

BANC MSS 69/5 p: 2 of 2 Compositions written by students at the Poston, Arizona War Relocation Center.

Compositions written by students at the Poston, Arizona  
War Relocation Center. ca. 1943.

Transferred from University Archives July 1968

69/5:2  
P

November 10, 1947

To Whom it may concern:

Miss Edith Rosenberry taught at the Poston, Arizona War Relocation Center for the year 1943-1944, as I remember. She intended to make some use of these themes written by Japanese students but died suddenly in July, 1947. Perhaps the University Library would find these papers of some value to those who are seeking first hand impressions of the Relocation Center. I understand that all the themes were written by students in Miss Rosenberry's classes during her stay in Poston. One paper, however, is evidently a government document issued to give the history and purpose of the camp.

Very truly yours,

(Miss) Martha G. Law  
2412 Durant Ave  
Berkeley 4, Calif

[Placed in University Archives. Transferred  
to Miss Dixon, July 1968]

The first of April rolled around and with it came headlines of the mass evacuation of 100,000 Japanese and U. S. Citizens of Japanese ancestry. Rumors of evacuation were heard prior to this, but we didn't give much thought to it. On April Fool's Day, we Japanese Americans in San Diego were notified that we were to be out of there by the eighth of the same month. Being notified on the first of April was more of a joke than anything else. It took a lot of convincing to make some people believe that this order wasn't a wild rumor. We were given one week to close up any business and pack our belongings. During that one week, we did more things that I think we ever tried to do in a month. Shopping had to be done--we needed suitcases, trunks, duffle bags, extra clothing, such as boots, jackets, etc., and many more necessities. We didn't have such a time getting our suitcases and duffle bags (for bedding), but quite a few people couldn't obtain any, for the town was nearly bought out by the sudden Army order. Much of our furniture was sold to anyone who wanted it and there were quite a few who wanted it. This was due to all the defense workers who had moved to San Diego. We left a few pieces of furniture with a friend of ours who is using the washing machine, sewing machine, and other gadgets.

When it came to packing our clothes, I thought we'd never finish. My bag would be closed and ready to send off; then, I'd just remember that I had forgotten something I wanted to put in. This happened many times to all of us. Rumors were that each person was limited to one suitcase and a roll of bedding. That meant that we could take only a few things. That's why many of our personal belongings had either to be left behind or sold.

69/5  
P

Besides packing and clearing the house, we had to get a smallpox vaccination and a physical examination before leaving. I can still remember, when I went to get punched in the arm, hearing a lot of children crying. I'll have to admit this started me to trembling, but just a little. For the benefit of those who never had a smallpox vaccination, the doctor only stuck a needle in my arm.

Within a few days of our original time of departure, we received word that we were to leave on the seventh instead of the eighth of April. There were plenty of commotion and confusion until the seventh, but fortunately, everything turned out, not too good, but all right; and I survived all of it.

Finally, the saddest day of my life arrived. We were told to be at the depot by 5:30 P.M., for the train was to leave then. We thought we'd be early going to the station at 4:00 P.M., but to my surprise, there were hundreds there already. I didn't believe there were so many Japanese people, but when I saw all 1,000 of them right before my eyes, I had to believe it. We talked with our Caucasian friends who had come to see us off. I thought it a very kind gesture on their part, and it really touched me very much. The long awaited hour finally drew near, but there were no signs of action. About 6:00 P.M. we were told to get "aboard", and I thought sure we'd be leaving soon, after being late a half hour already. Seven o'clock---seven-thirty---eight o'clock.---"Oh, maybe we'll leave now!" Nope, not yet! Someone received a wire saying we had orders to be sent to Santa Anita Assembly Center instead of Manzanar, because of the heavy windstorms which caused some damage. Then, "Maybe that's why we've been delayed!" were the next rumors.

"We're leaving at nine o'clock!" Eight-thirty---nine o'clock---  
nine-thirty---ten o'clock---and we were still in San Diego. We  
decided to play cards and forget what time we were going to leave.  
Here we were, sitting in the train, but to me it felt like a dream.  
I couldn't get used to the idea that we'd be leaving San Diego,  
where I was born and reared, leaving our beloved homes and our  
dear friends. Even when the train started chugging out of the sta-  
tion at 1:35 A.M., Wednesday, April 8th, (yes, we did leave on the  
eighth after all, but only after a number of wild rumors.), I  
couldn't believe my eyes. As we looked behind, we saw the station,  
the highest buildings, Consolidated Aircraft buildings, and the  
whole city fading away in the distance. "Am I seeing things? Was  
I really leaving San Diego?" Yes, I was. An M.P. ( a military po-  
lice) who walked by asked me to pull the blind down---"Military  
regulations, you know!" Before pulling it down, I took my last  
look at our city, our home and then, bid a last adieu. Most of us,  
exhausted from our last few, tiring hours in San Diego decided to  
get a little sleep. Since two of us occupied one seat, it was  
quite difficult trying to sleep; but we managed to get a few hours  
of "shut eye"!

At 7 A.M. most of us were up and complaining of being hungry.  
I decided to wash-up and get ready to eat, if breakfast were served  
Within a few minutes, two soldiers entered our car and started dis-  
tributing box lunches! This was a fairly good breakfast composed  
of two sandwiches, ham and jam, (slightly stale), fruit, a boiled  
egg, a piece of cake and a half pint of milk. I was so famished I  
ate my lunch, plus part of another. About 9:30 A.M. we passed  
through the Los Angeles station. We saw many buildings, the Sears,

Roebuck & Company and the City Hall constructions.

Time seemed to be going slowly and finally, about 3 P.M., after stopping and going back and forth so many times, we arrived at our destination. The rumor being correct this time we discovered that we were in Santa Anita, the "home of the horses."

Hoping to get out of the car, we all gathered our belongings; everyone's arms were loaded with coats, jackets, night bags, and what not. Before leaving the train, we had to put our hand baggage down, pull our sleeves up and let the doctor see our vaccinations.

At last, having reached our destination everyone gave a sigh of relief. It meant nothing, for we were to face greater hardships later on. We stood in line, received instructions, registered (the usual--"your name?, your age, please?" etc.), and then were made legal residents of Santa Anita. Our "Homes" were converted horse stables; and the impression I got then is something I shall not express. These stalls were the filthiest places I ever saw, and the odor was something horrible. The floors were of asphalt and hay was scattered around; horse manure was on the walls, and the stall door was gnawed on, most likely by the horse. I was really disgusted and discouraged that day besides being tired from such a long train ride.

In about three weeks, I adjusted myself to the new environment. During my spare time, I wrote to my Caucasian friends and they always answered me immediately, for which I was very grateful. I couldn't get used to the idea of living with so many Japanese, approximately 20,000 in all. I guess my friends understood my situation, for they were always cheering me up in their letters.

The recreation department certainly helped us to keep up mor-

ale. Softball, baseball, volleyball, and basketball leagues were organized. Dances were held twice a week, a movie was shown about once a month, community sings were held once a week, and a talent show was given approximately once in six weeks. Many who participated in these shows were professionals and proved to be very talented.

The much talked of riot was started by some policemen who began an illegal search in the barracks. Money and all sorts of things were deliberately taken from the residents. The Army came in for four days and straightened the problem out.

About two weeks after the riot was over, rumors circulated in camp that San Diegans were being relocated to Parker Dam. On August 20, 1942, official Army orders were given us that we were to leave for Parker Dam on the 26th and 27th of August in two groups. "Gee, Parker Dam, that place that's in the Arizona desert that's as hot as h---!" This is all that was heard for a few days! I was in the second group which was to leave on the 27th. Again, we had to pack and repack our bags, only this time we had more to bring with us, for we had sent for some of our personal belongings. Oh--what a task repacking all this stuff; we certainly had accumulated a lot of unnecessary junk in five months. The first group left as scheduled on the 26th. Then, came our turn to leave;--we had not thought things would happen in this way. It was tough, bidding goodbye to these people whom we had met within five short months and with whom we had become such close friends. It was time to get on the train; so, we told all our friends that we'd be on the first car. The first thing we did was to open the window so that we could talk to our friends. They stood about four feet away

from the train; they were held back by a barbed wire fence. There were hundreds outside the window who had come to see us off. It was hard to say anything; I couldn't express my thoughts in words. Just tears expressed my feelings---everyone was in tears. It didn't seem true that we would be leaving within the hour---I couldn't believe it. There were thousands of people; yet, it was quiet. We felt a sudden jerk, (my brother's watch read exactly 6:45 P.M.) and before we knew it we were pulling out of Santa Anita at a very fast rate---I barely had time to wave back. For some time, all was quiet on the train. Happenings of all kinds were running through my mind---all the wonderful times we had had, and yes, all the forgotten hardships. I remember the Center---not from words or pictures about it---but through friends made there, the discovery of high courage in unexpected places, a smile breaking a tense moment, the full moon through the pepper trees, and the young people who kept their courage and faith in this democracy. All the times were now just a memory in the past.

The trip was dull, boring, and very quiet, Many of us just sat and talked of the past five months. Breakfast time again---and no one seemed to be hungry. Since we were now in the desert, it was warm and sultry; so, I kept sucking on a lemon. It was about 1 P.M., Friday, August 28th, when we chugged into a small town, Parker, Arizona. There was no one in the streets. We gathered our belongings, (reminded me of the time we arrived in Santa Anita), boarded a Greyhound bus, which was to bring us to our destination for the duration. It was a stuffy, dusty, 35 minute or so ride to Camp III, Poston. Hardly a word was said by anyone while on the bus. At last, our destination was found! Rows and rows of black,

tar-paper covered "houses" or barracks were in view---the rest was sand. I wonder if many were thinking as I was; what I was thinking wasn't very nice! Registered again, given instructions and an address, we were then taken to our "home" and dumped off the truck. After seeing our one room "apartment" I was more disgusted than ever. We had to wash the whole place out because the dust was an inch thick all over. This was clean and new, not covered with filth like our stalls in Santa Anita.

Everyone was depressed and to top it all, we had no one who wanted our friendship. The people who had come to camp in early August from Central California didn't approve of us, for some reason, and wouldn't help us out. We, of course, were hurt, but determined to make friends.

In early October, (the 5th to be exact), school started. It wasn't until a few weeks later that we began chumming around with the Central Californians. Finally, after nearly two months, we had made some new acquaintances. With many socials and dances going on in camp, we have become closer in our friendships. We have decided to make the best of things while here, for we're all here in the same boat. To me and to many other people, this evacuation has been a hardship, but I have learned to endure and to develop more strength and courage in whatever I do. This coming April eighth will be our first anniversary as an evacuee in camp; it was a sad year in a way, but a wonderful memory.

### EVACUATION

December 7, 1941 will no doubt go down in history. That day changed my life, as well as the lives of millions of people. It was the beginning of a new era, an era in which all must sacrifice. On that bright Sunday morning during the Pearl Harbor attack, I was busy working. I did not know about it until 1:30 that afternoon. The following day I went out to school, and heard nothing but war talk. At school we had an assembly, and listened to the declaration of war made by Congress.

A few days later came the order from the Attorney-General that all types of contraband must be turned in to the nearest police office where they would be kept for the duration of the war. Articles which were classified as contraband were all types of firearms, cameras, flashlights, spotlights and shortwave sending and receiving sets. Then came the curfew, which kept all persons of Japanese ancestry, as well as Italian and German aliens who lived in military area one from leaving their homes between the hours of 8:00 P.M.-6:00 A.M. Before orders were issued that people of Japanese ancestry in area one would be evacuated, permits were given to those who wished to move to inland states, or to military area two. Many families took advantage of this, and came into zone two, because General DeWitt stated that in all probability those in zone two would not have to evacuate. But it turned out otherwise, as we have found out. About two thousand five hundred persons moved in and around the vicinity of Dinuba,

69/5  
P

Reedley, and Visalia with the result that housing conditions soon became congested. Many families had a difficult time trying to locate some type of house in which to live. The evacuees came from the Bay Area, the central coastal region and Los Angeles. For some persons it was probably a wonderful experience to see the San Joaquin Valley. It will be an experience one will never forget. Those evacuated from area one did not have much time in which to prepare and to settle property transfers. Before evacuation started the Japanese were asked to sell or lease their farms or goods by the W. C. C. A. Most of the people in area one were not sent to assembly centers at first, because relocation centers could not be made ready in time.

As the days and the months passed by after the start of the war, things began to look bad. We heard rumors that we, who lived in zone two, would also be sent to a camp and we were. When the curfew was set upon us, we knew quite well that we too would be in a camp. We were vaccinated against typhoid and smallpox which made it all the more probable that we would be excluded from zone two.

Then began that hilarious episode which was dreaded by all. Farms had to be sold or leased, cars and household fixtures were sold or put in storage. Those who leased the farms from the Japanese made a good bargain, for all they had to do was harvest the crop, because when we left it was already harvesting time. Cars which Caucasians bought were good bargains also. Those who had evacuated once before had more trouble time this time, because they did not own their homes; consequently, they had to sell their

goods even if they wanted to keep them. Even graduates of Japanese ancestry could not be present at the regular commencement with their Caucasian friends, because of the curfew. The American Japanese were given a special graduation on a Sunday afternoon. The highest honored male graduate of Reedley High School was an American of Japanese parentage.

We all began going to town to buy articles to be used in camp. Meanwhile, excited Caucasians began to say that all Japanese should be sent to a camp; so General DeWitt changed his plans, and said we would be sent to a relocation center. We did not know to which camp we were going, until the day of the registration. When it came time for harvesting the crops, the farmers asked General DeWitt to alter his issue. The farmers' pleas were in vain; General De Witt could not change his order. The stores received so much patronage that they ran out of stocks of many things. I don't believe the merchants ever had a more prosperous year than the year of 1942. The amount spent by Japanese Americans no doubt ran up to a million dollars or more. Every day the streets were crowded with cars. More winter articles were bought than summer ones. This was mainly due to the fact that we thought we might be sent to a cold climate. Shoes were bought excessively. Articles purchased in great quantities besides clothing were suitcases, duffle bags, coolers and mesquite nets. First, the rumor was that we could not take anymore than one hundred fifty pounds and that the only things that would be permitted were clothes and bedding. Later on, it turned out that we could bring anything. Bulky articles, were shipped by freight. Because I thought we

would not be able to bring bicycles, I sold mine, and so did many others. Now, I wished that i hadn't because a bicycle would be very convenient in camp.

Many of us evacuees worked to pay for some fo the goods we bought before coming to camp. I worked until a week before evacuation, picking peaches for a Caucasian. That week was the busiest time; we had to pack everything we were going to bring. We packed and packed until the last day. We were not the only ones to be excluded from California. All United States soldiers of Japanese origin were sent to inland camps. Some were given honorable discharge, even some of the soldier's stripes were taken. Even today soldiers of Japanese ancestry cannot enter California, they are homeless.

I can vividly recall that last day at home, probably because I did not expect to see it for a long time. Who knows how long? I can clearly picture in my mind the conditions prevailing in and around the house. Every room except one was empty, it had our goods within. I can still see the green trees and bright flowers and the bursting grapes which were about ready to harvest. I still think of home today just as it was when I left. I can't imagine that things have changed; I won't believe it, I can't picture the season's weather. I couldn't believe that I was actually going to leave my home and my friends. I couldn't believe it until the train started to move.

We left Visalia at 6:30 on tuesday afternoon of August 3, 1943, from the Santa Fe depot. This was my first train ride, and

What a ride! When the train started to move, I could see many waving hands bidding farewell to their Caucasian friends, who brought us to the depot. Most of the trip occurred during the night. When we came through the Colorado Desert, I saw nothing but barren land. Nothing but sultry hot air came through the open window. Once, I saw a white strip of land which was alkali. After sunrise I didn't see much, because I was fatigued from so long a ride and slept. We arrived in Parker the following morning at 9:15 A.M.; however, we didn't reach Poston until 2:00 P.M.

When I first saw Poston, I couldn't believe that we were going to live those barn like structures. Driving past Poston II and II nothing but white dust could be seen. It has the worst worst barracks of all ten relocation centers. We came to Poston via the buses. Before we went to our quarters, we had to sign papers and were finger printed. Poston is hardly a city. At night from afar Poston looks like a real city but by day one sees only rows and rows of barracks. The longer we stay here the more boring; life becomes partly because the climate is hot and dry. I hope I shall never again experience such an upheaval as this as long as I live. I never dreamed that I would one day be confined to a military camp! I who had always been so proud of my American citizenship.

## Opportunities in Poston

There are many opportunities, here at Poston for young and old. Since this is a time when we are at war and trying to preserve the ways of decent living, opportunities are somewhat limited. To me this is an opportunity to broaden one's knowledge and a time to develop one's abilities to assure a successful future. Poston is a rather ideal place to take advantage of all the opportunities, because here time is plentiful. The three opportunities in Poston are: (1) Agriculture (2) Education (3) Arts and Crafts)

Agriculture probably has the greatest effect on the Postonians, chiefly because the greater number of us came from farms. Most of the farmers did not go to an agriculture school; therefore, the Postonians farmer can learn modern or scientific farming from those who have gone to agricultural schools. Scientific farming is not only using modern machinery, but is studying the conditions of the soil. Study of the soil is done to see what sort of plant is most suitable to this particular environment and what can be done to improve the conditions.

Here in Poston, we have enough land to start producing food for ourselves. Since we do not, as yet, have a canal it is impossible to start growing food in abundance. Many of the Postonians have fine vegetable gardens around the barracks, which is a good way to experiment and find out what grows best. The heat of the sun has somewhat hindered the growth of some vegetables, because it forces the plant. Lettuce is one of the vegetables that I have noticed in particular. Before the head has formed, the flowers bloom.

I have also observed the types of soil in the three camps. At Camp I the soil is red dirt with sand mixed, and here it is red and black dirt mixed. Also here at Camp 3 there is sand about five feet below the surface. If fruit trees were planted, the sand might have some effect on the tree as it grows.

Educational opportunities here in Poston are not too encouraging, because of the present conditions. We, Postonians, have to go to a kindergarten, a grammar school, and a high school. We are handicapped without textbooks; therefore, we students must go by what the teacher says, and use the library as much as possible. Another educational institution is the library. There are a few books to read in the library. I have read many books myself and have enjoyed them all. As Time goes by, we all will probably have a better library.

Another educational opportunity is afforded by joining some club. There are scout clubs, both for girls and boys, a talent club, and various other typed of clubs for young and old. Also another educational opportunity is provided by working in the various departments. A few of the departments are, Press Bulletin, fire department, post office, and carpenter shop.

Arts and crafts provide many opportunities for those who like art. Here at Poston, one can find unusual specimens to work with, which we would not find back home. There are many unusual specimens such as burnt tree limbs and stumps. For those who wish to learn to crochet and knit there is a club, which is probably under the direction of one who was in that business. Yesterday I saw many beautiful artificial blossoms on a mesquite tree, which was made in camp 3. The tree, I think, was supposed to resemble a cherry tree. The blossoms were made of pink crepe paper and attached to the ends of the branches.

For those who wish to make rock gardens, material is plentiful. Cactus and petrified wood are obtainable in the mountains. Many of the Postonians have artistic rock gardens already. The petrified wood and cactus are two materials which we could not obtain back home.

Yes, there truly are many opportunities in Poston if you seek them out, and have the ability to recognize them.

## Evacuation

San Diego was my hometown until a wind blew in a paper from the F. B. I. It was a seven day notice to prepare ourselves for our removal to Manzanar. At this sudden "turn up", mother was harassed and shocked, since we had so many things to attend to in so short a time.

First of all, we had to buy suitcases. At the beginning, rumors went around that only two suitcases and bedding of so many pounds were allowed on the baggage car, and the next minute you could hear other folks saying. "Take as much as you can carry, for it is quite a walk from the depot to Manzanar!" "Anyway, we packed and repacked our suitcases from morning till night and day after day. On the sixth of April, everything was in proper order and the following morning our bedding was ready.

Incidentally, some "Okies" begged for our furniture. Finally, mother gave in and they bought everything from clothes pins to machines. Although we didn't get as much as we expected, it was a pretty fair bargain, and we were relieved to have the furniture taken care of in a short time.

I was greatly discouraged when I had to give up my ice skates, roller skates, and all the wonderful things I had received on Christmas, but I did bring one thing and that is my tennis racket. The second-hand store took magazines, books, and little odds and ends. Mrs. Fox, a very good friend of my sister's, kept our sewing machine and said that she would send it to us when we were

settled in a relocation center. This was very thoughtful of her.

We were very busy during that week: doing our last minute shopping, having our small-pox injections, and signing off from school.

On the seventh of April, we roamed around downtown and bid farewell to our friends, We arrived at the station at three o'clock and waited impatiently until six o'clock. Then we finally got aboard the train, and it started in the middle of the night.

Since we didn't have anything to do on the train, we bought the papers and found out that we were headed for Santa Anita instead of Manzanar. This change was due to the bad conditions prevailing over there. We thought this was just another rumor, but to our great surprise we made a happy landing in the stables!

Although we had to live in the horse stables, we got used to the smell, "slowly but surely", but the floor (gravel) was something to sweep, and the broom wore down in no time.

Every Monday morning we had to air our steel cots and mattresses and had inspection. At first, it was bothersome and it was unnecessary, but later we found it really was necessary, and orders are orders!

Each morning at six-thirty we grabbed our towels, toothbrushes and pastes and make a "pell-mell" dash to the nearest latrine and got ready for breakfast. There was usually quite a mob; therefore, everyone had to form in a single file. About two thousand people were fed in a mess hall; so you can imagine---- that long single line!

The people were from various parts of California: San Pedro, Lomita, Long Beach, San Francisco, San Diego, San Jose, Downey, Los Angeles, etc., with a total population of about ten thousand.

There was a curfew in Santa Anita. All lights had to be turned off at ten o'clock at night, and everyone had to be in his or her own barracks.

Our pastimes were crocheting, knitting, taking walks around the race track, and playing all kinds of sports.

At the end of August, we received another notice. This time we were headed for our respective relocation centers at Poston; so we got our things together again. Packing was much easier this time.

While I was on the train, I had that "lonely lost" feeling. It kept reminding me of those good ole days which were spent in the stables. As we approached Parker, we felt the heat of the warm sun which made us very uncomfortable.

After the train ride, we were hurriedly crammed onto buses. Due to the hot weather, we were fatigued and fagged out. I felt like an Oklahomian locked up in a dust bowl.

I was full of curiosity as to where the officials were taking us. I couldn't possibly see anything but sage brush. We were all downhearted, and we certainly took a "beating" that first day. You can picture how disappointed we all were with the terrific heat and dust that flew like nobody's business. We were all grey-headed and really needed a good shower upon our arrival at Poston--- our future home.

Naoshi Ueno

Japanese Relocation Papers  
Bancroft Library

### MY EVACUATION TO POSTON

Before evacuating to Poston, I lived in Reedley, California. While we Niseis and our parents were working hard to supply our nation with fresh fruits and vegetables, war was declared on the United States by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. It was a bright, sunny Sunday morning while I was in my Sunday School class that I heard this tragic news, which was really a shock to me and all my companions.

On December 8, Monday, I went to school as usual, but the friendly attitude of other students towards us seemed to have disappeared, and wherever we went, people stared at us as though we might have taken part in the bombing of Hawaii.

After that day, December 7, 1941, the future grew darker and darker for us Americans of Japanese descent. We heard rumors of evacuation inland to relocation centers; we heard of losing our citizenship, and even of our being deported to Japan. These rumors amazed me, and I thought of them seriously, especially the taking away of our citizenship. What would we do without the freedoms we had enjoyed so long--our freedoms of speech, of religion, and of the press; the right to vote; and other democratic privileges. Then I realized that we Americans do not appreciate our freedoms here in this country until a situation such as this arises. Depriving us of our citizenship would be absurd, I thought, because it would be against the Constitution of our country; for the Constitution states that all natural-born people of the United States no matter of what race, creed, or religion are American Citizens. This assurance quieted my fears until I learned by bitter experience what war can do.

On the other hand the FBI began taking our fathers who had done no wrong, fathers who had sons in the United States Army. This experience

also made me wonder what kind of a nation the United States was.

On June 2, a curfew was placed on all the Japanese in the Reedley District; this meant that we could go out only during the hours between 6:00 A.M. and 8:00 P.M. and that we could go a distance of only five miles from our homes. This kept many graduate students from attending their own graduation exercises, which were held on the evening of June 10. For the first time in the history of the Reedley High School the Japanese graduates of both the high school and junior college received their diplomas during the baccalaureate services, which were held on Sunday afternoon.

Another incident of this period which I recall is an essay contest held in our high school on "THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD AMERICAN." The winner was to receive a prize of five dollars in war stamps and to read his theme over the radio station KMJ, at Fresno, California. Out of the enrollment of approximately 800 students, a little Japanese girl, a sophomore, won the contest. But because of the curfew, the military areas, and other restrictions, she was not allowed to read her own theme and in her place, a teacher's son read it over the radio; his name was mentioned as the reader so that naturally everyone thought he was the writer. He was praised for his good work, and the girl was given no recognition whatsoever. This is just one of the many ways in which the Japanese were mistreated.

Then a few weeks later we learned that we were going to be evacuated inland to Arizona on August 3. I can still picture vividly our last few days in California. It was one of the busiest and saddest times I have ever experienced; I believe I shall never forget it. Everyone was busy helping in some way to sell, rent, and pack all his possessions.

I can still see our farm of forty acres with grapes, plums, figs,

vegetables, and a poultry house containing approximately 1200 hens. I hated to leave the big white house in which I was born and in which I had lived up to the time of evacuation; the flower garden in which we spent so much time keeping it beautiful; the green lawn shaded by a large elm tree; the big fish pond; and all the beauties of HOME which I didn't half appreciate until I came to this sun-bleached desert, Poston.

We left behind several things which bring a lump into my throat and tears to my eyes when I think of them. We left not only our homes, property, most of our possessions, and our dear Caucasian friends, but we left behind our home-life, and innumerable freedoms which we had loved and cherished so dearly.

The first train ride I ever had in my life, which wasn't any too pleasant, was the one here to Poston. It was a long, tiresome ride in a day coach. We left Reedley at approximately 7:30 P.M. passing through towns, mountains, tummings, and then miles and miles of dry, bare desert until 10:00 A.M. when we crossed the Colorado River and came to Parker, a small Indian town in Arizona. There we waited in the hot sun at the railroad station until 3:00 P.M. Incidentally, the temperature was about 125° in the sun. From Parker, a Santa Fe bus took us down winding roads, through mesquite trees until we finally reached a dry desert camp which is now called POSTON.

The day we reached Poston was dusty and hot, and I felt like sitting down with all my luggage and crying. The water had a peculiar taste and smell, but we had to drink it to quench our thirst. We were wet with perspiration and as the wind blew, dust gathered on our faces, reminding me of my brother's face when he came home to dinner after a hard day's work on the tractor.

-4-

Today after a lapse of about seven months things have changed a great deal. Each barrack in the camp is fixed in an attractive way of its own. Some have lawns, others have flower and vegetable gardens, and many have rock gardens and fish ponds. People no longer sit around, discouraged and forlorn but are busy all day long making the most of their time. Women and girls are seen crocheting, knitting, embroidering, and doing other types of art and handicrafts while men and boys are kept busy improving the appearances of our barracks, working in the adobe industry from which a school is to be built, the nursery, and the net factory. But no matter how busy we may seem to be, I believe we could be of much greater help on our former farms helping the conditions of our present food shortage program.

I can truly say that there is no place like Home. and I am looking forward to the day when racial discriminations and prejudice will no longer prevail, and all will be living harmoniously in a peaceful world, as God had planned it to be.

Katherine Sogo

Evacuation Experiences

Japanese Relocation Papers  
Bancroft Library

69/5  
P

I relaxed in an easy chair and sat down to listen to Jack Benny. There were many interruptions during the program, but I did not take note of them. The announcer was talking about many casualties and I could not make head nor tail to them. Just then my brother and two of his friends came rushing into the house shouting, "Hey, the Japs have bombed Pearl Harbor." For just a brief moment I thought to myself, "Now, just where is Pearl Harbor," and the the horrible reality came over me. I was stunned, I tried to believe it was not as bad as it sounded, but when I heard that war had been declared, I could not escape the truth. We spent the whole night listening to the radio and with each announcement the situation became worse.

The next day was a trying day for the Nisei at school. We tried to pretend that nothing had happened, tried to show that we were loyal, and most of our Caucasian friends were especially nice, for which we were grateful. While coming home on the bus, I had to pass right by the Consolidated factory. When the factory workers got on, I noticed them looking at me, trying to figure out whether I was Japanese or Chinese. Those stares were very uncomfortable.

For about a week I felt very low. My thoughts were that there was nothing to live for; worst of all, that the Caucasians did not trust us. I think that is the lowest I have ever felt.

From then on things happened very fast for the Japanese on the western coast. First, we were pushed out of homes that were too near the waterfront or near army factories; then we were restricted with a curfew, and immediately after that, we began to be evacuated inland into assembly centers and relocation centers. Some of the

Japanese that were a little braver, that had more stamina moved of their own accord and resettled in the Middle West. The rest shuffled along and did what the government told them. I was one of them.

When we first got our notices to evacuate, we thought someone was trying to play an April fool joke on us. Our friends convinced us that this was no joke and that we were to be evacuated the following Wednesday. The week that followed was a hectic one, full of packing, making of clothes, shopping, registrations, physical examinations, and the selling of property. Finally, the day arrived when we were to leave. We went to the station and saw what seemed to be hundreds and hundreds of Oriental faces. One could almost imagine himself somewhere in the Far East. It was 4:30 P.M. when we reached the station, but when we got on the train, it was 6. After we had settled ourselves on the train, it was rumored that we were going to Santa Anita instead of Manzanar, where we were scheduled to go originally. The rumor was correct. A trainload of soldiers was waiting on the track next to ours, and one lonely boy was playing "Home Sweet Home" on the harmonica. Finally, at 1:00 A.M. we started on our journey. The train lurched, the wheels ground on the rails, and we were off. As we rode along, many familiar sights whizzed by, Pacific Square, Consolidated, drive-inns, gas stations. After we left San Diego and hit the outskirts, I fell asleep. The trip was very tiring and about 10:00 in the morning we arrived at Santa Anita.

The first thing we saw as we entered was the horse stables. We were shocked when we found out we were to live in them. Our family was assigned to two units and when we entered, we couldn't imagine

living in such a place. It smelled and the walls and floor were filthy. We received our blankets, beds, and baggage and set to work on our "house". The next few days were spent in collecting wood with which to make tables and chairs; in about a week we were fairly settled. The problem then was keeping the place clean. The floor was made of gravel and was very difficult to sweep, but we managed.

The problem of adjusting ourselves to this new kind of life was the most difficult. We had hardly any privacy, one could hear distinctly everything being said in the next stall. The food was terrible and the showers and latrines, "blackhouses", offered little privacy. But we gradually got accustomed to it. I think it was harder for the older people to get used to it than the younger kids, because we had things to do to forget our troubles. Our little gang would get together after dinner, obtain some records and dance in one of the empty units. When I think of those nights and all the rest of the things that made Santa Anita so much fun, I forget all the inconveniences we had to endure.

When we first entered Santa Anita, we were forever standing in lines. We had to wait in lines for our lunches, rain or shine, for our vaccinations, for our mail; one really wasted a lot of time waiting in those lines.

To keep up the morale of the people in camp, the recreation department sponsored dances, which were held every Thursday and Saturday, Community Sings, movies, about one a month, and every Sunday a Music Appreciation Hour, when we listened to classical records. Baseball games attracted huge crowds and gave enjoyment to both young and old.

After things were organized and everything became more systematic, life began to get a little boring, but things kept coming up to keep us busy. Once, we had a camouflage strike which lasted for two days, and about a month after that a riot, which resulted from an illegal searching of our barracks.

Soon after the riot, rumors circulated that we were going to be relocated. It is really amazing how fast a rumor traveled around there. Life went on as usual, but one could feel something in the air. Then on August 20, we received news that we were going to Poston, the place in the middle of nowhere and hotter than "H---". We had about a week to get ready and during that week we were really "sad Japs." The thought of leaving our friends, who had become so dear to us, was not a pleasant one. Packing this time was not so bad, and we were ready in no time.

They say, "parting is such sweet sorrow," but to me it was all sorrow. My friends came to see me off, and when I saw them crying, I felt like crying too. We had a special dinner, but none of us could eat it. After a while a man started calling in the people assigned to different cars. Car 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----(and finally our car)--9. We said goodbye for the last time and got on the train. Then we saw our friends come running as far as they could to the train. They sang college pep songs to us, when all of a sudden, the train gave a jerk and we were off. Everyone started calling goodbye to everyone else and we left Santa Anita. We reached Pasadena and headed for Los Angeles.

This trip was very different from the first one. No one spoke or even bothered to find where his friends were. The M.P. came along and told us to pull down the shades and put ~~all~~ off the light; so all there was left to do was go to sleep. The next time I opened

my eyes I looked out but all I could see was sagebrush and desert.

We arrived at Barstow about @ 7:30 in the morning and stayed there till about 8:00. We rode on and on. The scenery grew monotonous and the steady beat of the wheels on the rail made us drowsy. Most of the people in our car fell asleep, but I just sat, wondering what the people were doing back in Santa Anita. We finally reached Parker and boarded the buses that were to take us to Poston.

The road was dusty and when we passed camp I, all we could see was dust, Camp II---dust, but when we came to camp III, we wanted to keep right on going. We got off at the 310 mess hall, and there we became legal residents of Poston III. The heat was terrific; we wondered how anyone could stand it. I heard someone say, "It's cool today," and I wondered how it was when it was hot. After we had signed some papers, we were taken to our barracks and dumped off. The next day we just wrote letters to friends in Santa Anita telling them how terrible it was here, and that Santa Anita was a paradise. We had to eat with knives and the water tasted very queer.

Things here have perked up a lot from the time that we first entered, and I know that when I leave Poston I shall probably miss it, but when I think of Santa Anita, I often long to be back there again. Now, it is being used as an army training camp; the Santa Anita that we knew is but a memory.

I was born May 13, 1920 in the city of Honolulu, Territory of Hawaii. I lived in that city until I was six years old. Because I was small, I do not remember much about my birth place, friends, and neighbors.

It was Beretania Street on which my house was located. There were five Japanese neighbors lived around my house. I had many friends, but I do not remember none of their names. In my six years in Hawaii I remember <sup>well</sup> that my father took me to baseball game every Sunday. ~~well~~. I also remember the sweet tastes of pineapple, mango, banana and many other fruits.

When I was six years old, my parents, my little sister and I went to Japan, because my aged grandparents asked us to live with them. We took <sup>the</sup> President Taft of Dollar Line and left Honolulu March 8, 1926. We reached Yokohama, Japan, two weeks later.

I lived in a lonesome village named Kawashimo with parents, grandparents, two sisters and two brothers until I came to America June 26, 1936. After spending one year, I began to attend a grammar school. It was a quite a large school with a student body of about 950. I spent six years in learning Japanese with 150 classmates eight of which were American born Niseis. After completing the grammar school, I attended a junior high school <sup>for</sup> two years. I graduated this school March 28, 1935. The following one year I went to Maishoko, a middle school, where I took English course.

It was the spring of 1936 that my aunt and her whole family visited Japan for my aunt's first time in her twenty years. It was the opportunity that I came to America. Being a citizen of U.S., I had interest in reading articles about my country. I often went to see American motion pictures and watched every thing in it curiously. I liked geography because I could touch with my mother country more than any other subject. I was very enthusiastic to hear every word from my aunt and cousin although I could not understand sometimes because they used English in their Japanese. After hearing all about my country, I could not make myself to live in Japan any longer. Finally I asked my parents to permit me to go America with aunt. Having lived twenty years in Hawaii and realizing I am a American, my father permitted me although he wished me to stay with him.

I left my village with my aunt and her family June 5, 1936 and reached Kobe next day. After staying three days in Kobe, shopping magazines, some foods, cards for voyage, we caught a steamer, Chichibu Ma ru later called Kamakura Maru, of Nippon Yusen Kaisha. We left Kobe June 9th and arrived Yokohama June 10. Then we departed Yokohama June 10. The ten-day voyage between Yokohama and Honolulu was followed. It was a monotonous one although there were entertainments, such as motion picture, talent shows presented by captain, engineers, cooks and

other workers of the ship. I did not have sea sick but I had home sick. I played card games, ping pong and other games. The ocean was calm, and the ship went on regularly. After sailing ten days, the steamer anchored in Honolulu harbor safely. I shall not forget the beautiful scenery of my native land. White building standing side by side with green tropical mountain background, palm trees growing tall by sea shore, famous Diamond Head guarding the harbor, modern automobiles running swiftly, people in white summer clothes, all were very fascinating to me. I did not have enough time to see the city; however, we had only five hours. We left Honolulu 20th and continued the same monotonous voyage seven days. We sighted the main land late afternoon of 26. Passing under Golden Gate Bridge, the steamer slid into San Francisco harbor. It was a magnificent view that golden beam were reflecting on tall skyscrapers, and long and gigantic Bay Bridge was extending far beyond the bay. I went to immigration office for examination. Then I took a night train to Del Rey, California, where my aunt lived for 20 years.

For the first two years I worked in my aunt's grape field. Realizing I must have an adequate American education in order to be an upright citizen, I began to attend a small district grammar school, named Rosedale fall of 1938. It was a just two roomed building with about fifty students and two teachers. I went to the

school every day with little children. After staying two weeks in lower class with first to fourth graders, I transferred to upper class. I was very happy to be in the upper class room. I had many difficulties in the class. I could not understand English at all although I had some when I was in Japan. Fortunately four nisei boys translated English into Japanese and Japanese into English whenever I had a conversation with classmates. I was in special eight grade following year. I was very happy when my teacher told me that I can graduate with other eighth graders. There were only four graduates, but it was the most happy and memorable occasion I ever had. We all made a speech. I made one on "What Does Democracy Mean to Me" which I wrote for the contest given by Del Rey American Region.

In the summer of 1940 I moved to Dinuba, California where I lived until the evacuation. I attended Dinuba Union High School two years. After coming to Poston, I attended Poston High. Having had 17 credits, I am going to graduate high school this year. I would like to go to college and want to be <sup>one</sup> <sup>who</sup> something that is valuable to my country.

Karacawa,  
Helen

## My Life in Brief

A little more than seventeen years ago, on April 25<sup>th</sup>, 1926, I was born and christened Helen Karacawa. The town in which I first saw the dawn is located in Southern California, next to the Mexican Border, or San Diego, California.

I attended a grammar school which was located a half block from my home. While attending there, I helped publish the school paper which was a weekly circular. I was also affiliated with two music organizations, the orchestra and the glee club. Before my last year was over, my family moved away from this district; since I had a few more months to go, I continued and graduated from there. My new home was situated only two blocks from the junior high I was to attend. This school was large and the attendance was approximately

1800 students. I was confused by the different buildings and the crowded halls. On my first day, I even got lost trying to find my class. I became acquainted with the pupils in my different classes; and within a week, we became fast friends. For three years, I was a member of the orchestra. We used to play for graduations, assemblies, and reviews. I was also associated with the newspaper staff. Many a happy day was spent ~~there~~ at that school. With February, 1941, came graduation. This was exciting, but also quite mournful. The thought of leaving this school, which had given me so much enjoyment, was hard. The year, 1941, was going to be a happy one, with new adventures to look forward to; but in later months, we discover that 1941 is to be a tragic year.

I began my sophomore year at San Diego High School in February of 1941.

Contented with my grades, the school year ended in June. The summer wasn't an enjoyable one, for the thought of the conflict, across the ocean, in Europe, seemed to strike us indirectly. Although our country wasn't in the war, there was a sort of barrier which I feared. The summer months passed swiftly, as always, and in mid-September, the fall semester began.

Every day was the same for me, but the newspaper headlined something different daily. Then, on that tragic Sunday morning of December 7, 1941, came the news which shocked the whole world. News flashes came over the radio — "Japs Bomb Pearl Harbor!" War — a disaster which I had never thought would strike us had! It was hard to believe — it was impossible; yet, it was true! After this heart-breaking news, life wasn't worth living.

Christmas and New Year's Day were just ordinary days that just dawned

and passed. Early in February came news that all the Japanese and citizens of Japanese ancestry were to be evacuated from the Pacific coast, that we were too dangerous to be so near the vital war industries. There was even a curfew put on us. At that time, it seemed impossible for the government to evacuate some 110,000 people inland. Slowly, but surely, the government got us out! We Japanese in San Diego were one of the first groups to be moved. The Santa Anita Racetrack, which the war department banned for the duration, became our destination! There, we lived the life of horses in stables. It was difficult trying to get adjusted to this new environment, for we had no privacy whatsoever.

Just as we had become acquainted with our surroundings, we were again ousted from our "homes" and shipped to this isolated place called Poston. Getting used to Poston was not a mere trifle. Worst of all, there were dust storms, the heat,

and the wind to get used to. We have finally grown accustomed to these climatic conditions!

School is a problem for all the students in camp. Studying is one task in which I have not succeeded as yet. One cannot easily settle down and study, because there are so many distractions. I suppose this is the reason why so many students have slumped in their grades.

Until the war began, I had no worries; I was just any ordinary girl. When my father was interned, we had to face many difficulties. Many a time I have become discouraged and downcast, but I have ~~recovered~~ recovered my courage. I have discovered that losing faith isn't going to help me; therefore, I am determined to make the best of things. I have had to make some of my own decisions, and if it had not been for this new experience <sup>of mine,</sup> camp life, I would have been unable to do so.

## Just Me

I came to be just one added speck of humanity on the twenty-eighth day of March, nineteen hundred and twenty-five, on a rural farm in the district of Dinuba, California. I was the sixth child of our family. Even though I was born in the district of Dinuba, I do not recall going to that city very often. It has a population of approximately five thousand. I went more frequently to neighboring cities. After living there for seventeen consecutive years, I am not very familiar with the city.

The first things I can recollect doing was to get the mail each day. Conscientiously, I used to wait for it. I guess I was about four or five years old. I can still remember the mailman's features. He was a small man with dimples on his cheeks and was bald. Often, he gave me a ride home when I went to play at my friend's house. He was a kind gentleman, who quit his work about eight years ago.

Then, too, I remember the standard oil gasoline man, who often gave me a few pennies and sheets of used carbon paper which made me very happy.

After eight or ten years of not delivering gas, I remembered him when he came back just before evacuation.

Before I further tell the portion of my life which I recall, I will tell about my childhood. My mother told me that just after I learned to walk, I suddenly, couldn't walk for a while. I guess, it was then that I had an acute attack of infantile paralysis. Due to it, I am still<sup>d</sup>cripple; even after having an operation in February, nineteen hundred and thirty-eight. In someways I have been handicapped; my foot hurts occasionally, but not enough to make me abandon what I am doing. I have participated in many different sports during my life in California. I have had many mishaps while playing games, and I am now compelled to withdraw from all athletics.

I can recall those days when I occasionally received a spaking from my father, because I would make my little brother and sister cry. Often, because

I got spanked, I wouldn't eat; I crawled under the bed and slept. Often, I would go some place with my father in the car, and when he didn't let me go, I pleaded. I can remember the first big black and white hobstein cow. We sold it, because it gave a too abundant quantity <sup>of milk</sup> for us to dispose of profitably. To me, it was the most generous cow we ever had. I loved to put my arm around its big, tender neck when my mother milked. I can't remember how the milk tasted, but it must have been very nourishing. I was too young to know then that I wouldn't see the cow any more when I saw it being led down the road. Then we bought a much more smaller cow, which practically grew up with me. It would try to horn any small child; I never dared to go close to her.

I can picture the cats and dogs we used to have. Today, I know that I was entirely too cruel to them. Whenever they didn't obey me, I would kick and slap them. Even though I loved the dogs better than the cats, I was more generous to the cats. The cat and dog which I liked the best died of unknown causes. The best dog was a little black and white terrier, and the cat an orange and white tiger featured cat.

Yes, I can vividly picture those good and bad times I had in grammar school. The only thing I can recall ~~on~~ my first day of school was the little Caucasian boy of German descent, who stood in a far corner of the room and cried. He was afraid or lonely; maybe I cried myself. There is one incident which occurred to me during the first grade. I received a spanking from the teacher, because some boys accused me of saying a bad slang word. Today, I still say that I didn't curse, and I said it then too! During my second year another thing happened to me. I had to stay after school and take off four points from my deportment, because I didn't hop-skip and jump; how could I? Today, I know why I couldn't. It was because of my physical defect. I lived about two and one-half miles from the little, red-brick country school. I used to carry my lunch pail each day. Occasionally, I got a ride on a bicycle by my Caucasian friends. Fortunately, our school bought a bus when I started in the second grade. ¶ I really enjoyed participating in all the sports. If I try to remember which sports I liked the best; basketball,

speedball, baseball and track, I liked them all equally well. I started to participate in interschool competition from the fourth grade; it was in track. Something fatal happened to me while competing in a county track meet; something which never happened to me before; I had broken my big toe while broad jumping. I was immediately taken to the Tulare County General Hospital and taken home by a Mr. Terry, then county supervisor of the schools. The following year I went back to compete, but I did not place. During my sixth grade I was unable to take part in track, because I had an operation on my defected leg. The following year I was much more fortunate. I not only placed first in high jump, second in broadjump, but made a new county high jump record of five feet two inches. That year we boys of our school, Windsor, placed first in the boy's division of the meet. We also won the district speedball championship. I also started to participate in basketball, baseball and basketball. I will never forget that day of my commencement. I can probably name all my fellow graduating classmates now. I felt quite proud sitting on the stage and listening to many speeches.

My first day of high school brought new life and vigor to me. It seemed ~~like~~ <sup>as though</sup> I was in a different world; I liked it. There was just one thing which I ~~strived~~ <sup>strived</sup> for, that was to get a good education, and to plan my future career the way I wanted it. I enjoyed the first year, for it was better than I had expected. I kept my love for sports, and went out for track. I tied for fourth place both in the county and valley meets. Once again I was on a championship team; ~~We~~ won first at the county track meet. My second year started like the first year, expect I was more familiar with the school. I went to school day after day, studying harder than the first year; ~~cause~~ <sup>came</sup> that unexpected undreamed of thing, war. I kept hoping that we wouldn't have to evacuate before school was out. Fortunately, we went until the last day of school, but a curfew was ~~imposed~~ <sup>imposed</sup> on us. I achieved something; a good education and a member of the scholarship society. When the notice was issued that we would be evacuated, I thought that my educational career was over. To my amazement we are holding regular classes; that I am attending classes can be readily seen by this, my autobiography.

When I was but seven or eight years old, I liked to drive the team. Often, when my oldest brother was cultivating the vineyard, he let me drive the team. While I was driving, he would sneak under the green vines and run ahead of the team, and waited till I came to where he hid; then he would jump out and scare me, but the team stopped. I did the same thing. After I became twelve, I helped harvest all the grapes during the summer vacation.

I was about eight when I learned to swim in the big irrigation ditch which runs through our vineyards. I had a lot of fun catching the fish when the ditch went dry. Many times I went to the river to fish and swim. I was afraid of the swift river, but I liked to fish. I can remember some of my experiences. Once, I fell in from a log on which some of my friends and I were fishing. Another fellow tried to go pass me and crowded me off. Another time I caught a bass and was admiring it when it suddenly got away.

4 My first hobby was stamp collecting. I was then ten years when I received some stamps from my brother. I am still collecting, but have not gone into it extensively. Many of the stamps have interesting data on them.

I learned to love and appreciate music when I was thirteen. It all began when our school formed a band, back in nineteen hundred and thirty-nine. My father bought me a cornet which I learned to play after many days of practicing. After taking lessons for three years, I learned to play the cornet fairly well. The best types of music I like are waltzes, marches and symphonic music. The only full orchestration I had had the opportunity of seeing was the Northern California W. P. A. Symphony Orchestra which I enjoyed very much hearing. I have heard many fine band and orchestras by the great invention, radio.

The day I left home, August third nineteen hundred and forty-two, may someday be the turning point of my life. Never had I dreamed that someday the whole population of Japanese ancestry on the West Coast would be confined in a camp. I've learned a lot while in Poston. I probably don't realize them

now, but I think I will after I get out. I hope that someday soon this war -  
torn world will be mended permanently, and we will all be living in security.  
This is only a small portion of my life; more important events are probably  
yet to come.

## My Life's Story

It was on a hot summer day of June 29, 1926, near a little town called Reedley in Central California, that I was brought into this world full of wonder and curiosity. Though but a faint memory, I can still recall those early days on our little farm of vineyards and orchards where Mom and Dad, after having come from distant Japan, worked so hard and earnestly trying to keep the farm in good condition and also to support me as well as my elder brother and sister. These early days of excitement and the many experiences with my brother and sister, I shall never forget. Most especially do I recall those vigorous and greedy moments when I used to fight with my brother over such little things as candy or ice-cream. In these cases, Mother would always have to part us and make us share equally. Still more vividly do I recall those days when I would bring jug fulls of water to Dad, who would usually be driving the tractor in the field and greeting me with a dark, negro like face with so much dust collected upon it.

My first school days after entering Windsor Grammar School, just a mile from home, were joyous moments, for never had I looked forward to such days. This was mainly because of the fact that all my buddies had already started school previously, while I was even too young to begin, and had to stay home alone. Thus, these first school days meant lots to me and I started school with the most whole-hearted interest. Though I found reading rather difficult, this extreme eagerness and interest in school kept me going. After having been promoted to the second grade, I was indeed happy to have started off with a good fresh beginning.

The second to the fourth grades were mostly stressed in the introduction of mathematics and spelling, and I became especially fond of mathematics. Speed tests in the fundamentals of arithmetic were my favorite exercises.

During my fifth and eighth grades, my interests spread to a variety of things. Participation in inter-school sports fascinated me, and baseball and basketball became my favorite sports. With this developed the liking for hobbies, pastimes and such, and soon I was taking lessons in playing musical instruments. A school band was formed and I wasted no time in joining the group as a trumpet player. I also found increased interest in wood working, and often I used to build model airplanes. As for actual subjects in school, mathematics still remained my favorite.

I graduated from Windsor Grammar School on June 6, 1940, as one of a total of eighteen students. It was a joyous moment with the commencement exercises under way and everybody receiving their diplomas which signifies that their grammar school days were over.

My summer vacations were spent mostly in helping Dad on the farm. We were always kept busy harvesting this and that; so we rarely found enough time to take actual vacations or tours to other localities. Yet, many of my leisure hours were enjoyed going down the river fishing and swimming. Fortunately, the river was located just a quarter of a mile from home, and thus I often went every afternoon. But when harvesting reached its busiest stage, I had no time for doing this either. We had to stick to our grape-picking and peach picking or whatever it was. Of all these, peach picking was my most detested job, for it really made me itch all over the body with so much of the peach fuzz. Harvesting also came at the hottest time of the season and thus made the job worse.

Time went on and soon I found myself entering Reedley High School as a freshman. I was amazed at all the different courses that this school offered. It was a school having approximately ten times as many students as the previous grammar school, and I was rather lost at the sight of so many other students. Here, I also noted the different attitude I must take toward school, for I was now to be more on my own. I had reached the point where I had to decide for myself what subjects I should take as an elective that would lead to my life objective.

This, I discovered to be most puzzling and difficult to decide. The question of what to become in the future was beyond me, for never had I faced so vital a question that I must decide for myself. Should I follow up the occupation of my father as farmer and work on a ranch all the rest of my life? Should I plan to enter college and prepare for some profession? These were questions that constantly kept swarming through my mind, and I found myself lost in thought.

Nevertheless, I had entered high school carrying such electives as I most cared for. For one of them, I took up algebra, for ever since grammar school, mathematics had been my favorite subject. Then, I took up band which was very interesting and provided a pastime well worth while. As for my definite life objective, it was rather uncertain, but I had planned to continue mathematics hoping that it might lead to some bright future in the engineering field.

My sophomore year was much the same with mathematics as an elective. This time it was geometry. This I loved and I still hoped that it would lead to the engineering field which by now I had definitely planned to enter. My other course, band, was dropped after my folks insisted that it was a mere waste of time. Other subjects were taken up with little consideration, for they were requirements that had to be taken and no way out of it.

Next came the dreadful and heart-breaking news of the Pearl Harbor attack by the Japanese and never had I, as well as all other Niseis, been so miserably depressed. The fact that we were of Japanese blood, which could easily be noticed, made it a more serious matter. Soon it became evident that all Japanese from the West Coast would be evacuated--that we would have to leave our dear old home and California behind was a dreadful and heart rendering thought.

Soon enough the order of evacuation came and we were transferred to Poston. Relocation Center in hot Arizona. We sold whatever property we had and left our farms in the care of a neighbor Caucasian. Reaching Poston, the sight of the dull camp life and the countless number of barracks in the very midst of a

hot, dry desert, instantly made me long for the wonderful environments of home. How long we were to live in these barracks, neither I nor anyone else knew.

Today as I sit through this dull, everyday camp life, my only hope is that this war will soon end, and that a pathway for a bright future after the war be left for us.

## Christmas of 1941

The morning was dismal and cold; there were no glad tidings to tell us it was Christmas Day. Every year this day of the birth of Jesus, the savior, had been my biggest and happiest day, but this time I couldn't see Christmas as I had before.

In California we had a little store in a small coast town—no, not even a town, a village, so small everyone knew each other. People came in and went out. Greetings of "Merry Christmas" were given, but still the cheer and all the neighborliness that we enjoyed on Christmas were missing.

This was a time of war; soldiers had come to our fishing village, and guarded the beach. Every night we could hear the heavy trucks rumbling by, as soldiers were taken to their posts or relieved for the day from their duties. These soldiers were from all parts of the United States. They wanted leave, so they could spend Christmas with their families, but this was not granted. Everyone felt that it was his duty to make the soldiers happy on this day. We baked cookies and cakes for our boys and some donated cigarettes and other useful articles for the soldiers.

Christmas dinner was something we had always looked forward to, but this was one dinner I did not enjoy. My friends came over and I gave them gifts as before.

The tree was lighted—oh, so pretty! but no one could see it from the outside. You see, the windows were all covered, because every night we were in a blackout. If a little streak of light were seen from the outside, a soldier would knock and tell us to

fix it, so that the light would not be reflected through the window.

This was a Christmas in war time; now once again we are nearing Christmas. Must we face another day such as that of Christmas before? No, we can make this a happy, and cheerful Noel with what little we have, for gradually we have come to adjust ourselves to this war and when we think of the suffering of others on Christmas Day, we can make the most of everything. S o I say, "Merry Christmas."

## EVACUATION

December the 7th, Sunday morning, was a nice quiet morning until I heard the new about Pearl Harbor over the radio.

As usual, the next day I got my car out and started to school. Assembly was called, and we all went into the auditorium to hear the President's speech and a few words from our principal, Mr. Gross.

About March there was great excitement. Rumor said there was a plane; some folks said there wasn't, but there were a lot of search lights shining all around us and shooting continued for a long period. It was so noisy I got up to see what was going on. It looked as if our fliers were practicing; so I jumped back into bed again. Next morning I got up, looked around and found anti-aircraft gun fragments here and there.

When I went to school that day some of my American friends are checking out of school; so I asked them where they were going. They replied they were going back to their home states.

March 23 was my saddest day, for I had to say good bye to all my friends whom I left behind when I went to Reedley, California. After a long ride over mountains and dry land we finally reached Reedley. As soon as we got settled, I enrolled in Reedley Union High School. It was hard to get use to their system, but I managed to finish my 10th grade. I made many new friends and had lots of fun with them.

After a period of three monthsschool closed for the summer. During the summer vacation my brother and I went to pick tomatoes. I was used to this kind of work but the weather was terrible; it wasn't like that of southern California, but I grew accustomed to

this, too.

Sunday was the most enjoyable day. We went to show or to Kings River to see the motor boats go up and down the stream. Fishing was lots of fun too, but the thing that interfered with it was the curfew which was from six A.M. to eight P.M.. These enjoyable moments soon were ended by the second evacuation. All our time was spent in packing, selling and doing the last minute shopping. We were all packed up before the date. August the fifth arrived. Finally, this day arrived; our friends took us to the station, for we had sold our own car. Just before getting on to the train we went into town a block away and had our last ice cream soda and our last look at Reedley.

While waiting for the order to get onto the train, we said good-bye to our friends. When the time came they all got on, but the car we were to ride in wasn't there; so we split up into different cars. When clear signal was give we started to roll out of Reedley, the town getting smaller and smaller and friends waving their hats until it was out of our sight. Then we went through many small towns. The next big town was Bakersfield; it was dark when we arrived and M.P. said to pull our shades down; therefore we couldn't see the town. After we got out of Bakersfield, the lights went on and shades were put up. The train stopped continuously in the dry, dusty land. It was so hot that I went to drink ice water regularly.

As the train struggled through the mountains, I counted fourteen tunnels that I remember. Every time we went through one we had to close our windows on account of the black smoke getting inside. After the long, boring ride we reached Barstow where we

stayed at least an hour and had breakfast. There we saw much army equipment, such as trucks, jeeps and tanks. Once more we started for a long ride. Pretty soon we saw a river. Everyone stuck his head out of the window and said, "That is the Colorado River." After we crossed, we were in the state of Arizona and stopped at a small town called Parker. We got off with our belongings and got on to the buses, which were waiting there. Soon we were on our way to Poston. The roads were dry and dusty. I thought to myself how can anyone live in a place like this. As we went through we saw barracks lined up in rows; for a while I thought we were going to land there, but the bus kept on going. Then another camp appeared, but we kept on going until we reached camp 111. There I saw my brother who came from Camp 1 to see our arrival. Then a man whom I knew got on the bus and gave us a speech of welcome. There we all got off and went into the mess hall, where we got one pill and paper cupful of ice water. It was very good, for the weather was so hot.

Then we were taken to our apartments in a truck. We got off the truck and entered the apartment to find that it was very bare; there were only few cots covered with dust. I went to the block manager's office and obtained a hose and washed the walls and floor; they were so dirty, it took half an hour. Next we made up the cots and went to bed. This was the end of a "Perfect day."

### EVACUATION

San Jose, a serene, middle-sized city, is located less than fifty miles south of San Francisco, California. I spent more than fifteen contented years in this peaceful community. Since we lived in a residential district, most of our neighbors were Caucasians who readily accepted us as their friends. I have always mingled with them in both school and social activities.

Every Saturday night a group of us girls attended a motion picture show; on Sundays we listened to the radio at our own homes. One particular Sunday afternoon, I was sitting comfortably on the soft sofa listening to Jack Benny's hilarious comedy program. Suddenly, the radio commentator interrupted the program to announce that Pearl Harbor had been attacked by Japan. I was shocked and dismayed! When I related this dreadful news to my mother, she trembled with fright. That night the supper, which had taken several hours to prepare, was hardly touched. Very few words were spoken during the whole meal. We ate in silence.

I was worried and harrassed about how my American friends would react toward me after hearing this terrifying news. When I stepped into the school bus, everone greeted me pleasantly as usual; yet, I felt that all were staring and watching my every move. This made me very uncomfortable; still I had to act as though nothing had happened.

The principal of our school called a general assembly so

that all might hear President Roosevelt's speech asking ~~Cong-~~gress for a declaration of war against Japan, Germany, and Italy. After the speech, Mr. Van Dyke addressed the students and said to them: "It is not the Japanese American students who attacked Pearl Harbor therefore, no one should aggravate these loyal boys and girls. To you Japanese students, keep your chins up." His speech was so impressive that tears ran down not only my cheeks but those of students and teachers as well. Later, everyone offered his symphaty to us.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation began to take in any Japanese aliens whom the investigators thought were potentially dangerous. Many of them were later released after they had proved their loyalty to the United States Government. One day I came home from school to find two F.B.I. men at our front door. They asked permission to search the house. One man looked through the front rooms, while the other one searched the back rooms. Trembling with fright, I followed and watched each of the men look around. The investigators examined the mattresses, and the dresser, and looked under the beds. The gas range, piano, and sofa were thoroughly inspected. Since I was the only one at home, the F.B.I. questioned me, but did not procure sufficient evidence of Fifth Collumnists in our family. This made me very happy, even if they did mess up the house.

Japanese, living near war plants, air ports, and water fronts, were asked to evacuate from those areas immediately. Because San Jose was not too close to any military plants, many evacuees began to make a home there.

In the early part of April General J. L. DeWitt, Commander of the Western Defence Area, proclaimed a curfew law stating that all persons of Japanese ancestry be prohibited from going beyond fifty miles from their homes without permits. This prohibition made it quite difficult for people who commuted from one city to another and for those people who were in the transportation business.

Another new curfew was introduced by General DeWitt. This ruling stated that no person of Japanese ancestry could go ~~no~~ farther than 5 miles from his home. Many students were affected by this curfew, because the schools they attended were more than five miles from their homes. For the same reason I missed three weeks of school.

A two-day voluntary evacuation to inland states was permitted on April 28. Out of the total Japanese on the Pacific Coast, relatively few volunteered, because it was impossible to sell and store their goods on such short notice. The remaining Japanese were being evacuated from the West Coast to Assembly centers and relocation centers. The War Civilian Control Authority advised the Japanese to dispose of their properties or make arrangements to store them. Many things had to be sacrificed because of the short time allowed us. On every street corner one might see a Japanese with a suitcase in each hand. The purchasing of folding chairs was a common sight, also.

The long-awaited order finally came late Saturday afternoon, May 23. Every head of a family had to register for a family number and <sup>give</sup> the date he wished to leave. We packed the furniture and

4

the things we would not use, and stored them in a private home. A Caucasian friend took us to the railway station. Since our departure was scheduled for 1:30 P.M., all my school friends could not see me off. I was very much surprised to see my best pal come hurrying toward me. With tears running down her cheeks, she handed me a little package. I opened it quickly and gasped with happiness! A gold locket with my initials inscribed upon it. When she bade me good bye, it was the saddest moment of my life. A Christian women's organization generously served iced tea and coffee to everyone and fruits to the children. Then we were ordered to form a line for our physical check-up. After the examination we were assigned to our cars. I sat down in a seat and looked out the window only to see many people still in line waiting for their physical examination.

The train gave a sudden jerk <sup>w-l</sup> were off to Santa Anita! NO - wait - it has halted again! It was only a false alarm, the train moved so that the empty cars <sup>o</sup>would be up to the platform. At exactly 4:46 P.M. the old locomotive moved without hesitation. People were waving good bye to us. We passed the residential district, and now we were parallel to the Monterey High Way. "That's Tanase's strawberry Patch! Look at our farm! The Inouye's used to live there," were voices that could be heard from various people.

We were away from the city noise and were in the open country. I saw orchards, hills, pastures, more hills, more pastures, and more orchards. This was getting monotonous. The sun was gradually disappearing behind the mountains. The train monitor, who

69/5  
P

was appointed by the Military Police, began to distribute the box lunch. It consisted of a beef sandwich and a jelly sandwich, an orange, two cupcakes, and a pint of milk. Even though I was exhausted and fatigued, I could not go to sleep. When I actually fell asleep, I do not know; but the next moment I was told that it was 6:30 A.M. We passed by guayule plantations near Salinas, we passed King City, beautiful Santa Barbara and busy Los Angeles. It took eighteen hours to go from San Jose to Santa Anita, because the old train had to wait for every scheduled train to go by. It was quite dark when we passed through Camp Roberts.

At 11:30 A.M. we arrived at the Assembly Center. A crowd of people were at the platform to welcome us into camp. An embittered woman said, "If you take one step into this camp, you will not be able to see the outside world anymore". The first thing we did was to have another physical examination. Then we were assigned to our quarters. A young messenger escorted us to our new home. I was stunned to think that we would have to live in horse stables! As I entered the stall, I could smell the obnoxious odor. I could stand it no longer; so I went out to seek fresh air. A few hours later a broomstick, bucket, six cots and mattresses were delivered to our door. We scrubbed the doors, floors, and walls as thoroughly clean as possible. The stable rooms included two windows, a front and a back room, partition walls, and a paved tar and gravel floor. It was rather difficult to adjust myself to this new environment, but I gradually became familiar with the surroundings.

Santa Anita is a beautiful large horse-racing track. At the

right of the Grandstand is a statue of the famous horse, Seabiscuit. The population of the camp was 20,000 evacuees, all from the West Coast. There were six mess halls located within the camp. Each mess was named a color red, blue, green, white, and orange, and yellow. The red mess, largest in the camp, was in the huge grandstand. It accomodated almost 3000 people at one time. Sixteen search lights played into the center every night on the look-out for any suspicious moves or persons. At six every morning and nine o'clock every night, a person assigned to our district came around to see that we were all in our homes. He was called a "woodpecker", because he had to knock on each door while everyone was asleep.

Every girl and boy above sixteen years of age was drafted to do the work for which he was best fitted. Wages were as follows: \$6.00 for unskilled workers \$12.00 for skilled workers and \$16.00 for professional people such as doctors, lawyers, and cooks. Employment was on a voluntary basis; therefore, it was not compulsory to work. My sisters and brother were employed, so it was necessary for me to do the housework, washing, and ironing.

Three weeks after we had put in our application for removal to the Colorado River Relocation Center, our request was granted. This meant another sad experience of leaving old friends and new acquaintances. Friends and neighbors helped us to launder soiled clothes, pack our belongings, and wash up the rooms. Because our blankets wer all crated up, we barrowed some from various people that evening.

A truck came after the Army cots and blankets at 4:30 A.M. We had breakfast at 6:30 that morning. Now we were outside of the fence, while our friends were still behind it. So we left Santa Anita, a place I shall always remember. In the little town of Redlands, we were permitted to get off the bus for a few minutes of rest. The first thing we boys and girls did was run to the nearest grocery store to buy ice cream and candies. In a few minutes we were off again on our way to Poston. We could see only sage bush and desert. The only signs of civilization were the modern highway and electricity wires along the road. The heat was terrible! We made our second stop in Indio. The heat was terrific, even in the shade. We dashed onto the bus again, because it was much cooler in the air-conditioned stage. The desert and its extreme heat made me drowsy. I awoke just before we arrived at Desert Inn. The United States soldiers were maneuvering in the intense heat.

When we crossed the California-Arizona border, I thought I'd see and notice a difference. The soil, climate, and environment were the same as in California. Five miles from Parker our bus had a flat tire. All the other buses except one went ahead. At Parker we were met by a Military Police who escorted us to the camp. Even through the thick dust I could see the most beautiful moon I had ever seen. We passed through Camp I, Camp II and then stopped at Camp III. Each person was required to register and be finger printed. It was dark now; so I could not get a very clear idea of what the camp looked like. The next day I discovered that the camp was divided as follows: each block has fourteen barracks,

8

two latrines, an ironing room, a wash room, a recreation hall,  
and a mess hall. Every block is supervised by a block manager.  
The cooks and waitresses are usually hired from their own block.

The September heat was terrific and the winter weather was almost unbearable. If I opened my mouth when the wind blew, I would have my mouth full of dust. The dust storms may come, the heat may be terrific, and the living conditions may be almost unbearable, but these things will not discourage me from being glad if our confinement here will bring a quicker victory for the United Nations.

It was a bright and clear Sunday, like the many Sundays which had already passed. A few of my friends from Los Angeles came and together we went to the theater near by. We enjoyed the picture tremendously, but as I filed out from the theater I noticed a long line of people waiting to get in. I felt their eyes staring at me as if I had done something wrong. When I came in sight of my house, there was a car parked. My friends and I climbed up the steps gaily, but as soon as I stepped inside the dining room, I saw a friend from Brawley who had arrived from Japan on the last boat. The room was quiet until mother broke the silence. She said that Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor. I had never heard of Pearl Harbor, but as she continued and said Hawaii, I just couldn't believe it. I rushed to the bedroom, where my little sister was lying sick in bed. The radio was on; the announcer was relating the episode which had happened that morning. After my friends and I sat down to dinner, we were interrupted by the sudden ringing of the telephone. It was my friend's eldest sister. She wanted her to buy a newspaper giving all the details of the attack. As much as we hated to go to the drug store, she and I walked into the silent street talking about the dreadful attack, and about going to school the next day. We were worried about how our American friends would react. With enough courage we bought the paper.

Next day my friend called for me to go to school. I was ashamed to face my American friends, but as soon as I arrived they treated me not like a Japanese-American, but like any American. They surrounded me and treated me so well that I never

shall forget them. When the President of the United States addressed Congress and the people, declaring war on Japan, all the classes in school were required to listen in on his speech. I sat quietly wanting to shrink, but was relieved, because I wasn't the only Japanese in that class.

Three or four blocks away from my house is an airplane factory, Northrop. Soldiers started to build tents around the factory, and sentries could be seen standing around from morning till night. At night as you go by the factory, rows and rows of lighted tents may be seen. From that day Hawthorne was filled with soldiers and I never liked going into town or to the theater.

Near the end of January, an evacuation notice was given out. We lived near the coast and were surrounded by Northrop, North American, and Douglas air craft factories; so we had to evacuate by February 22. Those days were busy ones for each member of the family. The saddest part was saying goodbye to my teachers and friends at school. Our near-by neighbor invited my sisters and me to a farewell dinner party, the day before we were to evacuate. She also gave each member of the family a farewell present to remember him by. The final day arrived. The truck came for our furniture, suitcases, and other baggage.

We then moved to East Whittier and lived at Blue Hill. Blue Hill is a lovely place. It is surrounded by mountains and everywhere you look one can see rows and rows of orange, lemon and avocado trees. We lived with a friend who raised flowers such as sweet peas, cherry blossoms, stocks, daisies, just to name a few. From the house I could see the beautiful mountains with snow covered tops. In the morning the sun would shine through the window, and sweet fragrant odors from the orange blossoms from

across the road drifted in. I had to walk a mile up and down the hills to the bus stop. From there I caught the bus and rode fourteen miles to school in Norwalk. The day I enrolled in Excelsior Union High School, ten other Japanese students also enrolled. All were from Terminal Island. The students of Excelsior welcomed us heartily. About a week later the Girls League gave a welcome party to all the students who had just entered. They entertained us with refreshments and songs. After three weeks and two days, I regretfully left Excelsior just after I had made new friends, whom I never expect to see again.

Friday, March 13-I shall never forget this day. It was when the F. B. I. men came to see my father, who had happened to be at Los Angeles. They came after him, because he happened to be the treasurer of the Japanese school which I attended before the war. I was frightened and could hardly speak. Words just tumbled out from my mouth saying my father was in Los Angeles on business. When my father came home, I told him what had happened. He began to pack his bag and stayed up waiting for the men, but they didn't come. The next morning I awoke and immediately looked at father's bed to see if he were still there. He was still at home. I was so relieved that there wasn't any word that could express my feelings. That morning my father and I rode into Whittier to do a little shopping for certain things he needed in case he were taken. During luncheon we were interrupted by a car driving into the yard. It was the F. B. I. men coming to take my father. I was brave, trying not to shed any tears. He was taken to Tujunga to the C. C. C. camp where I visited him twice before he was interned in New Mexico.

Rumors had been going around the neighborhood for sometime, that we would have to go to Santa Anita Assembly Center; so on April 7 we moved again. We had to repack all our clothes. We left our furniture, books, and other belongings at Whittier in care of our friends. After leaving Los Angeles at 12:30 P. M. we drove all afternoon and until 7 o'clock when we finally reached our destination in Orsi.

I attended Visalia Union High School for the bus passed right in front of the house. There I went, my friends and I, some of whom are now here in Poston with me. At school and everywhere else, there were rumors that we would have to go to some relocation center. I prayed that this would not happen. In case this rumor were correct, I went into town during lunch hour to shop. I shopped and shopped until it seemed as though I would never finish. The dreadful news appeared one day in July in the Fresno Bee. The headlines read that we were to evacuate and would have to register at Visalia Municipal Auditorium on a certain date. There I went and registered. A man gave me the baggage tags, the family number, what train to board, and on what day. It was then that I found out that I was to go to Colorado Relocation Center on August 2. From then on people with whom we lived did not feel like working on their ranch. All we did was to pack, shop, and go swimming. Everyone was disgusted. We were busy selling our car and other things which we did not need.

The final day came. We were the first group to leave Visalia. That morning we all awakened early, cleaned house, prepared lunches to eat on the train, and were busy saying goodbye to our neighbors.

We ate our last meal in Visalia's Chop Suey. Everyone advised the other to eat as much as he could inasmuch as this was the last chop suey meal he would be able to get for a long time to come. I boarded the number 10 car next to the Pullman. People stood on the platform waving goodbye and calling out that they would come later and hoped to meet us in Poston.

Here the long weary trip started. At 6:45 P. M. on August 2nd we pulled slowly out from Visalia depot, waving farewell to our friends. At first, I was excited because it had been a long time since I had ridden on a train. I kept looking out of the window as the train rushed on into the night. I took a final glance at Visalia, for I was sure I wouldn't see it again for the duration. After a long weary ride, we came to Bakersfield where we stopped for seven hours on account of a train wreck which had to be cleared up. Then the train went slowly on toward Arizona. I dreaded the hot sun glistening right through the window at me. I was so thirsty that I kept going back and forth to drink the ice cold water at the front of the car. During the whole trip, we received salt tablets at intervals in order that there should be enough salt in our systems.

We finally arrived in Barstow at 1:50 P. M. We had not breadfasted; so everyone was famished. We ate our luncheon which consisted of two sandwiches, an orange, a cupcake and a glass of milk. We left Barstow at 2:45. For supper we had left overs from our lunch, which consisted of one cup of milk and one sandwich. After a long and weary ride, we finally crossed the Colorado River. As I leaned out the window and glanced across the desert in the dark, flashes of lightening could be seen away off in the distance.

As I sat staring out into the silent night, I heard only the roaring of the train as it went rapidly clickety-clack over the rails.

The train finally gave a jerk and stopped at Parker at 10:30 P. M. The people in our car were fortunate enough to get on the first bus, which happened to be an air-conditioned Greyhound. As we rode along the dusty road, trying to peer out through the venition blind, all I could see was desert with mesquite bushes and sage bushes. We rode on through the silent night. Presently someone spied lights in the distance resembling a little city. The bus started to slow down. Everyone was certain that this must be the camp, but the bus kept on going. We all relaxed again and rested our heads against the comfortable chairs. We rode along for about three miles and presently I looked out the window. I saw another group of lights, but this group seemed to be smaller than the first. I thought for sure that this was to be our home for the future, but I was mistaken. The bus kept on goin g, while the dust circled about us as the tires sank deep into the dusty road. I grew tired and weary as the bus jolted as it went up and down, but we finally reachèd our destination Camp 3 in Poston. The two groups of lights which I had seen were camps one and two.

The bus finally stopped in front of a lighted building which I later learned was 309 recreation hall. Just as we were about to alight, a man entered and welcomed us to Poston. He was from Camp 2. The residents from Camps 1 and 2 were kind enough to volunteer to help with the registration and made it possibe for us to come in. As I entered the recreation hall, I received a salt tablet and Ice water, which was certainly a treat at that time for it was so hot. Everybody registered and then was ex-

amined by the doctor. After I finished with certain details, I finally went toward my barrack which was to be my home for many months to come. As I jumped from the truck, I looked around. Everywhere there were barracks covered with black tar paper. When I walked into my room, I stopped and stared into the empty apartment which was covered with dirt, sawdust and nails lying everywhere, just as they had been left after the barracks were built. I felt dirty and grimy after the wearisome trip from California, but I couldn't do anything for my baggage had not arrived. I walked to the messhall and ate, for I had not eaten any supper. I dragged my legs slowly up the steps and slumped onto the cot without bothering to undress. I was all tired out after the long tiresome trip. I retired at 1:30 A. M.

Laughter and voices could be heard the next morning, as the sun shone through the window. I went to collect my baggage and refreshed myself before breakfast. Those days were certainly hot. The temperature rose from one hundred fifteen to one hundred twenty in the rooms. People were rushing about getting settled. For the next week or so buses were constantly bringing in people from the depot. I stood in the hot, blazing sun watching the new arrivals come in. Dust was blowing from all directions. Frequently, I saw friends whom I knew back in California.

Camp three is surrounded by mesquite bushes with mountains in the distance ~~in the distance~~. Late at night the howling of a lonely coyote prowling around in the mesquite bushes were heard. Not far from the camp is the Colorado River. It is just a branch of the river where the Postonians go fishing and swimming. As the days went by, Postonians started to make vegetable and flower

gardens which add a touch of beauty to the camp.

Our days are filled. We keep ourselves busy crocheting beautiful bedspreads, doilies, and tablecloths, knitting, making small souvenir pins, or making canes and vases from iron wood. There is always something to do, which fills the day. When baseball or basketball season comes around, everyone is either playing or watching the games between blocks and other camps. There is some kind of social gathering, and movies are shown every Friday in Camp 3.

This camp is made up of eighteen blocks, six blocks in each unit. Each block has sixteen barracks. Fourteen of each barracks are divided into four rooms while the other two barracks are divided into eight little apartments for couples. In each block there are a mess hall, two latrines, an ironing room and a laundry room.

School opened on October 5th for the students of Poston. The days were hot walking to school. Every boy and girl had to bring his or her own chair to school, for there were not any at school. Many brought home-made chairs and some brought folding-chairs. The school room was vacant. There weren't any blackboard, chairs, tables, textbooks, or any other school supplies. With the cooperation of the students and gardeners, the school surroundings are being beautified with trees, lawns, and flowers planted around the barracks. Now there are books, chairs, tables, and the equipment and supplies which make it easier both for students and teachers. At present the school building is being

9  
Hayakawa, Kimiyo

9  
Japanese Relocation Papers  
Bancroft Library

built from adobe. The residents of Poston are cooperating to make this possible. Everyone is hoping that the school will be finished by next fall. At present we are using one of the blocks as a school building.

Our camp is like an ordinary small town. It has three canteens, one dry goods store, a nursery, a clinic, a fire department, a police department and many other things which make up a community.

Now that Poston has been eliminated from the military area, people are rapidly moving out to various parts of the United States. Hundreds of people are going out of camp to work in sugar beet fields and other places outside the military area where there is a labor shortage. Everyone is looking forward to the day when we will be able mingle with the Caucasians outside of camp. Until this time comes, everyone is helping to build a better community in Poston.

Evacuation to Poston

The evacuation of the West Coast Japanese, which I went through with other Japanese friends, is an experience I shall never forget. My father and our family were excited and bewildered; we did not know what to do with our home and properties. So, like many others, we stored what we could and sold the rest of our belongings to anyone who wanted to buy them. When the war is over, we planned to start over again.

The few days before the evacuation we were so busy selling, registering at the W.R.A. headquarters and packing what little necessities we were able to bring, that we were too tired to care where we would be sent.

At the station we gave hurried farewells to friends that would be going tomorrow, and then, in the midst of this parting, came the jerk of the train, and we slowly gathered speed that was taking us away from home.

The train ride was tiresome; yet, to me it was a new experience, because it was the first time I had seen the desert. The morning sun shone brilliantly on the sage and sand as I sleepily looked through my window early the next morning. At first the bright sunlight seemed to hurt my eyes. When I grew used to the dazzling light, I could see the army on manoeuvres, training to fight in Africa. The rest of the trip in the hot desert seemed more wearisome than the night before. Towards noon we reached our destination, Parker.

69/5  
P

I looked out of the window and with me was almost every other pair of eyes on the train. All of us were anxious and curious to see what a desert town looked like. I was very much discouraged at the aspect of the town; the only paved street I saw was the main street and the highway passing through it.

Then there was another long, restless waiting for our turn to get on the buses to take us to Poston. When our turn came, we were allowed to get off the train; then walk directly over to the Greyhound buses. Into the bus we crowded, and then we rode thirty miles to camp on a dusty road through great fields of cotton, plots of mesquite trees, and dry, hot, arid desert.

In the few days after our arrival here, my greatest disappointment was the long rows of black tarpaper barracks which looked like barns. To think that we had to live in these for an indefinite time was almost unbearable. My only complaint was about the hot desert climate. But this heat is nothing compared to a Poston dust storm! How hard we tried to keep the dust out; yet it kept coming in through every little crack and crevice; there was nothing in the room that was not dusty.

## Evacuation

It was on the peaceful Sunday, December 7, 1941, that the dreadful news of the Pearl Harbor attack by the Japanese reached my very ears. At first I was so startled and excited that I thought and most earnestly hoped it to be a mere joke; I thought that such a thing could never happen. Yet, I was there as usual facing actual facts and here arose a striking incident so dreadful and appalling in my heart that I could hardly grasp it and swallow into my mind. Instantly, I was struck with a most unusual thought. I realized that I, as well as many others of Japanese ancestry was really up against something that would have a serious affect on our daily lives. Did this mean that just because mother Nature had brought me to earth in the form of a typical black haired, slant eyed Japanese, I was to be blamed for such a tragic event that I had nothing to do with? Did this mean that just because of my race I was to be hated among other people outside; or did this mean that I, in returning to school the following day would feel left out among Caucasian friends and even perhaps lose the friendship of these wonderful people? Did this by any chance mean that we would be deprived of all these extensive educational priviledges and be sent to some camp or center with the dullest and crudest of environments? Yes, these were only few of the many extreme ailments that so disturbingly and continuously swarmed my mind. Indeed, I must say, that these were the most hectic the most miserable, of all the days that had ever crossed the path of my existence. Oftentimes I had wished to have been born a Caucasian in order to have escaped these dreadful ailments.

With the coming of curfew order it became evident that our evacuation was bound to come, while rumors of it were increasing day by day. For this reason people were already seeking us out for the sake of buy-

ing what ever properties or implements we might have to sell. At that moment we were gravely affected by the problem of uncertainty, for, as it was, evacuation had still not been revealed, while already our inclinations had led us to puzzle over the selling of our very useful properties. The puzzling matter of it was that we had not the slightest notion what we could keep or could not keep for use in camp life in case of evacuation. Such was the case with my bicycle which I had just purchased two weeks previous to the Pearl Harbor outbreak. At the time of purchasing my bicycle, I thought I had accomplished something worth while for I believed that bicycles would soon appear on the priority list, and I would fail to get mine. Yet, with the coming of this Pearl Harbor outbreak, my thoughts were entirely reversed, and my final conclusion was that I was forced to sell it back. But the funny thing was that my previous wise thought had again come to light when I found out later that I should have kept it for use in camp; since the army allowed it. So went one case, although there were humorous others involving the same problems.

Not until the very day when our long expected and dreaded evacuation had finally been ordered and reached our ears did we realize the grave importance of actual preparation, for this time it had become a reality and not a mere dream. Thus, our little peaceful household now turned into a real uproar and a mad house of excitement. Our bit-by-bit purchasing was of the utmost abundance. We were hurriedly packing what ever things came to our minds. More important was the settling of the question of what to do with our home and farms, which question required much careful consideration. Some were sold; while others were kept in guardianship of neighbors for the duration with the hope of returning with some adequate security-if not, at least a dwelling place.

With this arranged our preparations for leaving were quite well under way, except for the final arranging and packing of our luggage. Our preparations were finally concluded with small-pox and typhoid injections; we then awaited our sorrowful day of departure, although impatiently it was.

August 6, 1942, the day of our departure finally arrived and with it came also the many sorrowful feelings of having to leave good 'ole home and especially our many friends. That day we bade our many friends and neighbors farewell, and in a short while we were taken to the depot by one of our friends. Taking a final glimpse at our dear home and bidding my favorite pup the fondest of farewells, we were off. Arriving at the depot we soon boarded the train, and after saying good-bye to our sympathetic friends, the train started to move. Then I realized deep down in my heart for the first time the actual leaving of my dear home for how long a period no one knew.

## Colorado River

As I got down from the truck and gazed at the lovely scenery of the Colorado River and its surroundings, I thought back to the many years I had fun at home near the ocean. As I jumped and sank down into the white clean sand, I noticed that there was salt here and there. While I stood and looked at the water, I observed that it was brown and deep blue in certain places. The reason for this is that the brown places are shallow, and the blue places are deep. Sitting down, I gazed across the river. On the other side dark green trees were standing, oh so straight, up to the heavenly blue sky. Their trunks were so white and leaves so green that they made a magnificent picture with deep blue water, white sands, green trees, and, in the background, the mountains. The mountains were of all colors, such as purple, brown, black, and blue mingled together. The clear blue sky just above

Colorado River (Continued)

with white clouds blended in so lightly, as though they were painted in by some artist, gave the sky an added touch and made it a magnificent <sup>view</sup> to observe. Lying on the warm sand, I could hear the rippling of the water as the current of the waves splashed slowly into the tranquil air which surrounded me.

When it was time to go back to the camp, I gazed once again across the river, toward the trees, mountains, and the blue sky, hoping to be able to come back again to enjoy myself away from thousands of people. Just for a few hours it made me forget all about the war, and even about being in camp.

Ben Inouye

## Summer in Poston

Summer life in Poston is very annoying, where you are not well acquainted with the hot, dusty summer days. Early in the morning the sun hurries up over the hills of the east, and shines brightly and gayly over our heads all day. At midday it seems to pause directly overhead for quite a while. This burning heat makes even the mesquite trees look dry and bare. As the day goes lazily on, the sun crawls slowly down the western sky. As it drops to the hillside, it seems as if it had reached its destination, for it stops and rests on the slope of the hill. Just as soon as the sun buries its round burning face, long lines of bright red light stretch across the sky in front of the dark mountains and color the western horizon. Every-

Ben Snowy

one sits at home by his porch and watches this beautiful action take place before his eyes and admires this colorful transformation. Just looking at this scenery clears the minds of the people and quiets them. Toward evening even the mesquite trees seem to jump in their growth. Everyone forgets for awhile, the hot, restless day with its many discomforts. However, even in the dry desert-land where most would think it uncomfortable, things such as these happen and people become serene and tranquil. At night the sky is filled with stars by the millions. Large stars glitter and twinkle. Once in a while a long pause, and "oh" and "ah" — and "Look! look!" can be heard as a falling star flashes gracefully toward the earth. Many a time airplanes with their taillights on, fly peacefully among the huge clusters of stars.

Helen Karasawa

## Poston, Arizona

The things that Nature has provided for us in Poston are limited. We are alone except for a forest of mesquite trees, desert sand, and the clear sky. Yet, the people of Poston have made use of the mesquite. They have gone out to the forest, cut branches off the trees, and made beautiful pieces of furniture. Petrified and iron woods have also been discovered in the mountains close by; and vases with Nature's own carvings have been made out of pieces of mesquite trees which looked like nothing but tree in the beginning. The desert sand is no advantage to us; but it doesn't do any harm. Although dust storms are not fun, we have gradually gotten used to them. In Poston, we have an average of two dust storms a week; but once in a while the wind is in a hurry and travels

Helen Karesawa

from twelve to fifteen miles per hour, which isn't as slow as it sounds. Many times I have noticed the clear Arizona sky. The sun rises and sunsets are so beautiful I cannot express the sight in words. In the evening, when the sun is setting, there are rolls of clouds in the sky, which resemble rolls of bread dough, but more so the ~~words~~ waves of the sea. For about three minutes the clouds are white; then, all of a sudden, the sky turns a flame-red, mixed with fiery yellow, and the clouds are no longer "ocean waves". It is really a glorious sight to see.