

Helen E. Amerman  
War Relocation Authority, Minidoka Project  
Hunt Branch, Twin Falls, Idaho

Monday 10:15 PM

June 29

Dear Family,

I didn't think I'd be this late writing but I've been to a Japanese funeral (Methodist) and they aren't like American ones! Last night — or rather most of yesterday afternoon and evening I was typing up the (list of) tentative graduating seniors!

To go way back — last Monday seems ages ago and such a full day. Monday noon one of my favorite seniors came in with word he had to go home to bed and would probably have a hernia

operation Thursday. Ed twisted  
and turned his credits to get  
enough for him to graduate  
and he was quite heartbroken.  
I got him consoled and  
made what arrangements  
I could. I thought to read in  
the paper that Father Kall's son  
had died in a Jap prison camp  
in the Philippines. Just as  
I was composing myself to  
write a letter of condolence  
there was a crowd going  
past our door - returning  
from the drowning of the  
youngest brother of one of my  
former students. He had  
stepped into a drop-off while  
wading in the canal. He  
was washed 2 miles down  
through the roughest part and

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evidently was thrown against  
the rocks.

The rest of my evening  
was spent in quiet activities  
like letters, Darning, ironing,  
and finishing *The Grapes of  
Wrath*. I also judged selections  
for the *Pen Club Magazine*.  
I'm anxious to send you a

copy. It seems as though I'd done  
more than that, but I can't  
imagine what.

Saturday I went to town  
with Mrs. Major, Sharpe, and  
Evelyn. I bought blue silk  
poplin for a two piece dress or  
suit. I hope to have it for my

"vacation". Had a really good dinner — steak and shoe string potatoes (meager portions of both), coffee, and pumpkin pie with a double portion of soft ice cream. The latter is a special delight if you've never had any.

We had a beautiful ride home about 9. The air was clear and we could see mountains we've never seen before — to the north. They must have been nearly as far as Boise!

Yesterday I went up to 32 for church at 8:30. Walked home, had breakfast, planned my Sunday school program and got over there at 10:45. I was slightly disconcerted to find the Japanese rector who has been in the hospital 5 months

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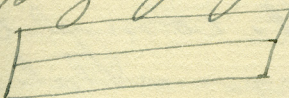
was my visitor. But we  
plowed through quite  
bravely. I was able to ask him  
to pronounce the "Absolution"  
and the two other teachers said  
I'd handled the situation OK.

I read the paper and  
clipped my accumulation  
of papers till lunch time.  
The rest of the time I worked  
on my senior list. Except  
for the time Mr. Nummms, the  
assistant fire chief was  
here for supper. I'd invited  
him to share my avacado  
and cucumber purchased  
Saturday. He was very  
appreciative.

Tonight was the funeral.  
It was at 7:30. It started with  
taking the picture outside.  
The choir (jissie), Scouts, family,  
and teachers plus the cadet  
and almost all the flowers.  
That is a WRA regulation - it  
is proof of "decent burial" and  
is sent to relatives in Japan  
in normal times.

The Scouts acted as pallbearers.  
First they sounded taps. Then  
the scriptures were read in  
English and a prayer in English.  
I'm forgetting to say that  
as we entered there was a table  
to receive gifts - it is customary  
to give money in a special  
gift envelope but I suppose  
the A.P.'s didn't. At that time  
we were handed programs  
(mimeographed)  
printed sideways on legal

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size paper. The upper half  
 was program and  
the lower, words of hymns.  
All in Japanese and covered  
the page! (You'll see why!)

After the English part the  
scriptures and prayers were  
repeated in Japanese. Then a  
hymn. Then the boy's life was  
narrated by a little fellow his  
age (11). Then followed speeches  
of condolence by: <sup>boy</sup> representative  
of the church, representative of  
block, representatives of young  
people's organization, boys of his  
block, school class, cub pack.  
Then a hymn and a funeral

sermon, hymn by choir  
and benediction. But  
that wasn't all. They had  
a fellow come up and read  
of wires and notes of condolence  
received - some the complete  
message! Then a representative  
of the family expressed thanks.  
It was 9 then. And they started  
going up to see the body and  
bow out (literally). They bow to  
the body and then to each of three  
rows of family. Well, there must  
have been hundreds - the hall  
20x100 was full and as many  
must have stood outside because  
the line moved fairly rapidly  
and took over a half hour to file  
past!



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The funeral had been delayed so that a brother and sister could come from colleges in Nebraska and Indiana and a grandfather came up under guard from the internment camp in New Mexico.

My job continues most congenial. I think people are quite satisfied. It takes me into wider contacts and I have a far reaching overview of the project. I go to staff meetings regularly now and am repeatedly impressed with the almost nobility of Mr. Stafford. He certainly inspires confidence!

I've had nice letters from  
several students and friends  
located this week plus one  
from Elizabeth Prother and  
a card from Mary Buelow Hale.

I must answer soon.

But now it's bed time!

Love,

Helen