

July 23, 1942

Mr. Chimata Sumida
Dormitory No. 27
Fort Missoula, Montana

Dear Dad,

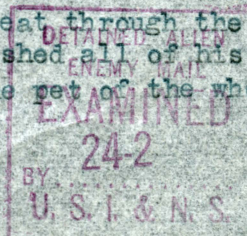
Here it is ages and ages since I wrote you last, and it makes me feel rather ashamed for neglecting my correspondence. Excuses are in order, I know, but I will not dwell on such formalities, as I know you will understand. It is just that I haven't been in the mood to write, ever since I came here, and it is rather hard for me to even write to you now, as I just don't have enough time of my own or a place of my own, so that I will not be interrupted or distracted. Ours is a meeting place for friends, just like home used to be, but it is different in that five adults occupy a 12' x 20' room, and with five beds in it already, you can picture the situation. It seems the only time I have to write is at night, after doing my daily work, and invariably people are flitting in and out.

Time passes by without any effort in this Center, as there is so much to do, and so little time to do it in. I can hardly believe that it is almost 3 months since we left Los Angeles, and if I think back I can hardly think how I managed to pass the time away. I guess working as we all are doing helps to pass the hours, and the Sumida family is doing their share of the work. Marshall and I are skilled workers, earning \$12.00 a month doing Recreation Department work. Marshall helps in the Handicraft Department teaching the youngsters to make Model airplanes, while I am helping in Girls' club work, organizing and leading the young girls of our large community. Tets seems to have the hardest job, working in the Mess Hall as a server, and unfortunately, mess hall work falls in the Unskilled classification and he only makes \$3.00 per month. He gets to eat as much as he wants, so that makes up for it, and he has time to study between hours and is now studying short hand, which will help him later on.

We are surrounded by our close friends, and we have risen above our present environment mentally speaking, and so we are not defeated, nor are we lost in this world of bewilderment. We still retain our equilibrium in this mess, and so we are as happy as we can possibly be. We would be more than grateful to the Government, if you will be able to rejoin us, and we have not lost hope as yet. Your last letter reassured us and lifted our spirits considerably, and we hope for the best. In any case, please believe that we are with you no matter what happens, and that always there is a "silver lining" in the sky overhead.

Mother and I have talked about the possibilities of your early return, and we are anxiously awaiting the good news. Everyone tells us that you will be back, and so we are banking on your return, so that we may really see you in the flesh at least for awhile, so that we can talk about the future of our family together, and decide how we will finish educating Marshall and Tets, and etc. Life is so complex, and no one person knows what the future will be, so again, we can emphasize the fact that life is a big gamble, and if the Sumida family is going to gamble with the future, we should all be in on the big conference, and we just have to have you with us. We are keeping our fingers crossed, and hoping that you will be able to come here in view of a favorable decision, regardless of your application. So much for that, I am sure you can digest the foregoing, as I wish it interpreted.

These hot July days has sapped our energies it seems, and we just sweat through the heat of the day. Toddy-boy is the most comfortable as he can just about shed all of his clothing, except for his diapers. He's so cute and strong. He's the pet of the whole



neighborhood, and so he has plenty of nurse-maids. He is rather spoiled, on that account, but nevertheless, he still is the apple of our eye. Mother just thinks the world of him, and wishes that you could be here to see your grandchild grow. He'll be seven months old right away, and can you beat it, he stands up by himself in the Taylor Tot, sits up, and recognizes his parents. He has curly hair, and big eyes, and still looks like you, especially when he frowns. It really is too bad, we can't send you any snaps as cameras are contraband, and there are no commercial photographers able to come in from the outside.

The hot sun just beats down incessantly, and as a result we are a bunch of sun-tanned people. You wouldn't recognize some people now, I bet, for some have thinned down, and others have fattened out. As for the family, Yohko is springing up, Tets is getting to be a big husky boy, stronger than Marshall now, as he takes Weight-Lifting to develop his muscles. Marshall indulges in a few boxing bouts ever so often, and as he isn't athletically inclined outside of Golf, he isn't as muscular as Tets. Tets and Sumi-chan are both sports enthusiasts and they have joined soft-ball teams. Tets just started playing hard ball, and he seems to like it pretty well. The only thing he regrets, is not having spike shoes. Oh well, there's a lot of things we do not have. By the way, Mother said you would send back the badminton sets, and so please send them back to us, as we have many people who would like to have some rackets and/or frames, and Marsh and Tets are thinking of taking up Badminton as soon as they arrive. Any other equipment which you have, and are not using, we can use here, so in the event you are coming here arrange to send it all here or bring it with you. William works with Sam Minami in the Recreation Department doing field work, umpiring and etc., so he looks like an Indian. He tells me they are making a Driving Range on the other side of the tracks and so we may be hitting golf balls again, like old times. We live just this side of your old golfing grounds, Santa Anita Golf course, and occasionally we see people playing the game, and does

We have lots of dances, parties among our clubs, athletic events, such as softball and hardball leagues, sumo, judo, ping-pong, badminton, volley-ball, and programs, talent and community sings, so we have plenty to do. On Sundays, we have Buddhist, Catholic and Protestant services, and in the evenings we have Recordings of Classics, to round out Sunday. The Isseis have their programs too, and of course their Americanization classes, and they are popular too, since they declared all Japanese reading matter, except hymnals and bibles and dictionaries contraband. The newest proclamation from DeWitt's headquarters bans all Japanese records, so they are going to be picked up. Since they took up the reading matter, Mother has started English Class, and she is in the same class as Mrs. Koshiro Endo. She reads the newspapers, translates it, and explains it in English in her class, and so she finds it very interesting. She is getting along very well. Aunt Kinuno also attends, and you should hear them read out loud, we get a big kick out of it. Uncle is busy with his Church work, and so he is always dressed up in a suit, and calls on the people, sees the Ministers, and helps with the services so he is occupied.

Marie, Sachi and I are now taking the "Art of Self-defense", a mild form of Judo, and we enjoy it very much, especially the exercises as we are getting a bit stiff in our joints and need to limber up. We have a big class of 35 women, and three male instructors who are very good, they are all black belts. On top of all this I am now taking "First Aid" as sponsored by the Red Cross, and so we are getting some practical training.

Emmy takes Art, as taught by Mr. Ueyama, and she is improving every day. None of us knew she could draw, and we are surprized at the results she gets. The appreciation of Culture must come from your side of the family, as we all like music and have an appreciation for art, drama, and literature. I sang just once since I arrived here, and I wasn't at all bad, according to the most critical of critics, Mama, but I have refused to sing at the Community Events as there are too many accomplished musicians here.

Toshi-chan, Yamashita san, Kurata san, Sasajima san, among others have left for a new destination, so their fate is sealed. We heard recently from Toshi-chan, and he says

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he is scheduled to leave too. According to word received by Eddie Yoshimoto of Kageyama Company from Mr. Kawasaki, Taka-chan left on the Gripsholm, so Mit-chan and the children are still in Turlock, and the latest information at hand, says Turlock will be evacuated to Gila, Arizona, as far as the heat is concerned. They say around here, that by the end of September we will be cleared out of Santa Anita, and I'd give almost everything to remain here, for Father Lavery and Father Clement says of all the Camps they have visited, which includes Parker, Manzanar, Pomona and Santa Anita, Santa Anita is the best, which isn't much. I know you are more comfortable where you are.

We used to complain about the food, but it isn't at all bad now, I guess it is due to the fact that we are used to it, but we still hunger for big steaks, o-sashimi, sukiyaki a la Sumida style, china-meshi, but why think of the past it won't do us any good. Why just this morning we had our first butter actually on the table, and we had Cantaloupe. Sundays we have pancakes, which is a treat, after a week of mush, eggs, toast or bread, some fruit, and coffee. We have nice vegetables, and good fruit once in awhile, and as long as I have fresh vegetables and fruit I don't complain. We have quantity as far as foods are concerned, but no quality, but when there are almost 20,000 people here we have no room for complaint, as it is a huge task to cook for that many persons.

We have just received our first coupon books worth \$2.50. Every person over 16 gets a \$2.50 book, and those under get \$1.00. Married couples receive a \$4.00 coupon book. The canteen is always running short of ice-cream, pop, and candy, since sugar is on the ration list. We also received clothing allowances, and the only item in at present is shoes, so we will be getting our government shoes soon. Well, in a few more years every body and his brother will be dressed alike. Can you picture that?

All in all Camp life is interesting from one angle at least, and that is, it gives us a chance to find out for ourselves who the real people are, and who are the ones to serve willingly as community leaders, and who are the real leaders, or persons with real talent, not sham or face. I have found that persons who were esteemed in the city, have fallen in the eyes of the populace, and those who were in the dark before have come to life, to show their true worth. It is amazing how human personalities change when they are reduced to the same level. Some have become embittered over the fate of the niseis, some have lost all incentive to live for the future, while others have said this is a chance and an opportunity to really start from scratch, to readjust our values, and to look towards a bigger and better life for all of us, studying and growing, so that we may again take our rightful place in society again. We must prepare for what is coming after, and we must be fortified to take everything on the chin as you issei did when you first came to this country. We Niseis know no other country and on the whole they are awaiting the opportunity to enjoy life as they did in the past. Everyone is not of the same opinion naturally, but when it comes down to our family, we have come to the conclusion, regardless of the future, Marshall and Tets must at least receive their college education here, and at least have a Bachelor's degree. Mother says if she can see them through, as far as that, she will be satisfied. We are all in accord on that point, so I am determined that they shall at least have that much education, and I will do my part, to see that they get it.

I seem to have written lots and lots, and still it seems I have lots to say, but I shall stop at this point for this time. Oh, I forgot to mention the fact, but I want to know if Mr. Blair's and Mr. Pine's and Mr. Williams's affidavits were read or not, and if you thanked them? They are concerned about you, and send their regards.

This took me a long time, and still it seems I could hardly have written this much myself, for my mind is so full of things, that it goes blank once in awhile, for it seems 20,000 Japanese in one dose is too much for me at times. They surely bother me sometimes, as I don't have any privacy at all, and it is an effort to create your own "private world", with the whole world around you and bothering you every minute. One never has a chance to think of serious things for it is hard to concentrate, so if this letter is jumpy you know the reason why.

Everyone sends their loving regards, and I trust this finds you well and in the best of spirits. My regards to all of our friends. Love from *Grace*