

June 29, 1942

Dear Sally and Kan,

It was so grand to hear from you, and to know that you and Miki seem to be coming through all right. I judge, and hope, many of the inconveniences and understaffing have been corrected by now, though life must be very trying these days in that hot, blazing valley. All we can do is pray and hope there'll soon come a change for the better. Virginia and I greatly appreciated your excellent and vivid description of the center, including, in particular, your feelings about the community toilet.

For the past four weeks Virginia and I have been working most of the day night and day fixing up the lower flat; it was only three weeks ago that the men finally finished the last (we devoutly hope!) work downstairs--putting in a concrete floor and wall for a store-room and workshop; pouring a concrete wall along the mudsill to protect it from the dirt, and putting concrete around one of the chimney bases--the former rashly impractical owners had simply scooped the earth away from the base in order to make room for a clothes closet. At all events, Virginia and I have plunged into the job of trying to make that lower floor look more like a place to live in than a ghastly shambles. We've been scourging the floors with electric sanders, applying stains and varnishes, polishing them with electric waxers; scraping the paint off the old wood surfaces on the doors and baseboards--a horribly tedious chore!; scaling off the wallpaper on the walls in order to repaint them, since the darned stuff started rising and bubbling when we tried to paint over the wallpaper; counting the undercoat of flat white, we've been putting three coats of paint of all the surfaces. It's no surprise that we reek with the odors of paint, turpentine and thinner, with our work clothes and hands showing the effects of all three. An English couple in their sixties, Hal and Etta Glover, are coming to stay a few months with us on the 1st, so we've been between the devil and the deep blue sea trying to get that place in passably ship-shape order by then. But we're beginning to have grave doubts. It was only last night that a second coat of paint on the wood began flaking--damnation!--so it had all to be scraped clean again, leaving us to start from scratch. Hal Glover has written several novels and plays--one of his plays, 'Wat Tyler,' was given in the Greek Theatre at U.C. several years ago--; they were stranded in this country by the war. They're friends of a New York ^{friend} of Virginia's and since they came to Berkeley last December, we've grown to like them very much. They have that wit, kindness and inner humbleness which, to me, mark the true princes and princesses of this earth and isn't often found.

Horticulturally, life has been rather empty of late due to all this interior decorating work, though I have succeeded, this Spring, in growing three species of Azalea from seed (one of them, *A. Schlippenbachii*, an Asiatic species, Mr. P.H. Brydon considers the most beautiful ~~ix~~ of all azaleas); as well as about a dozen ceanothus seedlings (*C. gloriosus*). This wild lilac is a ground cover plant, growing about four inches high only, but is said to have ~~the~~ one of the most intense and lovely blue

blossoms of the wild lilac family. Some neighbors of ours were kind enough to let me incubate these ceanothus seeds in their ice-box for ten weeks before sowing them. I suppose this is about the right time to make cuttings of the lovely azalea you gave us; I believe you said June or July was the best season, though I'm darned if any of them stems will break off sharply as I understand they're supposed to; they simply bend like rubber.. It was so very kind of you to set aside the plant for us at the nursery; as soon as this interior repair work is done, we intend to go down there some Saturday or Sunday. Virginia, by the way, wants a small, dwarf azalea for the little sunken garden to the right of the walk-way as you come up the house; perhaps you could suggest the name of one we could get from the nursery when we go down to Hayward.

But enough of these horticultural matters! We're trusting that later this summer the Army or War Relocation Authority will issue special permits to students that would enable you to go to Wisconsin and resume your architectural studies under Frank Lloyd Wright. I'll keep a close watch for any such rulings that would help you spend this war period under happier auspices. Meanwhile, if there are any articles you want, whether books, personal effects, clothing, or anything else we're in a position to get for you, don't hesitate to let us know. We're only too glad to help. Virginia went to Hink's in Berkeley to fill a request mentioned in your last letter; they said they would do the packing and mailing, so we trust it's long since reached you. That was two or three days after we received your letter. Virginia will write you as soon as all this work on the house is over; meanwhile, she sends lots of love along with mine to both of you and to Miki.

Cordially,
Richard

1075 Cragmont Ave
Berkeley, Calif.



B-4-7

Mr. and Mrs. Kaneji Domoto,
Merced Assembly Center,
Merced, Calif.



1075 Cragmont Ave
Berkeley, Calif.