lovely mountain stream off beside the road most of the way. About 50 miles beyond Sun Valley we came to Alturas Lake--it might have been in the Adirondacks or Switzerland. Crystal clear way out, with mountains surrounding it. Unfortunately I must have been tired or the shock of the hot and cold at the cave or something made me car sick enough so I didn't care for dinner. But they had a fine camp fire and watched the sun go down, etc. *We're going on an overnight camping trip the first once before gas rationing.*

We got home about 11, the boys nearly froze.

The Workshop started yesterday. We had speeches from the key men of the project. There were 60 of us. About 25 Caucasians (we don't refer to ourselves as "whites") and the rest Japanese student teacher and assistant teachers. We had an unusual day--the meat for our dining hall didn't come till 11 and it took 3 hours to cook so we had to wait till 2 for lunch. Then our speakers couldn't come at the last minute. But we had a very nice time with contributions from the floor on the history and geography of the surrounding country.

Last night we were all supposed to attend some community function. Most of us went to the mass choir. They had 50 or 75 young people and the young lady (Mrs. Hara) got them to sing with all their souls. Some of us plan to join--they practice twice a week. Afterwards we went to a Japanese entertainment over at the other end of camp. It was all in Japanese so the old people could understand--several instrumental numbers, a play, etc. Everyone seemed to enjoy it and we had a good time.

This morning we had a fine start on discussing curriculum. In the afternoon we had a guided tour of the camp and saw just about everything.

You would be surprised to see the breakfasts I put away! A typical one was hot cakes, cream of wheat, half grapefruit, and coffee. The dinner and supper tend to be starchy, but we're getting used to a cup of rice a day.

We aren't sure we can have school next week because the furniture just arrived in the form of lumber, but we will probably meet an hour a day or so at least. Jerry Light plans to use me for visiting teacher work as soon as I can get an assistant trained in to help me. It is going to be a thrilling experience.

We have gotten additions to the teaching staff right along this week. Tonight a charming lady who left Burma in February arrived.

She used to be a missionary. There are some others--unfortunately our first lemon. I shouldn't be surprised to see her wash out soon or else snap out of it--the rest are such grand sports she is a bad contrast.

But we just can't complain when we know so many Japanese personally as we do. They can't get away, and they live in such inconvenient quarters, yet we have yet to see any of them out of sorts. They manage to smile at something most of the time and they all look as neat as pins. We have been especially charmed with their gentleness with children. The fathers seem to take the responsibility of feeding the young children at meals.

I hope you are able to send the pillow, sheets, linen, etc. soon. I have been trying to recall what was done with my pin-up lamp and I think that was sent to Portland. Do you suppose Aunt Edith would be able to find it and also the box of nick nacks which I sent there to be stored? And I think my pictures (etchings by Andy Tymon, etc.) are there too.

One thing I could use would be a hat box to keep my hats out of the dust. Somewhere in the trail I left behind me there was a cardboard one with sort of an imitation airplane baggage finish. Maybe it would be easier to send one of the celophane ones--or aren't they collapsible? I think I already mentioned the desirability of the down comforter. I hope you haven't given all the hangers to the scrap drive or the tailor. I could use 15 or 20 of them to good advantage. I can also find grateful recipients for any books you may care to get rid of. You'd better send them to me direct and I'll sort those for the teachers to read first and give the rest direct to the library. If you'd like to have the NY Times Sunday edition sent to me I'd appreciate it and make good use of it.

My, that sounds like a big order, but with pay checks coming through irregularly the first time or so, I hate to spend money when I have the things in other homes. *Was paid on the 1st and 15th.*

This letter has strung out so I'm going to ask people to send it around as a round robin to the addresses ~~xxx~~ at the bottom. It's 9:30 now and I must get my bath and be ready to go to breakfast at 7:30. I could talk on all night.

Hope - Son

Aunt Ida - Edith
Love,

Ida

*Eleanor!
Bea
Miss Lenny*

Aunt Eleanor and Peggy

✓ Ren, Box 105, State Teachers College, Trenton, NJ.

Mrs. J. J. Millar, 134 Western Ave., Benton Harbor, Mich.

✓ Mrs. F. W. Haasis, Box 38, Salinas, California

✓ Miss Flora Tenney, 930 Waverly, Palo Alto, Calif.

P.S. Please remember express and freight go to me:

*War Relocation Authority
Munichoka Project
Eden, Idaho*

Mail is the same except that it's Hunt, not Eden.