

Manzanar Cemetery, Winter 2002.

This booklet was developed by the park rangers at Manzanar National Historic Site in partnership with the individuals profiled and their families.



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National Park Service website at <a href="www.nps.gov">www.nps.gov</a>. To learn more about Manzanar National Historic Site, please visit our website at <a href="www.nps.gov/manz">www.nps.gov/manz</a>.

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Manzanar



# **ID Card**

INSTRUCTIONS
TO ALL PERSONS OF

JAPANESE

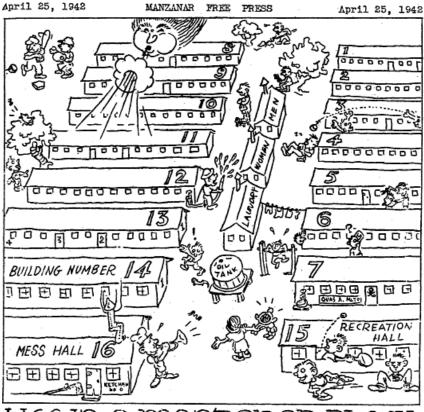
ANCESTRY





In 1942 the United States Government ordered over 110,000 men, women, and children to leave their homes and detained them in remote, military-style camps. Two-thirds of them were born in America. Not one was convicted of espionage or sabotage.

In this booklet, you will read the story of a person who lived this history, in his or her own words.



## LIFE IN A MANZANAR BLOCK

## Wind and Dust

This wind and dust I have to bear
How hard it blows I do not care.
But when the wind begins to blow –
My morale is pretty low.
I know that I can see it through
Because others have to bear it too.
So I will bear it with the rest
And hope the outcome is the best.



## **MANZANAR**

**Location:** Inyo County, California, at the eastern base of the Sierra Nevada.



### **Environmental**

**Conditions:** Temperatures can be over 100 degrees in summer and below freezing in winter. Strong winds & dust storms are frequent.

**Acreage:** 6,000

**Opened:** March 21, 1942 as a Reception Center and June 1, 1942 as a War Relocation Center.

Closed: November 21, 1945

Max. Population: 10,046 (September 1942)

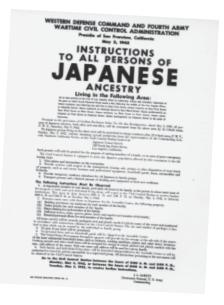
Demographics: Most internees were from the Los Angeles area, Terminal Island, and the San Fernando Valley. Others came from the San Joaquin Valley and Bainbridge Island.

#### KINICHI WATANABE

Family # 3705

Camp: Manzanar, CA Address: Block 27

My father came to the United States in 1920 at the age of 16. He worked as a farm worker in Utah and California. My mother was born in Long Beach, California, but she grew up in Japan. At the age of 18, she returned to the United States



as a picture bride for my father.

They settled down as flower-growers in the Shadow Hills area of Roscoe (Sun Valley), California. I was born in 1934. From 1940 until the start of the War, we lived and worked on leased property in Pacoima.

They had a few weeks to pack for the move. The house that my parents had built was sold to the property owner, and the flower shop was lost.



Arriving at Manzanar, 1942

Furnishings, car, farm equipment, and other items were sold at very low prices to scavengers, who were aware of the situation.

On a rainy day in April of 1942, the property owner took our family of five to Burbank. There we boarded bus-

es to go to Manzanar Relocation Center.

Our assigned family number was 3705. The youngest of the three sons died in camp in 1942 and another son was born in 1944.

The youngest of the three sons died in camp in 1942 and another son was born in 1944.

The camp was windy and dusty, and it seemed to me that it was windy every Sunday.

We first lived in Block 13, but we had to move in order to locate the fire station there. We then moved to Block 28, but we had to move again to house the hospital recovery patients. We then ended up in Block 27, which had many later arrivals from the Stockton area.

I don't remember too much about school. I was in grades 1,2, and 3. It was no picnic for my parents, but I remember having lots of fun and making new friends.

In 1944, we went to Camp Tule Lake. This was a camp for those planning to go to Japan at the conclusion of the war.

Because of hardships in Japan, we stayed in the USA and returned to San Fernando Valley. And after a couple of years, we were able to move back into the same property in Pacoima.

...for a while, I felt like a person without a country and that I needed to behave like a visitor.

I returned to Haddon Avenue School as a 4th grader, and when the word "Jap" came up in class, the teacher would politely correct it by saying "Japanese". But, for a while, I felt like a person without a country and that I needed to behave like a visitor.

I graduated from San Fernando High School and from UCLA. After 41 years as an aerospace engineer, I am now retired.