



Exploring Diversity in Pennsylvania History

Iwata Family correspondence

Sonoko Iwata to Shigezo Iwata on June 10, 1942

Block 42 – Building 7 – D
Poston, Arizona
June 10, 1942

Dear Shigezo san,

It seems ages since I have written you last. It's eleven o'clock in the morning now. All my washing, cleaning, and sweeping are finished. Misao and Miki are taking their morning nap (Misao usually doesn't sleep at this time) and Masahiro is outside playing with Dickie (Yano) and Emi-chan (Laurie Masushige's girl). I am now free to do anything until dinner time.

It's really seldom that I am able to do my laundry in the morning but today Miki who goes to almost anybody now was with Toshiye san, Koichi and Jimmie over at Tsunodasan's that I just went ahead and did all my work.

Jimmie's father and Yasuko san's father are carpenters here and in between their work they've made a very roomy, good looking closet for me and now I have all my boxes and things put away and my room looks much better and neater than it did at first. Our rooms are really large. We are by ourselves in the end room of Building 7 with three windows each on north and south sides, partition on the east side and two-door opening in the west side.

The crude drawing will tell you just about how my room looks. On the wall right above the half-trunk which I use for a seat, I've hung up the little boy and girl appliqué work that Mrs. Satow gave to Masahiro for his first gift. On the wall space above the table I put the three pennants you sent the children and also a copy of the words of Largo which I wrote in your letters some time ago.

"Poston City – Let us build with cooperation and self-government." So reads one of the posters on the bulletin board. Mr. Head who is the head of this War Relocation Project says something to the effect that there really is a lot of dust and dirt and the homes are not like those that we have left but that it is up to us whether it will stay dirty and dusty or will be built into a beautiful city.

Rumors about this location have made you all quite uneasy, I've heard. When we came we heard someone had died the night before from rattlesnake bites and were told not to go near wood piles and places where people didn't go much. Since then, no one has been bitten. There have been several deaths but they were due to long illness quickened perhaps by the sudden change and all the strain. Water seemed awful at first but it evidently was caused by the new pipes. It isn't reddish colored anymore and doesn't taste queer and it's much easier to wash with it. I hated to wash at first because no matter how much soap you used, the laundry would come out brownish colored. It's much better now. Will write again soon. Don't feel uneasy about us.

Love, Sonoko