

August 19, 1942

Dear Bill,

Thanks for you letters. It's the same old story for me. I've been trying to write but just can't get down to it with so much doing these past couple of weeks.

Congratulations. A first class private now. Not bad. Keep up the good work old boy. I got a letter from Meech a couple of weeks ago and by his envelope I find he is a pfc too. Looks like I'll have to be saluting you guys if I ever get in.

August 31, 1942

Dear Bill,

Was interrupted just as I started to write this letter and now it's almost two weeks now. Honestly Bill, I'm sure sorry.

Let me explain. Being a recreational leader in this camp is not as soft as it might seem. You know, last week ~~xx~~ I was elevated to the position of community center director taking Yosh Hibino's place. Yosh resigned since he was feeling too good physically having lost a lot of weight since coming here. I'm still taking care of the 17 - 20 yrs. fellow in our district. This is the Class D group and there is a definite league set up for them in basketball, touch tackle, ping pong, and horseshoes. We play one game or match in each sport each week. Most of the fellows on the teams work during the day so we play most of our games in the evening after dinner. Also, we have socials about every three weeks for each of the clubs which take a lot of time in planning and putting over. And then again there are the special events at individual rec. halls or on a camp-wide basis in which the whole rec staff has to pitch in and help. Since most of the other rec halls had a carnival we thought we'd be different and so ~~xxxxxxx~~ we converted our place into a funhouse a couple of weeks ago. That is, we made the hall pitch dark and made the kids go through tunnels, moving bridges, jungles, mazes, the chamber of horrors etc. It's surprising what one can do with a little imagination. The whole thing was a real success. It was just supposed to be for our district but we had over 900 kids go through from 3 in the afternoon till 10 pm.

The recreation program is very important for the morale of the whole camp. The Tanforan rec dept. is supposed to have one of the finest of all the assembly centers as well as the relocation camps. When you write about it, it seems as though there are altogether too many socials, dances, and general playing around but that's not the case. If one is to keep from thinking too much about the present conditions, the future, etc., he has to keep busy and do things he enjoys doing. Well, it's pretty hard to sit down and read a good book or write in our rooms because all the neighbors' conversation, radio, and noise comes in from all sides and you just can't concentrate. And so the next best thing to do is sleep if you can or go out and play. That's what we've been doing.

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You know, there is school for all the kids up through high school in the mornings. Kay started to teach English at the high school a couple of weeks ago.

We finally got definite orders for our relocation. We're supposed to move between Sept. 15-30 to Abraham, Utah. This whole camp is going to move intact. The first contingent consisting of workers will leave here Sept. 9th. It's hell to think we have to leave California and maybe to never be able to come back again. I know they sure made a mess of this evacuation and there are many who have realized the great mistake but it's too late now.

I'm sure you don't have to worry about your folks, Bill. This camp life isn't too bad. Physically it's not bad at all for the old folks. It's the mental side I'm worried about. Not having Japanese food, the war news, the lack of freedom, it all tends to get them down. It's an easy life but everyone of us would trade it for the hard and vigorous life of before.

The reason I haven't been sending you the Totalizer anymore is because it truly doesn't present the real conditions here. The censorship in it is terrific. Every thing is written to make the reader think camp conditions are all pleasant and rosy. This stuff about self government and election is a lot of baloney. You just can't get around it. If this place isn't a concentration camp, I don't know what is. Enough of the bitching.

Nothing definite as far as my schooling is concern. Because of financial reasons I won't be able to get out unless I get a scholarship and with the grades I got it looks hopeless. John is planning to go to school too. I think he has a darn good chance. He's contacted a lot of universities and it looks like he'll be either going to Boston University or Garrett Biblical Institute on the ~~xxx~~ Northwestern University campus in Evanston. I've recieved formal acceptances to both the University of Nebraska and Washington U. in St. Louis. If I get out, I'll most likely go to Nebraska. Registration there begins on Sept. 16th. If I can't get out, I don't feel I'll be losing out too much. When I think of the many fellows drafted into the service and having to sacrifice their all, a year or two for me shouldn't be too hard. It's tough though, to not be able to serve like the rest of the boys and to prove ourselves worthy too.

Almost forgot to tell you the good news of Ted. He was supposed to have left Fresno Assembly Center last Friday for the Univ. of Colorado. He's got a job in Rocky Ford, Colorado until registration on the 18th. He'll be right there with Ari and Dr. Yanaga.

Got a letter from Meech Saturday. He says you haven't written to him yet. His address is: Det. Med. Dept., Station Hospital, Fort Warren, Wyoming.

Well, whatever lies ahead for me I'm ready to face it. Still young and pretty much alive and kicking away as usual. Take it easy there, and drop me a line when you get time. If you see Yori Wada (Hanford) give him my regards. I got a letter from him but haven't had a chance to answer yet. Will drop you a line before I leave this camp.

As ever, Tom