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Mrs. Elmer Shirrell's Diary

May 14, 1942

Twenty-nine years ago today I was off to the gay house-party which celebrated the Mills College 1913 graduation. Today much older, little wiser, and burdened with a sprained ankle and fractured foot, I'm off again to a very different sort of house-party, one not for ten days but for "the duration."

It is just about a month ago that my spouse went to work for the War Relocation Authority, a bureau created by the President to assume responsibility for all Japanese in the Western Defense Area, most of whom are to be placed in so-called relocation centers, for one of which we are headed. In this month he has jumped hither and thither with me trying to keep up as nearly as possible. First to Parker, Arizona, for him and for me a stop en route at Santa Barbara. After five days of intense activity instead of the promised month, and he is back at Santa Barbara returning to San Francisco. There is a quick repacking, hurried farewells, calls from anxious Japanese, confused, pitifully ignorant of what is to happen them, and finally by noon Friday we are in San Francisco.

Saturday afternoon comes a ring of the telephone, "Pack my bag. I'm leaving on the six o'clock train for Tule Lake," but less than fifteen minutes later another call, "We're driving up in our car; pack your bag, too."

By five we are leaving Oakland, stopping enroute for Elmer to register for "the old man's draft" and thence to Colusa for a

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brief visit, a brief sleep, and on the road again at six.

Klamath Falls for luncheon - all is familiar ground so far, but not so the remaining 35 miles to the project site. Bearing away to the south east, we drive into California again, into a valley ringed with barren hills, treeless acres of rich reclaimed lake bottom. For miles along the railroad stretch potatoes warehouses, doors at both ends, wide enough for trucks to enter, dirt banked up the outer walls, sod on the roofs. No signs of spring yet - not a leaf on the trees around the prosperous looking farm houses.

Tule Lake with its curving main street, chuck holes, dust, hums with activity far beyond normal, for every available space is filled with trailers - the construction boom is on.

The project itself, eight miles farther south-east on the Alturas highway is a beehive. Trucks, curious sightseers, army engineers, jam the highway. Numerous floors have been laid although ground was broken just three days earlier. By three days more some of these buildings will be ready for a baptism of paint. All will be typical army barracks for this is the military and administrative area that is going up. Across the highway rises a rugged butte; it is upon its slopes that wells are being dug for the water supply.

Until Wednesday noon we remained in Klamath Falls, Elmer journeying back and forth to the project through snow, rain, and hail, making arrangements for telephone and mail service, railway

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sidings, and other immediate necessities.

At the hotel I heard many unfavorable comments; no one in this vicinity wanted "the damn Japs," I gathered. Men from the sugar beet interests were on deck hoping to get favorable word on Japanese labor so that the valley farmers might be induced to plant heavily.

Back to Oakland we hustled where I promptly fell down the front steps and laid myself up for the two weeks that Elmer collected members for his staff, he reaching San Francisco at eight or before every day and returning any time from seven to ten at night.

Yesterday the doctor removed the cast from my leg so that if we had to go I could manage. It is well he did for Elmer telephoned about five that we would leave at the crack of dawn.

Again a hustle of repacking but no time for farewells, not even by telephone, for that instrument rang almost continuously all evening in connection with business concerning Tule Lake.

This has been a long tiresome day with my sore, swollen foot, but we have arrived and are domiciled in the pretty guest-room at the Frank Johnsons.

May 15.

Last night we reached the project at six o'clock. To see a huge camp sprawling out where two weeks ago little existed is one of the modern day miracles. The military village is done, as are two dormitories, two so-called apartment houses, the administration

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building, and a large part of the Japanese village. All buildings are built on the 20 by 100 scheme with windows right under the eaves. All doors open outward; I wonder how they'll work in windy, snowy zero weather.

Tired and forlorn I sat in the car watching the rain while Elmer tried to locate Mr. Chambers who is acting as his assistant here, and who was to have found a place for us to stay.

What good Samaritans the Thomases proved to be when we'd finally tracked Mr. Chambers to his lair at their house. At their insistence we had dinner with them before driving seven miles farther to the Johnson farm.

I have to smile as I think of our exit. Elmer walked on one side, Mr. Cooke on the other as I trudged through the grass on my crutches, Mr. Chambers bringing up the rear holding an umbrella over my head. I must have looked like a comedy Cleopatra.

May 16.

Mrs. Johnson drove me into Tule Lake, but I discovered that we'd practically exhausted its possibilities when we saw it in April. Elmer is very busy and hates the ten mile drive back and forth to the project, both on account of time lost and good rubber taken off by the gravelled road.

May 17.

I went to the project today. It is interesting to see how well along toward completion the hospital is. It is a regulation army base hospital very sprawly, something like this

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No, it isn't, but the wards go stretching out like fingers - I never could draw even a diagram.

The Administration building has a few stoves, a long dilapidated counter, several tables and one telephone. Some odds and ends begged and borrowed from a C.C.C. camp stand around in more or less hodge podge fashion.

Staff members are arriving and conferences go on in this or that corner. Where can the agricultural group get enough seed potatoes for 500 acres, where are the women stenographers and secretaries to be housed, what is to be done with stuff arriving from the Quartermaster marked for the M.P's.

Some engineers from regional office consult with Mr. Slattery, our chief engineer, as to the best spots for schools, stores, and additional personnel housing. They are interrupted by such queries as "Is there a thermal control for evacuee showers?" "How on earth can four-feet-six-inch Japanese women turn on showers designed for husky six foot American soldiers?" "Where oh where are all the thousands of toilet seats that have been ordered?"

A telephone rings with a freight office reporting, "We got a carload of carpets here; where do you want 'em?" Hastily the incredulous staff member tries to spike the rumor at its inception, "Those aren't carpets; they're bales of renovated army blankets."

A lull permitted us to sally forth to inspect dormitories and apartments. The former are the ever present 100 x 20 barracks

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divided into six rooms, each with a small bath containing shower, toilet, and bowl. The apartment buildings are divided into four parts, a 9 x 24 living room (what proportions) a 9 x 11 bedroom, tiny kitchenette, and bath. Up to date the apartments have no hot water as each is to have its own electric heater; therefore the Smiths and Shirrells have chosen rooms side by side in the dormitory nearest the administration building.

May 18.

We were up early, packed, and set off right after breakfast to take up our abode at the project. Since our room hadn't been cleaned yet and there was absolutely nothing in it but a tiny air-tight stove, I spent much of the morning with Frankie. She has two army cots, a nail keg or two, and several sofa cushions.

By afternoon the fill-in maintenance man had swept out the room and moved in two steel cots with their mattresses. I managed with Elmer's help to make them up and to set up our card table. Frank rigged up a shelf in the closet alcove and put up a few hooks. Then the two boys brought over an old table that had been brought over from the C.C.C. camp. On it we've placed radio, writing materials, and toilet articles; on the card table I have a few things by which I can get myself a bite of breakfast.

The absence of seats has been the greatest discomfort - even the toilet lacked one until the man next door gave me the one his bath boasted. More precious than rubies and platinum, toilet seats seem to be - Let's hope we find the carloads of ours that seem to

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have gone astray.

After much talking to hard boiled army engineers, Elmer has succeeded in inducing them to equip the women's bath houses with partitions between the individual showers and toilets - but no doors. The showers, moreover, are six feet high, as I said before, and what is a tiny woman to do! Several of the staff members have volunteered to act as hoists.

May 19.

We slept well in our bare room with its sheet rock walls. Our bed lamp hung at a precarious angle from a nail over my head, the army cots were hard, the o.d. blankets heavy, but even so we slept soundly until six thirty.

The Smith's accompanied us to the cafe at Stronghold, over a mile distant, a cafe much overworked by the construction crew - vile breakfast!

Since I refused to endure another day without a chair to sit on, Frankie, Elmer, and I drove into Klamath Falls to do a little shopping. I brought back such refinements as drinking glasses, camp chairs, bath mat, ash trays, waste basket, and tea-kettle; Elmer found and bought shower curtains for a number of rooms, including ours. Several of the secretaries arrived last night, including Ruth Young, Elmer's secretary, and he's trying to get them settled in a degree of comfort at least.

After luncheon we drove back to find that a company of military police had just arrived and were stirring up plenty of dust with their trucking back and forth from the railway spur.

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Frankie, Mrs. Friedman, and I are spending much time and thought on a list of articles likely to be needed by women and children. Mortimer Cooke, who has lived many years in Japan as a business man and got out on the last boat minus everything but a suitcase or two, is heading up our village store. He's afraid lest his customers will start a run on his non-existent stock. After all, we will have 11,000 people to supply.

May 20.

Some benighted soul's alarm went off at 5:30. Up popped Elmer and nothing I could say dissuaded him. I snuggled back as I'd decided to sleep in. A Stronghold breakfast doesn't appeal, especially as I find walking on crutches in gravel very difficult. About nine I had ovaltine, a cookie, and an apple.

Fortunately, I'd dressed and made the cots when Elmer and Captain Patterson of the military police came by. He is from Fort Worth, Texas, very pleasant with his good Texas drawl.

Thanks to his courtesy we are to be allowed to eat at the army mess until our eating facilities are set up - and at the rate of about 70¢ a day. For dinner we enjoyed steak, country style, mashed potatoes, canned peas, bread, butter, jam, pickles, ~~on~~ olives, celery, and canned pineapple.

May 21.

Today has been one of all kinds of weather, sunshine, wind, dust clouds, thunder, lightning, and rain. I've been restless all day; these high windows make me feel as though I were in jail and

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walking is so difficult that I don't go out much. I did stay in the office all evening last night; Elmer and the other staff members work from sun-up to ten, eleven, or twelve - Joe Hayes who is in charge of transportation and supplies burns the light until two or three.

May 22.

More weather today including thunder, lightning, and hail - sort of matches my inner turmoil for Mr. Fryer telephoned last night that the Washington director, Mr. Eisenhower, had named a new director for this project. Mr. Fryer seemed quite upset and said, "You'll remain as assistant director with your salary at \$5,600. You'll like Mr. Rachford, the new man, and you two will make a fine team."

All this may be true, but Elmer has worked night and day on this project now for a month, Saturdays and Sundays included, and it's hard to turn one's "pet child" over to another. If only we don't get a broken-down politician on our hands we can stand it - but it would break our hearts not to have this project go as it should.

May 23.

I feel better. Mr. Rachford arrived this evening in time for the first staff meeting, and he emphatically is not the type we feared. He has been high in the forestry service for many years, is kindly, keen in sizing up a situation, and appreciative of good work well done. We'll get along, I'm sure, and I won't be altogether

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sorry to have the tremendous responsibility on some one else's shoulders.

The meeting was wonderful. Each one rose and told briefly who he is and what he does, even the wives, four in number, and the one child on the project. After that Elmer introduced Mr. Rachford who made a pleasant little talk which was followed by committee reports, i.e. housing and placement, recreation, construction, internal security and transportation and supply - O yes, Mr. Fleming headed that on community services, and we had a report on the store we're to have.

Elmer gave a good speech, short, to the point, and appreciative of the fine work which has been done to date. Mr. Rachford followed him, saying, "I've been listening with every 'pore', but I have been unable to take in half of what you've been saying. Even so, I've learned more tonight than I did in two full days at regional office." (There's a lot to be said for training on the job; especially on a brand new job no one has ever tackled before).

Later he put his arm around Elmer's shoulder and said, "That was a splendid meeting, my boy. You are to be congratulated."

It was mighty good to see "Kit" Carson arrive today to take over the hospital and public health. He is such a cracker jack of a doctor and such a grand person that we know we're the luckiest project of all.

May 24.

Today, Sunday, the project was thrown open to visitors -

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under very strict rules. From two until five p.m. cars were permitted to drive through at 20 miles an hour on certain designated roads. No stops were permitted; all rules enforced by military police. There was a steady stream of cars for three solid hours; people came from as far north as Eugene and south as Dunsmuir; all this despite the fact that the weather was threatening.

Frankie and I held open house for guests from Klamath Falls and Tule Lake who used the occasion to call on us.

Dr. Thompson, head of the regional office medical division has been here all day. He, Kit, Mr. Rachford and the Shirrells toured the hospital this afternoon late. I soon had to give up and sit down; my game foot wouldn't permit me to hobble the miles of corridors. Workmen are still busily engaged night and day in finishing jobs, plumbing, and electrical installation.

We, together with Kit, drove Mr. Rachford and Dr. Thompson in to catch the night train south from Klamath Falls. Mr. Rachford will not return until the middle of June as he has to put his affairs in order first.

Coming back we drove leisurely and visited much. The country begins to seem like spring now with trees leafing out, apple blossoms appearing and green grass sprouting. But after all its only a week until the first of June. I'm used to summer by then.

May 25.

After our pretty drive home, the weather decided to settle down and go to work in earnest. A wildly stormy night followed

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with high winds and lashing rain. E. and I were both wakeful, worried lest the dike go out. Today the army turned over to W.R.A. land in the reclamation district to the extent of some 2300 acres. This land borders the lake; in fact, just a few years ago it was lake bottom, but by a fabulous sort of scheme it has been reclaimed and leased to neighboring farmers. The leases expired this year so that the land will be farmed hereafter by our agricultural department - provided the levees hold. If the high winds, late rains, and muskrats prevail all this 2300 acres will be inundated, and by the time they dry off it will be too late to get in a crop.

Today the dikes are being patrolled as they will be tonight by the M.P's. Two hundred sandbags were used yesterday and a drag line is busy today. Baled hay is in readiness to shove into crucial spots.

May 26.

Work rambles right along. Insulation is being installed in Japanese barracks. Yesterday's flurries of snow and hail prove the necessity of having fairly warm dwellings if we are to escape respiratory epidemics. E. had hoped to have all workmen out of the "village" before our first evacuees arrive, but that will prove impossible now that the sheet rock must be installed at once.

We drove down this morning (about half a mile from the administration area) to find crews working in the blocks which are being readied for tomorrow's influx of 450, a volunteer group

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coming from the Puyallup and North Portland assembly centers to assist us in taking of the large numbers who will come daily a week hence. One mess hall is ready; the first temporary store has many shelves and counters built and its goods will begin arriving today.

Kit has been rushing the carpenters to finish some of his wards enough that they may be used altho there are no hospital beds as yet. He'll use army cots. He's dashed into Klamath Falls now to try to get sterilized pads; none have arrived as yet in the hospital stores. He does have his dispensary set up after a fashion and all his supplies are being inventoried and either held in his warehouses or placed where necessary.

May 27.

This morning at ten o'clock they came. Poor little people with their bundles and bags, their aged and their babies. We had lined up in our private automobiles to meet them on the railway spur, only to be told just before the train pulled in that the S.P. refused to take the train in and would unload at the front gate where we have no loading platform and by which the K.F.-Alturas highway runs. Down this road each way dashed jeeps laden with M.P.'s to cut off traffic, and we lined up by the track.

The train puffed to a stop and the military police who had accompanied the train gave permission for one carload after another to disembark. It was really dear to see the way the

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soldiers helped the women and old men off the train. It was no uncommon sight to see a big burly chap with a baby in his arms, carrying it over the rough cinders for the little mother who trotted by his side. Such dolls as the babies are - and the little children, too.

I made four trips back and forth to the registration building where our secretaries all sat behind typewriters ready to make out the registration sheet for each family.

One of my passengers, a beautiful young woman told me that she is a registered nurse so she was rushed to Kit in double quick time, as he was absolutely alone in the laundry temporarily converted into a medical office for a quick survey of throats and for a census of bottle fed babies who must have formulae prepared.

After passing through the doctor's hands, the evacuees, or colonists as we prefer to call them, went to another building where the housing department took them in charge and in a rather short time, considering our lack of experience, each family had been assigned to its apartment.

Each apartment is a big bare room 20 x 25 feet. In it are placed a stove, an army cot for each one of the occupants, and to army blankets apiece. There are two overhead electric lights, and one double wall plug. The floor is bare, the windows up under the eaves. Each apartment has one door opening outdoors.

Families of more than six persons rate a second apartment, but even though small, families are not required to double up as

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they were in assembly centers.

The day has brought its difficulties and laughs. Kit has had a particularly strenuous time. Yesterday he wrestled with the problem of bedmaking, aided only by Charlotte Stevens whose course in bedmaking has never included mitred corners and the other refinements of hospital techniques. She said, "He'd yell at me, 'My God, girl, didn't you ever make a bed?'" and I'd say, 'Lots of them,' and then he'd yell, 'Well then try to make one, just one, any one, but make it right.'"

Today he and the little nurse dashed back after registration and prepared the food for the two o'clock bottle feedings. This food was placed carefully in one of the electric refrigerators at the hospital. About twenty minutes of two, the nurse preparing to fill the bottles which were to be "taxied" to the hungry infants, took hold of the refrigerator handle which promptly fell off in her hand, and as Kit said later, "Then it took soldiers, sailors, and marines to get that door open." Meantime in the village the wailing began and continued until new food could be prepared. To expedite matters Walt Chambers rushed hot milk from the messhall kitchen in thermos bottles.

Frankie and I spent the latter part of the morning and all afternoon over in an empty messhall in the military area making curtains for the recreation hall and messhall. Several women came out from Tule Lake to help; quite a job as there were about forty-eight pairs to be done.

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Tonight after dinner Frank wanted to look over the housing to be sure every one had a cot and bedding. Frankie and I accompanied him. We sat in the car while he went hither and yon and in so doing we met and talked with a number of young people who were strolling about. They were all very courteous, attractive, and bright. One girl said, "When I saw that butte across the road this morning, I said to Fugi here, "Wouldn't that be a wonderful place to carve George Washington's head." (The speaker's name, by-the-by, is Aster).

In general, these people seem to be glad to find they are to have adequate space and a modicum of privacy. Evidently the pavillions at the Portland Stockyards and the Puyallup Fair Grounds have left much to be desired.

There are five sick babies in the hospital tonight, one graduate nurse, one girl who has had a little training, and Kit.

Twelve cooks came in this contingent, six of them former hotel chefs. Altho we got no laborers, a large number volunteered for levee patrol work tonight. Our first impression is that of ability, backed by cooperation.

May 28.

What a life, what a life. "Never a dull moment" is certainly our motto.

This morning as I was dashing off a letter, a messenger came from the Ad. Building to say that Prof. and Mrs. R.L. Adams from the University of California were here and E. wanted me to tour them around the village. I piloted them down to see the hospital

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and then to inspect a typical block with its barracks, messhall, recreation hall, and latrines, showers, and laundry in the alley.

To give good measure, I took them through the military area too and as we were driving back I said, "Now do come and see the way we are camping out." With which remark I pointed to our barracks and at the same time saw flames shooting up around the chimney of the boiler room. I yelled frantically at two Japanese boys who got the idea in nothing flat, grabbed a fire extinguisher, climbed up on the coal bin, and thence to the roof. Prof. Adams rushed into the Ad. Building to give the alarm whereupon out popped dozens of people, many armed with fire extinguishers. But by this time it was apparent that the fire had gained considerable headway in the attic; so the men began opening, even breaking into the apartments, and I hobbled as fast as I could around the building to grab my most precious belongings. Soon everything we possessed was in front of the buildings, the Smiths' belongings and poor Frankie herself most liberally sprayed with extinguisher fluid. We fared better in that respect, why I don't know except that the fact of Frankie's being just ready to step in the shower may have impressed her danger on the amateur firemen. At least, that's what we told her. At the first call of fire, she pulled on slacks and sweater and dragged a big trunk out. I'll never forget her white face and large scared eyes.

Slowly, lumberingly came the firetruck - our one and only - at 15 miles an hour. The governor hadn't been removed; Chief

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Bauman was in a fine lather by the time he arrived. He said he had hard work not to jump out and run ahead, unreeling the hose as he came. A short time later the Tule Lake rural truck came crashing in, siren going.

Meantime E. had ordered everything moved farther back ~~is~~ so that the fire apparatus could get in, and by the time the trucks arrived, the contents of all the rooms had been piled in wellnigh hopeless confusion across the road.

In the midst of the turmoil the Adamses departed, promising to tell our mutual friends in Berkeley that we were adepts at scaring up excitement.

Then the rain began to fall just as the firemen had finished chopping away the roof and drenching the inside of the building with water. Once more everything had to be moved, this time to the shed which serves as a garage for our cars. The floor of the shed is several inches deep in gravel; fortunately, Mrs. Slattery and several of the military police helped me segregate my belongings; my lame ankle being a constant menace.

Mr. Hawes had to be hospitalized on account of the amount of smoke he inhaled and Frankie was almost overcome by extinguisher fumes. Her lovely kidskin coat was completely ruined, but fortunately she has insurance on it.

Leaving two Japanese boys to guard my possessions this afternoon, I served as guide for a couple of Red Cross people from Klamath Falls. They wanted to see the hospital and the

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project. Still later the Smiths and the Shirrells moved to two end rooms in the obstretrical ward at the hospital, the ward not being needed as yet for its primary function.

Distances are rather great; I go limping through a long empty ward to get to the bathroom, and have to use the car if I wish to go to the doctor's office at the front of the building. We keep the car near the back door of our ward.

May 29.

This morning we tried to settle in, but with no place to hang or store clothes we've had ~~as~~ a time. We've finally hung our clothes hangers on a window frame and there they sway precariously, something going flop every now and then. I have part of an old sectional bookcase in which I've placed our other clothing. The card table serves as a dressing table, and we have two cots and our two camp chairs. Steam heat, though, how marvellous.

In the afternoon Frankie and I decided to rest frayed nerves by going to Klamath Falls and remaining for dinner. To be rid of the ubiquitous chocolate pudding of the army mess is wonderful! I'd forgotten cracked crab and fresh tomatoes could be so delicious. The drive home was lovely with a glorious sunset and rising full moon. The poplars against the back drop of hills makes the country side lovely now with the tender green of spring.

May 30.

Memorial Day and a holiday in the great outside, but

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everyone has worked at top speed here today. We have to get ready for the days ahead when we'll be getting around 500 new colonists daily.

I'm beginning to feel as though I live in a gold fish bowl with workmen prowling around through every nook and cranny of this hospital. F. and I went down to the store and then drove around. That evening Elmer and I were patron and patroness at the first "Get Acquainted Dance."

Today, the 31st, began auspiciously with a lovely, clear warm morning. Our men folk were soon involved in the pressing affairs of the project, but Frankie and I dressed and attended the first Protestant Church service, a service for which a group of young people petitioned.

Mr. Allmand from Tule Lake, Presbyterian Community Church, officiated. His text was from the story of Nahaam, the Syrian leper. The main theme was that the world, today, is leprous, and we have tried all the ways to cure it, even war, without avail while all the time all we need is to dip in the River Jordan, i.e. to accept and spread around us the love of God through Christ Jesus, the Lord. I think we were all deeply touched; I know I was.

Kit's two white doctors and two white nurses arrived today to help with the strenuous week ahead. Many of the colonists arriving this week have not been in assembly centers so have not had typhoid shots, etc.

Tonight after supper, Captain Patterson took me for a long

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jaunt in a jeep. We went over hill and dale, sagebrush and ditches, going high up on a mountain side so that I had a gorgeous view of the valley, the lake, the mountains, and the sunset.

A long but interesting staff meeting closed the session.

June 1.

F. and I went to Tule Lake this morning, returning incensed at the independent, almost insolent attitude of the local druggist. The grocery store was almost as bad.

At noon we four came back to the room after luncheon and had fresh strawberries dipped in powdered sugar.

June 2.

Paul Revere, alias Walter Chambers, came galloping up the steps at five this morning to say the train, due at 7:30 was already in. Up jumped everybody and by six o'clock with the M.P's out stopping traffic in the highway, the cars lined up, and we began our taxi services. I took a Methodist minister, his wife, and adorable 4 months old son in my car on my last trip.

Everybody is getting tired now, especially with this very early hour of rising. We had breakfast with the Japanese where we are to eat now until our messhall is set up.

We got our men home fairly early tonight, thinking we might get in a bridge game, but Elmer had to go to Kit for a "shot" and didn't get back in time.

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June 3.

The Japanese drivers are all trained now so that I don't have to drive taxi any more. Since Frankie had never seen a "disembarkation," I took her down for our 10 o'clock train. We had plenty of excitement, for suddenly we saw smoke and flame over by the M.P. village. It turned out to be a rubbish heap burning.

F. and I spent the afternoon in Tule Lake having our hair done. Half the town seemed to have the same idea so that it was six o'clock before we were through. The boys met us and we had dinner together at the hotel. Nice change.

June 4.

We watched the train from a distance today. Later we brought a boy with a cut foot to the hospital. Ate dinner down at Stronghold.

June 5.

Still no salary check - it grows embarrassing. F. and I called on Mrs. Syng, sick here in the hospital, and on Mrs. Elverson. Dinner again at Stronghold, and then Elmer and I went calling in the village. Mr. Waller had given us a list of names but one address was evidently wrong. The people there, however, greeted us most cordially and insisted on giving us a can of Japanese tea. As we left, the woman who had giggled all the time, patted me on the back and said, "Come 'gain," pat-pat, "come 'gain."

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June 6.

Two of the men I met last night nearly fell out of a car to bow and smile at me. One asked me to come again so he could show me a picture he has of Mr. Oliver at Willamette University. We were met in every home with the utmost cordiality, made to feel so genuinely welcome; poor little people, most of them asking why only what people the world over want, a chance to live their own little lives and let others do likewise.

I took Dr. Francis and Frankie to the train today, nearly 500 from West Sacramento and Clarksburg.

Afterwards Margaret Hayes joined us and we four went to Stronghold for lunch.

At Kit's invitation we had dinner at the hospital - very good.

We were supposed to be patrons at a dance, but a poor old Japanese man died about six thirty, and both Elmer and Frank have been busy all evening. The family feel quite bitter as they think the removal from their home hastened the man's death. Our men have been trying to locate a Buddhist priest, but find there is none in camp. Two men who are studying to be priests are here and can conduct the preliminary rites after which the body will be cremated, and the funeral itself will take place at a later date.

June 7.

Sunday and I celebrated this morning by doing a good sized wash, the reason being that I could use the hospital washing

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machine in the temporary laundry.

This afternoon we called on several Japanese families, including the family whose head died last night. The widow's face was a study in sorrowful repression.

The captain had a Dutch supper party and had the joy of presenting his wife and youngsters who had arrived earlier than he'd expected.

Another church service tonight was attended by Elmer and me as well as about 100 Japanese.

June 8.

We (F. and I) went to Tule Lake this afternoon to do a trifle of shopping. Ran into Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Thomas at the store so we all had malted milks together.

At noon I took 4 Japanese girls down into the village. One of them, May "West River" said, "O I hope lots of people are looking so they'll see us drive up in style."

Strawberry shortcake for dinner - Mr. Kallam's treat as a reward to the Japanese nurse and aides who took care of him during his recent illness.

The old people, particularly old men, are having a time finding their respective dwellings. One old man who had lost himself slept in a vacant building with a mattress under him and one over him. Four others were locked into a building overnight by a harassed block warden who let them out in the morning to renew their search.

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June 9.

Frances' birthday and I managed to get a letter off to her.

We called this afternoon on Mrs. Slattery, Mrs. Allumbaugh and Mrs. Jacoby. Margaret Hayes and Mrs. Elbersen were there too - nice time had by all.

Three fires today - two in mess halls, one in the contractor's planing mill.

June 10.

A real spree today. We went into Klamath Falls with Mr. Townsend for dinner. He'd ordered a special one - steak and gobs of fresh mushrooms, lovely green vegetables, peas, asparagus, tomatoes, radishes, raw carrots, sherry - oh boy.

More Japanese doctors have been arriving - now have four and one dentist, but still no more nurses.

June 11.

Whee-eee goes the siren this morning at 6:20 - just another messhall - Elmer got into his clothes in nothing flat and dashed out to the car to find ice on the windshield. We have climate!

Tonight the Personnel Mess Hall was used for the first time. It seemed very nice and quiet and restful. Our dinner was very good - had a jolly time at our table, the Smiths, Shirrells, and Hayes - Each table seats only six and there is no confusion nor clattering of dishes nor echoing and re-echoing, the fault of too large rooms.

Elmer is down in the village attending meetings of the

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Japanese who are getting ready to organize their preliminary government.

June 12.

Today was a large one in a social (and eating) way. F. and I spent the morning primping for the Guild luncheon in Tule Lake.

At noon we went to the Mess Hall for a bite; at one we arrived at Mrs. Thomas' house for another bite - vegetable cocktail, crackers, and cheese, by a quarter to two we were eating at the luncheon, and at five fifteen we were back at Mrs. Thomas' and eating canteloupe sundae after a rubber of bridge.

Six o'clock found us here at the Project with the Pattersons invited for dinner. Too much food.

I was late for Staff Meeting but in plenty of time to go with Elmer, Carol, and Frankie to Klamath Falls to meet Franklin Scudder.

June 13.

Lazy-lazy-lazy this morning and this afternoon Elmer actually came home and took a nap.

C. and F. went off to stay overnight in Klamath Falls and have themselves a real change of scene. They looked like a bride and groom.

Quiet day - one false fire alarm to mar the serenity.

June 14.

Elmer and I went to church in Tule Lake, the Harknesses arrived, Frankie, and Carol returned.

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June 15.

Had my first class tonight. 5 girls, 1 boy, 1 man. I feel rusty enough but hope to get back into the swing soon.

The furniture exhibit is remarkable. All of it is made of scrap lumber and the wardrobes, dressing tables, chairs, benches, desks etc. are both ingenious and handsome.

The Drews, Priors, and Thompsons (Sears Roebuck manager in Klamath Falls) were our guests at dinner and served as judges. Elmer couldn't be present as he had to accompany Mr. Fryer into Klamath Falls.

Mr. F. and Colonel Cress arrived on the 4:10 A.M. train and were met by Elmer and Joe Hayes who had to get up at a quarter to three.

Nice staff meetings right after luncheon. Mr. Fryer was very complimentary indeed.

June 16.

Colonists began arriving again today. Mr. Rachford came also. I took Marguerite Harkness to see the train come in. Elmer was at a meeting until late.

June 17.

Got ready for my class which met this evening. Two of the girls who work on the paper "joined up."

I've been asked to lead the high school groups at Young People's Meeting. What shall I choose as my subject?

The other day I had a long talk with Miss Kohayashi, the little nurse. She feels the whole evacuation program is a blot on American

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history because to her it is a travesty on democracy. She said, "We young people feel as though the foundations had been swept away from under our feet. Now the old people say 'What good is American citizenship to you,' and we have nothing to answer?"

June 18.

Moving day and am I "regusted." First, it has been a cold, disagreeable day; second, I got too well dusted by speeding workman, as I walked to the Ad. Building; third, Elmer's salary check still comes at the old figure; and finally, I am tired and had no place to rest until the coats were brought in after dinner.

Still camping out although we do have a chest of drawers and a small table of the new furniture.

June 19.

Winnie came this morning to visit Kit until Monday. Had the nurse here, too, today who came in with the colonists (we get a train a day now with about 500 on board).

This afternoon Frankie, Frank, and I accompanied Mr. Hawes, the visiting nurse, and doctor into Klamath Falls--Frankie and I did a little shopping then drove home with Frank about five.

Elmer at a meeting as usual.

Quite a time today. The captain is sure the Japanese are sending out information about our camp and is very jittery. He demands outgoing mail be censored. Elmer thinks it's all "hocey."

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June 20.

Pried Elmer away long enough to call on the Johnsons tonight. Their columbines just through the ground 5 weeks ago are as high as the fence and in full luscious bloom. The out-of-doors is lovely now about sunset time.

June 21.

Up early and took Winnie to meet the train. I followed that by going to church at 10:30. The minister visiting here from Seattle and I were the only Caucasians present.

In the evening I talked to the High School Group on What it means to be a Christian American.

Elmer took the "visiting fireman" to Klamath Falls to the train. Two men were here from the new Denver regional office. Wonder if it means anything?

Winnie came by late to bring us some lovely iris and then just as we were "dropping off" to sleep the poor little Patterson baby had a bad spell of asthma.

June 22.

Frankie and I spent the morning being beautified in Tule Lake. Had luncheon at the hotel.

I enjoyed my class very much tonight. We had oral reports.

Later an unexpected staff meeting brought the news that Mr. Rachford is going to Denver to help with the opening of the Wyoming project. Does that mean Elmer will get the directorship here? Well time will tell.

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June 23.

Morning watched the registration. Several women came out from Tule Lake to sponsor Red Cross work here. About 100 women attended the meeting. We met first with three of the women and then all went over to the large meeting. After we were introduced, Mrs. Kato presided over the meeting, talking in Japanese.

June 24.

Up at 5:30 after the Smiths, Hayeses, and Shirrells had a strawberry feed until 10:30. Frankie and I drove into Klamath Falls to meet the south bound train, as Mrs. Tahira was returning from her 5 year old son's funeral bringing with her the 20 year old sister who had remained in Olympia with the lad. A Mr. Cornwall was at the station trying to get a ride out to the Project. He helped us get the bundles of baggage aboard so we insisted on his driving out with us.

We had to leave all the baggage at the provost marshall's as it had not been inspected. Then we took the daughter, Toshie, down for registration; the mother to go through the medical check-up.

Slept a little this afternoon and worked on material for my class.

June 25.

Quite a rain last night or early this morning.

After my class last night, I went to the office hoping to get Elmer home, but it was after ten before I could snatch him away.

Went to the train this morning and had to take the doctor and nurse to breakfast, then to the hospital.

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The weather is cold and blustery - my tired old stove which is squatting down on its haunches is to be moved out today. As a result, I have no fire.

June 26.

Cold-horrid weather. Dust storm followed by hard rain. Tried to catch up on odds and ends.

Weather still cold but clearing. Red Cross sewing meeting this afternoon - knitting this evening. Mrs. Miller at latter was remarkably successful with the Japanese women who laughed and chatted with her to the best of their meager English ability. As there weren't enough seats, I stood up for an hour and a half.

Went to the U.S.O. dance in Tule Lake. Too tired to be anything but a total flop.

June 27.

My foot nearly drove me mad in the night. We didn't get to bed until after one, and I slept only a little before the intolerable itching woke me up. After an hour of torture, I tore the adhesive tape off and greased the foot thoroughly, but it was a long time before it quieted down and let me sleep.

As a result, I slept in this morning. In the afternoon Elmer, Franklin Scudder, and I drove into Klamath Falls. Elmer and I bought ourselves a double bed. Every one laughs at us now, but wait until the long, cold winter nights.

As the office was being sanded preparatory to putting down "master
" Elmer came home early.

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June 28.

I went to the train this morning - Two stretchers (semi and no ambulances so I took them to the hospital in an automobile. Learned that our "first baby" was born at six this morning.

...

Called in the evening on several well educated, attractive families. One man said, "I've lost my feeling of being in a concentration prison camp, since I heard your speech the other night." That made E. feel good.

June 29.

... Margaret, Frankie and I spent most of it (morning) in front of the house...

A rumor that the Goodring project has fallen through and will be moved here makes us wonder what next? Our electricity off for a time. The military jittery.

June 30.

Margaret, Frankie, and I spent the day in Klamath Falls...Met Mr. Cooke and Mr. Smith who took us to luncheon.

...

Last night rather hectic--Joe came in mad at Mr. Goss who slightly "under" and belligerent. Then after we were asleep Jake (Mr. Jacoby) was in with a report of a rather serious scrap in the village.

Captain Patterson back from Reno with news that Lieut. C. has been removed, largely on account of car episodes.

Military is still censoring the mail - surely sickening.

July 1.

...

Mrs. Rhodes came this afternoon to meet with Mrs. Kato. She

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brought cotton batting and more quilt scraps. Mrs. Kato brough beautiful blocks for several quilts. These Japanese women do lovely handwork...

Class this evening...

July 2.

Thursday morning Frankie, Margaret, and I picked out our rugs over at the warehouse...Later we went to Merrill for hinges for the closet doors, Mr. Davis has made for our closet.

Elmer had to get up at 3 to go to Klamath Falls to meet Mr. Fryer and Mr. Meyer...

After luncheon we had a staff meeting in our recreation hall at which time Mr. Meyer announced that Elmer was to lose half his title and be director, hereafter, not acting director. Everyone seemed very pleased.

We took the "visiting firemen" in to K.F. to catch the 7:30 train and to pick up the new nurses coming here for training before going to the Idaho project. (We don't get? Idaho, thank heaven - that was only a rumor).

Coming home Elmer told me Joe Hayes is to be the assistant director. I'm fearful of his youth, inexperience, and unpopularity.

July 3.

My misgivings were well founded as there is great dissatisfaction. I've been sick about it all day. I'm very fond of both J and M but I hate to see anything happen to our wonderful esprit de corps.

...

Mr. N. has flown higher than a kite-- a prima donna if there ever was one.

...

July 4.

Up bright and early. The flag raising with scouts in charge, followed by pledge of allegiance was very touching...

...

In the afternoon were held athletic contests and races, but we took Mr. Cozzens and Mr. Power into Klamath. They have been here "pow wowing" over the school buildings and other new construction including staff apartments.

E and I had a good visit on the way home, talking over the J.H. situation. I think E. has everything well in hand and as a result, I feel better.

We ate in the Block 15 Mess Hall by invitation. The women of the block gave the chefs a holiday and cooked a large amount of "Shuzi" - a rice dish with chicken, eggs, green vegetables and either a dash of vinegar or lemon.

At six-thirty between 4,000 and 5,000 men, women and children assembled for the big program of the day. It was held outdoors in the big fire break between 4th and 5th avenues.

Despite interference by the wind the public address system worked fairly well altho Elmer's speech--the oration of the day--did not sound as though uttered by his voice. A former prof. of Japanese at U.C. followed him immediately giving the speech again in Japanese for the benefit of the older colonists.

After a patriotic song or two, the variety show was on. Much talent was discovered--a very good violinist, several vocalists, beautiful

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dancers both Japanese and modern, weight lifters, and a Hawaiian orchestra. Further entertainment for the Issei followed this program and dancing for the youngsters.

July 5.

We went early to church at nine o'clock. The choir sings beautifully. Their song this morning "Yes, I am able."... Young Mr. Tanabe, a Methodist minister from Sacramento, gave the sermon on "The Man from Nazareth." It was as well organized and delivered as though Harry Emerson Fosdick were the preacher. The subject matter, too, was fine.

The captain insisted on our going on a picnic at the Adams ranch near Merrill. He took the Smiths, the Hayeses, Kit, us, and his family.

...

Despite Mrs. S's difficulty with articulation, it was not a wet party so I enjoyed it very much.

July 6.

Frankie and I went to town to pick up more visiting firemen. ... One of the three men had his wife with him. She turned out to be Frances Turman, Frank Turman's daughter.

July 7.

Down at Mrs. Thomas' for a meeting of the committee wanting to give a dance to the military. I seem to be the liason officer--much telephoning which I loathe.

July 8.

...

Taught in evening.

July 9.

Expected to have my room painted but was drafted to drive a car into Klamath Falls to pick up Japanese arriving from Merced on the 10:55. Train was late so we did not leave until 11:15. Frank, Bill Stevens (Charlottes' husband) and I. When we arrived, train still later allowing time for us to dash up to hotel for quick luncheon...

Tonight came our first wedding to which the Shirrells, Hayeses and Smiths were invited. Elmer had gone to a mass meeting, hence it devolved on me to represent the family.

Since the office seemed a cheerless place, we adjourned to the Smith's (room house--it had been painted that day but was all in order). I dashed home for some flowers I had and borrowed some from Mrs. Rhodes.

After the wedding we toured the project in two cars en route to Block 11 mess hall for the reception. En route our car was halted by an excited grandfather to be who wanted us to get his expectant daughter to the hospital. Out we piled and sent her and her mother off with Mack Mcfurne while we chatted with the grandfather, Mr. Takeda (former N.Y. life insurance agent and our best rustler of laborers for the placement office).

When Mack returned, we went to the party...~~Thank you~~

There was a toast drunk to the bride and groom (in coca colas) potato chips (the Japanese seem to love them) cake and an orange for everyone.

We were all introduced and said just a word or two, two girls sang, and the bride and groom each thanked every one for the party...

July 10.

...

Winnie and family arrived last night so we ran up to see them for a minute - also Captain Patterson who is in the hospital with his laryngitis.

July 11.

A little orphan boy 3 months old arrived on the train this morning. I took him out to the hospital. Poor sweet little mite, his father is in a concentration camp, his mother dead, a suicide soon after his birth--one of the tragedies of war time.

...

In the evening we went to the community sing in the village and then to the furniture exhibit. After that to play bridge with the Carsons.

July 12.

A big trainload today about nine--nearly 600.

At noon went to a shindig at the military village. A number of couples were down from K.F., also a group of girls known as commandos.

Went to a meeting of 3 Japanese and me, to girls and one elderly man flower arrangement classes.

In the evening we had the Rev. Mr. Phillips and his wife as our dinner guests, and went with them to the Young People's Fellowship.

July 13.

Took material down to Mrs. Kato for the Red Cross and then tried to find Mrs. Miller's to get some plants she promised me. Failing in that Frankie and I collected grasses by the roadside. I brought them back to the flower arrangement people.

Had my final class in the evening. I hated to turn them over to Mrs. Gifford but trust she'll be a good teacher and like them as much as I have.

July 14.

...Mrs. Elberson and Mrs. Stolts did likewise (washing); Mrs. Tracy ironed.

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Elmer called me to take charge of a visiting delegation from Oregon State. Was busy with them until luncheon. I find myself resenting the attitude of many outsiders towards our fine people here. Too smug.

...We looked at the Fish and Game Commission's house yesterday--we may lease it.

July 15 and 16.

Trains each morning.

July 17.

Coming back from the train a little Japanese girl eyed Claire and Gayle hungrily. It seems she has never played with Japanese children before and was pining to know some of the white children. Her delight in my room was pathetic. She said "We children used to have fun playing pirate. We'd steal strawberries out of our own berry patch. Japanese children don't play that way."

Elmer and I dashed into K.F. for him to give a talk at Rotary Club. I was tired when I returned and not up to being enthusiastic with the Red Cross contingent.

July 18.

...

We had dinner with the Kendall Smiths...

July 19.

Frankie and I went to church. Mrs. Stults and enfant terrible were there, too, but left fortunately.

E. and I took the visiting firemen into K.F. about 2:30. Mr. Chapman was rather disquieting on some inside dope.

In the evening Elmer attended and spoke at the G.B.A. installation. Except for the gong, the service was not unlike a Catholic service with its genuflections, rosaries, incense, and chanting. The six Buddhist priests all wore dark robes with purple stoles and each carried a book and a fan. The choir of girls were garbed in white satin robes with purple stoles.

...

Then we went for a time to the Bon Odori, Japanese dances for the month of July to celebrate the return of the spirits to this earth.

July 20.

Margaret, Frankie and I went to Tule Lake and Merrill this afternoon. ... Grace Hosegawa brought me an interesting juniper branch in a wooden container--Japanese style, very effective against my ivory wall. Our prima donna is prima-ing again. He is so childish and vain that he's ridiculous. I think Elmer is more tolerant than I.

July 21.

Mr. Lindley, project manager from Granada, Colorado, was here today. Also half a dozen cases of chicken pox arrived on today's train to add to the mumps cases that came yesterday.

...

...

Gave a book report to the Library club tonight. Good audience.

The Slatterys had us to dinner tonight, and we certainly ate ...

Met one of my former pupils. She regrets me and tells me that "rs. Wada wants to quit the class too, since I am no longer teaching them. She says, "Your are much more interesting "rs. Shirrell; we all want you back." Of course, all this made me feel good.

July 22.

No train today so we slept until about 7. Slept this aft. a while, then Frankie, Ruth Elberson, and I had iced tea out in the shade back of the house...Elmer at a council meeting.

July 23.

Went to Letty Rodolph's luncheon in K.F. today--didn't get home until nearly six. E. spoke at Kiwanis Club.

Such fantastic rumors as fly around. "Is it true the Japanese are furnished sheets with colored borders." "Were 7 girls bayoneted." "Did a young woman strangle her baby and kill herself because a man saw her in labor?" And so on ad nauseam. One workman had told ^Mrs. Smith that he was here the day a Japanese was killed--that he heard all the commotion but didn't see the actual killing.

It would be funny if it weren't so dangerous and tragic to spread such tales.

July 24:

Our last train came today so I went over and then down into the village for the registration program with its heads of families registering, the whole family getting throat inspections, mothers of little babies and expectant mothers being interviewed by the nurses, and finally families assigned to their apartments.

Later Frankie and I went to the Winema Gardens. Beautiful. .. flowers. We brought home great quantities of the latter; some for the flower arrangement class, some for the hospital, and some for a few bouquets here and there.

I made a corsage to take to the Niesse's cocktail party for Phil Sullivan's bride to be.

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In the evening a very fine meeting with a group of 17 here from Stanford to survey our educational set-up. The staff members, heads of departments gave very fine 2 or 3 minute talks, and then the colonists present gave their ideas as to what they wanted from the schools.

Both Elmer and I nearly burst with pride because each one had a worthwhile idea to express. One mother distressed at lack of table manners in the mess hall wanted etiquette stressed in the schools; a man wanted 12 month schools to keep youngsters out of mischief with wrong associates; still another wanted his children to go back after the war and be as well prepared as their former schoolmates.

One man pleaded that these Stanford teachers go back with something of missionary zeal to tell people outside "we are still Americans."

A young girl requested that all teachers tell the same story as to the reason for the Japanese evacuation.

One man said, "We leave our children to you. Prepare them for a better world."

July 25.

E and I went to Klamath Falls this afternoon. Took in Sgt. Norman and the Wallaces. I'll bet the Sarge comes back stewed on Monday.

Mr. Taylor, to be a project director in Arkansas and I went to a variety show given in the fire break. ...

July 26.

...

In the afternoon Mr. Christianson, Joe, Margaret, and I took all the dining room girls, Jack Monoye, and 3 of the cooks on a picnic! We

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got lost and circumnavigated the lake before we finally reached the farm where we ate

The girls' happiness at being outside was pitiful.

In the evening I reviewed "That Day Alone" at the meeting for young adults. I didn't feel too successful because I had a violent headache.

July 27.

... We've been expecting Chink and Bud and May, but no signs of them so far.

July 28.

Quite a stew in block 4 last night over an anonymous letter in the paper. Not only the cooks but the whole block was up in arms -- loss of face, I suppose. Some of our staff busled down to the mass meeting which was being held. They'd have done better to stay away, Elmer thinks. The Japanese seemed to resent it.

Frankie and I spent the morning in Tulalake being beautified.

This aft. I took That Day Alone to the Library and delivered some Red Cross stuff to Mrs. Kato's home.

Lots of visiting "Red Crossers" here -- some from Washington. I presume we're being investigated.

As I thought, Sergeant N. came home drunk and a shooting scrape resulted. I don't know the straight of it, but Captain Murphy is gone and a Colonel is here investigating, I presume. Captain M. probably asked to be relieved; he hated the lack of discipline but his hands were tied.

Mr. and Mrs. Conner arrived, he to take Mr. N's place--one prima donna the less, glory be.

Our electricity went out tonight for the third time since we've

been here.

July 29.

An editorial of apology appeared in today's paper from the editor to the mess hall in Block 4. So ends a tempest in a teapot -- or over a suki yaki pot.

I went to K.F. with E tonight to return Mr. Cozzens, Mr. Coverly and the nurse from the Red Cross. (She is supervisor for 7 western states) (I argued about 12x12 forms for 2 teachers).

E. very tired and glad the visitors have all left...

July 30.

J.H. feels that he is being too much curtailed and Mr. C. thinks Mr. Slattery too independent...how easy life would be without a clash of personalities.

Mrs. Slattery, Mrs. Jacoby, Marguerite Harkness and I are getting up a tea and shower for Ruth Elberson and our first staff baby to be -- ...

...

July 31.

We went to Alturas this afternoon. It seemed wonderful to be going away for overnight...

The Shriners Club were having a dinner, and Elmer was the speaker. He gave an informal talk on the project which people seemed to enjoy as they continued to ask questions after he'd finished. We had a night-cap with the editor of the paper and his wife...Their spirit towards the project is a friendly one.

...