Chronological: Library of Congress, The Legacy Project, 2001-05-16

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, THE LEGACY PROJECT
MAY 16, 2001

- **December 7, 1941**
- **Selective Service designation - "4C"**
- **Executive Order 9066**
- **Mr. Kiichi Saito and children were shipped off to concentration camp.**
- **In 1943, two sons of Kiichi Saito, Calvin and George volunteered to serve in the all Japanese-American 442 Regimental Combat team.**
- **The following letter was written by George Saito on July 11, 1944, four days after his brother, Calvin was killed in action in the bloody battle of Hill 140 near the southwestern Italian coastal towns of Grosseto and Rosignano.**

THE TRUE MEANING OF THE "FOUR FREEDOMS".

PLEASE GIVE MY REGARDS TO THE MORIMOTOS, YOUR NEW NEIGHBORS AND AMY KAMAYATSU. GOOD LUCK, AND LOTS OF LOVE.

-ERNEST

- **Ernest was brought up in the Los Angeles area. His family and he were placed in the Amache concentration camp.**

- **After the war, Ernest worked with the YMCA for 30 years. Today, he is a deacon for an Episcopal Church, and serves as the official Chaplain of the 442nd Battalion. We are very proud of him.**

- **The 442nd Regimental Combat Team was the most decorated military unit in the history of the United States Army for its military service in Italy and France. During WWII, the men of that unit received 21 Medals of Honor, in addition to 40 Distinguished Service Crosses, over 350 Silver Star Medals, over 900 Bronze Star Medals and over 3,600 Purple Heart Medals.**

LETTER BY GEORGE SAITO

DEAR DAD,

I BELIEVE THE WAR DEPARTMENT HAS NOTIFIED YOU OF OUR LOSS OF "CALVIN" — DAD I AM WRITING YOU NOW BECAUSE I'VE JUST LEARNED OF HIS PASSING — JULY 7TH WAS THE IMMEMORABLE DAY —

I CAN IMAGINE WHAT A SHOCK IT WAS TO YOU, AS IT WAS TO ME, BECAUSE IT HAPPENED TOO SOON — ON THE 12TH DAY OF COMBAT —

A FEW EVENTS AND ACTION LEADING UP TO THE TIME OF HIS LOSS AS RELATED BY A MEMBER OF HIS COMPANY, ARE — ON THE 6TH OF JULY HIS UNIT WAS ATTACKING A HILL HELD BY THE ENEMY — AFTER A HARD FIGHT WITH EVEN A LITTLE HAND TO HAND COMBAT, THEY TOOK THE HILL — THE JERRIES, AFTER BEING SHOVED OFF WERE REFORMING FOR A COUNTER-ATTACK — IN THE CONFUSION AND DISORDER OF BATTLE, "CAL" BEING THE RADIO-MAN, SOMEHOW, GOT A CALL THRU TO THE ARTILLERY TO OPEN FIRE ON THE ENEMY — HE PERSONALLY DIRECTED AND GUIDED THE FIRING ON THE ENEMY POSITIONS WHICH ROUTED THE ENEMY — HIS ACTION AND DOING HIS JOB WELL AT THIS ONE INSTANCE, EXPLAINED THE FELLOWS, SAVED MANY OF HIS BUDDIES — THEIR UNIT HELD THAT HILL THAT NIGHT BUT THE NEXT MORNING THE ENEMY BARRAGED THE HILL WITH MORTARS AND HE HAPPENED TO BE ONE OF THE

UNLUCKY ONES — HIS PASSING WAS INSTANTANEOUS — ALL OF THE FELLOWS WERE TELLING ME WHAT A GOOD SOLDIER AND RADIO-MAN HE WAS AND THAT HIS LOSS WAS KEENLY FELT —

WELL DAD — NOW THAT THE INEVITABLE HAS HAPPENED

I GUESS YOU'RE WONDERING ABOUT HIS REMAINS — RIGHT NOW I CAN'T DO MUCH FOR WE'RE STILL IN BATTLE AND I AM WRITING YOU WHILE AT OUR GUN POSITION, BUT AS I UNDERSTAND THINGS NOW — THEY WILL BURY HIM HERE IN ITALY AND AFTER THE WAR YOU CAN ASK THE GOVERNMENT TO TRANSFER THEM TO AN AMERICAN CEMETERY IN THE STATES. HIS PERSONAL BELONGINGS WILL BE SHIPPED TO YOU IN TIME —

DAD - THIS IS NOT TIME TO BE PREACHING TO YOU BUT I HAVE SOMETHING ON MY CHEST WHICH I WANT YOU TO HEAR — IN SPITE OF "CAL"'S SUPREME SACRIFICE DON'T LET ANYONE TELL YOU THAT HE WAS FOOLISH OR MADE A MISTAKE TO "VOLUNTEER" OR WHAT I'VE SEEN IN MY TRAVELS ON OUR MISSION I AM MORE THAN CONVINCED THAT WE'VE DONE THE RIGHT THING IN SPITE OF WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN THE PAST — AMERICA IS A DAMN GOOD COUNTRY AND DON'T LET ANYONE TELL YOU OTHERWISE —

WELL DAD, THE GERMANS ARE BEGINNING TO THROW A FEW SHELLS OUR WAY NOW SO MAYBE I'D BETTER GET DOWN IN MY HOLE. IF THERE IS ANYTHING ALSO THAT YOU'D LIKE

TO KNOW EXCEPT THE PLACE — I SHALL ONLY BE TOO GLAD TO LET YOU KNOW. IN TIME THO' WHEN WE'RE ALLOWED I'LL GIVE YOU THE EXACT LOCATION —

CHEER UP "DAD" AND DO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF —

REGARDS TO ALL —
YOUR LOVING SON — "GEORGE"

- Three months after sending this letter to his father, George Saito was also killed. He died in the crucial battle of Bruyeres.

LETTER BY ERNEST UNO

- On July 29, 1944 Ernest Uno wrote the following letter to his sister, Mae.

DEAREST MAE,

I PROMISED YOU I'D WRITE EVERY CHANCE I HAD SO HERE I AM AGAIN. IN THE LULL, BETWEEN FIRING, I'VE FOUND THAT SCRIBBLING OFF A FEW LINES OF A LETTER WAS THE BEST WAY TO EASE THE TENSION OF FIGHTING. ANY LITTLE THING WE DO TO DIVERT OUR MIND AND KEEP US BUSY WHEN THE FIGHTING COMES TO A TEMPORARY HALT, RELAXES THE NERVES AND RESTS OUR BODIES. THAT'S WHY RECEIVING MAIL FROM HOME IS SO IMPORTANT. I'VE GOT A

BUNCH OF LETTERS IN MY POCKET THAT ARE DIRTY AND FALLING APART. THEY ARE THE LETTERS I HAVE RECEIVED FROM YOU, AND THE REST OF THE FAMILY. I ALMOST KNOW EACH ONE, WORD FOR WORD, 'CAUSE I'VE READ AND RE-READ THEM SO OFTEN. THEY ARE THE ONES THAT HAVE KEPT ME GOING UNTIL NEW ONES COME.

OF ALL PEOPLE WHO ARE GOOD ENOUGH TO SACRIFICE A FEW MOMENTS TO DROP ME A LINE, YOU HAVE BECOME MY FAVORITE. YOURS COME REGULARLY, AND I'VE GOTTEN TO EXPECT AT LEAST ONE A WEEK FROM YOU. I COULDN'T BEGIN TO TELL YOU HOW MUCH EACH LETTER FROM HOME MEANS TO ME. MAYBE I HAVEN'T BEEN SO FAITHFUL IN ANSWERING THEM ALL ON TIME, BUT THERE HAVE BEEN REASONS FOR THE DELAY. I KNOW YOU UNDERSTAND.

THERE ISN'T MUCH I COULD TELL YOU, EXCEPT THAT I AM WELL. THINGS I CAN'T WRITE ABOUT ARE IN THE NEWSPAPERS, AND OVER THE RADIO ANYWAY.

ONE THING I DO LIKE TO TALK ABOUT, IS THE PEOPLE HERE. THEIR WELFARE, AND THEIR CONDUCT WITH THE PRESENCE OF ALLIED TROOPS IN THEIR TOWNS INSTEAD OF THE DREADED GERMANS. BEING PART OF FRONT LINE TROOPS WE ARE USUALLY THE FIRST TO MARCH THRU THE TOWNS WHICH HAVE COST SO MUCH BLOOD AND SWEAT TO LIBERATE. BUT THE PEOPLE ARE NOT UNGRATEFUL. THEY KNOW THAT WHEN WE COME, WE MEAN TO STAY. THAT MEANS THAT THE WAR IS OVER FOR THEM, AND AN END HAS COME TO THEIR LONG OPPRESSION. AS SOON AS WE ENTER

WE ARE SHOWERED WITH ALL THEY HAVE TO SPARE. WINE, WATER, AND FRUITS. AND MANY TIMES, THEY WAIT ALONG THE ROADSIDE TO OFFER US WARM, FRESH MILK. WHAT THEY HAVE TO GIVE IS SIMPLE AND LITTLE BUT WHEN YOU'RE TIRED FROM LACK OF SLEEP, WORN OUT FROM FIGHTING WITHOUT REST, DIRTY AND UNSHAVEN, YOU ACCEPT THEIR GIFTS WITH A LUMP IN YOUR THROAT. THE POOR PEASANTS NEVER ASKED FOR THIS HELL, AND THEY WANT TO MAKE GOOD OUR SUFFERINGS.

THERE WAS ONE TIME WHILE WE WERE FIGHTING, THAT ONE SNIPER KILLED ONE OF OUR MEN. A WOMAN SAW HIM DIE, AND SHE SAT BY HIS BODY AND WEPT. MAYBE SHE HAD A SON ONCE, WHO KNOWS? BUT SHE REFUSED TO LEAVE THE BODY, AND BETWEEN TEARS, SHE TRIED TO TELL US HOW HORRIBLE IT WAS TO SEE AN AMERICAN SOLDIER DIE FOR THEIR SAKE. IT WAS VERY PATHETIC.

THIS IS A GRIM WAR, MAE. OUR ENEMY IS NO LONGER THE GREAT SUPERMAN HE WAS ONCE THOUGHT TO BE. INSTEAD, HE IS A TIRED DISCOURAGED, DISPIRITED YOUNG BOY, FRESH OUT OF GRADE SCHOOL! IT'S A PITY. I'VE SEEN THESE BOYS, AND THANKED GOD THAT OUR YOUNGER BROTHERS WILL NOT HAVE TO SUFFER THE SAME FATE.

I KNOW NOW, FOR CERTAIN, WHAT WE ARE FIGHTING FOR! OUR MISSION IS TO FREE ALL THE NATIONS OF OPPRESSION. GIVE THE CHILDREN OF THIS, AND THE COMING GENERATIONS A CHANCE TO GROW DECENTLY, AND LEARN