

Dear President:



**President Arthur K. Nishimoto
Japan Fukuoka Mission
1973 - 1976**

Dedicated to:

Missionaries of the Japan Fukuoka Mission

1973 - 1976





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Preface

Senkyoshi-tachi:

Recently I had the urge to clean some of my personal things and I found a box filled with my mission experiences and photo's and came across excerpts of notes taken from the missionaries weekly reports to the Mission President, (these notes were reminders during my interviews with you missionaries) and as I re-read some of them I thought it would be interesting to put them together with some of the pictures I had during the mission.

The end result is this copy of the notes and photo's put together in some sort of fashion. This is by no means a finish book. I would be happy to include portions of your letters and pictures and add to this book and finalize it and distribute to our missionaries. I Hope this will bring back memories of your mission. Pass the word to other missionaries of this project.

Nishimoto Bucho

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Introduction

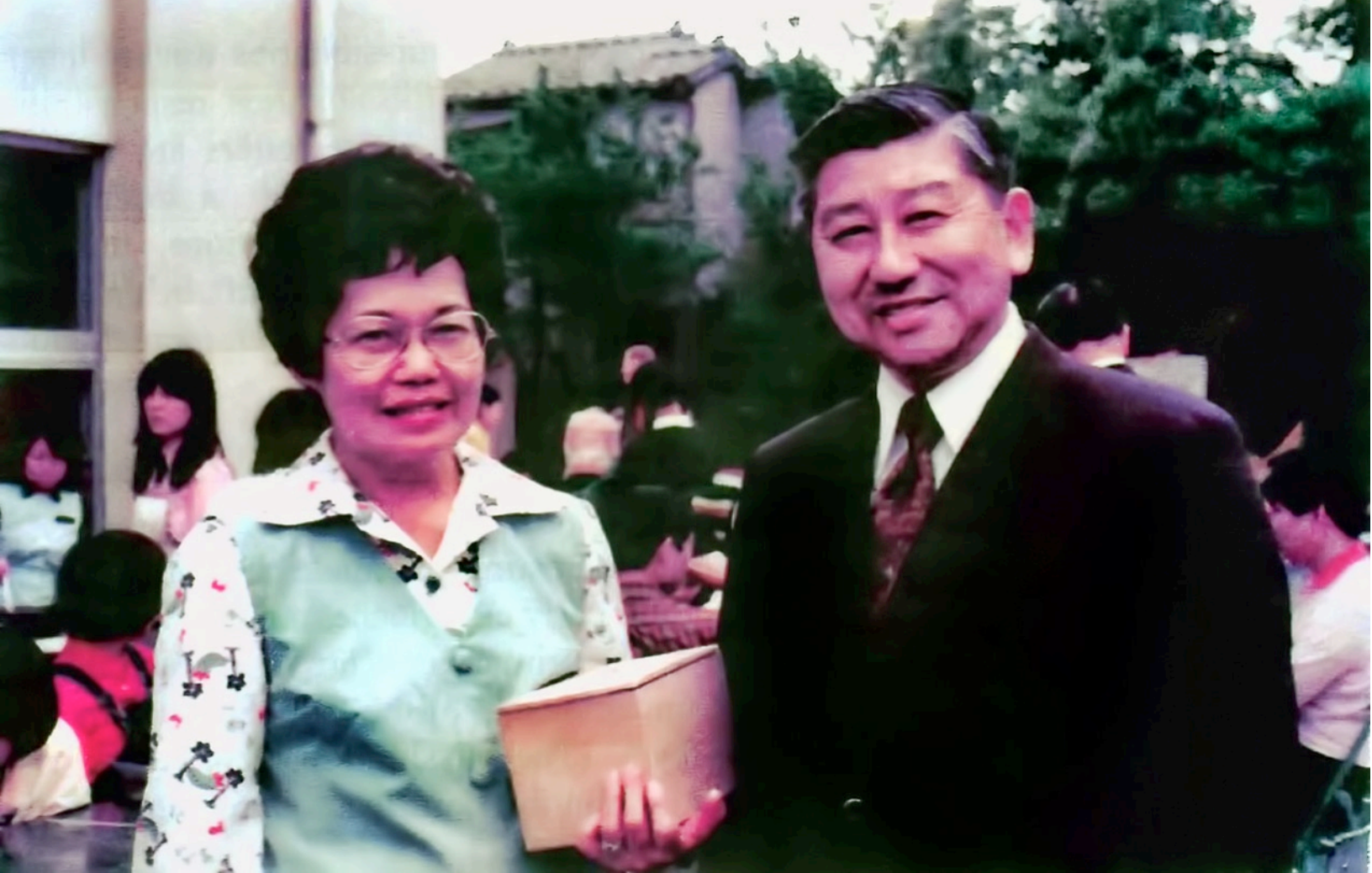
"Dear President" is a compilation of excerpts from the missionaries weekly letters to the Mission President. As disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, missionaries responsibilities and obligations are paramount as they fulfill their daily labors. These letters are written to the Mission President informing him of their labors, challenges, learning a foreign language, customs, people, their spiritual experiences, testimonies, gospel questions, their illnesses, accidents, humor, and their "Dear John" letters from the girls they left behind. They are informative and assist the Mission President of each Missionary's physical, mental and spiritual welfare.

These letters also have inspired and gave the Mission President the opportunity to grow together with the missionaries in serving the Lord. As each letter was read, I took the opportunity to quote parts of their letters that were interesting and made brief notes to remind me during our next interview. They clearly portray their early experiences, endurance, their progress and the joy of fulfilling a successful mission. The primary concern is for each missionary to enjoy their special calling, to always have the companionship of the Holy Spirit to inspire and to teach with the spirit, and to let their light shine forth. The Mission President's goal was to have each missionary return home with an undeniable faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, their testimony of the eternal truths and preparation for their future endeavor.

These missionaries are now sending their children on the Lord's errand throughout the world and are enjoying the fruits of their labors. It is with this thought in mind that perhaps these excerpts can be shared with them, to encourage and inspire them as they proclaim the eternal truths which has been restored.

Our Missionaries will always remain in our hearts for they have strengthened our faith and love for our Redeemer and Savior of all mankind. Our children have followed their example in serving His Church and they too are enjoying it with their families. Sister Nishimoto and I send our love and Aloha to each of you and your families and may you always be mindful of our missionary experience. May the Lord continue to bless you in all your endeavor.

President Arthur K. and Sister Grace F. Nishimoto
Japan Fukuoka Mission



The First Six Months

Dear President:

... I've been out in the field for 5 days now and I find the language is really tough. I can hardly even say a prayer but I know that through a lot of hard work the Lord will help me. This language barrier really can get you. The other night we met with a family for our first visit and had a family home evening together. The kids sang songs to us and they all participated in the lessons and we had such a good time or should I say they had a good time. I couldn't understand anything that was going on. All I could do was smile but I felt the spirit of the Lord there and I feel such a good feeling when the Lord's spirit enters into other people lives. I really love it out here and hope to be able to serve the Lord with all diligence.

... Today marks my first full week in Japan and the week went very well. As you remember, I am quite tall and I seem to keep hitting my head on things like ceilings and the tops of doors. While we are tracking I usually hit my head at least once a day on some door. Sometimes I do it three or four times a day. I am, however plugging away.



... Well I've been out here a week now. I'm still kind of mixed up about everything but things are coming along slowly. I've got a great companion. He really helps me out a lot and sets a very good example for me. My first experience on a bicycle here was quite scary, but I'm getting used to riding in the busy streets now. It's a real change for me to come out here and live on my own with a group of missionaries. I've been used to my mother do the house work and now the responsibility is on me, but it's coming along OK. My companion started me out the first day doing some street approaches and house to house. I was so scared and I still am now when I talk to the people but my confidence is building up even though my language is still terrible. I had the opportunity to teach the eternal progression lesson this week. It was really great, I'm so thankful for this opportunity to serve the Lord. I know that this is His work here on earth.

... The first week here has been fun. I can't understand too much, but I'm so busy finding out new things about Japan I don't have time to get discouraged. The Church is true. The members here really help, they let you practice your Japanese on them all you want.

... Since this week was my first week of actual proselyting I am kind of bewildered. It all came so fast I haven't had much time to really sit down and think too much about anything except that I know this is what I want to do, bring people unto the Lord.

... It's really been quite a week, my first in Japan. The main thing I have learned is that there is so much to learn. Elder Smith is a good companion. He takes a lot of time out of his personal time to help me. I like the way he trusts me enough to give me part of the lessons in meetings. The first night I arrived, he let me give part of the first discussion and I really liked that experience. I was no longer saying the words to someone at the LTM.

Suddenly I was teaching them to someone searching for the truth. I've also tried working on my approaches and I'm excited.



... As this is my first week, I haven't got a whole lot to say, forgive me. My first night I was really introduced to Japanese food. I went to Mr. Tanaka's house to visit them and they fed us strawberries and milk, that was super good. Then she fed us some other stuff, vegetables, turnips, rice and then crabs, whole thing, shell and all! They were just little ones, but we had to eat the whole thing. Wow! I didn't like it, in fact it was horrible I've been eating all the weird kinds of food since I've come to Japan. I hope that everyone has had their fun with me now. I really am beginning to love my companion, he is a great Elder and is helping me a lot. He really knows his stuff! The language is tough, but fun and interesting. The lesson plan is tough but I'll soon start to to be able to get it.

... I had my first opportunity to use ohashi (chopsticks). I never felt more sloppy. It just that I couldn't bite through the seaweed.

... Well it's been my first week in Japan and I've done so many new things that I couldn't tell about them all on this page. So, I'll pick out the highlights. I've tried out all kinds of Japanese foods now and I've found one place in downtown that I really enjoy to eat at. It's in Japan so I assume it's Japanese food. The place is "Dunking Doughnuts!". So far that's the only food I've really enjoyed. I guess the other foods here it just takes time getting used to, so maybe next week I'll be able to say something positive about food.



... I am very scared and nervous. I haven't been able to eat much of this Japanese food so far but will soon be loving rice. I ate my first mugi (Japanese barley) and I almost died. It's terrible but then I'll have to learn to eat it, right?

... I feel I am growing a little now and aren't completely in the dark. I want to tell you that I have a great companion. He has helped me greatly especially this first week. I was so excited when we were out dendoing (proselyting) and we stopped someone and they listened. We have a couple of real good contacts. Even though I only understood little of what was being said I could feel the spirit. I am impressed with the city here and its people. It is different than America but that is to be expected. I feel like I have been here for a long time. The people are very friendly. With the Lord's help I can pick up the lesson plan and the language.

... Things are going great. I'm enjoying this work a lot more then I thought I would. I feel the spirit very strongly and homesickness is going out the window. I've learned to ride a bicycle also.

... I know I should receive the reward for being all time greenest. Just ask my doryo (companion), I thought I was green. He told me the first week he was out, that he asked a 3 year old if his wife was home.

... I broke through one day this week to a beautiful new first for me. House to house with my companion, I handled my door approaches without even once worrying about not being able to speak Japanese. I simply used little I know to my full capacity and then

some. It was really wonderful, for I really hate opening my mouth and forever worrying that I can't say a thing. I am really grateful for the blessing.



... As for me it's been a week of ups and downs. It seems every time I begin to understand pretty well, I get knocked down and humbled. I just begin to think I can start to understand Japanese, and then I talk to somebody with a lisp or who talks two hundred miles a minute.

... After one week of proselyting, I find that my attitude is still good, my enthusiasm is high, but courage is somewhat lacking. I think the biggest reason that I'm so scared is because I don't understand what they answer and I feel helpless. I have improved since the first of the week though, at least I try to stop people on the street and can say a few lines at the door of someone's house. I think I'm really going to like it once I can start to understand and speak the language. The Lord has certainly blessed me thus far. I know if I keep working that the blessings will continue.

... I took my companion to a park and pointed him a guy and said "go get him". A little while later when I was talking to an older man, my companion came walking along with the biggest grin on his face I had ever seen. He had sold his book. It was the first time I had heard of an Elder in his 2nd week selling a book with no help from anyone. It really made him feel good and it helped me too. The next day we tried again and the same thing happened. I don't think he knows what a great job he is doing.



... This is great, I really enjoy the work, though it is the hardest work I've ever done as I dendoed (proselyted) at the Peace Park with Smith Choro (Elder). Now this was a great experience because he'd only been out 1 month and I had only been out one and one half weeks. Neither of us knows the language that well, but we still talked to seven people and almost sold a Book of Mormon. We probably would have sold it if we would have been able to speak the language better, but we did give the man a Joseph Smith pamphlet. I hope he'll read it. We made all our approaches on the Family Home Evening Program, then talked about the English Program and the Book of Mormon. I'll sure be thankful when I can speak the language so I can tell the people of Japan in their own language about this wonderful Church, its programs and eternal benefits. I'm thankful I came on this mission. It's really worth the two years we sacrifice. I love the work now. I can hardly wait till I can speak the language, which will be soon, then I'll really have some fantastic experiences and really feel good. It seems the harder I work the better I feel, but I sure wish I could hold that spiritual level that is sometimes reached.

... I am understanding a little more how a junior companion is supposed to operate. He must support his senior completely or he won't have the spirit. And there are a lot of little things involved in support, like smiling when your companion dips his dirty fork into your peanut butter and when you go to make a peanut butter sandwich and end up with a peanut butter cabbage salad special. I can honestly say, "I'm happy to be here!"

... The Nihongo (Japanese language) is not mastered yet, as a matter of fact, it is far from it. I love the missionary life. My companion is a real patient guy. I am "A" example of a true greenie, but I love it because every day I learn something new. The gospel is the

greatest! "You come out into the mission field a son of man, but work hard to go home a man of God!"



... I'm still kind of mixed up about everything but things are coming along slowly. I've got a great companion. He really helps me out a lot and sets a very good example for me. My first experience on a bicycle here was quite scary but I'm getting used to riding in the busy streets now. It's a real change for me to come out here and live on my own with a group of missionaries. I've been used to my mother do the house work and now the responsibility is on me but it's coming along OK. My companion started me out the first doing some street approaches and house to house. I was so scared I still am now when I talk to the people, but my confidence is building up even though my language is still terrible. I had the opportunity to teach the eternal progression this week. It was really great. I'm so very thankful for this opportunity to serve the Lord. I know that this is His work here on earth.

... My companion and I are doing great. He has really set a good example on how to really get into the missionary life. My mind has really been opened to the immensity of things to be done on a Mission. Wow! I can barely imagine how busy you are running all us missionaries and members too. It's a real lot huh? Well, we have some new investigators. Two kyodai's(brothers) and a shimai (sister.) They'll take some work, but we sure are blessed to be able to teach them. It's a real blessing to me, being new, in that I get to practice and put into effect the lesson plan I'm memorizing. It's for sure President that I'm no "pro" at the Japanese language yet. But I keep learning and forgetting and learning etc, so it'll come. I don't want to sound selfish, but I think that my mission is teaching me

more sometimes than what I'm teaching to others. I really love the people and culture here in Japan.

... I don't have anything profound to say this week so I'll just tell you some of the dumb things I've said my first two months here in Japan. So far, I've agreed with a lady who said she was ugly, told another lady after dinner that it wasn't too good, and at least twice, I've told people at the door that our church is like the Catholic church. And once, an older lady came to the door. She was about 93 years old. I asked for the head of the house, or at least I thought I did, but it turned out that I had asked for her father. My companion was cracking up and when I realized I had made a mistake he comforted me with, "its all yours!" Boy, were we surprised when her father really did come! (He must have been at least 135 years old). Fortunately he couldn't hear anything so we just waved good-bye and left. I'm thankful that I have a companion to correct my mistakes. I have found that I learn faster through my mistakes than any other way. I guess the Lord gives me mistakes not only but to help me learn.



... Something really wonderful happened to me this past week. I finally realized that I had made some progress since coming here two and a half months ago. I was sitting in MIA, straining my ears to recognize a word or two, when all of a sudden I realized that I could catch the basic ideas of some of the sentences. It doesn't happen often, but when you realize you're progressing it sure is wonderful. It's time like these that really make me thankful for the Lord's blessings.

... I've come to a greater appreciation and love for the Lord's work by the example of you and your associates lives. How marvelous is His love and how blessed are they who

patiently pursue the right. No longer am I daily plagued and torn by the burden of 2 years yet to come, but I look ahead with eagerness and with thoughts of dearest love ones and the Lord behind me, for you have given many of your time already, and you still have longer stay here than I, yet you press forward. So Shall I.

... We visited a newly baptized family and she (wife) brought out some mochi (rice cake). She must have thought I like it because she gave me two big ones. I thought I was going to die, tasted like mold but I ate it and kept smiling. I ate a bunch of mikans (tangerine oranges) afterwards.

... I ate raw octopus for the first time. It was better than I thought.

... Well, this week was my first week with a Japanese Elder and it was quite an experience, especially at dinner time. He cooked these small skinny fishes about 6 inches long, which you eat everything, both head and tail. After that first crunchy fish head, I wasn't sure I was going to make it. but I ended up downing one whole fish. I've never been so proud since I came on my mission as I was when I finally ate that fish.

... I had my first Japanese dinner Sunday night. I choked, but I kept on smiling. It wasn't so bad that I can't get used to it though.

... I am starting to think that this Japanese food isn't made for human consumption. We had raw fish and octopus and everything the other night. I got sick from it! Other than that, I'm alright.



... Had a really nice dinner with the investigators tonight. Another thing I've learned on my mission is you eat everything. We ate raw snails, raw fish, fish eggs, raw squid, and some kind of tendons. A year ago I would never have looked at it.

... I'm starting to like the food. Now, I'll probably get sick when I go back to America and start eating greasy foods again.

... The Zone Taikai (conference) boosted my spirit. It did me good to see other missionaries like me who are struggling with Nihongo (Japanese language) and old missionaries who made it through that struggled and completed a successful mission. I wish that when one of them leaves, he could leave me his Nihongo instead of a tea box. Dendo (proselyting) would be lot more fun if I knew what was going on. I'll keep being patient in the meantime. (Note: Tea boxes are footlocker size wooden boxes insulated with sheet metal inside, which makes wonderful storage and shipping)



... Had a good week. It was a little scary though. Two of our investigators have accepted the baptismal challenge so we taught them the commandments. I was to teach the Words of Wisdom. Just being out a month I was a little nervous, well a lot of nervousness, because I didn't think I could understand their answer. But everything went fine, the lessons went real good and they have accepted the first 3 commandments of the lesson real good.

... I am so thankful for this experience. I'm informing a lot of people about the gospel and watching it change their lives, but I'm growing too. This is the greatest experience I

could have. I am learning to give and take more the importance of things, like good home teaching, fellowshipping, caring more for other, companion relationships. Wow, what a preparation for the rest of my life.

... I'm starting to forget what American postage stamps look like. My mother did a pretty dirty trick and answered three months worth of letters with one.



... Then came Saturday, the day my life was changed. I lost someone that has really left a blank spot in my life. I got my "Dear John." To tell the truth, I was expecting it during the two years, but not quite so soon. She hadn't written me for a month and I got a letter with a 6, 11, 2 and 8 cents stamps on a teeny envelope. She couldn't get it here fast enough. I opened it and the first thing I saw was "Goodbye." Inside I almost died. I've gone with her 4 years and things were great. Well, all there was on the card was a baby red rose and a "goodbye." She couldn't have it done better. Five minutes later we had English class so I forgot about it. I really learned a lot from this experience.

... I got a mushy letter from the little lady at home this week. Yes sir, looks like she's got wedding bells ringing in her ears. Too bad I can't hear the same tune playing. I guess that's the break of life.

... Yesterday it came, my aisuru yohane (Dear John)! I'm a free man, Yosh! Wow, it's a relief to get out of my mind and to be able to buckle down. I feel now like there is nothing to distract my mind and I can dedicate myself to the Lord.

... I just got a letter from my old girl friend. She got engaged and invited me to their wedding, of all the nerve.

... I did a dumb thing and tried to cut my own hair but my companion evened it out and doesn't look bad now. This work is sure physically demanding as well as spiritual, emotional and mental.

... We made some banana bread for one family's mother birthday, but the oven wasn't working right and it got burnt a little. When we took it to them the grandmother thought that it was chocolate.



... We made a little dinner for the Relief Society, and my companion made some meat loaf. It was good inside, but if I hadn't had an ax to get to the inside, I would have starved to death. The thing that got me is the Sisters really enjoyed it, although they probably won't come over to eat anymore

... Last Saturday night Elder Smith played barber and tried to fix the mess that my companion left on my head. Did a pretty good job, but it still looks like it got run over by a tractor.

... I was a little discouraged this week but I overcame it fast. I guess I had better learn how to cook. The Elders have been yelling a little bit. It's a good thing I only have to cook once a week.

... I set new memorizing goals and so far so good. I'm starting to feel more and more with the Lord's help I can do it. It's a good feeling. But, it's going to take constant effort. Taught first part of "Continuing Revelation" lesson. Blew it. But, I learned from it.

... Well, it's my first few days of real missionary work. I guess I should start with my complaints. I thought Southern Japan was warm, Miyazaki is freezing! I can't believe it. When you see your breath in your room you know it's cold. But, I'll live, hopefully. Also, the Benny's (bathroom) are really weird and it takes me awhile to decide whether I really have to go or not.



... The foods different but the bad news the language. It's impossible at times, but I'm gradually understanding more and more words. At times it is even exciting, especially when I'm not feeling lost and out in left field. It's exciting going out and proselyting especially with the different culture all around. Every once and awhile it strikes me that we are in Japan and when I think about it I really like it so far.

... The other night we went to visit one of our families and he didn't know them so he had me introduced him as my Shinpai (worry) instead of Senpai (Senior) companion and he was ready to clobber me. The family was laughing their heads off. I really have learned a lot this week.

... Yesterday, I gave my first Sacrament Meeting talk. I think it went pretty well except for one or two mishaps. My companion told me I said "fuketsu" where it should have been "fukkatsu". That's pretty bad! Filthy for resurrection! Also, I used the example Elder Packer

used in one of his conference talks about "my hand is a spirit and this glove is your body". I was holding up the gloves and saying "without the spirit in it, this body can't move, but I was shaking so badly that the glove sure was moving.

... My companion and I get along great. I love to cook and he loves to eat. Anyway I love companion.

... I'm so glad that I got a chance to come to Japan to proselyte and to bear pure testimony to these sweet people that know that they really feel it. What a blessing. A nineteen year old kid comes to Japan for two years and goes home well on the road to eternal life. Truly the gospel is a wonderful thing. We come over here, knock on doors a different way, tell people something they never heard about before in a language we don't understand, and they listen. Maybe for the first time in their life they are actually talking to gaijins (foreigners) in their own language and we're telling them things they've never even thought of before, eternal life, love in the home, telling your wife you love and appreciate her. What a fine message this is.



... We were dendoing (proselyting) at the shoten (shopping area) last night and a man about 40 years old interrupted me while I was talking to someone else and asked if I was a Christian missionary. I asked him if he could wait until I finished and would talk to him. He scared the person I was talking to I guess because he left with a bow. We talked for a second and he offered or insisted to buy me a drink. I thought that he had already had enough to drink and I didn't drink what he was planning on, so I said I must always go with my companion. He didn't want to talk there so we walked over to the side, and I called my companion just in case he got mad or something. He nearly insisted we go in

for some saki (rice wine) or beer. I told him I was sorry and rude but I didn't drink and won't go in. He said there were some lewd women down the block we could go see and I politely refused. He offered me a cigarette and at last resort a cup of tea. After I declined, he stood back and asked how old I was. I said, "19" and then in English he said "I really respect you". "You are strong but gentle. You look to me like Christ or God." I said, "thank you". He wanted my name and gave me his meishi (calling card). It was really a good ending to what looked like a bad situation. I was praying for help and I got it.

... I was locked in the Benny room (bathroom). Don't know how the door got locked. Finally someone came around the corner in the kitchen and saw my head out the window. I was too embarrassed to call anybody.

... We had a interesting thing happen this morning. When Elder Smith and his companion were heading out to proselyte they were a little komarud (troubled) when they couldn't find his companion shoes. It seems someone coming up the stairs towards our apartment saw our genkan (entry) with some gaijin (foreigner) irresistible shoes and couldn't avoid taking the shoes for souvenirs. Can't imagine any Japanese wearing them, maybe float them in the old fud (bath tub) but could never wear them.

... For the next week Smith Choro (Elder) and I are planning a speak out program which should be a winner. We are going to tape our eyes with scotch tape so they are slanted and stand in front of a mirror for fifteen minutes a day repeating, I am a Nihonjin (Japanese) over and over again. Do you think it will work?



... Thought I'd relate an amusing story. We were eating dinner with a few kaiin (members) who had fixed curry for us. It was really good but super karai (hot). My companion who is usually a ravenous eater was going really slow and although he had a little smile on his face, you could tell that he was having a hard time forcing it down. I guess his eyes had been watering or something but he decided to try out a new word he learned - mabataki suru (to blink or wink) to say he was blinking a lot. Anyway, what came out was "matabaki" which with a sound change from "b" to "t" means "I'll throw up later." Well, the kaiin really were rolling on the floor laughing and my poor companion hadn't figured out what he said and didn't know until the kaiin could speak again which was a few minutes.



... The happiest Elder in Japan is reporting. I'm so glad I'm on a mission, doing the Lord's work, spreading the message of the restoration to the people of Hiroshima. Of course, right now my companion does most of the "spreading" and I stick to my 2-cents where I can. Every day is another beautiful experience. Each has its ups and downs but I learn from everything. It's so scary contacting people with my poor Japanese, but we strive to have the Lord's spirit with us so our message will be understood

... There's still so many things that I need to be doing better. My companion made a comment to the effect that, "when you're 19 you know everything but after that you get dumber every day." That's pretty much what I feel now but at the same time, ganbatte orimasu (hanging in there).

... Our branch here seems to be growing pretty fast. Elder Tanaka goes home pretty soon and it kind of makes me worry about the investigators. The language is still tough, I hope I

can learn something before my 2 years are up. I've really had some problems getting up on time but that ends tomorrow.

... Well another week has gone by that I don't know where it went. Things are pretty good down in Nagasaki. We're still hanging. We get along real good down here and we have some good members. I still can't talk. I'm sure glad you can read English. I never knew how dumb I really was. Am sorry. Well, better go.

... I have learned quite a lot this week. Let me tell you about one of my learning experiences. A couple of days ago while my companion and I were trading I hit my head on the door frame of a low gate. It hurt so much that it made me sort of mad. I got disgusted and kind of mad at all Japan. Well, it was my turn to do the next door but I had a completely wrong attitude, I didn't care because I was mad. I said my approach to a guy who seemed to be a real nice fellow, but something different happened, he slammed the door right in my face. I have been here nearly two months and that was the first for me. I learned from this experience just how effective a missionary would be without the spirit of the Lord. My Japanese is rotten but it is getting a little less rotten each week.

... I sure rely on the Lord because there's no way I can do things on my own. It's been a testimony to me to see how much He has helped me. Even when I ride my bike, I have a prayer in my heart every minute.



... I really am enjoying the work. Every day it seems like I learn something new. I just

hope it keeps going the way it is. It isn't a bed of feathers. But it is a bed of roses with thorns and all. The smell of roses drowns out the pain of the thorns.

... The work's going great here. Not that it's reached its potential but it's beginning to pick up. Well I've got to work harder still. There's always more room for improvement and as long as I'm getting somewhere in the positive direction and growing I'm happy. I'm growing now and I love the work.

... Things are going great President. We're not quite perfect yet, but we're getting there. We've been trying different methods of dendo (proselyting) the last few weeks, the results haven't been really great, but just as good as house to house and a lot more exciting. I've been really learning a lot from my companion, especially to just be a missionary wherever you're at, not just when you get to your area or when the meeting starts, but wherever you go. It's hard because you have to be in tune with the Lord all the time, but it really makes dendo fun and you feel like a missionary instead of Fuller brush salesman.

... There was one thing that was strange that happened this week. While giving the first few sentences of the door approach at a certain home, my mind went blank and I couldn't remember what came next. My companion took over and finished the conversation with the lady at the door, but we didn't make a meeting. Afterwards I thought about that embarrassing situation and remembered what one Elder said. "Some houses that you might go to that never show any interest in our message are sometimes houses that Heavenly Father give you to practice on". I hope, though, that all houses won't just be for practice.



... My attitudes are gradually improving, am getting more of the missionary spirit now. As I work harder, the Lord blesses me with a little better understanding of the magnitude of the work. It's quite serious business. Not only that, it's expensive. Last Thursday. I went to get a simple haircut. Before I knew what was happening, I'd been sheared, shaved, shampooed, cologne, and charged for 1,200 yen. I made my companion take a picture of me; my first \$4.00 haircut!

... I really like my dode (companion). He is really teaching me a lot. He has a lot of patience and helps me a lot. The thing I really like about him is that he really trusts me and he treats me like I have been here for a while and not like a green bean. He tells me to fellowship and tell a lot of Japanese people a lot of things like I have been here for a while and I know the language. It really gives me the desire to learn. I really love to speak Japanese.

... My companion is genki (fine). I sure like him even though he is a radical conservative. I found out yesterday that he has never even drunk Coke in his life.

... I guess the reason why things are going so well is that I have such a great relationship with my companion. I truly love him and feel confident in saying that he loves me. When we first met, I told him that I wanted a completely honest companion and I wanted a good relationship so we could proselyte and teach with the spirit. It's been interesting how we've sometimes been able to pick out the right people of the street.



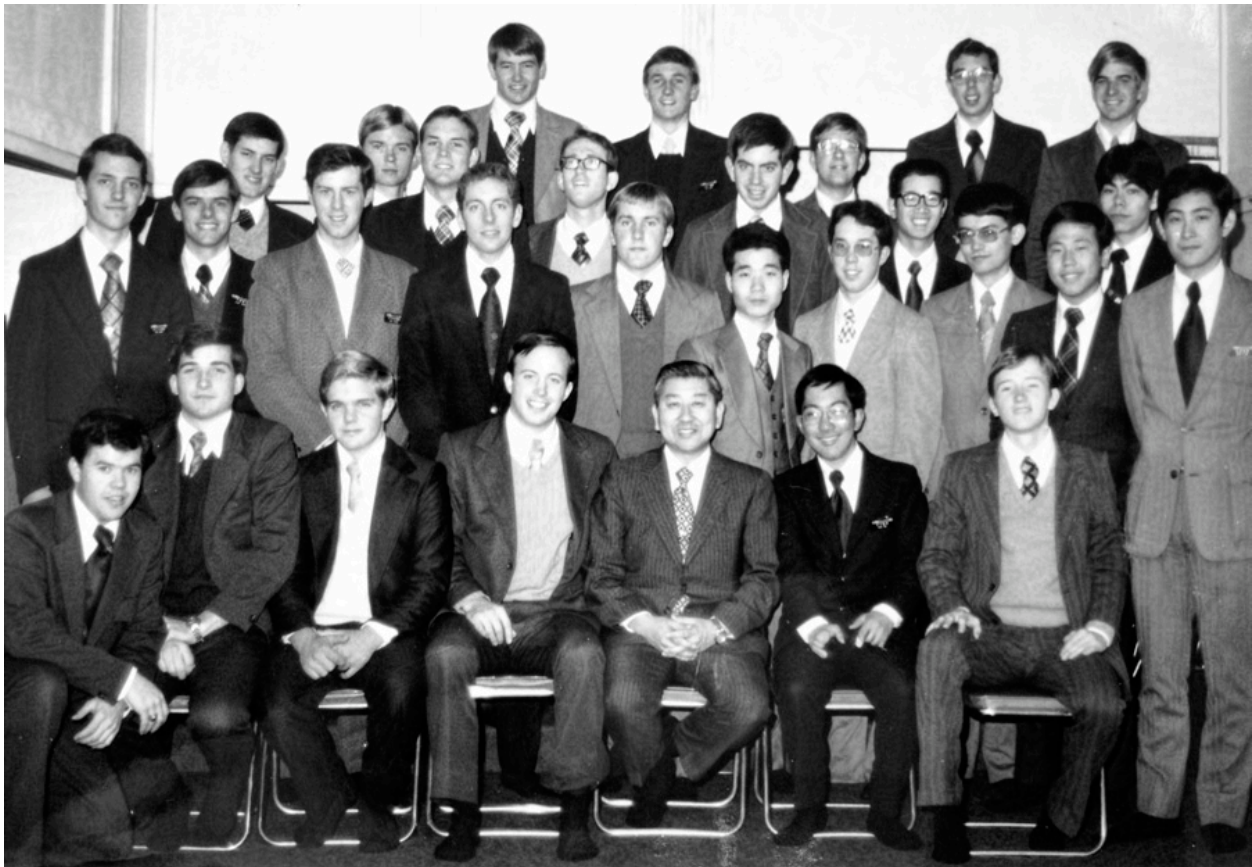
... I sure love the Elders here in Ube. They are all great men. We have turned this branch into a bakery. Each person here has a talent for making some pastry. When we come in at dinner someone will always be making some tasty morsel. And then we cook at night and set around talking about our days labor while munching on snacks. For example Smith Choro (Elder) makes a good cake with cake mixes from home; Jones Choro, banana cake; Brown Choro, brownies; White Choro, apple and peach pies. We eat great here and through doing things for each other our branch unity has become sugoi (fantastic). We are getting fatter.

... The holiday season this year meant a great deal to me. It was the first holiday season that I had ever spent away from home and yet it wasn't as hard to take as had expected it would be. I have been shown much love by everyone. I have truly felt the "spirit of Christmas" this year. My Heavenly Father is blessing me with more than I deserve.

... This week has sure been full of neat experiences for me. I think the neatest of my experiences was to spend Christmas here in Japan and away from my family. I think I learned the true spirit of Christmas here in the mission field, the spirit of giving. I am so thankful that I am able to give of myself to help others and enjoy the joy that I know, that of the joy of this gospel. To be an instrument in the Lord's hands to teach His children the way back to our Father in Heaven is truly an honor. I am thankful to be here in Japan serving the Lord on a mission. I am thankful for this district of Kumamoto, the people here are great. I am very thankful for my "dode" (companion) he is the greatest! He has helped me so much this past week, he is a real example for me to follow. I am thankful to him for all he does for me, he is just great.



... Last night at 1:00 am. across the street I witnessed a burglary. I heard someone outside yelling so being on the top bunk bed I rolled over on my stomach and looked out the window. We called the police and just in the nick of time they got to the scene just as the two were coming out of the store they broke into. We went down and gave the police our names as witnesses. The two men were obviously looking for money but after seeing there was none, settled for 2 Pepsi's, a bag of rice and some opened flour. I wonder if it was worth it? You won't believe this but at 4:00 am. I heard a crash and looked out my window and saw a man stealing a car, he smashed the window and was trying to hot wire it but failed. He left before we could do anything. This morning as the owner came out we went over and talked to him. He thanked us etc. I'ma light sleeper I guess. They ought to hire me as a detective huh?



... My companion and I ate at three different members homes on the same day. We stuffed ourselves all three times because we didn't want the members to think we didn't like their food. Man, I'd never been so full and believe me it hurt. I wasn't worried though because I came from a farm and knew what to do when something gets bloated. I'd seen it a hundred times before at home. You just poke them in the stomach with a knife. Don't worry, we used a real small one.

... I am glad that the New Years season is over with. It'll be great to get back on a regular schedule. It seems as though all I did last week was eat at our investigators or members

homes. I don't think I could take one more piece of sashimi (raw fish) until next year. I know the Lord has blessed me with an ability to eat those foreign foods because I know I couldn't have eaten them without His help. I'm too much of a meat and potatoes man.





One Year

Dear President:

... Near our Branch here in Shuri. there is a house with this huge big dog. Whenever we walk by it, he practically tears the gate down to get at us. It's really fun to stand and smile at him while he's strangling himself with his chain to get us.

... Thought we'd do this big mansion just for the fun of it. This little dog started barking but that was no problem. We could handle a little dog. Got about half way to the door and this big dog, low voiced dog started howling off. We looked at each other with a little question of if he had a chain or not - you never saw two boys head out the front gate in your life. Finally got the went in.

... When we house to house last week, at one house, the oba and oji (grand father and grandmother) had one of our pamphlets, the one with Christ's statue, and had it tacked on the butsudan (Japanese altar) and said there daijini suru (treasuring it). I was about to ask them if they ever heard of Jesus Christ but rather said "omoshiroi" (interesting).

... I said something funny while dendoing (proselyting). I said, "we are messengers of Jesus Christ and we are visiting the chijo (earth) instead kinjo (neighborhood) today with an important message.



... The living conditions aren't so bad as I thought they would be. We have battles with the cockroaches every night but is great here.

... One of our newest investigators came over Sunday morning during Sunday School and handed me some books of Buddhism, and a bottle of honey wine, then he took off and left me standing there with them, so I ran upstairs and hid them in our room before any of the members could see us. I'm going to dump it down the sink this morning. Then we'll have to go and straighten the guy out on what we can drink.

... My companion and I almost scared a woman to death while dendoing (proselyting). She went running out of her back door (she was looking out of her window and saw us coming). Brought back a couple of guys from next door to talk to us. Guess she thought we were from the Army and coming to take advantage of her or something. They were almost too embarrassed to listen to us when they found out who we were.

... Last night we went out in the pouring rain to look up a referral. It turned out to be a graveyard, we were had.

... We ran into a old lady doing house to house and she took a quick look at us and told us she couldn't understand English. We stood there talking to her for 5 minutes trying to convince her she could understand us. She would answer all the questions and keep telling us she couldn't understand because she couldn't speak English. We finally had to leave because we couldn't convince her she was understanding us.



... Last week Elder Smith and I were out tracting, we knocked on one door and as the husband opened the door we could see a bird flying around free in the house. After we got in the house and had sat down, Elder Smith asked the guy if it wasn't a little messy having a bird fly around like that in the house. The husband replied, "yes it's a little messy but I don't mind." The wife said, "it sure makes cleaning the house pretty hard." I managed to keep a straight face the whole time.

... The language is coming slow, but it is coming sukoshi zutsu (little by little). I guess that persistency is the most important thing in obtaining a goal. Also, I know that if I do all that I can that the Lord will tie all the loose strings. There are some specific things I want to obtain while on my mission. These include master of the language, complete memorization and retention of the lesson plan, always be worthy and able to receive direct inspiration concerning things which myself and my investigators stand in need of. I feel like these three things are basically the three most important things concerning my mission' success. I want these very much. If and when I obtain them I will set new goals to work for. I pray I may be able to become a better missionary.

... I've had some experience in giving approaches in house to house contacting although my companion told me I said some pretty screwy things to the people in the first few houses before I finally got my sentences straightened around. At first every time I rang a doorbell I was hoping that no one would answer, but now that the approach is coming more smoothly I feel at ease when I go to a door although I still don't have any idea of what answers I'm getting to my questions.

... Last night my companion and I really got set back, or at least I did. I knocked on a door and a guy came out so I started talking to him. He invited us in and I gave him my

approach. My companion talked to him next. He waited until we were both finished talking and then he started in. He told us for nearly half an hour how bad our Japanese was. I already knew how bad mine was but my companion has good language when he doesn't have a cold. I guess his cold made him sound a little weird. But that guy cut us down to nothing. I was going to ask him if he could speak English but I decided not to. I couldn't even understand his Japanese! Oh well, I guess I've got to start working on the ol' Japanese



... We were reviewing the lesson concerning the resurrection and just how we could all live together and how everybody would truly meet everybody again. Well, suddenly this one sweet old lady asked if we would truly meet everybody. My companion said "yes." Then she said what if you don't want to meet certain people. She knows some people that she just as well not meet again. She was saying this in such a way that we all started laughing. The person she did not want to meet again was her deceased husband. She said once was enough with him.

... Last Monday after I left for Hiroshima for Kure I was pretty tired and as usual when I'm tired I fall asleep. Well when I woke up I saw the train was sitting in the Kure station. Boy, I jumped up and grabbed my stuff and headed for the door. A little old lady was getting on so I decided to let her on before I got off. As I started for the door, it shut. Away I went. The conductors at the station didn't pay any attention to my banging on the windows. When I realized the train wasn't going to stop I got worried. I didn't know what to do. After thinking about it I decided just to get off at the next stop in Hiroshima, and catch a train back. I finally arrived in Kure safe and sound. Boy, was I relieved to see my dode (companion).

... On the train down to Miyazaki, a girl had the seat next to me. Through her little bit of English and my little Japanese, we communicated very well. We talked about religion and she didn't have one and so I told her about the "Restoration". She was interested but I couldn't think of how to give her a Book of Mormon approach. I told her I read it and knew it was a true book, and bore my testimony the best I could. When it came her to stop, she gave me a bracelet and told me she enjoyed the visit very much and she was very happy. She didn't have money so I gave her my Book of Mormon and I asked her to read it. She said she would. I hope I planted a seed for someone there. That experience really touched me. She was so nice I was really surprised at how nice the Japanese people are. I know I was called to be here and I'm happy to be here. I am going to work my hardest.



... As we were getting ready to leave the branch, in walked 3 guys and asked to be taught about the church, I couldn't believe it. I thought I misunderstood them and thought they were building inspectors or something. They said "no", we want to know about the church. I said, "come on in". Had a good shokai (introduction) lesson and will have meetings with 2 of them this week. Then Friday afternoon had a shokai with an English class kyodai (brother). It also went well, for the Lord blessed him to accept what we said. That evening, had a few minutes before a meeting. Went to an apartment nearby. Second door was answered by a friendly looking lady. Dode (companion) gave a Family Home Evening approach. She said, "well, we just got married and don't have any kids, but I have a friend nearby that might listen." She took us to her friends apartment. Talked with the father and made a meeting. Then the mother of that house took us to her friends house and made a tentative meeting there. It was an interesting day.

... We met a President of a Cellophane company. He was a white-haired 65 year old man with a voice that nearly rattled the windows when he laughed. Before we could really identify ourselves, he told us, "I've only been to two churches in my life, the Catholic and the Mormon." That kind of surprised us and we told him who we were. He said, "well, I've got your Mormon Bible. Wait a minute and I'll show it to you." One of the secretaries brought it down and sure enough it was the "Ole Mormon Bible". We made a meeting with his family to talk about it. He's a good man- looks exciting.



... We had a pretty funny experience the other night. We were out looking for an address and we couldn't seem to find it. So went to the police house, but it was closed. Then we went to a sake shop (liquor store), there were about six drunks in there and they gave us all the help we needed. One of them called the police, and ten minutes later two squad cars pulled up. After a lot of confusion the police decided to give us an escort across town. So there we were riding down the road with a police car at our side, with its red lights flashing. It was a little embarrassing. Well, we found the address and had a good visit with the family.

... This week has sure been full of neat experiences. We decided to go out to a different area to dendo (proselyte). Well, after a few houses we came to one door and they were really interested so we set up a meeting. We went to the next door and they too were interested and we set a meeting with them also. In the course of our conversation with our second door, they told us that a minister from another church had just been around the day before us. I thought that was kind of neat that people would listen to a message from a couple of 19 year old young women and not listen to a 50 year old minister. That just goes

to show who has the truth. That little experience really helped to build my testimony of the gospel and the truthfulness of missionary work.

... We had a meeting with a widowed mother and her daughter. It takes about 45 minutes by bike to go from our apartment so we decided to visit some other investigators that live on that side of town. We got about one mile away from here when the tire on my bike blew. To make matters worse, all the buses and denshas (street cars) were on strike. So, we ran my bike back to the eki (train station) and caught a train. We had to wait at the eki for about half an hour, so we did a little contacting. I casually started talking to a young man about life in general and to make a long story short, he was very interested in the gospel and bought a Book of Mormon. The timing worked out just perfect, for we had to leave as I gave him the Joseph Smith story. We went to our meeting and for the second time in two weeks she had visitors so we couldn't give a lesson after we went all the way walking a couple of miles from the railway station. When we were returning by train, at the eki a man came and sat down by me and started to talk. He was just golden. The timing with us was just perfect once again. I just had time to give him a decent foundation of the restoration story, and he wanted a Book of Mormon, so I sold him one. Just as I handed it over, my train came and we had to part. All in all, what had started out to be a completely wasted evening, it turned out to be one of the best of the mission. I met and talked with only 2 people and yet they turned out to be as good of contacts as I've ever met. And the timing of everything just worked out too well for it to have been simply coincidence. We spend weeks trying to find people who will give us 5 minutes let alone accept what we say or buy a Book of Mormon, and the one night our plans get fouled up and the first 2 people we meet are as good as we could have ever hoped for. What a blessing we received.



... Last Saturday, I had an experience that I wish I could have more often. We taught 4 shukai's (meetings). That reward makes all of the effort worth it. To see people learn the beautiful truths of the gospel for the first time then see the affect it has on their lives is the best experience one could have. I wish I could spend 24 hours a day teaching lessons, that's what I love most. I don't see my purpose as one going house to house, day in and day out making small progress. I see it as being one of teaching the gospel face to face, letting others know exactly what our Father in Heaven has given us. I see dendo (proselyting) as a means to that end, not the end in itself. Well, I hope you can understand somewhat of what I'm trying to say. I've done a lot of deep thinking lately about what exactly is the best way to get people to stop long enough to listen to what we really have to say. Sometimes I feel that we're just too ineffective in some of the dendo methods we're using now. I don't have the answer, maybe there isn't one, but if there is, I want to find it.



... We had a man ride up to us on his motor bike and asked us over to his home. We plan to introduce him to the Family Home Evening Program. We had previously met him when my companion went to a bank. We also went to large hospital to take care of my companion and the doctor invited us to dinner that night up to his 10th floor penthouse on top of his hospital. Very impressive. We will give his family the Family Home Evening Program when we meet with him again. The Lord has really blessed us with a lot of good people to teach. The Lord has placed in our paths people to teach so easily it's unreal.

... Another interesting experience. We went over to a little shokudo (inn) to visit a man whom one of the missionaries had contacted and see if everyone was fine. There were two of them, I guess his regular customer and I joined with them and the shokudo man taught him about the word of wisdom that he learned from our missionaries, although he himself

had not started his lessons yet. He brought out the Book of Mormon and explained it. Two more people came in and we gave them all our tracts and a couple of pamphlets. We gave a brief rundown of the Book of Mormon and told them the purpose of their being in Japan is to inform them of this wonderful beautiful message and we know that it's true and that's why we came. It was like the old times preaching the gospel to groups of people. There were many opportunities to bear my testimony this week.



... My companion and I had a spiritual experience the other day. We had taken the film and projector for a shokai (introduction meeting) with a family to tell them about the Family Home Evening, but when we got there we found out they couldn't meet with us. We had about an hour and half left to dendo (proselyte) and didn't know where to go. Their house was quite away from town so there weren't a lot of houses to knock on. We decided to pray and find out where a family lived that had interest in our Family Home Evening Program. We got on our bikes and rode a little way down the road and the very first house we knocked on found a beautiful family. The wife invited us in, the father got out of the fud (ofuro-Japanese tub) and we told them about the Family Home Evening. They have two little girls who said that they came to our kodomo (children) English class. Wow, it's experience like this that makes one's testimony really grow. I know this work we're involved in is divine and inspired.

... We talked to an old grandma for about 40 minutes. We were the first Americans she'd talked to in her whole life. We told her about eternal life and she asked us to sell her the book with some of the eternal life in it. My companion explained that if you're 70 years old and change, the Lord says it's as good as if you are 8 years old. So she said she is going to do good. What a fine lady!

... We have a family that we had a couple of Family Home Evening's with and they said they want to hear about the church and just before we left our last meeting they said, "ok, now it's all settled every Saturday come back". It was a really cool feeling. Sold them the Book of Mormon for the usual price of 250 yen and they thought that they were just renting it. They couldn't believe it is so cheap. Really cool family, I hope they come through.



... We were riding our bikes back to the branch and a man pulled up to the side of us and asked us what we were doing. We told him he gave us his address and invited us over.

... Well, I think one of the most important things I learned for myself was how to really approach a door. As missionaries we always pray that we will be guided by the spirit and that we will be able to touch hearts and open doors. This is a wonderful power, and most all really desire to have it, but they wait for it. We often read "and if you ask believing you will receive, it shall be given you". I've learned that after you ask for something you've got to get up and do everything you can to make that blessing come true so that you give the Lord every opportunity to bless you. I'm now going to each door believing I have all the power in the world with the Lord's help. When they don't want to hear, I just act like I don't understand what they're saying. (I'm still pretty good at that) and finish my approach..

... Last night we went to a house while we were proselyting, and were quickly turned away by the wife. She had told us that the husband had no interest, well, we walked around the corner of the street and saw a man working in his garden. We felt prompted to approach him. As we talked for a few moments he invited us into the house, which was

the same house we just got turned away from. We made a meeting and are going back next week. You should have seen the surprise on the wife's face when she saw us come in the back was with the father.



... We had a real different breakfast the other day because all the stores were closed. It was macaroni and jello and one egg mixed with lettuce. Good ne (huh).

... Saturday I was in bed all day with a mild case of food poisoning. I ate some cheap pork and the next day I was sick, so I guess it was food poisoning.

... We made ice cream the other night, but it turned out bad because Smith Choro put in maple and he thought it was vanilla, but we had cake anyway.

... I just thought of something I was going to tell you. Its about a cat. Ever since I left my last Branch, one of the Sisters has been writing me 27 page letters. She was inactive about a year ago so I never have written the Branch President to tell her to knock it off. I also think she is a little weird upstairs. About a week ago she wrote and said she knew it was wrong to keep writing so she was going to quit. But last week I got a letter which wasn't from her but from her cat. Yep, that's right, her cat and the stupid thing signed it with it's paw print. I think the cat has better handwriting than the Sister's. I'm not writing a thing back, as far as I'm concerned she 'd be better off writing to the moon.

... I really like the Branch here, the members are real friendly. This Branch has a beautiful young lady. President, I think I'm in love. She has beautiful bright eyes and a tremendous

smile. When she holds my hand I love to look into her eyes. Lucky for me she is only 8 years old. I just thought I would write it this way to make your reading a little more interesting.



... Monday morning, the dumb alarm clock rings at 5:30 am. Thinking it to be just another monster mosquito, I give it my backhand swat, sailing it across the room and through the window. Oh well. "Who turned on the light? asks my dode (companion). It's morning but we haven't been to bed yet, my body insists. From somewhere the smell of burnt toast drifts into the room. Yep, Smith Choro (Elder) is cooking again. A scream pierces the smoke filled hallway once again the shower heater gives up halfway through a gurgling sound from the direction of the toilet, the sound of flooding water, a mad scramble to escapeonce again the benny (toilet) backfired on Jones Choro. A snapping sound, a gradually softening "sayonara" is heard the soft in the front hall floor is not a hole. Today's three meetings cancelled out Yep, it's going to be a long Monday.

... Being 20 years old doesn't feel a heck of a lot different than being 19, except that I can't blame my stupidity on me being a teenager anymore.

... Last night I scratched the heads of two Charlois steers, talk about being trunky, do you know how long it's been since I've touched a cow? Didn't want to wash my hands.

... It was about the trunkiest place I've been in Japan. I could hear cows, sheep, goats, and pigs. kind of smelled like home.



... I have a good story to tell you. As you know being a Zone Leader down here in Kagoshima, that every month one of the Zone Leaders has to visit Naze. Since Naze is so far from here no one comes up to be my companion so therefore 3 days one of us is forced to be by their self. Well this was the position I was in the other night. Smith Choro (Elder) and Jones Choro were out proselyting, and since I was by myself, I stayed in the apartment to catch up on my work. Well when 8:30 rolled around I was getting pretty tired from the days work so I decided take a quick nap. Well the futons (Japanese bed) were in the closet so instead of getting everything out just to take a nap, that I would crawl into the closet and take five, besides that it was dark in there. Well I had no sooner got into the closet when Smith Choro and Jones Choro came home. At first they said, "hey Brown Choro isn't here and it is pretty late." Then they proceeded to do a quick check on the apartment just to make sure. Of course while they were checking my room they made a detail search and examined all the stuff on my desk and read a few reports. Naturally I was very amused when Smith Choro said "that dummy, how does he expect to get in - he left his key on the desk." After that the two them went to the kitchen and started to wash the dishes. I heard Elder Smith exclaim, "what is he doing out so late by himself, I sure hope he doesn't get himself into trouble with a Shimai (Sister), you know that is pretty dangerous being out by yourself." Jones Choro replied, "Brown Choro knows what he is doing, you never see him talk with the real good looking Shimai's. Me, well I'm alright, I talk with the real good looking ones all of the time but since I'm with my companion it is alright. If I was in America, I would date that Tanaka Shimai, man she is really good looking. Today, Brown Choro told me "to stay away from her, but she doesn't have enough money to get to America anyway."

With that comment I decided to scare him so I yelled from the closet "you better stay away from her." Then I could hear a lot of noise as they exclaimed, "he's here," and then they made a thorough search of the apartment. In the meantime I had gotten underneath a futon so they for sure wouldn't see me unless they dug. This time I was really glad that I'm skinny. After about five minutes search they gave up and Elder Jones bleakly said to Elder Smith, "I'm positive that I heard a voice". Then the two of them went back to their dishes with Jones Choro saying over and over again, "I know I heard a voice," to which Elder Smith replied, "do you know that no one took out the garbage last Thursday?" Well I figured out that the scene had died down so I yelled from the closet "Brown Choro isn't here". Well Jones Choro about jumped out of his skin, it sounded like. This time he made a real thorough search, I even heard him going through the garbage cans and look in back of the washing machine. Last of all he stood in my room looking out to the window for about 10 minutes saying over and over again, "I know that I heard a voice," then he said pathetically, "he has to be here."

By this time I was really beginning to enjoy this game. Finally Jones Choro went back washing dishes with Smith Choro. This time I yelled from the closet, "Brown Choro has died, he's dead." To this Jones Choro started running around in the rooms like a chicken with his head just cut off saying, "What are we going to do? Where is he?" This time they made a real thorough search including a look through all of the chest drawers. When they found me they looked real sheepish, sort of like 12 year old kids just caught smoking and Jones Choro said, "I knew that you were here."



... I was hanging up English posters down in Koza, Okinawa and we just hung one up in the A&W store and this goofy Nihonjin (Japanese) guy stopped us and saw that we were missionaries so he hurried and dug a 100 yen out of his pocket and gave one to each of us. We tried to give it back but didn't have any luck. Then he got in the old Buddhist

prayer stance and did a prayer or he put a whammy on us I don't know which, but it sure was funny.



... This family we are teaching gave us some eggs. It was bad enough riding my bike half an hour back on a flat tire, just to find broken eggs all over my sticks, lesson plan and Kyozei's (teaching materials). What joy of being a missionary.

... Saturday I baptized Sister Tanaka. It was the greatest experience I've ever had. We did it in the ocean. It had been raining all day but when we baptized her the sun broke through the clouds and made a beautiful sunset. I've never had such a warm feeling in my life. I felt guilty baptizing her though because I had no part in her conversion. I can't wait until I can play a part in someone's conversion.

... Wow, these last few days have been really great! On Saturday one of my favorite people was baptized. We had such great baptism kai (service). It was really fantastic. It just happened to be on the day that I was exactly 1 year in Japan. The person baptized gave such a beautiful testimony. It just touched everybody's heart. Then Sunday came and I was able to see that person partake of the sacrament. It brought tears to my eyes to see the joy of that person. It truly strengthened my testimony to see and feel such great joy. It helped me realize once again of the truthfulness of this gospel and the pure joy we can get from striving to live the gospel principles. It's so true! If we truly strive to live the gospel and keep the commandments, the most wonderful joy imaginable will come in to our lives, increasing daily as we study, pray, and become closer to God. I know that the gospel is true! I want so much to be worth of all my blessings. It's unbelievable how many blessings I do receive. A mission is so good for me. I'm a completely different person now than I used to

be. A lot of changes have been made, but of course, there's still a long ways to go. We're really blessed aren't we? Wow! I love it here in Kokura. The members are so sugoi (fantastic). I wish everybody in the church would work as hard and be as kind and helpful as they are. Well, I love the work and I thank you for all your help and support.



... Last week we gave the baptismal challenge to Tanaka san and it was something I won't forget. When we asked them if they would get baptized the father's head bobbed up and down "yes" while the mother and sons head were out "no". I guess they are scared of water and when they heard that we baptized by immersion I think it scared the mother out of her wits. Anyway it was a really cool experience to challenge the family to baptism and have at least the father to accept.

... We had a wonderful baptismal meeting here last Saturday and was so happy to hear about the Father who received baptism down at Kagoshima in the mountains. I feel so blessed to be able to witness such miracles of changing men's lives. We are just very happy to the extent of tears.

... The last couple of days we've met almost every Sokka Gakkai (a modern Buddhist group) in Okinawa. Friday everyone we contacted except for two houses were "Sokes." Saturday, after two hours of meeting more "Sokes", we went and got a drink of pop and sat down discouraged on a cinder block wall. An old man walking by stopped and said "konnichi wa"(good afternoon). "Hey I've read that book before", and he pointed to my Book of Mormon and slapped me on the back. He said he'd get somebody to listen to us and he walked up to the next house and yelled out, "hey, come and listen to these Christian missionaries". Then he led us up to the house and left. It turned out to be just five

young triffods (school girls) playing around in their friends house. They told us they could speak English so we talked for a while and had a good laugh. We went away from that house pretty genki (in good spirits). The next two houses we sold a Book of Mormon and made two call backs with some good fathers. That old man and those triffs made my day. Was he one of the 3 Nephites kana? I wonder?



... This last week I had a hajimete keiken (first experience). We knocked on the door and the family said "come on in and show us what you have." So we went in. It was a family of 3, one little girl about 7 years old. The wife, I found out had read almost half of the Book of Mormon but the husband hadn't read any. They had never studied with missionaries so all she really got out of reading was a lot of war. I explained the Book of Mormon and it's purpose and the steps to finding out for themselves its truthfulness and talked about the importance of studying with the missionaries in order to understand all the wonderful things in it. At first the husband kept saying he was so busy he just didn't have time and etc. We talked about the importance of the family and kind of got to know them a little and really became friends. My companion was kinda nervous and the wife could sense it so she even said for him to feel at ease because we were friends. We had been there about 45 minutes and didn't have time to do a Katei no Yube (Family Home Evening) so I made a meeting for Tuesday. Before we left the husband said any evening would be fine so come back. He said come back anytime. I got the little girl to say she would practice a song for the next meeting in the Family Home Evening. They are really great family. I was really surprised I could understand almost everything they said. When we first went in my companion said, "we can't do this, lets get out of this, we aren't prepared to give them a Family Home Evening" but the reason I was dendoing (proselyting) wasn't to get hours or

contacts, it was to teach people and present our message. The Lord opened the door so we went in and it really turned out nice.



... We had a first with a family, my dode (companion) and I contacted out. I was afraid to give them the first cause I didn't think they were ready, but went ahead anyway. Was able to teach the whole first and the spirit was really strong, yosh (great). Last night 5 of us went down to the big Catholic Church by the eki (train station) and shokaid (introduced) the church to 3 Nuns and another man with the new flick. Omorshiroi(interesting).

... Wednesday Smith Choro (Elder) and I were out dendoing (proselyting), at one house the mother just said kekko(which is the same as saying I don't need what you've got), right at first. Then a neighbor boy asked me a question about Honjo Cho(a name of an Mormon.) I told him about the restoration of the Church and some of the contents of the Book of Mormon. The more I told him the more excited he got... He asked a whole lot of questions about it. For 3 hours and 15 minutes straight we talked on the Book of Mormon. I then gave him the Book of Mormon. I felt if he was prepared and led here and wanted to give him the book. He had a lot of interest in the church. I could tell that the things I told him touched him very much.

... On the train down to Miyazaki, a girl had the seat next to me. Through her little bit of English and my little Japanese, we communicated pretty well. We talked about religion and she didn't have one and so I told her about the "Restoration". She was interested but I

couldn't think of how to give her a Book of Mormon approach. I told her I read it and knew it was a true book, told me and bore her my testimony the best I could. When it came to her stop, she gave me a bracelet and she enjoyed the visit very much and was very happy. She didn't have money so I gave her my Book of Mormon and I asked her to read it. She said she would. I hope I planted a seed for someone there. That experience really touched me. She was so nice I was really surprised at how nice the Japanese people are. I know that I was called to be here and I'm happy to be here. I am going to work my hardest.



... Had an interesting experience. While my companion and I were taking a break one day an American walked up and sat down next to us. He then proceeded to tell us the Book of Mormon was garbage and that he'd see us at the deepest hole in hell at the judgement day. I think this guy could have been the devil himself.

... Think we did a first this week when we sold a Book of Mormon inside an old Buddhist Otera (temple). We even sat in front of the big alter and talked Christianity to a Buddhist priest's wife and she asked us if she could buy the Book of Mormon. That doesn't happen too often.

... My companion and I are really searching for the Lord's help to teach these wonderful people. We really do love the Tanaka family, in fact we think, we worry, we eat, we sleep, and we sweat about our wonderful investigators. Although we worry and seem to go

through a lot of troubles, this is by far the happiest time of my life, to be worrying about someone else instead of just thinking about myself.



... What a blessing to be out in the mission field! I just got a letter from my parents and in the past week their water heater exploded, completely soaking my bedroom, and their parked car got smashed in and the price of cheese has doubled. What's the world coming too? I think the main reason a mission is so great is because you're worrying more about other people than about your own problems and that's really a lot more enjoyable.

... The Lord seems to keep helping us find families and some rather strange ways to dendo (proselyte). This week we helped a lady catch a snake that was in her yard and she listened to us and will see her next week. It seems that when things start to get a little boring the Lord helps you enjoy life by making an exciting or funny experience just so you don't get in a rut, everything from snakes in the back yard to Grandma's that laugh at you.

... It is really fun to be teaching the gospel here in Japan. This week I am going to try to be perfect for one day. It will be a very interesting day. I hope I can do it.

... I don't know if I'm converting lots of other folks to this gospel or not but I'm sure converting myself so that's one.



... It sure rained awfully hard last night. I wouldn't have minded it too much except for the circumstances I found myself in. Elder Smith and Elder Jones and I went out to look for a family that one of the members contacted last Sunday when we went out street contacting with the branch. It seemed like a good referral. We took a street car and found the machi (town) pretty easily. It was pouring and we were getting soaked from the knees down but we marched on confidently in search of 3 chome 5-24 (house number and street). We encircled the block marking off houses 5-21, 5-18, 5-11, and finally 5-9. We realized we couldn't enter the house because we were completely soaked but we were sure we could impress them with our diligence and make another meeting sometime during the week. Thus, on we pushed to 5-8. To our dismay, the next lot had about an 8 foot board fence which presented a problem especially since the only gate had a padlock on it. This was compounded by the fact that our small, narrow, street had suddenly become a water reservoir of considerable depth. Having no other choice but to push forward in our trek we waded through the water and arrived at the next apparent sight of civilization. The kanji (Japanese word) on the name plate was different but we asked the people there to help the poor wayward gaijins (foreigners) in distress. They could only tell us that they lived at 5-7 indicating of course that we had gone too far. This demanded that we once again wade through the swamp for another 30 feet or so and we, of course, wound up again at 5-9. Obviously the house was behind the 8-foot fence, we concluded, and it must be reachable from the opposite side of the block. We retraced our steps and finally came to a somewhat smaller gate, which nonetheless was also locked from the inside. Having reached breaking point I abandoned my umbrella and dendo bag in the hands of my companions and boosted myself upon the concrete wall adjoining the fence. Any final glimpse of hope which I might have held in this small mortal mind of mine was completely shattered as my eyes caught hold of the unmistakable shape of pure granite

formed into a pillar of approximately 4 feet in height with golden kanji *s faintly visible due to the rays of lone streetlight across the street. We had been referred to a graveyard!

... We had two baptisms this week and our special activity was figuring out how to get water from the sink to the font. It was really a hassle. But we finally ended up using a piece of hose, 2 hollow closet poles, our whole vacuum hose, and a piece of drain pipe from the sink. It looked really weird but it worked. The baptism really went good.

... I've learned it takes effort to do many things. Happiness is sometimes doing the things you don't feel like doing, but doing it and being glad you did.

... I've decided that the most important thing we can realize is that our growth depends upon the realization of our weak points. When we react negatively to someone's actions or words, was it because he was wrong or because we weren't in tune with the real meaning. In other words, if we can realize where we need to grow and work in those areas we will really make progress towards our ultimate goal, perfection. I know that 99% of the time when I have bad feelings it's because of my own selfish attitude and weakness. If I can only put myself in the position to react as Christ would, then growth begins to happen. What I'm saying is that humbleness and realization of our own position are prerequisites for growth and learning. I'm going to try to get more humility so I can learn faster how to be a good missionary.



... This missionary experience is invaluable. I learn more about myself and the meaning of this life every day. I've had the opportunity of teaching many wonderful people the truths of the gospel, but I know I have learned and grown more than anyone I've taught. It's like a veil is being lifted from my mind and I'm rediscovering truths that I knew once before. Even through the many mistakes and blunders I've made, I've learned important truths that, hopefully, will help me become the person I can be. Although I originally came on this mission to serve the Lord and His children, I am quickly discovering that it is I who received all the benefits. Anyway, I've done a lot of thinking about my own welfare and I couldn't be more grateful for this wonderful missionary experience that is helping me to discover myself.



... My companion for some reason asked me to go with him to the home of two girls whom the Sister missionaries were teaching and see how the parents feel about their daughters and our church. The father had been drinking some of the devils firewater and went into a rage, beat one of the little girls. Threw her down stairs and even kicked her in the face and drug her into the room by her hair. I found myself standing with my fist clenched and felt the desire to cast the evilness out of him. He was mad. I had never seen anyone beat their child before. Well it was not what I would call a pleasant experience but it was an eye opener. It shocked me for a while but I put my trust in the Lord that he would reward those young girls for their faithfulness. It reminded me of my great indebtedness to the Lord for my many blessings. The wonderful environment that I was raised in and beautiful parents I have.

... Sometimes out here I get down and seem to be in a hole and can't get out. And then I stop for a second and look at all the blessings that the Lord is giving me and it seems to just grab me by the pants and pull me right out of that hole. I couldn't stay in if I wanted to. I really think that's great.

... I'm in my zone now on a Zone Leader transfer. It gave me a bit of a scare getting here. The train stopped in the middle of nowhere and just waited for about two hours then went on, so I arrived about 11:00pm instead of 8:30pm. When I got to the chapel, my companion was on the phone worried about what had came of me, because it turned out there was a bomb threat and so him and one of the members spent the night trying to locate me. He's a good companion and he wanted me in one piece so we could dendo (proselyte). Well I'm safe now.



... I learned a great lesson on the train back here to Omuta yesterday, that is you can never relax because you'll never know when you'll be able to contact someone. I had been studying on the train when I got courage to talk to a young kyodai (brother) who sat down by me. But, he was asleep so I could have very well used that as an excuse and continued studying. To make a long story short, I did end up bothering him but in a way I don't think he minds. We have a meeting with him this week to talk about the gospel. To think I may have passed up that opportunity by being a little less bold really scares me. It was just another little reminder to me to try and always give it my all.

... I had to go up to Fukuoka to dendo (proselyte) and I got there ok. But coming home was a bit different. I got on at Hirao and I was riding along ok when we pulled into Futsukaichi. Well the train stopped for a while. I thought we were waiting for a train to pass. The doors closed and we took off except the wrong way. Well, it stopped at Gojo so I got off. I waited for a train going back the way I had just came. Well it came and I went back to Futsukaichi. Being a green sprout and all alone I didn't know what to do. When I was getting off I heard something about Kurume and rokuban (number 6) so I ran over to track #6, stood there a while and caught the next train going back to Futsukaichi. I got off and decided to call the shibu (branch) but I couldn't get to a phone inside the gate. So I decided to pray. Well, I decided track #4 looked good this time and went and sat down. A little while later a lady with her daughter about 23 years old sat by me. I still wasn't sure if the next train was going to Kurume. I was thinking about asking her if it was. I was scared I'd say something stupid or wrong. While I thought this, a train came in so I got frantic and asked her. She answered and I didn't understand one word. Finally she said it was dame (useless) and I understood. I asked if the next train was going to Kurume and she said "yes". It came in and I jumped on and zip to Kurume. Boy was I glad to get home. I sure do

know the system now. I feel the Lord wanted me to use my Nihongo (Japanese) at this particular time to show me that it works. I love it here.



... I was a bit surprised Saturday morning. The truth is, it was really a shock! Leaving Ube as a senior not less! I kind of lost my appetite. It's really sad to leave Ube and the people here, but there's one thing that comforts me, that is that people in the gospel never meet for the last time. That sure is comforting. I feel like I'm leaving home all over again. It's a bit scary to become a senior. I can feel the extra weight of responsibility already, but along with that will come extra blessings so that I won't falter under the load. I'm looking forward to this new experience. It should prove to be a very good growing experience. Well, I'll just "gird up my loins and put on my armor of faith and gamboro" (hang in there). I know this church is true. The Lord our God lives and loves us and guides His church through a living Prophet today. The work is great.

... Last week taikai (conference) was really a great learning experience. I really learned a lot of new ideas and things that are a necessity in teaching and presenting the Home Evening Program. The approach that my companion and I presented in the work shop has really been a useful mono (thing). This week we used a lot of the new ideas we learned from the workshop. We made one of the Katei no Yube (Family Home Evening) posters with the family's names and assignment on it. It really went well. The family was almost as excited about it as I was. We tried planning out the meeting before hand with the father and teaching under the father's direction. The Family Home Evening Program is truly inspired of God, and like you said, I'm looking forward to the day to hold it with my own children, but I'm not thinking much about that now, don't worry.

... At a first time shokai (introduction) and showing the "Meet the Mormons" flick, I made a mistake. They gave us something to drink. I tasted it and it was a little weird, so I asked my dode (companion) daijobu desuka? (Is it alright?). He said he thought so, and I was thirsty as a picker, so I chugged it. Later to my surprise I was accused of being a drunk. It was saki (rice wine). Well I now know what it tastes like so it won't happen again. Anyway they were curious about the "chie no kotoba" (words of wisdom), interested enough to have us back. So at least we have another meeting! They are golden so far, and I hope and pray we can keep them.



... We tried a new way of contacting a few weeks ago. My companion and I have a bus pass so we went from one end to the other, about an hour ride contacting kyodai's (brother's) on the bus. We did this all one afternoon and we had several good contacts. But one, we were trying to get off the bus but the button wouldn't ring so we decided to contact him. I've never seen a person more interested in what we have to give. He came to MIA, shokai class (introduction class), Sunday school, and Sacrament. We gave him the first discussion and his interest was fantastic. He has a lot of questions, has studied other churches before. That discussion was the smoothest one I've ever taught and I could really feel the spirit there. He's a great kyodai (brother).

... .The devil has really been working to give me a bad attitude this week. In many ways he has sought to destroy my genki (enthusiasm). The Lord has helped me however and for the most part. I've been able to resist his temptation.

... I'm so proud to be a missionary and I'm grateful for the missionary life I now live. The language is coming well and I give the Lord credit for my progress. Serving the Lord

faithfully on a mission is one of the most important things a man can do in this life. Because on this mission you have one of the greatest opportunities in your life to set your heart hungering for Jesus Christ. So you must serve Him diligently and not waste a moment and if you can develop this feeling for Christ, you have laid a foundation and given your life a fierce, craving desire which will lead you the rest of your life, leading you along the path of true joy, success and happiness which can be found only in Christ. This is my belief.



... Yesterday I did a dumb thing. I was cutting cabbage and was trying to hurry and cut a big chunk out of my thumb. Well, we had to look for the piece I cut off in the cabbage; blood was pouring out; we found the piece and I put it back on and held it there and put it under water and it took about 30 minutes for the bleeding to stop. Then I taped it up pretty good and had the Elders bless me and the piece that I cut off is growing back.

... I think I learned more from this week than almost any other week of my life. I hope I can remember the experiences I went through for future reference. What I learned was between the Lord and I. and because it all went on inside of my head and heart. On Tuesday I had the biggest *u doubts about the church and myself than I ever had before. I remember waking up in the morning at 6:00am and felt so terrible that I just stayed under the futon (Japanese bedding) until 9:00am. That just made me feel worse. It all started when I was giving a Book of Mormon ^ approach and couldn't think about anything else except how bad I was doing. After I reflected back on all the approaches I had given, I

know I was only worried about speaking clearly and could never get the spirit. I knew I wasn't talking from my heart and the only way I can really TM talk to people about the gospel is from my heart. When struggling through a different language I can't say anything I really feel and just can't get psyched about what I'm saying. I just feel like a futsu (ordinary) salesman trying to sell a product that I'm not really sold on. By this I don't mean that I don't believe the Book of Mormon or gospel. I'm just not sold on the way it comes



out when I say it cause it just doesn't come out from my heart. I thought about this and then realized that probably the spirit is what makes your message special. But I just didn't have the spirit with me even though I had been working hard and doing all that I thought I should be doing, I had felt good feelings and the spirit when my dode (companion) has been teaching but not when I have been doing something, I was just nervous and worried about the language. I knew faith was an important ingredient in getting your message across, I tried to have faith that the Lord will help me but I still got nervous and had to bail out during an approach. Then to top off my hard feelings that were building up in me, Smith Choro (Elder) got off his first Book of Mormon. This made me really sick inside and nervous as I hadn't been able to get through a Book of Mormon approach and fall back on my dode. I tried to get rid of my envious which had been warned against in my Book of Mormon, but it was hard and I ended up retreating completely into myself and not saying anything to anyone. That's when the real struggle began. I felt the church was true but wasn't sure whether or not I could be true to the church. I felt kind of forgotten by the Lord and this made me mad and more depressed. But during this time, I tried to dendo (proselyte) hard and I think this is what pulled me through in the end. My biggest and most discouraging problem up to now is that I can see the rewards and happiness at the end of the trial but I'm never absolutely sure whether I

got the guts to hang in there over the rough spots. I have a testimony of the gospel but not a complete testimony of myself. More than anything I want to do the job the Lord has sent me here to do, that's all I ask of Him, to let me complete the mission foreordained for me. When I stumble through the language and get nervous I just can't see this as being any help to the Japanese and the Lord. Well anyway to make a long story short, I ganbatted (held out to the end) through my doubts and my fears and finally realized the Lord was at my side all the time. He wanted me to realize I have to depend on my own efforts and not on His helping hand all the time. I've grown a lot from this experience and the next day I sold two Book of Mormons with the help of my dode.



... I saw a family of husband, wife, grandmother, and two children who I thought were ideal. I approached them and said my piece, and made an appointment. I was so happy as I could be and went to tell my doryo (companion) the news. I got him to read the families' name and address which I got them to write on a sheet of paper. All of the sudden he started laughing and I couldn't figure out what was wrong. Later I found out that they lived in Oki-jun, which is on the far side of a nearby island, about two hours away by bus. I should have asked where they lived. I used the vast knowledge I gained and along with the Lord's help placed a Book of Mormon and set up two appointments. Everything went beautifully. This time I only forgot to check the time schedule and set both meetings up on busy nights. I'm learning all the time, I only wish it wasn't the hard way.

... I get frustrated at the Japanese religions here. Some people are so unbelievably close-minded that you would think it takes brain surgery to put a new idea in their heads! You tell a business executive about a great family centered program and get him all excited about it, and then he remembers you're Christian and he's Buddhist and even though you

go through agony trying to convince him that the program won't take away anything from his religion he absolutely won't change! People are so funny aren't they?



... I'm flat out determined to succeed President. I'll fail, I'm sure due to various things in the future. But, I'll stand right up, and no matter how many times I fail, no matter what it takes, I'll fight, I'll fight and fight and keep on fighting because I know it's the only way. Pure, hard, honest work within the clearly marked path is what I'm going to do. I'm fed up President! Fed up with futsu (average) mediocrity. Now my pursuit is excellence in every area.

... It takes two things to get things done—a plan and a beginning.

... My companion and I aren't what you would call men with golden voices. We have a rough time getting through the Family Home Evening songs. It's mainly my fault. Maybe from now on you could audition my upcoming dodes (companions).

... I was out with Elder Smith in an apartment building, I thought I had everything under control, then my companion pushed the fire alarm. He said, "is this the door bell?" I said, "why do these things happen to me?"

... President, I am so thankful that I am on a mission. Everything is coming step by step. Today, I even understood a phone conversation. It was really neat! I love the chance to bear my testimony to our investigators. My heart just starts beating and I just start smiling while I am telling them the things of my heart. I really love it.

... This has been a week that I don't think I'll ever forget. We were street contacting and had just stopped a man, a college student, and started talking when a man on a motorcycle got hit by a car right in front of us. There were a lot of people around but nobody did anything so my doryo (companion) and I ran out to help. The mans' leg were broken, one of them compound. There wasn't anything we could do besides cover him up. It's funny how in Japan also, it seems nobody wants to get involved, just like in America. Anyway that same day we had many other strange experiences. They sure started me thinking.



... At last it has happened, my awakening my rebirth has finally begun. For all this time so far, as a servant of the Lord I have just kind of gone through the actions, not really doing the best I probably could have. Tonight for the first time on my mission, I took a long serious look at myself and realized that I'm not near the type of missionary that I'd like to be. Also I'm not even close to that kind of missionary that I'm desirous or capable of becoming. I asked myself a couple of deep common sense questions and with honest answers found that I'm here to find some good honest Japanese people searching for the truth.

... President. I just want the Lord and you to know that I'm thankful to be here on this mission. I know I sure would be lost and confused if I were not here among such great elders and these beautiful people. I love them so much. The members here are really special to me. I pray for forgiveness each day because I'm so weak and I need to do more. I hope the Lord sees past my many weaknesses and knows that I truly want to do a good work. Again, I really love the people- it's just special to me to be around them. So many beautiful people have become my good friends- people I'll love forever. Our investigators

are about the same age as us and I just love them so much. Seeing them makes me so genki (happy) and I'd do anything for them. really sense that they really do realize that we as senkyoshi's (missionaries), have something for them. I've just got to do more, have more faith, more hope, more love, more charity. My life is truly changing. I see it as the darn weeks go by so fast. I love it here so much, please try to see my feelings and not the dumb words I write. I am so thankful for a loving Heavenly Father who saw fit to send me to this paradise. I don't ever want to go. I can't see myself anywhere but in Japan. Please accept my deepest gratitude for helping me find myself in the work of the Lord. I'm eternally grateful, I've so far to go.



... We are teaching Tanaka shimai's (sister) 7 year old son, Yoichido, whom she wants baptized, yet her husband does not want this. Yoichido with his mother's explanations understands and he eagerly and attentively listens and answers our questions. Such childlike faith! Here is one special experience. After I offered our closing prayer at yesterday's cottage meeting, he, as his mother later told me, shed a few tears. This is very rare for a young boy. Yet I know that anyone with the faith of a child like this boy has, can surely through the spirit understand the things of God.

... I've had an uplifting spiritual experience this week. I was privilege to administer to a member's father who was paralyzed in an auto accident two weeks ago and since the blessing he has fully recovered. I had the opportunity to exercise my priesthood power to help someone else...one special thing that was sort of special this week was a simple answer to a prayer. As you may have heard that my dode (companion) several weeks ago he wiped out his bike. Well we've been having a pretty rough time finding a new one. One problem, was all the ones we found were too expensive. Well when Smith Choro

went to Sasebo I told him I'd try to get him a bike while he was gone. The day that Jones Choro came in I said a special prayer asking the Lord to help us find a bike. Well to make the story short we found a bike, in fact the first place we stopped at which was really just to get our tires pumped up, had a real good old bike.



... I wasn't feeling so genki (happy) and things weren't going well for me. So, we talked it over and I came to realize that I wasn't praying the way I should. I wasn't putting my trust in the Lord. I wasn't looking on things with a successful attitude. So, this week I've been doing a lot more praying and you know what, the Lord has blessed me with an inner peace, a happiness that I haven't experienced so far on my mission. I've only felt this way for 3 days now, and sometimes I still get down a little, but most of the time I feel great!

... This week has been a beautiful week. We're really being blessed. I only wish I could do more to help my companion get into his missionary life better. His heart is still 90% civilian.

... It struck me how wonderful it is that a cowboy and a college kid studying business administration who probably shouldn't have a whole lot in common, can be companions and learn to love each other in the gospel so much that little differences don't matter and people accept the gospel because they feel something there. I still do a lot of stupid things I guess but it sure is good to be on a mission.

... My companion and I are getting along great. I've learned to eat some different food this week. Since he likes Japanese food I let him cook and I eat whatever turns out.

... Well, I'll have to admit that this morning's transfer was somewhat more than a pleasant surprise. I've only been here for a week and now I have a companion who knows nothing about the city. It'll be like the blind leading the blind for a while. I'm really thankful and lucky to have a Japanese (Choro) Elder, for a new companion.



... This week has been filled with changes. The biggest was that I lost a great companion. I can truly say I grew to love my companion, for we sure had a lot of good experiences together. While I was with him, I feel I grew more while I was a companion with him than I have anytime else, because we were true companions half and half.

... I want to thank the Lord for the companion I had and the companion I now have. It really is a wonderful experience to associate with Elders on such a plain, that is a spiritual plain. You really come to know, love and respect them so much more than a regular friend. They say the missionaries often get married quite soon after they return. Well last Thursday I think I really began to understand why. I was without a companion a few hours and really felt lonely, as though I'd lost a part of my life. But, when my companion came that void was quickly filled.

... I'm a little worried about my dode (companion), President. A lot of the time he seems tired and unexcited. Last night he told me that he felt that his mission had not been worthwhile. He doesn't seem to know why he was called as a missionary or what his purpose is out here. We had a good talk about it, but I'm afraid we didn't solve anything. It's not really as bad as I make it sound, but he just doesn't want to get out and work anymore. It's kind of the "I don't care" attitude. He's a good man and of course he'll ganbaru (hang in there) to the end, but not with the right feeling. He realizes this and

wants to change, but doesn't know how to do it. To change it will take a lot of effort, and sometimes I feel that he doesn't want to put in that much effort. We are having a special fast and prayer to help him out today. But I'm still worried about it.



... We have a couple of sick Elders but they are doing better. Smith Choro (Elder) got into Iwakuni and they found out he had a fracture. His arm is in a sling and in for 3 weeks and he should be back to normal. Jones Choro may have hemorrhoid. I'll check up on it more. Brown Choro teeth are OK now. Elder White has some rib problems from way back but no big problems. Green Choro may have hearing trouble. Elder North is pretty healthy now. Sister Tanaka is eating better now and is much genkier (healthier) now and doesn't act like she is drunk all the time any more. South Choro has a case of the trunky fits. Red Choro is as ugly as ever and has a new Elton John tape. He has been working very hard lately. Today he got after his dode (companion) to hurry up so they could go out and dendo (proselyte). The Elders in the Zone could spend more money on eating better and taking better care of branch and bicycle.

... I had a really bad problem this week. It seemed that every day I would go places that I knew I shouldn't and fall into temptation even though I plan at the beginning of the week not to and make goals against it. I was hoping that my senior companion would help me to resist but it wasn't that way. Not only didn't he stop me but he fell right along with me and we both regret it now but it's too late. The act is already done the money is already spent. We just can't seem to resist the pan-ya (bakery). Maybe this week I'll be able to resist spending money because I have only 30 yen left. I sure am happy to be here even though I am getting fat from all the pan I'm eating. I'm thankful for my companion. He teaches me a lot by his example, especially how to use time wisely and do things as

quickly as possible. He is the only person born I ever saw heat a hard-boiled egg in one bite.



... One of the most important things I have learned is listening to the spirit and following its counseling's. What I mean, or what I am talking about are little things, such as going to bed on time, arranging time efficiently, keeping the shibu (branch) clean, keeping accurate records, following up on prospective investigators etc. If everyone would do these things as directed by the spirit we wouldn't really have a big need for other people like Zone Leaders or District Leaders to kick us in the pants to get us going. I know I am one that needs to improve. Many times I hear that small voice, but I really don't give it all I have to carry the work out. From now on I am going to give the spirit a better chance to work in me by following it better, that I may be an example to my companion and fellow missionaries.

... I've learned at least one lesson since I've been out here, that is that you can't prove the gospel to anyone. When you teach with a true spirit of Christ-like love, knowing that what you give will truly help them, then they will listen.

... This past week was definitely the most spiritually uplifting one of my mission so far. I guess the reason was that it started off with the taikai (conference). It really gave me added strength to hear the other Elder's testimonies and also just to get together as a group. The main reason though, that made this week so good for me was the fact that I sold 4 Book of Mormons. I know I'm not on a mission simply to be a salesman, but, after 2 weeks of being rejected door after door, and never having sold a Book of Mormon all on my own without my companions help, it was simply refreshing to all of a sudden meet 4 people

who would listen to our message long enough and to have interest enough to buy the book.



... I have found that my rate of learning is related directly to my desire and dedication, also to my relationship to the Lord. One thing that I have really given a lot of thought to ever since I first came out here is how we are supposed to dendo (proselyte). I realize there are many ways, but I don't feel like we should be concerned only about how many hours we spend dendoing, but in what way we dendo. Is it efficient? Is it with the spirit? Is it the most important thing at the time? I feel that if I could answer yes to all these questions then I am doing the correct thing at the correct time. I feel that the most important of these questions is, "is it the most important thing?" And then if it is the most important thing at the time then, "do it with the spirit".

... I had the experience this last week of seeing the power of the Holy Ghost change a person's life. I saw a person's life, goals, and future change 180 degrees in a matter of a couple of days.

... And what a testimony it was to me of the power of prayer coupled with honest humility. It wasn't until that person admitted to herself that there wasn't anything more important in the world than to know if Christ is our Savior and Joseph Smith was a Prophet. And with a sincere desire to know and faith she prayed. And received an answer. You should have seen the tear-streaked face as she bore this testimony to me and asked if we wouldn't teach her the gospel. It was then I got a glimpse of a broken heart and a contrite spirit. If you would have known her before you might say a miracle had taken place.

... We're all doing pretty good except for one thing. My mom said she sent my money three weeks ago but I haven't got it in my bank account yet. As a consequence I have spent about a dollar in the past two weeks. It's a great way to save money but you can sure get hungry doing it.



... Guess you've probably heard about the 2 or 3 earthquakes we had down here the past week. We are hoping for a bigger one next time, Ha Ha. Maybe people would then forget their money and think about their families..

... Well, I can't think of anything to say this week. I have caught 7 rats here in the branch. Well, that's all.

... I love my mission more than I ever imagined I would! My dode (companion) had his birthday and I made him a chicken dinner and cake that turned out more like brownies. (But it was the thought desho, right?). My companion is a great Elder! I really love him and love working and dendoing (proselyting) with him. He's going to be a good District Leader and shape things up around here. You'll be pleased with him. He really appreciated your birthday card and says it's something he'll treasure for life.

... Today is my birthday, President. I'm one year older missionary. It seems like yesterday that you patted my little "bottom" and sent me off to Nagasaki. I should say I've really grown and learned a lot in this past year, and I have, but I sure have a burning desire to learn a lot more. It's just like papaya sukimono (pickled). President. The more you eat the gospel the hungrier you get. It's the only food I've ever eaten and hoped to get fat on.

Looking back, I think this first half of my mission has been the greatest spiritual experience I've had. I haven't taken part, or been the instrument in any miracle "conversion" stories or anything, but through study and prayer my testimony has been strengthened and solidified into a pretty good size rock.



... I'm fine I think, except tomorrow I won't be a teenager anymore. Boy, I'm getting old.

... I'm really finding out all the time the things I have to change and the places where I need improvement and I'm going to work at all those weak points until I conquer them. You probably never realize until you go on a mission how weak and undeveloped you are, not only in the gospel but in every-day life. The Lord expects a lot from us and so we have to put forth all the effort that is in us or we can't excel and improve.

... My family is getting the hay in a lot faster this year than we've ever done it before. I can't believe it! They don't need me.

... I start a new week and a new year today. I'm twenty years old today, unbelievable, twenty is really old.

... I keep getting trunky letters from my parents. My mom is taking some Japanese courses at the University, so she's trying out all her stuff in her letters.

... Weekly thought: It is alright to pull your cow out of the mud on the Sabbath, as long as you didn't put him there the night before..

... My kid brother just got his call to the Alaska-Anchorage Mission. I was sure excited to hear that. I was afraid all that glory he was getting playing college football was going to his head but I guess he's still as humble as me.

... My companion and I aren't what you would call men with golden voices. We have a rough time getting through the Family Home Evening songs. It's mainly my fault. Maybe from now on you could audition my upcoming dodes (companions).

... It's my dad's birthday. He's probably out herding cows. At least that's what he usually does.

... Life seems to be bittersweet, but our Heavenly Father makes the bitter bearable and the sweet everlasting.

... This work is sometimes hard, sometimes easy, sometimes fun, and sometimes discouraging, but you know what? I like It!!

... I am not fine. I have got a cold. We were given two futons (Japanese bedding). We sleep warm now. My futon was bad, but I didn't monku (complain). This was a blessing of the Lord. I thought so. Yesterday I received a package from my home. In that there are many warm underwears. For example, Long Johns and some dried fishes. I am thankful for this work. I want to be healthy again soon (written by a Japanese Elder).

... As I reflect on myself for the first time in my life, I am so happy for just being alive and being a child of God. It is a great feeling. I received a recording from some of my friends back home and it really hit me hard how lost they are and how lost I was back home. I thought I was happy but now I can see that it was the happiness of the world which is not really happiness at all but something with a false front to it. Being on a mission is bringing me to the realization of just who I am and what my purpose is.

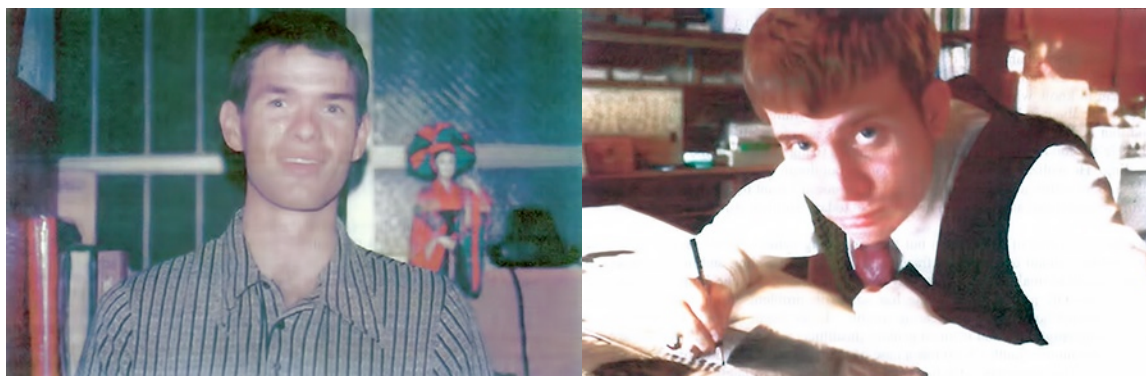


... I wanted so much to be able to tell somebody about the gospel but my Japanese is so bad. I really prayed that if I find a good person I would have the ability to tell them

something. One door I knocked and this married lady answered. I started telling her about Family Home Evening but since they were just married I changed to a Book of Mormon approach. Thoughts just came to my mind. She really got a lot of interest so I bore my testimony to her and she bought a Book of Mormon. She probably just felt sorry for me, I don't know. I just hope the Holy Ghost bore record of the truthfulness of the message. Oh, I just wish I could've told her more than I did. I guess I've just got to develop more patience.

... At her baptism, I was lucky enough to be the one performing it, and that was one of the best experiences in life. But the thing that got me most is when my dode (companion) was confirming her and all the senkyoshi's (missionaries) were participating. I realized for the first time what a real force the Holy Ghost is as my dode said, "received the Holy Ghost". I just felt it go out of my body through my hands to her. I was shocked because it was so real a force that my body could feel it leaving. Also, I realized that it's really there in me just waiting for me to tune in so that I feel its guidance continually in my life.

... Well, had a little action down here in the way of weather. The typhoon kind of slowed down the dendo (proselyting) for a while, but it gave us an opportunity to help the members out a little and show both the members and the investigators that the church is concerned with all the facets of their lives. We visited all the members and investigators before the typhoon to help close the storm windows and set us for the storm. Then we checked on them after it was over to help them with the cleanup.



... I think as missionaries here in Naha we really had a humbling experience yesterday. Elder Smith after finding out that his father had just died, just really got hold of himself. While the rest of us really felt stunned he strengthened us. Then after we ate he went out and proselyted. It just really humbled me to see Elder Smith go out and serve the Lord as written in the scriptures where Christ said to let the dead bury the dead and come follow me. I just felt like crying when I saw how strong he was. I know if it were me that it would probably crush me. He is just a really super missionary. I'm really thankful for the opportunity of working with him and receiving his help and choice spirit.

... I sure appreciated your phone call, President. I had kind of a sick feeling all day Saturday. but I'm alright now. Of course, when I found out that my father had died, I could

hardly control myself. But the first thing I did was pray for comfort from my Heavenly Father. It was really strange. At that time I received assurance that if I was faithful that I will be able to see my father again. It was really a peaceful and calm feeling. Of course I'll never be able to forget my father. I loved him more than you'll ever know, President. It is very hard for me to accept the fact that he is gone. But the one I am worried about now is my mother. The rest of the family is ok, but she took it very hard. I talked to her and my two sisters and brother on the phone Saturday night. They all said that everything would be alright, and that they wanted me to continue serving the Lord until the end. But my family has always been very close and it is going to be hard for them. Especially since the only ones left at home now are my mother and my 7 year old brother. I pray that the Lord will guide and protect them.

... We picked up another investigator family this week and as we were teaching them my companion asked them if they thought the Family Home Evening program was a good thing to have in the home. One of the boys in the family came right out and said, "nope, Pd rather watch TV and do the things I want to do." It made me think back to the times when our Home Teachers came to our house how I felt. I probably would have said the same thing if I hadn't been born in the church. I thought he was a little weird when he said he had better things to do, but I know how he feels and I don't hold it against him.



... People are really the same all over the world. Probably the thing I like best in Japan is the people and the opportunity I have to talk and work with them. I think Japanese kids are the cutest little things around. Families are so important, aren't they. I'm sure grateful for the wonderful family I've got. We, as missionaries of Christ's true church, have something really special to give to the families of Japan, that is "Katei no Yube" (Family Home Evening) program. I'm thankful for all the things I've learned about this program at last taikai (conference). The new things I learned there have really helped out the families we are teaching. I really have a testimony of this program and of this church. It really means a lot to me when I can look eye to eye at investigators or stand before the members of the church and say with a sincere tear in my eye, that I know that Joseph Smith saw God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ. Wow, that's the greatest experience. The mission field is the place for me.

... We were able to give a good Katei no Yube (Family Home Evening) last week. The father was a school teacher over on Sakurajima and he had twin boys. We met him on the

ferry with some help from the Lord prompting us on who to contact. We will be going back. We also were able to make a meeting for a Katei no Yube off the street. We had a couple of guys come up to us on the street and say they wanted to talk to us so we set up a meeting for Wednesday. It should be interesting. We also have 2 more Katei no Yube's for the 1st week in November. Here is proof that the Katei no Yube approach works. The Lord is really guiding us now more than ever before.



... This week my companion did the thing that all missionaries dread; he fell in the beni ditch (open sewer). It could have happened to anybody but it happened to my dode (companion). Other than that the Lord is really blessing us with opportunities to teach many people about the gospel.

... Well, I guess the most exciting thing that happened this week was my little accident. I put my arm through the hall window. Boy, you really have to be careful going down those Japanese stairs, you can kill yourself! Anyway, despite my accident, we are still doing the Lord's work.

... One complaint I do have; my crummy bicycle and I just can't get along together. It's been trying to wipe me out ever since I got here and this week it's done a real good job of spreading me all over the road. It's only fallen apart about ten times now though so I guess I shouldn't complain, at least it goes fast (no brakes). Really, if I can learn to be more careful I think I'll survive a while longer. We have so many good investigators I don't have time to play around with ignorant bicycles.

... This week has been very interesting. We contacted a lady who said that she had not only heard of the church but she had bought a Book of Mormon and had read most of it. This was the first time this had ever happened to me. We didn't set up an appointment but we are going back to see her. I was really surprised. Then on Monday night, my companion was erasing the blackboard and one of the bolts holding it up popped out and it swung down. In the process it knocked a speaker which hung right above it off the wall. Since I was standing right under it, I got hit. I got a small cut behind my ear and wasn't feeling too well for a while, but I feel just fine now. I wouldn't want to do it again.

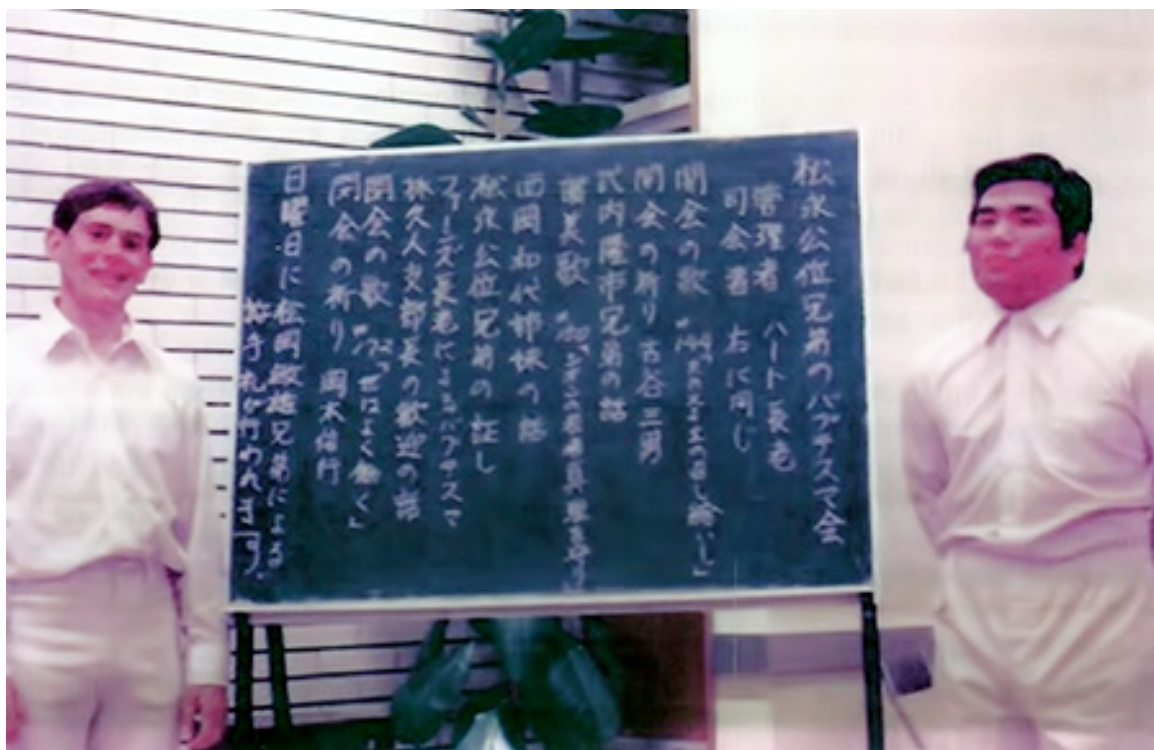


... As I was slowly, carefully going straight on the road on my bike, the car in front suddenly turned left, and I turned too, to avoid hitting it, yet I brushed against it, so after getting off from the road, the man in the car came to see if I was alright I said yes, and after my companion and I talked to him and sold him a Book of Mormon. I'm happy for that, but unhappy for my unskillfulness on bikes. I will be more cautious and watchful now and still try to stay close to my companion. Of course. I'm fine. The Lord blesses us to learn lesson from experience.

... Something happened yesterday that you might like to hear about. My dode (companion) and I were hurrying to a meeting on Sunday, and he wasn't looking and hit a stopped car and went into the beni (sewer) ditch. After I found out that he was alright and got his bike out, we had a good laugh together. I sure wish I would have had that movie camera.

... Well, I got out of the hospital yesterday. I need to go back next week for a check-up and then in a month for another X-ray. To tell you the truth I really didn't want to leave the

hospital. There are still some people in there that need to get a Book of Mormon. While I was there I was able to place six Book of Mormons to nurses. They are all reading it and one of them is praying morning and night. They all really want to know the truth and are interested in eternal life. I was there 23 days and it went fast. It is going to be super hard to get into the routine of things again. It's like starting all over again. The people at the hospital were very kind to me. Therefore, I really want to help them out and teach them. Just about all of them have interest in the church now and want to read the Book of Mormon. I guess that hospital was a good experience after all. I really want to teach them.



... This past week I have been somewhat affected by an insect bit which caused a great deal of soreness and swelling from walking. This is why the latter part of this week has become scantily in proselyting hours. My foot is getting better now because of the medicines a doctor prescribed.

... This week I guess the most unusual thing that happened was that I spent my first Christmas away from home. It was a real different experience and made me appreciate my parents and family even more. Well lately it's been colder than a dead Eskimo's big toe. I hear they had snow in Nagasaki and I missed it. Oh well, maybe I'll have white Christmas next year.

... This has really been a special week for me. I hope it was just as special for you. Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday we went to various schools, hospitals, and Old Folks homes and put on programs, played Santa Claus, and brightened up some little children eyes and put a smile on some teeth-less faces. I really had a good Christmas. In the morning we read about the birth of Christ and its meaning for us. Then we went to a

handicapped children's hospital and participated in the Kodomo Taikai (Children's Conference). Those little kids are really hanging in there. It was really something special to talk with them for a while. It really broke my heart at first to see their little imperfect bodies with braces on legs, etc. but they were so genki (healthy) and making the best of it. I played catch with a little boy, that only had one hand, for about 5 minutes, and he only dropped the ball once, and that was probably my fault. After Christmas I had the opportunity to talk to many people at the Shoten (shopping area) and to bear my testimony. It was the greatest opportunity to live and talk to the people, to see how much they need what we have to offer them. I've talked to many people with many different personalities, beliefs, and ideas. I've born testimony to them of a way to improve life and themselves. This gospel is just so beautiful and simple. It's hard to understand why few people see its divinity. I really love the work and talking to people about the church.



... Like all missionaries who become Seniors, I wonder at my ability. I am to say the least somewhat frightened. However frightened I may be, I realize that I was called through you by my Heavenly Father. I am or must be prepared to do the kind of job my Heavenly Father wants me to do. I also look at it as another step in my preparation to do His work later on in this mission and in my life. All things lead to something else and I can only hope that I will be able to take this opportunity to grow and utilize it to the best of my ability. I've got to grow! I got a lot of growing up to do. much preparation to accomplish.

... My first Christmas in Japan has come and gone already and it was justly celebrated with something that I will always hold dear to me. Christmas Eve we were invited to sing some Christmas carols at an orphanage. As we sang, my dode (companion) made balloon animals for the little kids. Those children are so special. I just love every one of them. The

children put on a special Christmas program there at the orphanage. It, for me really helped to catch the Christmas Spirit.



... Our Santa program gives you a nice feeling when you see the faces of all those little kids light up. And yesterday was our English Christmas party. It was a good success and we all had a lot of fun. I think this year I've felt the real meaning of giving a little more deeply. My mother has sent me box after box of candy, socks and little goodies like that for the last week and I know they can't really afford it. Especially this time of year and she keeps sending them airmail. I can really feel the love of my family all the time. I wish I could do the same for them, but right now as they have told me before, I'm doing the very best thing that I could be doing, and I love every minute of it.

... I hope you had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We went to an orphanage to sing and we made some Spanish Pinyata's with candy, etc. inside. It was really successful and the spirit of the Lord was present, as we all felt it. This was probably one of the happiest Christmases I've ever had, because it was truly one of giving and not receiving. Of course the joy we received from doing this was worth all the effort put forth.

... My companion was really brave during Oshogatsu (New Year's). We had a dinner appointment with a real good family on the first and I forgot that he'd only been out a couple of weeks. W^hen I turned to him the first time and he was a little pale and I asked him if he knew what he was eating. He said no and not to tell him until he had finished. When I told him it was fish eggs he nearly lost it all. He ate almost everything though so he did real well. I can see he won't be hard to please when it comes to food. After two dinners on the first, thought I think he'd had enough for one day. Shogatsu was sure a lot bigger than I had expected.



The last 6 Months

Dear President:

... I've had a Japanese companion for so long now that the other day when I was shaving, I looked into the mirror and I was really surprised to find that I have blue eyes and a big nose.

... My bike has been giving me guff the past couple of weeks. First, I hit a big bump and bent the back axle and the frame, got that fixed, and about a week ago later the handlebars broke off. then last week my brakes out at a intersection so I go flying through a red light. Other than my bike problem, everything else is just great.

... Recently we met an interesting guy at a high school, a teacher. He said that he was prejudice against the Mormons. Then last year he went to America and visited Idaho and Utah. He said one Monday night in Idaho he was with a family that got together and had

an organized evening of fun and entertainment (family home evening). It was really a nice program he thought. Now he is not prejudice anymore. Boy, we were excited to hear that. He is going to help us introduce it to the other faculty members,



... Well, another week has zipped by and that many more people know about the gospel or at least a little about the church. I was thinking, just think of all those people that were introduced to the gospel in the world last week. How many know about the Joseph Smith story and then how many more need to hear it this week and then next week and the next week. We really have our hands full. No time at all for slacking. I really feel that Satan is at work too. I think I have seen him get in the hearts of people and change them. So I guess we better just out work him.

... The Lord is opening many doors and peoples hearts to us. Pd like to share one good experience with you. We went on a wild goose chase looking for what seems to be a faulty address, and giving up went to return home. We waited at the bus stop for a minute and had a few minutes. I felt like we should go to the house nearby. We didn't have much time, I was reminded, but as we opened the door and received a warm welcome and please come on in, we would love to hear, we knew why we had the feeling. This week will be the third time we will meet with them.

... Last night my dode (companion) and I had a meeting and it was raining so hard I had the thought come to mind to cancel but just couldn't feel good about it. So we drove our bikes and it was raining so hard that it took us almost a half hour to get there. Well, the meeting was canceled because the man said his wife became ill this morning. However he was really surprised that we came in the rain. How glad we were that we followed the

spirit and went to the meeting as we had planned. Even though the meeting was canceled and we were soaked we had that great feeling inside.



... In the taikai (conference) you emphasized the importance of each and every member being a missionary. I never realized how vital that is, or how poor a job we as simple members of the church are doing, until last Sunday night. A few weeks ago as Elder Jones and I were doing some house to house contacting, we met the Smith's an American family working for the government from Nevada. They have lived in Nevada all of their lives. Apparently the majority of the people are Mormons. They said many of their best friends were Mormons, and every single day for over 23 years he worked side by side with Mormons in his business. They said sure, they knew all about us. We did leave them with a Book of Mormon, which they had seen before and got a meeting to tell them more about us for last Sunday night. That experience was simply beautiful. Despite the fact we had to stumble through our broken English, we had a most spiritual experience. We taught them about Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon, and the attributes of our Father in Heaven. They were dumbfounded as they listened in perfect silence and amazement. When the lesson was finished, Mr. Smith really had no questions, he thought our message was simply beautiful. But, he did have one thing that he felt most unbelievable and astounding, that was the fact that in all of his 24 years living in the heart of Mormonism, never once had any of his friends so much spoken a word concerning this most sacred event. He said he learned more from us about our religion in that 1 hour and 15 minutes than he had in all the 24 years he lived in Nevada. He said he's always been willing to listen to other people's views on religion, not only has been tolerant, but he said he's actually had questions whose answers he's been searching for himself. But even with this attitude, never once had he been approached by his Mormon friends to be told this most

spectacular event. That is simply sad. There's no excuse. I often wonder how ungrateful our Father in Heaven must think we are. To think, Mr. Smith had to wait 24 years and travel half way around the world to hear a message his next door neighbor should have



told him long ago. I hope and pray I never forget that lesson.

... A few weeks ago we were contacting people on the street, and ran into an older gentleman who really had interest in our message. He invited us right there on the spot to go with him to his house and talk. He then said his son was a member of our church, but we just assumed he was confusing us with some other Christian church. But finally we recognized that his son is Bro. Tanaka who has been a member for over 5 years. The father was really excited to hear more, so we've been teaching them regularly ever since. The sad thing is that Brother Tanaka had never introduced the gospel to his father during those 5 years, but his father had to wait until he "accidentally" met us on the street and pleaded with us to come to his house before he had the opportunity to hear the gospel. This is something, he ought to have heard from his own son years ago.

... My companion and I were in shoten (business stores) street contracting when I saw this one guy walk by. He looked like he was unhappy about something that had happened to him. The thought came into mind - that guy has been searching for something for a long time. This message we have is just the thing he needs and what he is looking for. When this thought came into my mind seeing as how he had already gone by us I offered a quick prayer to Father above, "Father that guy just walked by us look as if he has been searching for the message which we have to give. If you want us to contact and teach him have him walk back by us again. When I finished I turned to Smith Choro (Elder), did you see that

guy that walked by us. He told me he had and he had noticed him also. When I told him what I had felt when he had walked by and he told me he had felt like contacting him too. By this time our contact was 50 yards away. He had stopped as if he was looking at something in the window. Then I said to Smith Choro. well if he walks back by us then we'll know the Lord wants us to contact him. Sure enough he started walking back towards us, first hesitantly and then at his normal walking pace. As he started to go by us again, we stopped him. Smith Choro after introducing ourselves and asking him the purpose of life questions tried to get an appointment to meet with him later on that night and show him a movie "Man's Search for Happiness". The guy told him that he couldn't meet with him. Then he noticed that Smith Choro was a little disappointed and was afraid he was going to give up on the idea so he said, "well is tonight the only night I can see it?" Then after we had set another appointment he asked if he could bring a friend. Well, we showed them both the movie last Sunday and they were both interested. Smith Choro apologized to them for going 10 minutes over time in our meeting when Mr. Tanaka said, "Don't worry about that, the more I hear you talk the more interesting it gets."



... About two months ago, I sold a Book of Mormon to a man at a park and he gave us his address and said, "it would be fine if we came to visit him." We looked for his house one stormy night and couldn't find it. Sunday night we had 2 hours to dendo (proselyte) and we didn't know exactly where we should go, so we prayed about it. I thought of this father, then we took the Joseph Smith story tape and flip chart and headed for an unknown place. As we rode I prayed for direction. When we left I stated that we would go right to it. I didn't remember his face but he said he remembered me. We asked him if we could come in and talk to him for a while. He said sure. We introduced ourselves and then taught him about Joseph Smith and more clearly explained the Book of Mormon. He

hadn't read it before but when we left he stated that he wanted to study it in detail and asked us to teach him. We said we would be happy to. Before returning home we had to give thanks to our Maker for helping us.



... I met a real fine man down by the wharf and he was from Tokyo. He had heard of the Mormons but only heard they were a very strict organization and that was all. He seemed to have some time and interest so as we walked along the wharf I had the opportunity to paint him a small picture of God's Kingdom on earth. He was taking in everything I had to tell him. In one hour I had the opportunity to bear testimony of Joseph Smith's vision, receiving the plates, the Book of Mormon, Jesus Christ's church was restored and organized in 1830, and we are receiving inspiration today, example of Katei no Yube (Family Home Evening) program and he took all the pamphlets I had. He is the only person that told me to my face that he really had interest. He said that the Church Office Building in Tokyo is about 100 meters down the street from where he works. He said he would get in contact with them.

... We had one more house to meet our goal for the day and so we were walking down the street and passed this one house and wasn't going to stop. Then we heard some kids inside and so we said, "why not?" We knocked on the door and the mother answered. Before we could say anything she went and got her husband and cleaned the front room, called the kids in, and then invited us in. It seemed almost like they were expecting us. We sat down and talked to them. The father loves his family, wants to help them, and wants to know more about the Christian religion. One thing he said when he was inviting us over for the next meeting and for dinner was that his wife was the best cook in all of

Kagoshima, and was very proud of her. You never hear that type of stuff in Japan. It was really neat.



... We went back to finish shokai-ing (introduce) a coup of kyodai's (brothers) living in the geshiku (student's apartment). There are 10 of them from 20 to 25 years old. They were all waiting when we got there. Last week we told them about Joseph Smith and this week we were going to explain the Book of Mormon and how they could find out if it is true. You know, without the Spirit and help of the Lord that could be a scary experience. But thanks to preparation and the Lord's help we were able to pull it off. The highlight of it all was when we got to the part of explaining the Book of Mormon, we unloaded a packet of 10 Book of Mormons on the table and passed them out. At the end all but 3 kyodai's bought books and wanted to read it. Couple of them laughed at us at first, but when we testified the spirit was there helping us. I've never seen a group of guys like that shut-up so fast and listen so hard as they did. They've got interest now. They know they have to find out if it's true or not. We walked away feeling really good about it. Out of 10 of them 7 are now investigators. It was a real testimony to see how the Lord can work through you if you've done your part (preparation) and have a little guts.

... I've really become aware lately of how the Lord is helping us. All we have to do is sit back and take note of it. Last week my companion and I contacted again with this family, a young couple who had been receiving lessons about one and a half months ago. This brother is back from his business trip and it looks like things will start rolling again. As we left the home, I mentioned to my companion, "wouldn't it be great if we could find another family in same apartment building?" The very next door we knocked happened to be that of one of the family which we just visited best friends. These families often get

together and do things. This Sunday we will visit both of the families and have a Family Home Evening. This is all too good to have happened by chance. I know that the Lord is literally opening doors for us.



... Last night, the first house was one I wasn't too sure we should go to but the house on the left caught my eyes and we went and my companion gave the Joseph Smith story to a fifteen year old youth and he was interested in the message. I was so touched by this youth and by the spirit he heard our message. After we had contacted this 15 year old youth, we contacted around 10 more people, and I was somewhat discouraged although the people were gracious and listened to our message. We stopped at a corner and I felt a great need to say a prayer, which I did. We turned left on the corner and contacted some people and came to a home, and a young lady in her twenties answered. She invited us in and I felt happy inside and also felt she would be receptive to our message. It turned out she bought a Book of Mormon and seemed interested in the gospel. It turned out that my companion knows this young lady's aunt who received a blessing from our Elders and also attended our Eikaiwa (English) classes before. Immediately after returning to our apartment, we knelt and gave thanks to our Lord for the wonderful blessings he bestowed upon us.

... My number 2 suit just gave up the ghost. An extemporaneous autopsy prove conclusively that the cause of death was directly related to deterioration of fabric in the posterior section of the pants induced by excessive wear and tear. While the remains rest in quiet repose, final plans for burial and disposition will be determined at a later date.

... We went to an old folks home and put on a program, the members and us and after the program was over, one of the members was playing the shamisen (a string instrument)

and the old people were standing up one at a time and started dancing. Well, I was sitting there all smiles and one old woman went to my companion and said lets dance. He turned beet red and would not then she came to me. The situation was so that I had to do it. She was 80 years old obaasan (grandmother). It was kind of fun and it sure did make the obaasan eyes and face light up. Well, that was my adventure for the week. Hope you don't mind that little dance. It lasted about 2 minutes.



... This week I had the privilege of baptizing an 18 year old man. I say man because he had the faith and courage to put aside what the world thinks and says and join God's Kingdom. This baptism was really special, the things that happened and things for me. First, it rained cats and dogs right up through the baptism speech and his testimony and just when I thought my prayers weren't going to be answered a big patch of blue sky moved in, exact opposition to the way the wind was blowing! This was my second baptism and second ocean baptism. The cove where it was held was flooded with sunshine just long enough for the baptism then the sky clouded over and it started to rain again. Besides the cove being flooded with sunshine, the spirit also flooded that little cove.

... Last Saturday we baptized our Kyodai (brother) over at Sakurajima. We were a little worried at first because he came over early Saturday morning and said he wanted to cancel it because the weather was bad. I talked with him a few minutes and said good or bad weather, the Lord's work will never stop. He left for home and I guess he prayed about it because he came back all beaming and ready for his baptism. The water was all choppy and really rough because of the strong winds as we rode the ferry across the bay. But as we neared the place for the baptism, everything just calmed right down for a while. After the baptism, which was just beautiful, the winds really started up again, but it was really a beautiful baptism.

... Last Saturday was another highlight of my mission. We had the beautiful experience of baptizing the Tanaka family and another koydai (brother) in one of the most spiritual atmospheres I've ever been in. Ever since Brother Tanaka was a young boy he kept having dreams of a blue, crystal clear lake in the mountains. When the missionaries were teaching him, the dreams began to occur more often. One day while at work he couldn't keep his mind on the job, so he decided to take the day off and try to find his lake. He drove to the mountains and began to hike up into them because he was sure it was there. While hiking he got lost and knelt down and prayed to find the way. After hiking a little

ways further he got on his knees again and prayed to find the way. He prayed three times and after the third prayer he looked up and saw in front of him an overgrown path he hadn't notice before. He followed the path a short distance when he came to a ridge and looking into the small valley below he saw what he had been dreaming about all these years. Saturday we baptized he and his wife and wife's brother in that blue crystal clear lake in the mountains. It was so beautiful and the spirit was so strong that I can't even describe it in words. It was truly one of the highlights of my life I'll never forget.



... We just had a kyodai (brother) read the Book of Mormon in 9 hours. He stayed up till 3 a.m. one morning. He says he wants the discussions, and is going to read the book again.

... The Book of Mormon. I really believe that is the conversion tool. Although it seems pretty hard the first time reading it through it. If the people are sincere about knowing the truth, the Book of Mormon will help give them a testimony. It really is a thrill when you see how an investigator will catch a glimpse of the truthfulness contained in the Book of Mormon. It truly is the only true book on the earth today. Well, we will keep getting those Book of Mormons out to the public cause they don't do any good on our shelf.

... I had kind of a disturbing experience last week. We have been working with a man who has apparently left his family and is now living by himself. We've spent many hours with him taking about what the purpose of life is, gave him the 1st half of the D discussion, left him a Book of Mormon and asked him to read Alma 32, particularly the analogy of a seed, growing into something beautiful. He didn't even read it. It really hurt. We are here delivering a message of love, happiness, peace, joy and eternal life. If a man

will expend just a small amount of effort in his life time to find out whether or not it's true, he can know with all his soul the true path to joy and will have a craving desire to pursue it. A lot of people say that any church will get you to where you're going, that they're all true and etc. Our only argument against them is that of our testimony, that such is not true and an invitation to delve into the Book of Mormon to see whether or not the message we bring to them is true. It seems to take some special spark to get them to accept that invitation. Some missionaries say that investigators must be prepared, implying that they're chosen and selected before they're found. I don't doubt that, that isn't true in some cases, but I think that same spark can come from the missionary. I'm sure that I don't yet have it. I'm not sure that I've yet seen it but I'm working and praying that I may obtain it to more fully do this work of the Lord.



... I love teaching out of the lesson plan. If I could get all the kyudoshas (investigators) from somewhere I would like to teach and nothing else. I like it most when I am given a few concepts and teach them and am allowed to answer the questions and everything. It's really a lot of fun. I think I would rather teach than do anything else. Our kyudoshas (investigators) are few so I hope we can gain some more. I think the reason I am really beginning to like to teach is because I can understand and speak a lot now. I had an experience on the train up to Kokura, K While sitting next to a 29 year old man I started talking to him. He asked me if I was in school here. I said "no. I am a missionary". Then I was wondering what would be the best way to introduce the gospel into his life. Before I had a chance to think of a way he turned to me and asked me to tell him about my religion. I was a little shocked. I started to get the feeling in my mind and heart that he was lead here and has been prepared for the gospel. I met him just before I got on the train and he asked me to sit next to him. I really had that feeling strong. He didn't have a family of

his own but he was living with his parents. He looked about 23 but was 29. I gave him all of the Family Home Evening and said he can take it home to his parents. Then I shokai (introduced) the Book of Mormon. I told him about the restoration of the Church and some of the contents of the Book of Mormon. The more I told him the more excited he got.. He asked a whole lot of questions about it. For 3 hours and 15 minutes straight we talked on the Book of Mormon. I then gave him the Book of Mormon. I felt if he was prepared and led here and wanted to give him the book. He had a lot of interest in the Church. I could tell that the things I told him touched him very much.



... Everything seems to be running smooth. Got a new pair of pants in the mall. Now I can go Kaisha (company) dendo (proselyting) without them straining to see the patches and holes in my pants.

... I got to see what the Japanese doctors are like. Frankly, I think they are needle happy.swear every time I went in to see a doctor he was poking a needle in me. When I went to the doctor we were sitting watching some people get shots while waiting for my doctor. This nurse (it looked as if it was her first day) was giving shots and when I saw her pull out a shot that was bigger than they give to horses in America, I thought it was a joke. I just really about died when I saw a man get that mono (thing) in his arm. T got the same thing later and it really blew me away. I will tell you truly, that the kind of shots they give in Japan for real, they have hanging in American doctors' offices as a joke. Actually if it didn't happen to me I would think it was funny.

... Japan's such a marvelous place! It's so beautiful to be here. It is here that I learned the true reason I came on a mission. It is here that I have strengthened my testimony so much.

It is also here that I have grown to love the Japanese people so much. The town isn't especially so special, although I really love little towns like this, but the people are wonderful. The Lord really knew what he was doing when he sent me to this mission, to this branch. The work is great! I'm so happy! My mission has become such a joy to me. My experiences and testimony gained during these 2 years will guide me to perfection and exaltation if I remain true.



... My companion and I had an unusual experience. We went to dinner with Tanaka-san and after went to a Obon (annual dance for the dead). Then by surprise they ask us if we would go up on the stage and sing. So we did and sang "There is Beauty All Around" in Japanese. Then we said who we were and told them how we had been here in Japan, told everyone the name of the Church and about English class. So all in all it was a very exciting experience. So we got 300 contacts that night. Let me tell you, because we were from a foreign country, everybody had their ears and eyes toward us. It was really fun even though we were shaking in our boots.

... Sure was hard to give up all those families to the other set of Elders this week with the transfer. Seems like I was just getting to know them too. Seems like it's that way in everything. When you just get to where you know what you are doing and things are working well, they move you on and you have to start all over again. Guess it keeps you from getting stagnant and causes growth. Really have learned a lot from my Japanese companion. He has really been a help to my Nihongo (Japanese). I can feel it growing every day. It seems to be coming a part of me. Funny about gifts from the Lord though, I've found they have to be worked for. I kind of figured that when you went on a mission everything was given to you because you were a missionary. But I've found out that it is

quite different. I've learned a lot of important things that I've needed in my life and things that I've needed to change. I thought that "I" was number one importance before, but I can see that it's being able to make people happy, not just the chuckle you receive from a funny comment, but something that makes them eternally happy which is the gospel. It builds your testimony to see the light of Christ in others and to see their eyes light up as you tell them about the gospel.



... You know ever since being made a District Leader it seems like I have had nothing but failures and mistakes, thus I have a hard time seeing my own progress. When I was younger I always had someone older to turn to when in trouble, now I'm that older Elder, I have been forced to depend on the Lord a whole lot more lately and He is teaching me many things now. This knowledge He is giving me has not come from any books, but simply through experiences, trials, failures, mistakes, etc.. and now I can really see why our mortal life is such an important part of our eternal progression.

... Well, two weeks ago I told you that we had 45,000 yen stolen. Then last week I wrote again and told you that another 50,000 yen was stolen. Well, guess what it is this week? That's right, we caught the thief trying to get in for the third time! Right after sacrament meeting was over my companion and I came in to fix some dinner and saw him trying to get in through the back window. We ran outside to get him and when he saw my companion he just sat down and was real nice about the whole thing. So while my companion watched him I called the police and we all went down to the station. The sad part is he had spent all of the money. Come to find out he has been taking money from churches all over.

... Saturday we were busy proselyting and didn't shop for Sunday dinner. So Sunday came and we weren't going to buy on Sunday, so we assumed we would have to go without. Well, we went out proselyting, and we were waiting on the corner at the stop light, to cross the street. Just then the Yaki imo (baked sweet potato) man came down the street. He passed us by, but then stopped a little ways down the block. He got out and came running back with two hot sweet potatoes and, for no apparent reason, handed them to us and took off back down the road. Well, I couldn't believe it. But I truly feel the Lord blessed us for not buying or going out to eat on the Sabbath. After a long fast, this was truly a blessing.



... The last week and a half, I have been going to a Japanese dentist to fix a tooth that has been giving me some problems. Wednesday was my last day when he finished the job and replaced the filling in my tooth. During this whole experience I have been a little apprehensive not knowing what was happening and afraid of adding a little gleam to my smile. So throughout this ordeal I very carefully watched the dentist to see what he was doing. Well, it seems that Tuesday he finished drilling out my tooth and made a mold for the filling and put a temporary filling for overnight. So Wednesday, I went to the dentist not exactly sure what to expect and wondering how he was going to fill my tooth. Well I found out. He sat me down in the chair and messed around for a few minutes like they always do, and then he brought the filling he had cut and started to press it into my tooth with his fingers and then before I knew what was happening, the dentist had this huge punch and the dentist brought this hammer and pounded the filling right into the tooth! Then to finish the job he pounded on the filling for the next fifteen minutes until it resembled a tooth. Well, that was quite an interesting experience, and although I have to

admit it was cheap. I think I will leave the Japanese dentist to the Japanese. I kind of like my jaw in one piece.



... It seems like when I look back on my mission I was kind of like a wet firewood, at first I just kind of rode along and didn't quite know what I was doing, then things got better and interesting and my fire got lighted and burned more and more and now I really want to do this work more than anything. It maybe a little late, but not too late I guess. Wet firewood is kind of a rotten example but that's kind of what it feels like. I've really been studying the general authority's talks and things, lately, and have really learned a lot of things.

... I learned another lesson this week that I'll never forget. The other night I sat down to think. Cause I want to love the Japanese people and my companion and everyone else, but I didn't know how. And while I was thinking it came to me. Cause you can give people things you can do a lot of talking, you can do things for people and still not show them your love. But when you show a sincere desire in them, when you show your love, both in action and in speech they will feel your love, I love this mission. I just wish it were a little longer.

... Last night our meetings fell through. As we were headed towards the station I felt gloomy and very humbled. At a crosswalk I turned to the man next to me and said, "konban wa, Ogenki desu ka?" (Good Evening, how are you?) He was so surprised that he dropped what he was holding. After we got across the street he turned to me and asked if we were Mormon missionaries. I told him yes. It turned out that six years ago he had received all the lessons and read the Book of Mormon. But he moved here without being

baptized. We took a taxi to his house, talked to him and made another meeting and then got back just in time to catch the train. What a great feeling.



... The other night my companion and I did some second timing on a family we had given the Meet the Mormons filmstrip to. We rang the doorbell, only to find the parents were both at their jobs and the only people home were four little kids, the oldest being a boy about eleven. Next was sister often, next, boy of nine, and last a little girl about one and a half, just as cute as can be. Well since the parents weren't home and we couldn't make a meeting, we said thanks and goodnight and left. They live on the fourth floor in an apartment building and as we were riding away, they all four were on the balcony saying "oyasumi nasai (good evening) bye bye." It made us so happy, my companion said to me, "hey we've got to do something for them", "I know"* was my reply. I suggested going to get them four Tirols (candy bars) and that sounded good to my companion so we did it. When we returned and gave them the Tirols, I could see the oldest boy, even though he was young, was touched. They were happy to see us again, especially because we had the Tirols. We felt good and as we were walking down the stairs, relating to each other how good we both felt, we heard a "wait a minute" from the top of the stairs, and as we turned and looked, we saw it was the oldest boy. "Be careful as you return" was all he said, then he ran around the corner back to his home. I got that warm feeling like I've never felt before. I was sure someday he will be a member. I just felt it. I know he will never forget us. I'm glad I'm a missionary!

... I had many tests and trials which really took all I had. Late in the week, I was comforted in a dream. I had my grandfather who passed away last year was in a room speaking to some people, and I was placed there. I remember only the words, "Thank God

for rough difficulties. Be thankful to God for tests that try you to the center." This experience helped me realize that it's these types of tests that really purify and help me draw close to the Lord deep from within. And so, I learned more of how adversity is a blessing with many lessons and rewards. Hopefully I'm approaching worthiness for the blessings I ask so I might do the work I've been called to do more righteously. I'm also learning now even the little things that have lessons and applications which help explain the big and difficult problems. I've also learned of the importance of preparing oneself to be worthy of the doors the Lord will open and opportunities that will be given. It seems here for me it's easy to slip into a medium-ness. It's easy to get by without doing or pushing my all. I certainly need to push and continue pushing myself and as I do this that it gets harder, the trials come and things get rough. But I'm glad I don't know why but it makes me enjoy it more and I do love the work. To do it right isn't easy and it's not always enjoyable at first but the feelings gained, the strengthening of testimony and faith and doing best what I can results in joy.



... I have learned that other people have feelings also. I had just been taking my companion for granted and I was beginning to expect him to jump every time I said to. I'm now taking other people's thoughts into consideration. I'm trying to pattern myself after my favorite missionaries, because I've really been influenced and impressed by their examples. I feel that if I do my best and try to become like them I can't help but go right and for sure success will come my way. Being in the proper frame of mind and having the right attitude is probably the most important preparation I as a servant of the Lord must obtain.



... The really good answers and blessings I ask for come only after I give all I have, physically, mentally, as well as spiritually. Sometimes I think as I look back that I push myself and give more than I thought I ever had, yet then I also think if the struggles and opposition and tests had been a little greater perhaps the blessings would be too. But I am constantly seeing how the Lord expects my best and my all so I can receive the necessary guidance and blessings to serve him as I should.

... I prayed and thought about each of our investigators families and dode (companion) and etc. and literally cried when I thought how much I love them and want them to grow and receive the blessings. I was able to feel in just a small way the great love our Father in Heaven must feel for all of us.

... When you first come out on your mission, you've got a lot to learn about lots of things. Through a lot of experiences, you eventually get to the level where you can start helping someone else along that road. As you reach that point, you're given more of an opportunity to serve. The bigger job requires the more sacrifice and service. You'll be rewarded according to the amount of service and sacrifice you're willing to give. Service is really important. It's not only important to be willing to serve, but to be able to accept and honor the name that service requires. If you can't honor your own title, neither will anyone else. It's good to have 2 years to serve the Lord. I love it.

... I think perhaps that the last two or three weeks here in this branch have been the biggest strength to my faith in my life. I have an undeniable testimony of the fact that we are working for a god of miracles today just the same as the apostles of old. You see, last night the Lord performed a tangible miracle for me and my dode (companion). We were preparing an American meal for a family that I pray will be investigators next week. In my haste to make room for some jello in our little freezer, I poked a hole in the freezer wall while chipping away some ice. The freezer gas started pouring out and we didn't know what to do. I asked my dode how his faith was and he said it was "up", so we knelt down together and told the Lord to hurry up and fix the freezer. He kindly answered our prayers and stopped the gas, set the jello, cooked the chicken, kept the mashed potatoes hot and even helped us whip out a chocolate and banana cream pie just like mom used to make. By the way, today the freezer is broken again.



... Had another experience in the branch that sure is making a lot of members and kyudosa's (investigators) think. One of the shimai's (sister's) was sick with what I understand was a liver disease. She was supposed to go to the doctor for a lot of tests and possible operation. The night before she went the Shibuchō (Branch President) and I gave her a blessing and promised her that she'd be well. Two days later the shimai came up to me with tears in her eyes and said that the doctor told her that he couldn't find one trace of the disease. He kept telling her "shinjirare nai" (I can't believe it), "it's got to be here". She went in for more check-ups and he still couldn't find what was there a few days before.

... Yesterday we really had an experience that I will always remember. When we came to the branch to study the 20 year old kyodai (brother) that we are teaching was there. The Lord has really worked a miracle in him. Before he wouldn't pray or study and just suddenly he is really praying and studying hard. Anyway he and his brothers are living away from home to go to college. He received a telephone call from his mother just the other day. She told him to stop the church and believe in the family God they have. He came here just really feeling bad and not knowing what to do. We talked to him for a about two hours and all three of us got on our knees and prayed, one after the other, each taking turns. He left with a really good spirit and want to study.



... I've got a lot to learn but I know if I can become humble and teachable I can do whatever is required of me. Our one family is really doing good now and we should be getting quite a few shokais (introductions/ referrals) this week. We ran into a fellow who just wanted some help. He'd been in a car wreck and had lost his memory. We told him about Christ and the power of the priesthood we hold through Him. We asked him if he believed this power could heal him and he said "yes" I believe. Tuesday we are going to give him a blessing so we're fasting. It's a great opportunity to bring the gospel of eternal salvation to these people and able to exercise the priesthood we hold. I love this work.

... I thank the Lord each night for the opportunity to serve Him anywhere, with anyone, and doing any particular assignment or calling. I am so blessed I don't feel worthy, but real thankful. I will continue to pray for my father that he will accept once again the gospel. I'll work with the Japanese people with the love I have for my Father then I'll be successful.

... I had interview for baptism. She was truly humble and wanted to be baptized, was repentant, really knew it was right but said she didn't receive that witness of the Holy Ghost and couldn't quite say that she knew it was true, she believed it and had a burning desire. I asked her to kneel in prayer. She prayed of the message of the restoration. She prayed from her heart to know the Book of Mormon was true, Joseph Smith was a Prophet, he saw God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ and the one and only church of God was restored through Him. It was a beautiful prayer with tears in her eyes. Afterwards I challenged her to go home that evening by herself somewhere and fully repent and pray for a testimony of the truthfulness, take 30 minutes and have another talk with the Lord. Friday night as she stood up to bear her testimony she told everyone now she knew it was

true and she told how she knew it. The Lord has answered her humble prayer. I knew He would and I so prayed also.



... I got a call from Miyazaki from Tanaka shimai (Sister) a 55 year old widow who was baptized on January 30th. She was just filled with joy over her own testimony and thankfulness, to our Father in Heaven, for opening the way for her. I had the opportunity of teaching her for several months while in Miyazaki. At that time, she had a testimony of of the gospel, but her faith was very weak. She was afraid to break away from traditions of her ancestors which have been handed down for centuries. Also she had to work to support two children of college age. She worked in a yarn shop 7 days a week, never having a day off. After pleading with her boss for time off to attend church, he said she could take time off during the week days, but by no means would he let her off on Sunday, that's the busiest day. If she wanted Sunday off. she'd have to find a new job, which she felt impossible. At that time we felt moved to promise her that if she would put her trust in the Lord, a way would be provided. She had many doubts, but she accepted the challenge and committed herself to be baptized. She was especially concerned because all in the Church seems so young, and she was so old, but she had faith. Well to make a long story short, after "sneaking away" from work many Sundays to attend church, and as an answer to her prayers of faith by our Father in Heaven, she was given Sunday off as a holiday, and she proved herself worthy of baptism. Our Father in Heaven will always provide a way if we will only do our part. An "obaasan" (elderly woman) was baptized, contrary to all the reason and logic of men, due to faith and prayers. It's simply a miracle, but something I feel could become much more common if we'd only try.

... My testimony about following your senior companion and receiving inspiration about your investigators grew by leaps and bounds. We had prepared for a lesson and I was all ready to go when my companion said, "I wonder if it would be better to do it Wednesday?" I thought to myself, why? Let's go teach them now. But I didn't say anything. So he called and said, "well it's a little late would it be better if we came Wednesday?" They said "yes". Well, that was all that was said about it and then Elder Smith came home and after about 20 minutes he says, "'oh did you get the message?" and we said, "What message?" "The family you were going to teach tonight called and cancelled. I was just amazed, we hadn't got the message from them but my dode (companion) did get it. I learned that you just do what your senior says and you'll be alright



... I love my mission more than I ever imagined I would! My dode (companion) had his birthday. I made him a chicken dinner and cake that turned out more like brownies, but it was the thought desho? My companion is a great Elder! I really love him and love working and dendoing (proselyting) with him. He's going to be a good District Leader and shape things up around here. You'll be pleased with him. He really appreciated your birthday card and says it's something he'll treasure for life.

... A truly great missionary has left Yanai, but for better "missions", Elder Smith. He is the longest missionary I've ever been with and really grew to understand, love him and yearn to become like him. He was a real teacher, fair and always clearly stating and pulling for the truth, and filled with love and understanding from the depths of his big heart. He knew and practiced such good human relationships. He could encourage you to improve at the same time he left it up to you to decide and to follow your conscience, a source of truth. He could joke with you but he without saying so would command our respect. He was humble, really and truthful about himself and others. He cried after a phone call from his 2 investigators, who told him that they received their sure testimonies and really knew now that this church is all true and really want to get baptized. He had tears of happiness and said to us. "I can't think of a better way to end my mission". He was "lengthening his stride" to the end- 2 meetings even on the last day. I hope I can be as hard working and going the extra mile to do things that help others even if they don't ask for it (like waxing chapel floors for members), to show our thankfulness and love. He is one great eternal brother I've grown to love.

I wish to tell you too, how much I love and hold dear the companionship of Jones Choro (Elder), my companion. We feel a very special brotherly relationship between each other, as if we were

meant to be in the same family. We feel we are, spiritually. We strengthen each other (and not only because we have an "Indian arm wrestle" occasionally). He is a truly great Elder and missionary. He is diligent at learning the Lesson Plan all day and continues to learn many new words every day. In these above things he by his example encourages me to do better too! He is made up of trust, faith, and great support because of his love, empathy, listening well and gift of understanding. He knows how to pep you up or lift up your faith and ideals. He has many a good suggestion, too! I hope to grow in love with him and share that love in the actions we do for our investigators.



... Last Tuesday night Elder Smith, Elder Jones and I went down to get Elder Tanaka at the eki (train station) but he didn't arrive so we came back and got a drink and decided to go dendo (proselyting) for a while. Well we got down to where we planned to go, and a lady passed us. We said "hello" to her when just then we look over at her house and it's on fire. Smoke is coming out of every crack! We three missionaries ran in the house and the whole roof was on fire. We got all the water we could but it was like playing with water guns. Me and Elder Smith started throwing everything out of the house, color TV, stereo, beds, tape recorders, futon's (sleeping mattresses and covers), you name it, we threw it out. After a while a few others were there to help us. We worked until we could see the fire over the top of us so we got out. While we were throwing stuff out the mother came running by with all her money. She did a head dive and fell right on her face. Well, President, all we could do was pass her out the door. The rotten thing about the whole thing is that the lady died. We sure felt rotten we couldn't do anything for her. I learned one thing from this experience, "the Lord guides His missionaries". We entered that neighborhood right when that fire broke out. The same morning we had placed a Book of Mormon at that house. Before I entered that house I stopped and I felt we had been sent there.

... Saga is a rough place to dendo (proselyte). The people here are not even interested in what we have to say. If they could know what they are turning down! It's kind of like trying to give away a million dollars and nobody wants it. Some people get really rude and some won't even open the door. Sometimes it's really depressing but I know deep down inside of me that there is an important work for me to do here. That is finding the golden families that are ready to hear the gospel.



... Sunday an interesting thing happened. Last Friday night my bike was stolen. Sunday night we had a meeting, so we were going out to our meeting on the bus. I'd ridden about 10 minutes and hadn't once looked out the window. I took one glance out the window, and there was my bike. So we stopped at the next stop and ran back and got it. I know the Lord sure does look out for us. That was the only time I even looked out the window and I just happened to see my bike.

... This time of the year is rough on meetings, but I'm excited about the branch's plans for the holidays. We missionaries are preparing a small chorus to appear throughout the city for the purpose of making a good impression. I think it's going to be good. That beautiful Catholic Church down the street had its first meeting today. One student came over to ask us how to become a Nun in our church. My dode (companion) had a rough time with that one. Things are looking pretty!



... Things are great in Kagoshima. We are working hard and the Lord is rewarding us. I have so many things to be thankful for. The Lord has surely blessed me in my life. I have really been blessed with wonderful parents, who have taught me in the ways of the Lord. They are just as grateful as I am for this great experience and opportunity that I'm having. They really have faith in me and are supporting me all the way. When we are working on the Lord's side we're on the winning team. If I keep working hard and pulling at least my share of the load the Lord will continue to bless and help me. The Lord didn't send us out here to fail. I'm doing fine here and I'm really loving it. I came across a good thought the other day, maybe you would like to hear it. "Happiness is wanting what you have." I know that enthusiasm is catchy and if we go out each day with a smile and an enthusiastic attitude it will spread to others. We bear such a happy glorious message as representatives of our living Redeemer, Jesus Christ. I pray that He will grant to us His strength and love to sustain us all in the great work that's going forth in the Japan Fukuoka Mission. Thanks for your inspiration.

... Time is flying and I'm still kicking so I'm OK I guess. Also my dode (companion) hates spiders. He's at my mercy now.

... And it came to pass in the 49th year of the reign of the Emperor in the seventh month on the 21st day of that month that Elder Smith, or in other words Elder Saki Spud, being so named after the traditions of his fathers, being grieved because of his neglect to his friend and leader President Nishimoto, began his epistle. And it came to pass that Saki Spud had labored with much diligence to bring the honest in heart unto the truth, but after much labor and much tribulation and suffering much because of the abundance of the "Triffs" (young Japanese girls who consistently hang around the church in their high school



uniforms trying to look cute for the missionaries), was much joyed to hear of the success of one of his fellows, and that soon an honest young man would enter into the waters of baptism. And it came to pass that Saki Spud's time grew short in the land of "Made in ", being called after the tradition of the transistor radio, and as his time grew short in the land of "Made in ", he was much sorrowed because of the many waters to return to the land of his inheritance. And it came to pass that he wrote to his friend and leader, President Nishimoto and told him how he was still strong in the faith and that he was determined to endure to the end that he might gain the reward. And thus ended the 21st day of the 7th month.

... This letter has been pretty helter-skelter. My companion still isn't "trunky" (if he isn't a little bit "trunky" next week, then maybe I'll have to opposite problem to worry about). Summit (Utah) is still on the map, I think, of course Jones' pigs could break loose and demolish the whole town and nobody would know about it for two weeks until the Pony Express came through with the mail.



... Saturday we were invited out to a family's home. They had missionaries about three years ago. We went out to meet them and talk. While we were doing so, the lady brought out meishi's (calling cards) of the two previous missionaries. One of the missionaries was a real good friend of mine. I thought it was kind of neat. Boy, this world is smaller than we think.

... We were asked to come to a meeting for all the Gaijin (foreigners) in Oita, so my dode (companion) and I went while the other two Elders stayed with the members. Everyone there was affiliated with one church or another and had been in Japan for some 25 years or so. It sure was a testimony builder for me watching as a Catholic Father, Nuns and Baptist preacher, etc. got entangled in discussions of world peace, world political problems, gas shortages, why President Nixon was bad, among other things which would seem to me to lead the spiritual destruction. They couldn't believe it when we told them we didn't have a TV or newspaper, and how terrible it is that we have to pay for our own missions. We stayed out of their conversations and when we did that, kanarazu (eventually) the subject changed back to "What is the Mormon Dendo Program like? Why did you come on your mission? And why sacrifice?" and other church related topics. President, I sure am glad for a church I know to be true that I can share with other people without having to get involved in the world affairs of today.

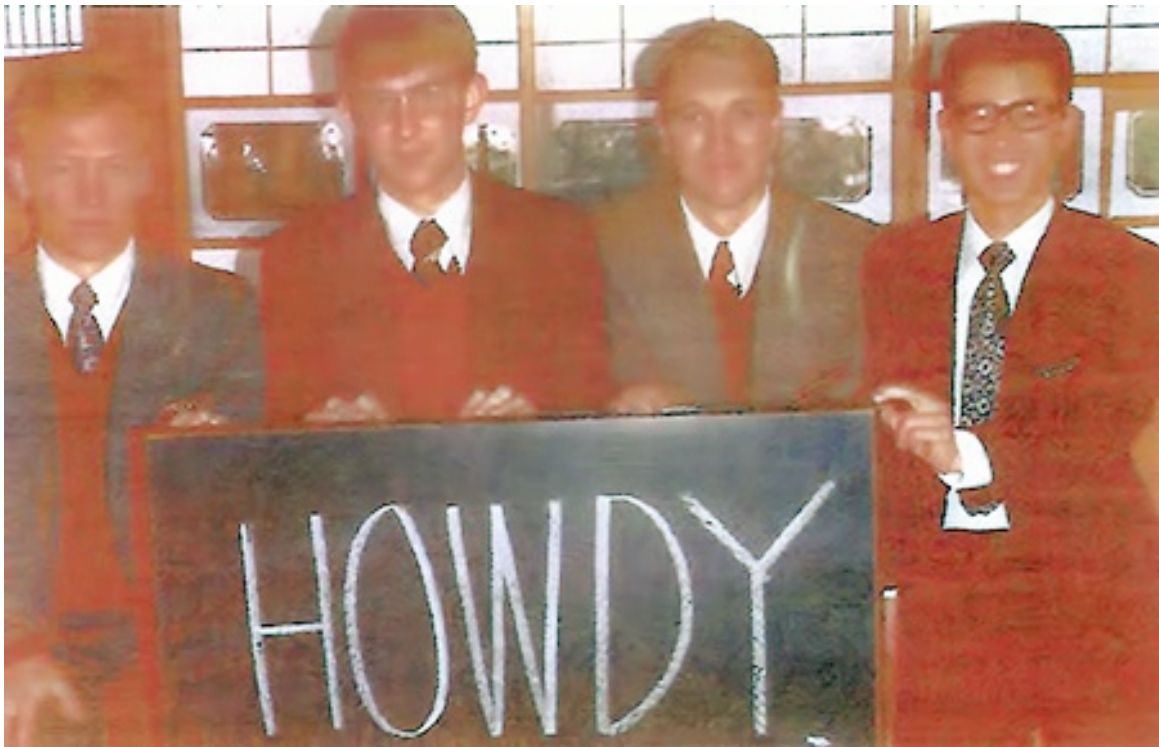


... Man is like a postage stamp. He may get licked, depressed, stuck in a corner and sent from post to post, but he will always succeed and arrive in the right place, if only he sticks to it!

... I've never had so many wrong things happen in one day. Through it all I think we had the most spiritual testimony meeting that I had ever been through. It was funny because neither I or any of the Elders realized what time it was until we got out and then it was almost three. The amazing thing is that with only about 7 members here we took that much time and I don't think that anyone noticed it! (The usual meeting starts at 12:00pm and lasts until 1:30pm).

... This week was pure kofuku (happiness) for me and Elder Smith. We prepared mentally and spiritually for a lesson with the Tanaka family last night. It was great. We gave them the Restoration last night, and pure testimony, bore witness to that family that they'd better see if what we were telling them is true. Last night brought back a joy I haven't had for almost 4 months. It was just like a T-Bone steak. I love to teach, I believe deep down inside, that we're going to have a lot of opportunities to teach here on this island in the near future. This is going to be the stronger branch in the mission someday, if it isn't already.

... We were able to get out long enough tonight to have a meeting with the Tanaka kazoku (family). We've been trying to do it now for a month and tonight we finally pulled it off. The spirit was there, too. They've been kind of fukisoku (up and down) now for 6 or 7 months. All they've had is Katei no Yubei's (Family Home Evening's) and tonight I decided I was going to find out how much interest they really have. We showed them "Moromon to Wa" (What is Mormon) slide presentation and afterwards just bore simple testimony of a living, loving God and eternal life and possible eternal family ties and how they could gain that same testimony if they'd let us teach them and that's all it took. We start next week..



... Last week we found a wonderful family with four beautiful daughters. We introduced them to the Family Home Evening and left them overly excited to hold this program. As we approached the door last Tuesday night we could hear the mother practicing playing "Love at Home" from the Family Home Evening pamphlet. We were greeted by the four beautifully dressed daughters. The mother afraid that we didn't have enough music, had written out two copies of the words to "Love at Home" and had prepared a meal that was waiting for us when we came. However, the father had got tied up at a conference at work and wasn't home. Because the family had made such preparations we decided it would be best if we used this opportunity to become a little more acquainted with the family. After eating for about 10 minutes a car pulled up, a child ran to the door and came back screaming, "Daddy is home and he's drunk". A few minutes later, a staggering 5'3" father came staggering in through the genkan (front foyer), kicked his wife out of the way, sat down next to me, put his arm around me like only a drunk man can, slapping my leg with the other and began to apologize, "I'm sorry that I'm drunk, I had a convention today." He then introduced his family, giving the name and grade of each child taking about 20

minutes. Then the mother started practicing "Love at Home" so he said. "Let's sing." After three sober times through the song, we excused ourselves. As we were leaving, he started shouting praise, "You Americans in Okinawa and Japanese, the whole world is one." He said to his children, "these Americans are messengers of Jesus Christ, come to teach us the gospel, to spread the gospel to the whole world, stand up and thanks them!!!" So there we left him waving his arms in staggering praise and glory. I only hope that he will have the same enthusiasm towards the gospel, that he demonstrated when we left, in our next Family Home Evening.



... We were able to find two very fine families and have a Family Home Evening with them. The first family is Mom, Dad, and a girl about 3 years old. We gave them a lesson on "Love" that went real good. It is one I remember that my mother prepared and taught to our family. We asked them each how they could show love to each other through the next week. Then they wrote it down. He even hung his up so he could see it all week. Even through something as simple as this big results can be received. The other family was really good also. There is a daughter and son in this family. When we went to their home they prepared a couple of songs for us to hear. The father played the harmonica, the daughter played the organ, and the son the flute. They played some old southern songs, and one of them was "Down on the Old Swani River." It was really fun.



... My dode (companion) and I are really doing good as companions. We've found some good families. One off of business contacting. We taught them one Family Home Evening, and then went back last Saturday and they'd really digested it. They recorded us singing, "Love at Home", and they'd been playing it all week long. They all had it memorized. We're going to start teaching them the lesson plan next week. Seeing the way they welcomed us in through the Family Home Evening really helped to strengthen my testimony.

... It was a real great taikai (zone conference) yesterday and I learned a lot of great ideas for Family Home Evening. We have on Family Home Evening this week so we have a big choice to make because their kids (6) are from 3 months to 12 years. I really think Family Home Evening is great. We never did it back home but I can sure see what it does for these people. It's great.

... Two of the member's teenage kyodai and shimai (brother and sister) have non-member parents who are farmers. The father is in the hospital because of a car accident and they needed to harvest their rice the past week. We went out Mon, Tues, Wed, and Thur, to help them with their harvest. I think that all in all we left a good impression on their mother.

... People say that the Lord works in mysterious ways, and I believe it. Using the new Family Home Evening approach we've met a wonderful family. My companion and I are fellowshipping the father every day, at 5:30 in the morning! That's right, all three of us meet just as the sun is coming up and jog a mile each day. Brother Tanaka is really concerned about his health. He doesn't drink tea, neither does his wife. He also eats grass.

I lie not! He says it's good for his health. In addition, he jogs barefoot so that the good vitamins and minerals in the earth will soak up through his feet. He's truly one of a kind but a wonderful man.



... One thing that happened this week that was kind of neat was the introduction lesson we had with a family Saturday night. We told them about the Family Home evening program and then went on to explain a bit about Joseph Smith. Well, that was all the father needed to get started. He proceeded to tell us of a vision he had when he was young and he saw God. I guess he was about 14 or 15 years old and was asleep one night when an angel took him up and showed him heaven. He said there were a lot of people with wings flying around and everything was all gold and pretty. He also told us about God, he said he had long white hair and a white beard and was wearing robes like the priests in the Catholic Church. He said he also saw Christ there, too. He said it was because of this vision that he believed in God. That was really some kind of dream I guess. Oh well, he's a good man and invited us back next week. It wasn't a story you hear every day. I'm still hanging in there.



... Ohayo gozaimasu! (Good morning). Hope you're having a happy day. We're pretty busy planning taikai's (conferences), making visits, doing reports, and most important, teaching good people. The Tanaka family- the one who agreed to live the Word of Wisdom last week, need special attention. Social pressure is causing them to stumble a bit, plus their job at a local mise (store) keeps them pretty busy. They'll need a lot of special visits and encouragement. Last night we took them a special present, a bottle containing their last cigarette pack, beer label, tea, and coffee. The cap was secured with a lock and a candle was on top encircled with a strip of paper reading, "let your light so shine". It'll look nice in their display case, replacing the ol' whiskey bottle. They're great people.

... Riding away from Hiroshima last Friday was one of the hardest things I've ever done. really grew to love those people. They helped me get my feet on the ground here in Japan more than probably I will even realize. Their graciousness and willingness to help whenever possible was more than I could have ever hoped for. They kyudoshas (investigators) I had the opportunity of teaching were just the greatest. Because of the way transfers worked out, I ended up teaching every investigator in the Hiroshima II branch which was about 35 people. Among those investigators are some families that will soon become as good of members as Hiroshima has ever had. I wish I had the time to explain about each of our investigators in detail. They're such fine people and they've taught me so much. To keep it short, I'm sure the Tanaka family and Nishi family will be great additions to the membership. Even though they don't know it yet. Whenever we met with either of the two families, I had a special feeling about them. They already have what it takes to be valiant members, a true love for people. Anyway, the kind of friendship I was fortunate enough to establish with these people surpasses any other thrill or enjoyment I've ever experienced. They're eternal friends.



... Every week we have many spiritual experiences and I think my favorite is when a father prays for the first time. Even if his prayer was only 4 lines long, it still has a lot of meaning.

... Brother Tanaka is one of the most beautiful persons I've ever met in my life. He's about 4 feet tall and has a slightly deformed face. But, the beautiful thing about it is that this "deformation" has him always smiling. He's a person who probably has a lot to be sorry about but he doesn't let that get him down. He's one of the happiest, pure in heart people I've ever met. In the lesson, when we'd talk about important things, he would say, "now wait a minute, this sounds important, let me write this down."

... We were really blessed this week. We saw a wonderful family baptized and we picked up two real super families as investigators this week. I was so happy to be able to meet with such humble people who seriously want to learn about our Father in Heaven. We met one man on the street a couple of weeks ago and he invited us to come and talk to his family. At our last meeting he told us that he believed that God had guided us to meet him on the street that day. The husband and wife both believe that God guided them to be together! I love them!

... The first thing that comes to mind is the progress of Brother and Sister Tanaka. They're obeying the Word of Wisdom 100% and as Tanaka kyodai (brother) puts it, "I don't feel any temptation to break it." We then explained about the law of the Sabbath, but brother Tanaka in particular, didn't accept it as well as we expected. He's a regular shortstop on his company softball team and has a list of games coming up, all scheduled for Sunday. He told us, "well, let me think and pray about this a week and I'll let you know in our next

meeting." The next meeting cancelled out, but Sister Tanaka told us that Brother Tanaka intends to quit playing on Sunday. We're so grateful for the Lord's help! Sometimes in our meetings, especially recently as we've been teaching the commandments, we've noticed a sense of doubt concerning what we've taught them. But after the meeting's over, the Lord keeps on working "overtime", using the whisperings of the spirit to let them know that what they've heard is true and sure enough, by the next meeting, Brother and Sister Tanaka*s minds are at ease and they accept what we teach them. This has happened several times. I know that it's the Lord helping us out.



... Our investigators are doing real good, except for one. His name is Tanaka, and sometimes he comes to the meetings drunk and he wants to get baptized but he doesn't know the gospel. It's because he comes drunk, and his mind is not in the meeting. So we're kind of confused.

... Last night we were giving a family the Joseph Smith story. At first the brother wasn't very serious, he sort of smiled a little and thought the whole thing was just a little hard to believe. We bore our testimonies to him and said that we know that the things we were telling him were true. Wow, after that he sat up in his chair and started listening. He wants us to come back and teach them some more.

... The best thing this week was the Showcase Hawaii Talent Program (students of BYU Hawaii), only thing is, the Golden Father we took with us kept sneaking out to get beer and by the time we got home he was nearly drunk. Well we don't know if he's golden now or not. I guess the thing I'll never understand is why all we ever get is girls! It's about enough to make a feller cry.



... This week. President, we gained a really good investigator. She has been president of the Catholic Church's "Relief Society" type organization but she is really fed up with the Catholic Church. We talked to her a little about Christ's church before the falling away and then told a little about Joseph Smith. We asked her if she wanted to know more and she said, "please by all means!" She really wants to know. She is probably about one of if not the richest people on this side of the island but one of the most humble people I've ever met. I think they've been well prepared. So we're going to give it a go. Yosh! Now, looking on the sad side of things, we just lost one of our longest investigator families. They just couldn't see the need for the gospel in their lives today. Gambarimasho (hanging in there)!! The gospel is true President.

... I don't know whether or not I told you this before but if I did I guess you'll have to suffer through it again. One day as we were out knocking on doors, I knocked on a door I won't forget for a while. I gave the lady my Family Home Evening approach and she invited us in. We talked for a while, then gave them the Message of Restoration. She and her husband and two of their friends were there. They bought three Books of Mormon. Then she asked me if I had a girl waiting for me. I said, "no". She said, "Oh good, can I be your girlfriend?" Her husband was sitting right next to her. Then she said she was too old so she was going to set me up with her daughter. I said, "ah so desu ka?" Then we left. We visited them two nights ago. They seemed real interested and read some of the Book of Mormon. But they haven't lined me up with their daughter yet (darn it). Ha ha. Thank you for reading this mess. I'm still genki (healthy).



... I'm still trying to come down from the Spiritual lift I received at the zone conference last week. The leaders of this mission truly are called of God. I learned so much at that conference, I'm really looking forward to the next conference. It's so great teaching people who are desirous to learn. I love my mission with all my heart. It's done so much for me. If only I could apply myself more, I know I can become the kind of person my Father in Heaven wants me to become. I guess it might sound selfish, but I'm beginning to consider my mission as a preparatory state. Just like life, I'm trying to build a strong foundation that will be durable enough for me to make it through life. I know if I do my best to take advantage of every opportunity, blessings are promised. I know God lives. He answers prayers.

... Sometime President. I really experience some awful pangs of loneliness. Not loneliness to return home but loneliness about leaving Japan. Loneliness that knowing my mission is about over. Sometimes I wish I could start over and do better than I have done. None the less I have really enjoyed my mission.

... It looks like this is about the end of the line for me as far as my two years goes. But, I'm thankful that there's still a lot more to do. I've had many many things to strengthen my testimony and more to weaken it. The love that our Heavenly Father has for us has been made as clear as can be. I've even had the chance to help a few other people which is probably the greatest blessing. Thank you for being my Dendo Bucho (Mission President), for your love, trust, understanding, and forgiveness. My prayers are with you always.



... If no other thing I have come to see that although missions seem an eternity from the beginning they appear all too short at this end. I've truly come to see what Jacob meant when he said, "our live passed away like as it were unto a dream". I have come to feel that the Lord sends us on a mission so that we can really realize just how swiftly time does pass. The message that we must learn is not to waste any precious time.

I imagine that this will be my last letter to you from the mission field. I think that it will be very strange not to be sending you a letter every week. I appreciate the time and concern that you have put into them. Lately I'm afraid I haven't written very well, but often they (the letters) have been the only pressure release that I have had. The strangest feeling that I have had being a District Leader and Zone Leader is the lack of interviews for myself. Of course I've learned to pray, but sometimes want to talk to a leader over me. That is where your letters help! Often I wonder President, if you don't have the same feelings, but much stronger than I do!

As I look back now over most of my mission I have one very strong conclusion. That is that I have made great mental and spiritual progress. I actually feel that many doors have been unlocked and opened for me. You know before I came on my mission I think that the Holy Ghost would have had to have hit me with a hammer to have been able to feel the spirit! My only problem is that I truly feel that my actions don't match the knowledge that I have been blessed with. I know the programs, know what I should do and just don't get it done. More than anything else in the last part of my mission I have come to realize the importance of organization and planning; two things that I have here to fore been lacking in, but hereafter am going to strive to make a major part of my personality. More than anything else I feel that the weaknesses of my flesh hinder the aspirations of my spirit. My mission has certainly taught me a lesson there and now the major problem is put the knowledge that I have acquired into action.

I want to thank the Lord and you for the faith that you have shown in me. You have given me assignments that I have thought were impossible, but I have learned the value of service in the church. The need to support our leaders and the importance of gaining the respect of anyone that we may be trying to lead. I thank you for the opportunity to have learned these things.

... Saturday we received our release date. I have to say I got a lump in my throat when I read that date. I'm going to miss Japan, that's for sure. But time can only tell if I'll ever be back, no matter how strong the desire is. So while I'm here, I've got to give it everything I've got until the end. Then I can be happy for completing a successful mission for the Lord, even though it will be sad leaving Japan.



... This week was one of the most spiritual weeks I have had on my mission. I went to Saga and got to see one of the most spiritual baptisms I have attended. It was really touching to see this mother enter the waters of baptism and after we choros (Elders) put our hands on her head and gave her the Holy Ghost, I really felt the Spirit. After the blessing was over she shook the elder's hand that had taught her most of the lessons, and with big tears in her eyes she said, 'Thank God for missionaries'. I had a good cry. President.

... I guess this about wraps it up for me. I can't say I've done much for the mission but the things I've learned in the past two years are invaluable. I'll be thankful forever that I came out. Before I came out I didn't know the importance of the gospel as I do now and wasn't studying it at all. I didn't try to get close to God through prayer. I've learned how important it is to trust in the Lord and to pray and study hard. I've learned how important it is to trust in the Lord and to pray and study hard. I've got so much growing to do I can't

believe it but I'm going to try to ganbaru (persevere) and follow the example of my leaders. I appreciate the chance to have been in this mission and to have been associated with the people in it. The example that stands out the most in my mind is yours. You're a great Mission President and it's a privilege to be in your mission. Thanks a lot for everything.



... My companion cried after a phone call from his 2 investigators, who told him that they received their sure testimonies and really knew now that this Church is all true and really want to get baptized. He had tears of happiness and said to us, "I can't think of a better way to end my mission." He was "lengthening his stride" to the end.

... Well. I'm leaving Japan with a stronger testimony of the Gospel, a love for the scriptures and the Japanese people, a thankful heart for the chance to teach and baptize that the Lord has given me. and two broken teeth. It's really been the best years of my life.*'

... I'm really thankful for you and of course Sister Nishimoto.

... Well, it looks as if this will be the last letter that I'll get to write to you. It amazes me how fast two years can go by. I'll be dead and preparing for the resurrection before I know it. The things that I have learned on my mission about the Gospel, about myself, and about how to get along with others are invaluable. I don't want to forget them. I know that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the World. I never had any questions about the Church or Joseph Smith or the personal relationship with Him. 'Come Follow Me' has taken on a brand new

meaning for me and I'm very grateful for this testimony. I want to thank you President, for the trust you have placed in me. I have been a Zone Leader for 9 months now, and during that time I have been able to learn a little bit about what it means to have a stewardship. I'm very grateful to each of my companions. I appreciate them very dearly. I pray that the Lord's special blessings will be upon you and your family always.



... By the time you read this I'll be gone. But once again I want to thank you for all you've done for me. I looked forward to each taikai (conference) just to see you. We only talked but for a moment but you were always genki and always made me feel that way. I remember how I struggled the first half of my mission. And meeting you kept me truckin' on. It seemed you were a prophet because you always said the right thing when I needed it. I'm really thankful for you, and of course, Sister Nishimoto. Leaving you and the Elders will be my toughest goodbye. You were always easy going, always willing to let us make up our own minds, decide for ourselves. Always pulling for us and I'm ever too thankful for that. You always kid about the love letters you get from us but I truly want you and Sister Nishimoto to know I've developed a great love for you both. You were really like parents to me. Thank you always. And I trust we'll meet again.

... Well, the weeks are just about done. I guess this will be my last letter to you. It's still hard to believe that in a very short time I won't be here in Japan any more. I won't be knocking on doors trying to slap people on the street, and all the many other things that we do. This life has just become a part of me and it's going to be extremely hard to change. I've seen Hakata Zone grow and as a Zone Leader been able to learn a lot. I think of every position I've held on my mission from Zone Leader to "greenie", no matter what it

was, I grew. We've got the best investigators now that I've had on my whole mission. We've got people coming to church, and progressing very rapidly towards baptism. It's a very sad thought think I won't see that baptism, but the important thing is the Lord's kingdom will grow. I've developed a love for the people I teach, and the members and all the Japanese people. Japan will always be in my heart.

I just want to finish out my mission good. I've got one more week. I'm going to work, work, work, but I realize that losing my mission isn't an end, it's a beginning. A beginning of a life following the testimony I've gained here. I want more than anything else to be a strong member of the church and raise a family to be the same.

I just want to thank you and your wonderful family President. I want to thank you for all the counsel and personal attention you've shown. I realize the job of a Mission President is no easy task, but you do a great job. The mission sure has and is growing. I sure do appreciate and have really come to love you. Thanks for everything. Your fellow servant.





Mission President's Notes

(Unbecoming Actions of a Mission President)

1. Need to challenge obese missionaries Elder Jones and Sister Tanaka to reduce their weight.

Result: Elder Jones lost over 40 pounds by the end of his mission. He looked fine and healthy and was pleased with his accomplishment

Sister Tanaka had a difficult time and during one of her interviews I told her she need not sit but come and stand by my desk. She stood along side of my desk and told her to look down and get on the scale which was placed there. She burst out into a loud screaming laughter and I told her interview was over. She left my office bursting into laughter and told the missionaries what her interview was like and they all had a good laugh. She got the message and did lose some weight by the end of her mission.

2. A missionary without the spirit of missionary work is a challenge. I knew without doubt mat Elder Jones needed attention from the day he entered our Mission Home. During our initial

interview I learned he did not want to participate in any normal missionary responsibilities. He was 2 years older than most of our missionaries and as expected his first companion was having difficulty with him and his District and Zone Leaders were all aware of his attitude and actions.

I kept a close watch through his weekly reports and letters and showed no improvement. His negative attitude did not allow his spirit to help him.

I then had the opportunity to interview him during his Zone Conference. He came into the office and I asked him to stand in front of me and close his eyes and open his mouth. No sooner he opened his mouth I stuck a baby pacifier in his mouth and told him "end of interview." He thought it was so funny and walked out of my office sucking the pacifier and showing the missionaries. In reality he got the message of my interview and began to conduct and live a little more like a missionary.

On another occasion I attended his Zone Conference and as I drove in the parking lot of the chapel he was waiting for me to "show off" his beautiful white suit made in Italy. He came and stood beside my car and as I came out he told me to "check this suit." I have to admit it was a beautiful white suit and asked him to take his coat off, and handed it to me. I then took this new white coat and started to clean the hood of my car until the beautiful white coat was now dirty and black. The Elder was so stunned he couldn't say a word. I threw his coat back to him and told him to change to his proper missionary clothes to attend the Zone Conference.

I'll admit it wasn't a nice thing to do but knowing his attitude toward his mission he thought he can push himself up to his Mission President

As the weeks and months passed by I noticed his sincere change in his attitude and commenced to work and cooperate with his companions. His weekly letters and reports were encouraging. His spiritual strength began to blossom and he completed his mission as a Zone Leader. (Note: Presently Elder Brown has a wonderful family and has had his children serving missions. We still continue to call each other).

3. One evening a frantic call comes from an Elder Brown of the Church Missionary Committee in Salt Lake City. Sister Nishimoto answered the phone at the Mission Home and before she could say anything , Elder Brown in his authoritative excited voice mentioned that whenever there are any unusual activities or incidents, the Mission President should report it immediately to Church Headquarters, in this instance a letter received by the missionary's mother, informing that her son was stabbed by an unknown person in Japan. Sister Nishimoto calmly told Elder Brown she is not aware of any such incident and transferred the call to my office.

Elder Brown immediately in his excited voice told me that the missionary's mother is standing next to him and has read her letter about her son. I calmly told him the Elder was not stabbed and in fact he is my Financial Secretary and is here with me now in the office, and you can speak to him.

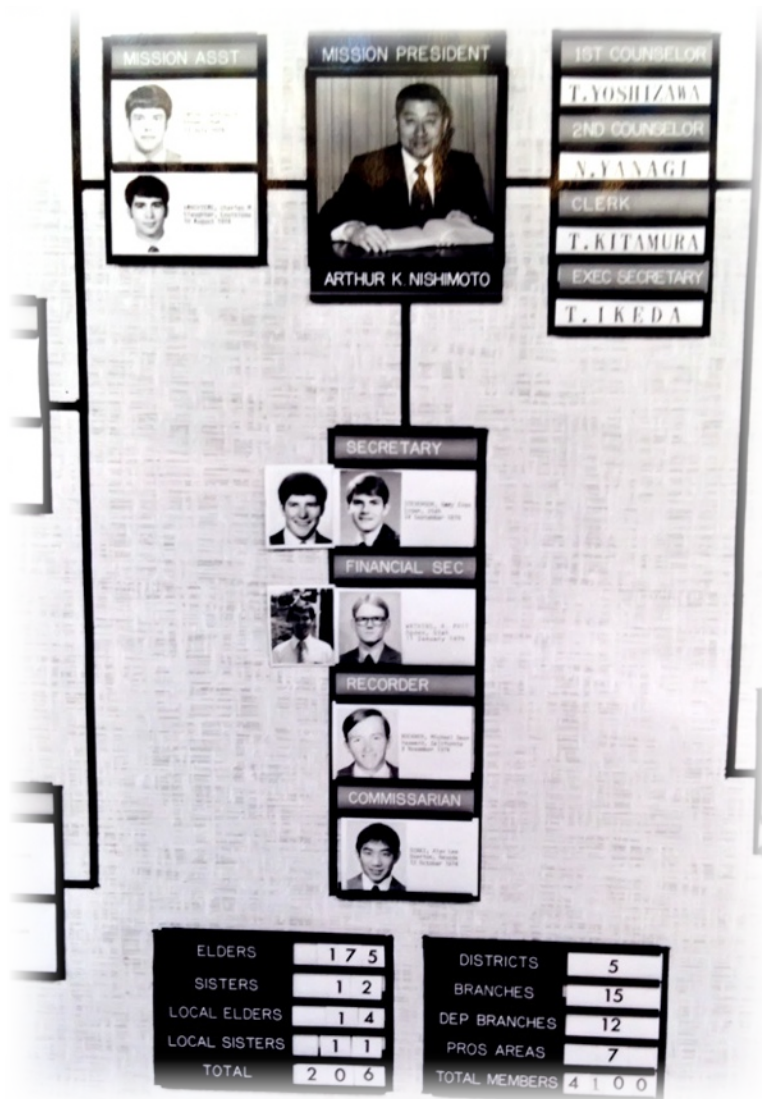
After their conversation I spoke to Elder Brown and said, "I appreciate you notifying me of this terrible experience the mother had gone through and she now has learned the truth. I also mentioned to Elder Brown to be more sensitive to us, that is not to raise his voice and jump to conclusion that the incident had occurred without first clarifying the incident. I also expressed my sympathy and understood the challenge when parents personally comes to their office with these unusual incidents.

4. Another incident where a mother of a Sister Missionary goes to the Church Missionary Committee office and reports that her daughter was transferred from our Mission in Japan to the Hawaiian Mission in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Elder Green called me and in a excited voice telling me I had no authority to transfer any of our missionary to different missions. I calmly asked who did I transfer from my Mission to another Mission. He then told me the mother of this missionary is here with a letter that indicate she is now in Hawaii. After receiving the Sister's name, I assured Elder Green she is still in our Mission and will confirm that she is not in Hawaii.

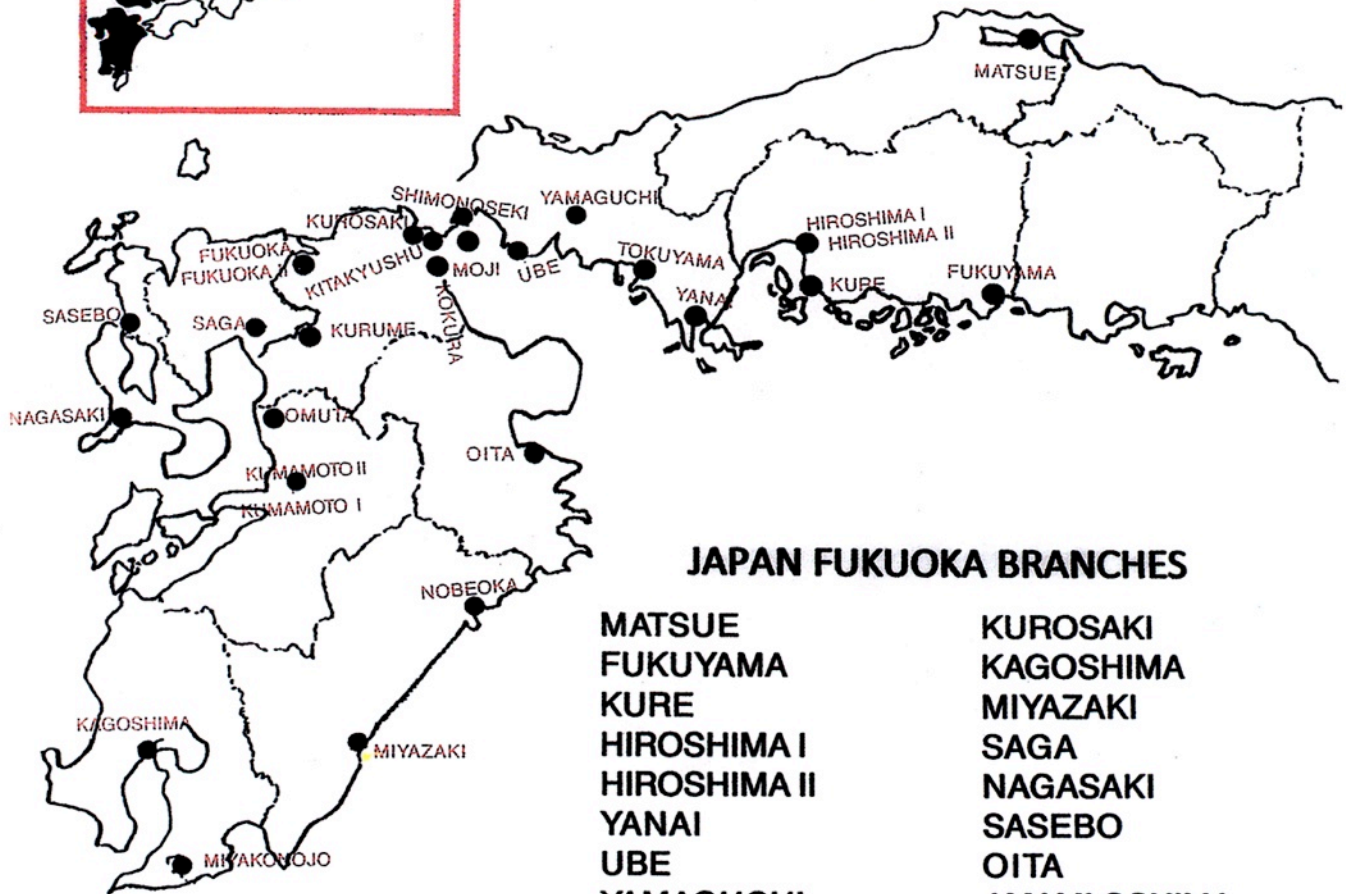
After discussing with Sister Smith of her mother's concern, she couldn't think of anything that would have made her mother think she was transferred to Hawaii. Then like a bolt of lightning she remembered that she gave Sister Jones who left our mission to return to her home in Hawaii asked her to mail her letter from Hawaii to Salt Lake. I said, that's it. I called Elder Green what had happened and asked him to check the envelope if the postage was stamp from a Hawaiian Post Office. He did. He then explained what had happened and the good Sister's mother was relieved. I can picture how parents look at every corner of their missionary's letter.

I politely told Elder Green not to raise his voice and accuse me of transferring missionaries from our mission to other missions. Again jumping to conclusions without facts..



Japan Fukuoka Mission

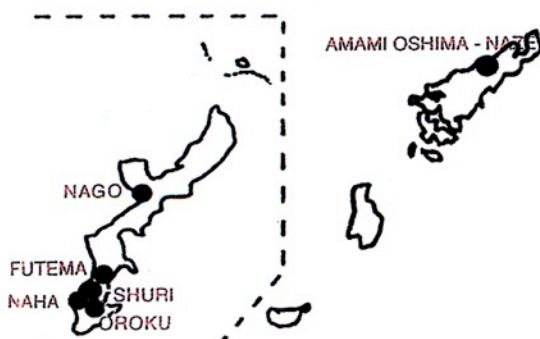
日本福岡伝道部



JAPAN FUKUOKA BRANCHES

MATSUE
 FUKUYAMA
 KURE
 HIROSHIMA I
 HIROSHIMA II
 YANAI
 UBE
 YAMAGUCHI
 TOKUYAMA
 FUKUOKA
 FUKUOKA II
 KURUME
 KUMAMOTO I
 KUMAMOTO II
 NOBEOKA
 SHIMONOSEKI
 KITAKYUSHU

KUROSAKI
 KAGOSHIMA
 MIYAZAKI
 SAGA
 NAGASAKI
 SASEBO
 OITA
 AMAMI OSHIMA
 OROKU
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 NAHA
 MIYAKONOJO
 MOJI
 OMTA
 KOKURA





**“Honbu”
Japan Fukuoka Mission Home**