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A House and a Harbor

For the Clarks, their trip to the Mainland was very revealing. Seeing all their siblings in Utah and Idaho working on farms and raising children made them realize what a unique life they had teaching school and partying in Honolulu. Myral and Loa's life was relatively worry-free and they loved their jobs, their friends, and their activities. Their exciting and fast-paced lives, however, began to slow down a bit with the arrival of their second child and the construction of a more permanent house.

Return to Hawaii and the Birth of Robert

The Clarks returned to Hawaii on Aug 31, 1935 on the ship Malolo. Fritz met them at the dock with leis and smiles. While they were gone, Shirley Temple had visited Hawaii for three weeks, and Fritz gave a few photos he had taken of the young actress to Myral, who proudly pasted them in his photo book.

As the family was without a place to live, Myral and Loa hurriedly searched for a new apartment. Five days after arriving, on Sept 5, 1935 Myral signed the contract for Canna Apartments on 1591 G South Beretania Street, Honolulu, near the city center and all the activity.¹ Myral had lamented that their former apartment had been further from town, and



The Clarks at Canna Apartments, 1935

further from the fun.² This closer apartment was very exciting. It had two bedrooms, a living room, a piano room, and a kitchen. They paid \$25 per month for rent, and were very comfortable.³



Annie Clark, ca.1928

One morning while Myral and Loa were living there in the Canna apartments, Myral received a heartbreaking telegram from his brother: “Mother passed away this morning All well”⁴ As the youngest child, Myral had been so close to his mother while growing up in Morgan for 19 years; Carlos had called them “best pals.” For nine more years they had lived close to each other in Logan. Even after Myral was married, he cared for his ill mother through another summer. The two of them were very close. He had visited her in the hospital when he was on the Mainland the previous summer, and had perhaps said his “goodbyes” then. Now an ocean away, Myral was not able to attend her funeral. Someone thoughtfully sent him a transcription of the talks given at her funeral

so he could read them as many times as he liked.

Around the same time, Loa’s parents, J.I. and Emerett Tolman, were getting advanced in age and decided to sell their land in Murtaugh, Idaho. They relocated to a home near the temple in Logan, Utah at the end of 1936.⁵ They worked in the temple daily.

Myral and Loa’s landlord at the Canna apartments generally did not want too many children or babies there, so when the Clarks were expecting their second child, they were asked to move. They found a lovely place on 1116 A Clio Street—the middle home of three small homes built one behind the other up the side of a hill. Their neighbor here was Mrs. Taylor who became their babysitter for many years.

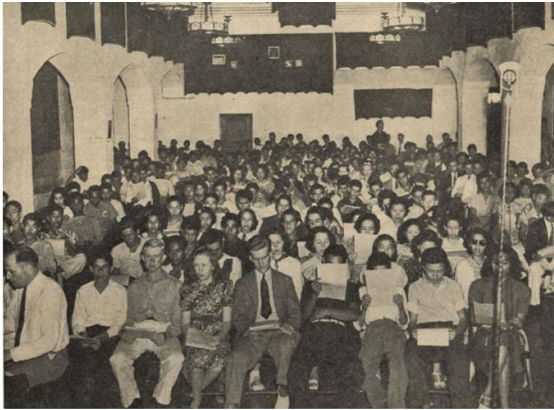
On Aug 31, 1937 their second child, Robert Judson Clark was born. They chose the name Judson after Loa’s father, Judson Isaac Tolman. As was customary, Loa remained in the hospital ten days after delivery, so Margene stood on the lawn and waved up at her mother through the

window.⁶ Once home, Myral enjoyed taking Margene on field trips to the fire station so that Loa could have time with just her baby Robert.⁷



The Clarks with their new baby Robert Judson, Oct 10, 1937

A few months before Robert was born, Myral was selected to be the pianist for “Hawaii’s Own Community Sing”, a musical event hosted by Listerine on Monday nights from 8:30pm to 9:00 p.m. at the Army and Navy Y.M.C.A. Hundreds of people came together to sing folk songs and Hawaiian songs. Clark family friend Ben Doty led the music, Myral played the piano, and a different featured artist joined them to “add a little spice to the festivities” each week. The community sing was broadcast island-wide on the KGU radio station. Listeners could send in a label from any Listerine product to the radio station, and receive a songbook for free; then they could sing along at home. The Community Sing ran every Monday night for over three years—from early 1937 to Dec 23, 1940.⁸



*The Community Sing was always crowded.
Myral is at the piano on the far left.*

A year after the Community Sing began—when Robert had just turned one—Myral was chosen to be the pianist for Wally Levack's Popular Dance Band⁹ which performed at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel—the ritzy, pink hotel right on Waikiki Beach. Eight years after first

entering the Hawaiian music scene, Myral was now in the top pianist position on the island. A gala premier for the band was held on the Waikiki Terrace of the hotel.¹⁰ They performed for dancing guests most often in the Peacock Room which had one entire wall of windows that provided a breathtaking panorama of Diamond Head.¹¹ Wally Levack's band sometimes accompanied special guest singers, or Hawaiian dancers dressed in beautiful costumes and draped in leis. Their programs cost \$3.00 for dinner and dancing, or \$1.00 for just dancing. Myral's wages were \$23 per week.¹²



Wally LeVack and his Royal Hawaiian Hotel Orchestra, Sept. 1938. Myral (top row, 3rd from left)

When the Clarks first came to Hawaii seven years prior, Myral became a leader for the High School YMCA program for boys, abbreviated as “Hi-Y”. Hi-Y was a service club that promoted Christian character by

fostering scholastic achievement, speech, and sportsmanship.”¹³ Myral took the young men on many trips, one of which was on a boat to a place called the Volcano House. They were instructed to only bring extra clothes, a blanket, and a Bible.¹⁴ Myral was also a leader for the Boy Scouts, taking them on hikes and other adventures.



Myral and some Boy Scouts on a hike, 1935

and collected shells, swam, and hiked. Margene was thrilled by the treasure hunts around the campsite.¹⁵

Even though Myral now had two children, his involvement with Hi-Y and Scouts did not decline; in fact, sometimes he took his wife and children on the trips. When he took 40 boys to Camp Erdman near the beach, his family came along



The four Clarks on a camp-out, 1940

One day while playing volleyball on the beach in Honolulu, Myral stepped into a hole, fell, and severely damaged his back. His teammates rushed him home on a stretcher. Loa was terrified. He had damaged some disks in his back, and later had surgery to repair them. As a result of his back pains, Myral never went camping again; his subsequent involvement in Hi-Y and Boy Scouts was only administrative or musical. This back injury bothered Myral for the rest of his life. Some days he had to stay in bed and

miss school, and much later in his life he was hospitalized again for the pain.¹⁶

The New Stake and the Honolulu Tabernacle

Shortly after President Grant had visited Hawaii to establish the stake in June of 1935, the LDS Church paid \$24,000 for a plot of land on Beritania Street for a future tabernacle. Until this time, church meetinghouses were small and far from the center of the city, so the Church had no obvious presence in Honolulu. But with a large, beautiful building close to the center of the city, the Church would have a glorious presence in Honolulu. As members raised the \$275,000 for the building construction, the plot sat empty save for a little shack in which the building's architect, Harold W. Burton, lived. Burton was a renowned architect who had designed the Laie Temple twenty years prior. He spent years living in that shack studying the plot of Honolulu land, designing a tabernacle building that would fit perfectly in the space among the beautiful existing trees.¹⁷



The pit-oven crew who prepared and cooked 30 pigs for the luau.

To help raise funds, 1,000 Church members organized a huge luau on October 28, 1938 on the empty plot of the future tabernacle. For the meal, the members built a structure decorated with ti leaves, ferns and tropical flowers. More than 5,000 people paid for and attended the feast.

Guests ate 30 pigs, 1500 pounds of chicken, 1800 pounds of fish, 2 ½ tons of poi, 2 ½ tons of sweet potatoes, 1800 coconuts, and 800 fresh pineapples. More guests arrived after the feast for the entertainment. On a stage under the large banyan tree, the most prestigious band on the island performed—the band of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, of which Myral had become the pianist just one month prior. After their concert, many different Samoan and Hawaiian entertainers performed. To end the evening, an hour-long Hawaiian history and culture pageant was performed.¹⁸

For another lively fundraising event, the Saints sponsored the E.K. Fernandez Circus for two weeks.¹⁹ The E.K. Fernandez Circus was a very popular traveling show that was often called the “Barnum of the Pacific”. The show had white tigers, elephants, racing pigs, flying trapeze artists, puppet shows, a merry-go-round, and other fun rides and food venues for families.²⁰



The cast of the E.K. Fernandez Circus in 1936

Five years after the land had been purchased, the Saints had raised enough money to begin construction in 1940. Stake president Ralph Woolley was the contracted builder, and the construction of this building was a very newsworthy event. One reporter called it “one of the most unusual religious edifices on earth.”²¹ All the walls, joints, beams, ornamentation—even the gargoyles—were made of solid concrete that was poured carefully right there on the spot with no visible seams. The towering 200-foot spire was topped by a great glass-enclosed beacon light to guide planes and boats.²² Only the famous Aloha Tower two miles away was higher.



The Honolulu Tabernacle, dedicated Aug 17, 1941

It must have been very exciting for Myral and Loa to be involved with the creation of the first stake in Hawaii and the building of the beautiful Tabernacle. Their children were especially fond of watching the construction. Robert, who later became an architectural historian, referenced the Tabernacle's construction as a foundational experience that solidified his love of buildings.

Before the building was fully complete, Myral visited it with his wife and children to play the brand new organ.²³ The Clarks were all present at the dedication on August 17, 1941, along with over 1,000 other members who filled the seats, and overflowed into the corridors and the courtyards. President David O. McKay gave the dedicatory prayer and said that the building would be protected from any missiles in the event of war.²⁴ The United



Myral and Loa at the Honolulu Tabernacle organ, 1942

Sates had not entered the Second World War yet, but the tabernacle was extremely visible from the sea and the sky, so its vulnerability was a concern.

Just over a decade prior to this moment, in the beginning of Loa's first year teaching school in Murtaugh—she received her patriarchal blessing from her father, the stake Patriarch, in November of 1927. In it, it was revealed to Loa “You shall labor as a missionary in the world and through your labors many shall be brought to a knowledge of the truth. You shall find great joy and satisfaction in this labor.”²⁵ At the time, Loa must have been confused at what that could have meant. Her world stretched no further than Idaho, Utah and California. But now that she was so deeply involved with the growing Church in Hawaii, the meaning of this revelation was finally understood.



Loa (2nd from right) and some Relief Society sisters in Hawaiian dresses, ca. 1936

“Hale Clarke” – A New Home for the Clarks

Early in their stay in Hawaii, Myral and Loa connected with Eldred Waldron, a cousin of Myral who was serving a mission there. During a very enjoyable dinner, Eldred asked, “Loa, are there any more at home like you?” She answered, “Yes, I have two sisters, Inez and June.” When Eldred was released from his mission, he went home to Utah and looked Loa’s parents up in Logan. Emerett and J.I. were glad to hear a report about Myral and Loa, and then they introduced Eldred to their daughters. Eldred asked Inez for a date to a dance at the AC. They soon fell in love and were married July 1, 1938. He was soon called back to Hawaii to serve as the mission and stake secretary. They arrived in Hawaii just 28 days after their wedding. Eldred and Inez Waldron lived at the nearby mission home, where Loa and Myral and their two children visited often.²⁶



Eldred & Inez, July 1938

With Loa and Inez's families both in Hawaii, Loa's parents and the youngest sister, June, couldn't resist the urge to return to the beautiful islands in October of 1939.²⁷ When they saw the ship *Lurline* approaching, Eldred and Inez went out on a tug boat to meet J.I. and Emerett and sail with them as they docked. It had been seven years since the Tolman's first visit when Margene was born. The Clarks now had two children and the Waldron's were expecting their first, so there was plenty of fun to be had, as well as house work to be done.



Myral and Loa sailing on the ocean, 1940

The Clarks were anxious to give a tour of the new Tabernacle to the Tolmans and tell all about the exciting fundraising events and its unique construction. Myral was thrilled to have them all dress up and dance as he performed with his band at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel. The Clarks, Tolmans, and Waldrons enjoyed many scenic drives and picnics around the island. They went fishing and sailing, too. This time of year was snowy and cold in Utah, but gorgeous in Hawaii. For Thanksgiving, they all enjoyed turkey and pumpkin pie, and for Christmas they attended the midnight mass at the Episcopal Church and opened gifts upon arriving home.²⁸

The Tolmans had planned to stay longer, but Emerett began to feel quite ill, so they went back to Utah on April 12th, 1940—after six months in Hawaii. She saw a doctor and had surgery on something swelling in her side. She later wrote to Loa, “When the doctor told Daddy and Bion that a week longer [in Hawaii] would have been too late, I knew our coming home

had been directed by our Heavenly Father and felt if I could keep my chin up, my life would be spared.²⁹ She later healed and lived for many more



Loa's parents - J.I. and Emerett at the Laie Temple, early 1940

years. Emerett later wrote a wonderful testimony to Loa, "The Lord surely blesses us all. Without His blessings we could have all the wealth in the world and be miserable."³⁰

Emerett commented later about Loa and Inez, "Letters come each week from our Daughters in Hawaii telling of their happy homes, their children, and the joy they have in working for the Church and in going to the temple. What could be more grand than to know our Children are in the service of the Lord, well and happy."³¹

The Clark family enjoyed their little Honolulu home with a shared yard on Clio Street, but during Loa's parents' visit, an accident occurred that sparked conversations about a larger home. Loa recounted: "Margene and Bob had a lot of fun together and yet they used to quarrel just like all little children do."³² One day, after coming home from the beach, Margene was walking around on an inner tube in the living room. Loa was cooking and Myral was reading the paper. When Margene left, Robert was running around and tried to walk on the inner tube, too, but fell and broke his leg.³³ When asked what had happened, Robert said, "Madine pushed me down!" but Margene wasn't anywhere around.³⁴ Loa was with poor Robert in the hospital as much as possible during his stay from Jan 15th to Feb 11th 1940.³⁵ His legs were pulled up on strings, and it was miserable for all.



Loa helping Robert in the hospital with a broken leg

After this, J.I. and Myral talked at length about buying land and building a bigger house so they'd have more space and a yard of their own. Judson helped them find a beautiful plot of land on Kewalo Street, directly across from the large house and beautiful gardens

of the royal Kawanānakoā family. They never went in her yard, but they loved living in such a special area. Years prior, Judson had given Loa a thousand dollars which she had put in the bank and was earning interest. They used that money to purchase the lot, and Judson lent them additional money to build the house.³⁶



The Clarks moved into their new home at 1721 Kewalo Street on Nov 1, 1941

It is safe to assume that with the building of a new home, Myral and Loa were planning on staying in Hawaii for a long time. They had already been there eleven years, and perhaps they'd be there another eleven years or more.

Pearl Harbor

The Clarks frequented the construction site of the house over the next few months, and finally moved into their new home at 1721 Kewalo Street on November 7, 1941. It had a living room, a kitchen, and three bedrooms. They proudly placed their furniture in just the right places. The

piano, of course, was at the center of the living room. An entire side of that living room was made of windows overlooking the lush vegetation in the backyard.

Just a few miles from their new home was Pearl Harbor, the home of the United States' Pacific Fleet. With the Second World War raging in Europe and with the United States' negotiations with Japan not going well, the navy base's soldiers and the Territory of Hawaii's citizens were preparing for a possible attack. The Navy staged air attacks and practiced island-wide blackouts.



The Clarks and a sailor in front of a US Navy ship, 1935

When sirens sounded and church bells rang, the people had to close their blinds, turn out their lights, and even drivers had to pull over and turn the headlights off.³⁷ This was to practice making the island dark so that enemy bombers couldn't find their targets easily. War was a distant possibility, but not a daily concern for the Clark family. They continued working, performing music, picnicking, and having a wonderful time with friends and family.

All was well and peaceful with the Clarks in their new home until one peaceful Sunday morning, exactly one month after they moved in. The Japanese navy launched a surprise attack on the U.S. fleet stationed at Pearl Harbor. Loa described this life-changing event as follows:

“”The Japanese are bombing Pearl Harbor!” This was the startling news I received over the telephone Sunday morning at about 7:30, Dec 7, 1941.

“How could this be? We had been assured many times by military authorities that such a thing could never happen. We were too well fortified and protected by our Navy, Army, and Air Force. Yet here was my friend [Mrs. Taylor], living in Naval Housing at Pearl Harbor, hysterically telling me that she had seen the planes fly over her home—had seen ships lying at anchor burning and had seen the Naval Barracks in flames.

“I rushed outside to tell my husband as he leisurely talked to a neighbor—Eugene Clissold—and watered our newly planted lawn. Even

though we could still hear the terrific explosions not more than 10 miles away, the men thought I was joking and that the [noise] we heard was only air raid practice. Just then we heard a plane above us. Looking up we saw a bomber fly out of a fleecy white cloud and head toward the sea. It flew so low, that we could easily distinguish that ‘rising sun’ on its wings.



The Japanese attack on U.S. ships at Pearl Harbor began early Sunday morning

“We all dashed for the house and got to the radio just in time to hear the message- ‘We are under enemy attack! Stay indoors and keep off the streets. Stand by for further announcements.’ No radio programs were heard again that day – but we were asked to keep our sets tuned in and wait for instruction.”³⁸

Loa and Myral later heard an anti-aircraft shot strike in their neighborhood, and they saw the explosion and subsequent fire of the nearby Lunalio School. Myral quickly took a picture of their new home, fearing that it might be destroyed any minute.³⁹

Loa continued, “I feared for our safety, of course, and for our new home that we had lived in only one month. I feared for the safety of our many friends in the Islands. I feared for the boys we knew who were on their ships in the Navy. I feared for the effect that all this excitement and uncertainty would have on our children – a girl 8 and a boy of 4.

“I thought of the courageous people of England who had suffered so many bombings and of my own ancestors who had crossed the plains

and mountains coming west – enduring untold hardships. All this gave me strength and courage to face whatever might befall us, and to make the best of the situation. At least the family was together and safe for the moment.

“I prepared our meals and we ate almost in silence except for answering the curious questions asked by the children. As we were instructed by the Civil Defense Authorities over the radio, we stayed at home, prepared bundles of bedding, essential changes of clothing and emergency food for possible evacuation to the mountain in case of a land invasion.

“We read stories to the children and sang familiar songs while my husband played the piano. When night came and we were getting our youngsters ready for bed, our 8 year old daughter said, ‘I always thought that war would be terrible, but it isn’t is it? It’s just exciting and cozy.’ Then I knew that we had accomplished our mission as parents on that tense day.

“Startling news? Yes, and tragic too for over 3,300 young men who lost their lives that day. Tragic too for the parents, wives, and children of those men. Unforgettable for those of us who survived that sneak attack on Pearl Harbor.”⁴⁰



In the event that enemy planes tried to fly over the island again, the use of lights, flashlights, matches or candles on the island was forbidden. It had to be complete darkness. The Clarks all went to bed that

night with their clothes on in case they had to evacuate somewhere in the night.⁴¹ Even though Loa recalled the children being quite calm, Margene said that during that night: “We listened to every sound, and anything we heard frightened us.” Margene continued, “We stayed at home for days, while spending our evenings singing in the dark, as my Dad was very proficient at playing piano without music or light.”⁴² The children remember singing “The Swing”, “Abide With Me tis Eventide” and “You Are My Sunshine”⁴³

It was difficult for Myral and Loa to get word to their worrying families that their family had survived the attack and was safe. Telephones didn’t cross the Pacific yet, letters took at least two weeks to arrive, and fast radio-gram communication was halted for a time. In the Idaho Evening Times newspaper printed *nine days* after the attack, no one knew if Loa or Inez’s families were alright. J.I. and Emerett must have been sick with worry.⁴⁴

Post-Pearl Harbor Honolulu

Immediately following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States declared war on Japan and entered the war in Europe. This declaration plunged the country into offensive and defensive preparations. Honoluluans got especially busy with defending the land, as they feared they could be attacked again. While many of the ships and aircraft had been destroyed or damaged, many remained and could be easily targeted in the future.

While the military was preparing soldiers, the local government was preparing its citizens. The Island of Oahu was under blackout for over a year. The street lights were all turned off at night so the streets were dark. Car headlights had to be painted black except for a small patch of gray paint, where the light could shine through faintly. Most people avoided going places in the evening anyway, as they had to drive so slowly in the dimness.⁴⁵

To facilitate island-wide darkness, the Clarks and all other families made denim curtains for their windows. At night, they could only turn on lights in rooms that had heavy curtains, and if someone needed to enter or leave the room, the light would have to be turned off before the door was opened.



Myral in his air-raid Warden uniform, 1942

A 10:00 P.M. curfew was established for everyone except those carrying medical or air-raid warden passes.⁴⁶ Myral was the air-raid warden for the neighborhood, because he knew everyone and was very trustworthy. He had a helmet, a gas mask in a shoulder bag, and uniform with an armband displaying “W”. Every night after curfew, he walked around to each house in the neighborhood and checked its windows for any light leaking through. If he saw any light, he’d tap on their window and the people inside would adjust the curtain.⁴⁷ Occasionally, Myral let his children accompany him, but they had to stay very close to him. Myral also served as

a guard for some defense establishments nearby during the first few months after the attack.⁴⁸

The government made everyone over the age of five carry identification, which included name, address, blood type, and fingerprints. Margene wore her I.D. around her neck and felt very important. Everyone was also issued a gas mask that they always carried with them.⁴⁹

Downtown, signs were posted above the doorways of buildings with basements that could be used for bomb shelters. Additionally, shelters were dug in schoolyard playgrounds. Outside of town, many families dug bomb shelters in their back yards. Together with their neighbors, Myral and Loa helped construct a bomb shelter in the neighborhood to which they could run in the event of another attack. They dug a trench about six feet deep with a strong cover and dirt over it. Inside, they built benches to sit on. When the air raid sirens sounded, people in the downtown rushed into basements, schoolchildren lined up and entered their playground bunkers, and people at home scrambled into their shelters with a few supplies they gathered as the alarm sounded. There they would wait patiently, hoping it was just a drill and not another attack.



The Clarks wearing gas masks at their neighborhood bomb shelter, 1942

As they drove around the island, Myral noted that the island certainly seemed to be well-fortified against any possible future attacks.⁵⁰ The tall and beautiful Aloha Tower by the harbor was painted camouflage. Life for Honolulu citizens became more difficult. Food items were scarce. Overcrowded housing and resulting uncleanliness became a source of considerable civic resentment.⁵¹ There was no escaping the existence of the war and of possible attacks.

On the bright side, though, Myral noted that “War-time life is a busy one. Everyone is working and making big wages.”⁵² Ships, aircraft, weaponry, and other military gear were quickly being made in high volume for the troops.

Soon after the attack, a great need for teachers arose, so Loa transitioned from substitute teaching to full-time teaching sixth grade at St. Andrew’s Priory—an Episcopal Girl’s School where many teachers were nuns. By this time, Margene was attending St. Andrew’s, and young Robert often came with Loa and napped in the teacher’s lounge where the nuns on break watched him.⁵³



Loa with her students at St. Andrew’s Priory

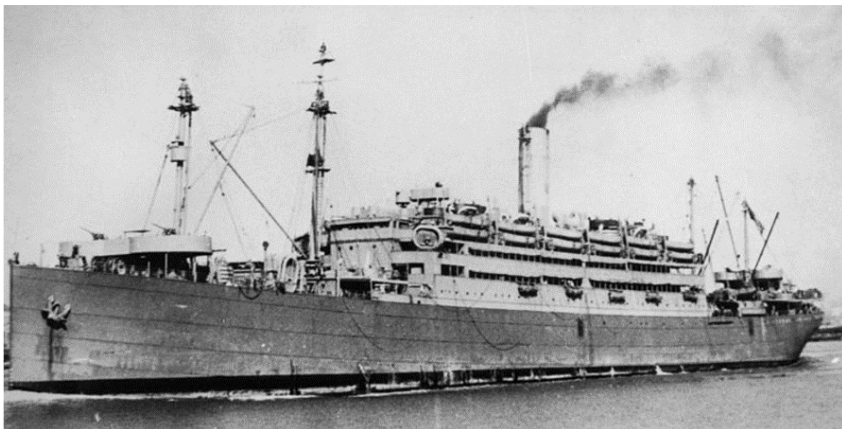


The Clark family, late 1942

Loa and the Children Evacuate

On Valentine's Day of 1943—a little over a year after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Myral and Loa looked out the window of their home on Kewalo Street and wondered where they would be in five years. They hoped they would be as happy and content in that home as they currently were.⁵⁴

Around the time of this hopeful moment at the window, Loa decided to visit the Mainland with the children, while Myral continued working in Honolulu. She probably wanted a break from the post-attack atmosphere and she wanted to visit her family, whom she hadn't all seen since 1935—eight years prior. Margene was two years old then, and now she was ten years old and Robert was five. There was a lot of catching up to do. Loa and her family had probably been worrying so much about each other after the attack at Pearl Harbor. There were no phone lines across the Pacific, so their communication to inform and comfort each other through letters was very slow.



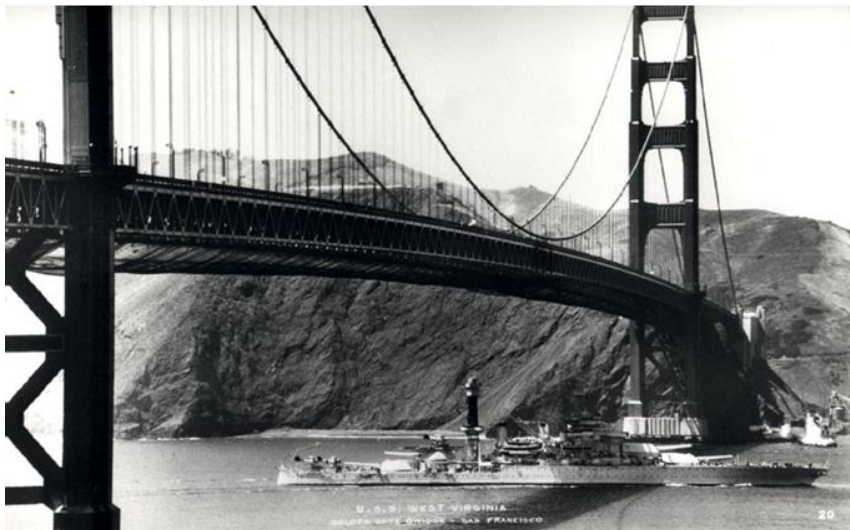
Loa, Margene and Robert evacuated Hawaii on the U.S.S. Republic

Once Loa decided to leave, she put their names on the list of persons wanting to evacuate. Women and children had priority for evacuation.⁵⁵ The Clarks didn't know when the opportunity to leave would come; they just had to be ready to leave at a few hours' notice. Before the sun came up on June 4, 1943, a man knocked on the door and said a ship was ready and they needed to be at the dock in a few hours.⁵⁶ Loa scrambled together a few suitcases of clothing and at 7:00 am, they left for the USS Republic, headed for simply "The Mainland".⁵⁷ Unlike their other trips, they received no leis and took no photographs before departing.

There were rumors spreading on board that the ship had once been used for transporting German troops, and then had been captured, and was now a U.S. ship. But that rumor was not true. The USS Republic had been an American troop transport ship since its construction in 1903. It had carried navy troops across the Atlantic in World War I and army troops around the Pacific in World War II. In 1942 and 1943, the Republic sailed back and forth from Honolulu to San Francisco delivering supplies, troops, and evacuees.⁵⁸

The Clarks' passage took two weeks—twice as long as their cross-Pacific journeys had taken in the past. Their evacuation route was not straight, instead they made a zig-zag path so as to fool enemy ships or submarines.⁵⁹ The USS Republic was in a convoy with a hospital ship to the starboard side and four destroyers—two in front and two in back. Each morning, the passengers donned their lifejackets and lined up on deck to review the plan in the event of a torpedo attack: they should jump off the huge ship into the water and swim to the hospital ship. Margene realized she would have to bravely jump and swim all by herself, as her mother would have to help Robert.⁶⁰

Loa and her children passed the time by exploring the ship and watching the film “Ladies in Retirement” again and again. When the ship finally reached the mainland on about June 28th, the passengers went on deck and saw the Golden Gate Bridge—such a structure never before seen



The U.S.S. West Virginia passing under the Golden Gate Bridge

by these Hawaiian residents. It had the longest span in the world of 4,200 feet. As they passed underneath it, some passengers shrieked, thinking the ship would hit the bottom of the bridge, but the bridge was much taller than they realized, and the ship passed under with plenty of room to spare.⁶¹

Loa and the children disembarked the U.S.S. Republic and had a few days to wander San Francisco before the next leg of their journey. Many things about the city were new to them. At a huge department store, Margene and Robert repeatedly rode up and down an escalator as if it were a Disneyland ride.⁶² They eventually boarded a train for San Luis Obispo where they visited the McCafferty family whom they knew from Hawaii. They told Loa about available teaching positions in town, hoping the Clarks might join them in San Luis. Loa and the children left on June 21st.⁶³

They continued on down to Los Angeles where they visited Loa's sister, June. When it was time to leave for Salt Lake, Loa experienced a very frustrating transportation delay due to the war. She was traveling with her Margene, age 10, Robert, age 5, and two other children, ages 7 and 11, whose mother knew June and was sending her children to their grandmother in Salt Lake for a holiday.

They arrived at Union Station expecting to get right on a train, but there was such a crowd that they were almost suffocated. The gates were shut and a sign read, "No More Room" until the next morning at 7:30. Loa tried to purchase a special "Pullman's" ticket that could guarantee a reservation, but they were booked for a month out. So they returned to June's house until the next morning.

Unfortunately, the next morning at 6:00 am the train station was crowded again. The workers called for Pullman and military passengers to board first, and only let on a dozen coach passengers. So Loa and the four children missed the train again.

Loa later recounted in a letter to Myral back in Hawaii, "By that time I was desperate for we had stood there in line for an hour being shoved and pushed just like you are at neighborhood theatre when the doors open. We went back into the huge waiting room which was alive with people and finally got some comfortable seats to rest our weary bones.

"I told Helen [the mother of the two other children] that I wasn't leaving the station all day and as soon as I saw them put the sign up for the trains, I'd make a dash for the gate with my brood and be the first one there. She very practically reminded me that there would be about a hundred

others with the same goal in mind and that I'd probably get knocked down in the rush.

“Just about that time, I saw a sign over a doorway which said, ‘Traveler’s Aid’. I said, ‘Well, if any traveler ever needed aid, I do. Maybe they’d help a poor evacuee with four children who is trying to get home and who has already missed two trains and no hope of getting one in the future.’ So—in we went. She took my history—all names and ages and said that if we would be there one hour before train time, one of the workers would take us to the train before the gates were opened and see that we were taken care of... It all sounded too good to be true—but after another pleasant day with June, they put us on the women’s coach on the Challenger. Our prayers were finally answered fully. It was heaven after the other trains we had been on. The children were happy and I got along just fine with my family of four...

“I felt after that experience that I’d never get on another train during war time. We had to carry our own baggage and walked so far that I felt my arms were being pulled out of their sockets. ...People who came into our coach through the gate said that near 300 people were turned away and I can well believe it for I have never seen such a crowd of people in a building in my life.”⁶⁴

They arrived in Salt Lake safely and were met by Loa’s brother, Bion. Her parents came down and escorted them up to Logan.

Time Apart

Just six days after Loa and the children left Honolulu, Myral turned the keys of their furnished house over to a man named Elmer Jenkins who was to rent it until Loa and the children returned. Myral moved in with Inez and Eldred at the mission cottage.⁶⁵ After staying with them a while, Myral moved in with the missionaries. In the evenings after Myral finished teaching and the elders finished proselyting, they all shared some great laughs.

Excerpts from a letter he was trying to write Loa give an insight into the evening atmosphere at the missionaries’ home: “Sunday night and all’s well. The elders are all here in the living room playing jokes on each other. They got such a kick out of my handshaker—especially when it was put under the cushion...I can’t concentrate—these elders are making so much noise—so excuse the ramblings...How do you get along with food

rationing? I understand that you can't get popcorn over there anymore!!! As the "kernels" are all in the army! (That was just pulled a few minutes ago) ... I can't get very romantic with all this noise going on but before going to bed I have to tell you how wonderful you are to me. I think I won't have a care or worry in the world when I get to you. I wish I could have you all in my arms and I'd be so happy."⁶⁶



Myral celebrating New Year's with a large cake and his roommates: Elders Hunt, Barnes, Bushman, Moss, Jan 1, 1944

In the same letter to Loa, Myral wrote about seeing a friend's stamp collection, and getting pointers about his own. Myral wrote, "Be sure to open up my envelope with scissors and save this [stamp] for me. Also, save the ones coming. These will be part of my stamp collection."⁶⁷ It's no surprise that Myral, who kept such detailed diaries and pasted together volumes of photo albums, had a stamp collection, too. And what interesting stamps he must have collected in the Crossroad of the Pacific.



Fritz and Myral on a fun photo shoot, 1944

Loa, Margene and Robert sent over the occasional package to the delight of Myral: "I had a lovely surprise. The packages from my sweet family came today. I did just as you said. I opened the large one and was I thrilled to get so many pretty, attractive packages. We sampled the home made candy

and that was wonderful. Eldred said ‘That’s the best homemade candy I’ve ever eaten.’ Oh it really is delicious. It carried perfectly. I hope you have my packages about now.”⁶⁸ Myral missed his family dearly. His letters always closed affectionately: “...Velly, velly, velly sleepy Honey, must go to bed. Kiss my darlings for me. Love and kisses, Myral”⁶⁹

On May 15, 1944, Myral wrote in his diary, “Had the thrill of a lifetime at 9:30 when I talked with Loa, Margene, and Robert over Trans-Pacific telephone. 3000 miles away, yet I could hear them wonderfully well – voices were so natural. Talked 6 minutes for \$18.”⁷⁰

He continued to play the organ for church at the LDS Tabernacle and at other church services and events.⁷¹ He spent plenty of time with his good friend Fritz Kraft, taking pictures and exchanging the best ones. People were leaving the island at a moment’s notice, so Myral had plenty of work at the Vocational School filling in for teachers who had left in the middle of the school year.⁷² The letters that Myral sent home were censored for war zone safety.⁷³



Myral at the Honolulu Tabernacle organ, ca. 1942



Bob, Loa, and Margene in 1943 in Logan, Utah

Loa and the kids lived with J.I. and Emerett in their home at 462 North 5th East in Logan, which was just a fifteen minute walk to the temple. Being in Logan—the city where Loa and Myral met and courted 18 years ago—must have made Loa miss Myral all the more. At first she and the kids lived on the main floor with JI and Emerett, but when the basement rental apartment opened, they moved there. And when the upstairs rental apartment became available, they moved up there.⁷⁴ Margene and Robert had a grand time in Logan, running around barefoot as they had in Hawaii. During the warm months they loved to walk over to the Adams School and play on the slides, swings, and jungle gyms.⁷⁵ But they eventually had to put on their shoes when they experienced snow for the first time. How thrilled they were to play in the snow, ice skate in the frozen irrigation ditch, and sled down the hills. Occasionally they went north to visit Uncle Clifford in Murtaugh on the old farm where Loa was raised. While in Logan, Loa was the Beehive teacher at church.⁷⁶

Farewell to Hawaii

After a while, Loa and Myral came to the decision that the family would not return to Hawaii and that he should join them on the Mainland. They most likely wanted to leave the war zone and live closer to family. In letters, he asked Loa whether or not to bring specific items in the house along with him from Hawaii. Loa told him he must bring the music records, her card recipes, the stove, the ice-box, the rattan chairs, the coffee table, the dishes, the radio, the sewing machine, and all electrical things.⁷⁷ He may or may not have *actually* brought all those things with him. He put ads in the newspaper to sell their remaining furniture. Myral worked many hours to prepare the home and yard for selling. He sadly wrote in his dairy that the house would soon be just a memory.⁷⁸ He had a few open houses for potential buyers, but eventually Myral left their beloved “Hale Kalaka” (Hawaiian for “Clark Home”) in the care of his cousin Eldred to sell.



Robert and Margene in the snow at J.I. and Emerett's house in Logan, Utah. Early 1944.



Myral pointing to a map labeled “Comrades in Arms”. This was on his wall at school in Hawaii during WWII, 1944.

During his last month, Myral either had friends over for dinner or was invited to dinner most nights of the week.⁷⁹ The Vocational School faculty and students held an outdoor goodbye assembly for Myral during which he received gifts. A large crowd from the Waikiki Ward held a Farewell party for him at the Amusement Hall. Choirs and soloists sang songs, speakers gave talks, and he received many leis and gifts.⁸⁰ A few days before leaving, he attended the LDS Central Pacific Mission Conference and wrote in his diary, “I was yearning all day to get going across the ‘blue’. This was the first conference that I haven’t had to play piano for.”⁸¹

One year after Loa and the children left, Myral, now age 42, departed on the SS *Permanente* bound for the Mainland on July 9th 1944.⁸² On his birthday, a steward brought out a birthday cake for him which he shared with the guests at his table.⁸³ Loa said in a letter that she would meet him in San Francisco, but they didn’t know exactly which day he was going to arrive. She reached the city around the time he might arrive, checked into a hotel, and waited.⁸⁴ On July 17th, Myral’s ship landed, and the next day he met Loa on the street. He had brought their car over—a brown 1938 Chevrolet Deluxe with leather upholstery. They toured around San Francisco for a few days, getting reacquainted after a year of being an ocean apart.

They drove south to San Luis Obispo to visit the McCaffertys, just as Loa had done a year before. Myral went to see someone at the school district about available teaching positions for the fall. They then took a long journey through Oxnard, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Delta, Logan, Morgan, Murtaugh and Twin Falls. Myral showed his slides of Hawaii at a number of gatherings along the way.⁸⁵

The four Clarks, reunited at last, stayed in Logan for a month as they waited to hear back about a teaching position in San Luis Obispo. It was so nice to be back together. When the job offer finally came, they packed up for one last, long journey. On August 31, 1944—Robert’s seventh birthday—they crossed into California.⁸⁶



Loa & Myral reunited in San Francisco after one year apart, July 1944

