

12A North Common Road
London W.5, England
May 11, 1955

Dear Tommie,

I hope you had a nice trip. I trust that you are safely arrived in Japan with the children. How do they like it now?

Received your letter which you wrote before you left. I hope you were able to get some in time. Hope everything is OK. You didn't say why you suddenly decided to leave for Japan. Are you returning to S.F. in June as planned? We are both fine. I am still repacking my boxes + trunks. Part of Will's hold baggage that got lost in November was just located today in West Virginia! At least it was located anyway. It will be a month before we get it at least. I'm relieved because his big camera + many other valuables were among the things missing.

I am slowly getting accustomed to England, which you will find, if you come + I hope you can be so much like Japan in many ways. I really can't put my finger on it exactly but being a small island crowded with people and an industrial nation dependent so much on imports and export trade must be one of the many reasons. As I said before, the country is just about like U.S. right after the war. People are starving for new things. The few good shops which stock

2
Contemporary things imported from Sweden,
Denmark, Holland & Germany are doing very
well from what I can see. I tried to get
dishes imported from Germany (They have them at
Gump's too - Rosenthal China designed by Raymond
Lowy) because they are about half the price
even in England due to proximity to Germany
I guess - anyway, I saw them at several places
and so I felt there was really no rush to get
them so we waited until payday when we had
enough money and when I went back - they
were sold at all the places. They finally got
me a few of the essential pieces but I will
have to wait until September to get the rest.
We are so glad we have the black
lacquer bowls you gave us - we use
it only as ornamental pieces because they are
so beautiful.

Will is so busy at his job - he leaves
for work around 7:45 AM and gets home not
before 6:00 and when I wasn't here, he did
quite a bit of overtime so of course the apartment
needed cleaning quite badly. I was so tired
from the accumulation of the last six months
I couldn't get myself on hands & knees to scrub
the floors, etc. So the colonel's wife upstairs
introduced me to her cleaning woman & she
helped me last Friday - she is quite good. Scribble
& she waxed the kitchen & bathroom & vacuumed
all the floors - worked 3 hours for \$54/hour so

I thought it was worth it.

I'm gradually getting used to life here.

Shopping for groceries is still quite a chore, since I have to go to at least 4 or 5 different shops for food for one meal. Our refrigerator is too small to stock up and since I have to carry everything home, walking 3-5 blocks, I can't very well stop once a week. Meat is very good + cheap.

They cost 30-50¢/lb even for the best. Vegetables are relatively high, however, since they are mostly imported from Africa, France, Denmark or Italy. Asparagus is coming out now but costs about \$1.00 - 1.25/lb. I'm glad I had a lot at your place in S. F. because I can never pay such a high price even for a treat. Bread is very good and costs 6-10¢/loaf depending on kind + size.

There are all sorts of pastry shops because the English drink so much tea + eat a lot of pastry.

The restaurant food - English - is horrible. I can't explain exactly but they just have no idea how to cook and season things. They eat lots of potatoes, mashed, boiled or French fried. At one meal, there are usually two kinds of potatoes.

I'm so glad we don't have to eat out all the time.

On Saturdays, Will takes me to the commissary to do the main grocery shopping. Thank goodness for that - we can get American canned foods, soap, and most things we need except fresh vegetables + fruits. They even have canned tortillas which I bought + made enchiladas. They don't have any comino but they do carry chili powder - thank goodness.

I'm so glad I didn't buy that \$25.00 4
Indian beds spread at Roger Barber's.
I found the same things at a nice store
here for about \$6.00! It is even less than
what I would have paid if you got it for me
through your salesman. In this same
shop - a large store has 5 floors, they have
lots of nice hand thrown pottery & contemporary
furniture & lamps which everyone is going
wild over. But they are on the expensive
side. A hand thrown tea set is from
\$12.- to \$25.- and actually not worth it
when examined carefully. I think it will
be well worth your trip here to make a survey
on possibilities of wholesaling to these stores.
There's no doubt in my mind that your things
will sell. London has a huge population -
around 6 million, I think and although the
common people are quite poor & have no taste,
there are lots of wealthy people, more than
S. F. by far. You can tell when you see
so many Rolls Royces driving around
(they cost about \$12,000). England imports
lots of things from Japan such as most of their
silk. Almost every small grocery store sells
Mandarin Oranges from Japan (18-20¢/can)
and I found some places carry canned crabs
from Japan too. I don't know the details of
trading i.e. money exchanges, etc. but I
suppose you can find out about that fairly
easily.

5
Will would like very much to work in Japan for awhile after his present job expires and will find out what the possibilities are. Working for dollars seems like the best bet since we can take home whatever we manage to save.

If you are able to find a suitable pair of stone lanterns for the grave & can send it home to S.F., please let me know what it costs so I can pay half and also for anything else.

Please give my regards to all our relatives and friends. I'd like to have their names & addresses too. Perhaps they might like some woolen socks or something from England.

Please keep in touch and write to me if you have time. You can address it to my apartment and I will get it during the day - they have several deliveries a day. I hope you are working yourself to a frazzle with travelling, children & business both personal & otherwise. I hope & pray that you are alright and that all the unpleasant mess is cleared up soon. Please take care of yourself. Your health is more important than anything else. My love to the children. Best regards from Will to all of you.

Love,

Martha

P.S. Thanks for taking care of my suitcase & box - I'll be looking for Mr. Kawabami. Lost card from that lady & son who are to come here - Please send names.

FROM M. TSUCHIDA
12A NORTH COMMON RD., LONDON W.5, ENGLAND

東京神田駿河台
二丁目十一番
日昇館内
高橋友枝様



VIA AIR MAIL
CORREO AEREO

Mrs. Tomoye Takahashi
Tokyo,
Japan

PAR 3P
AVION