



*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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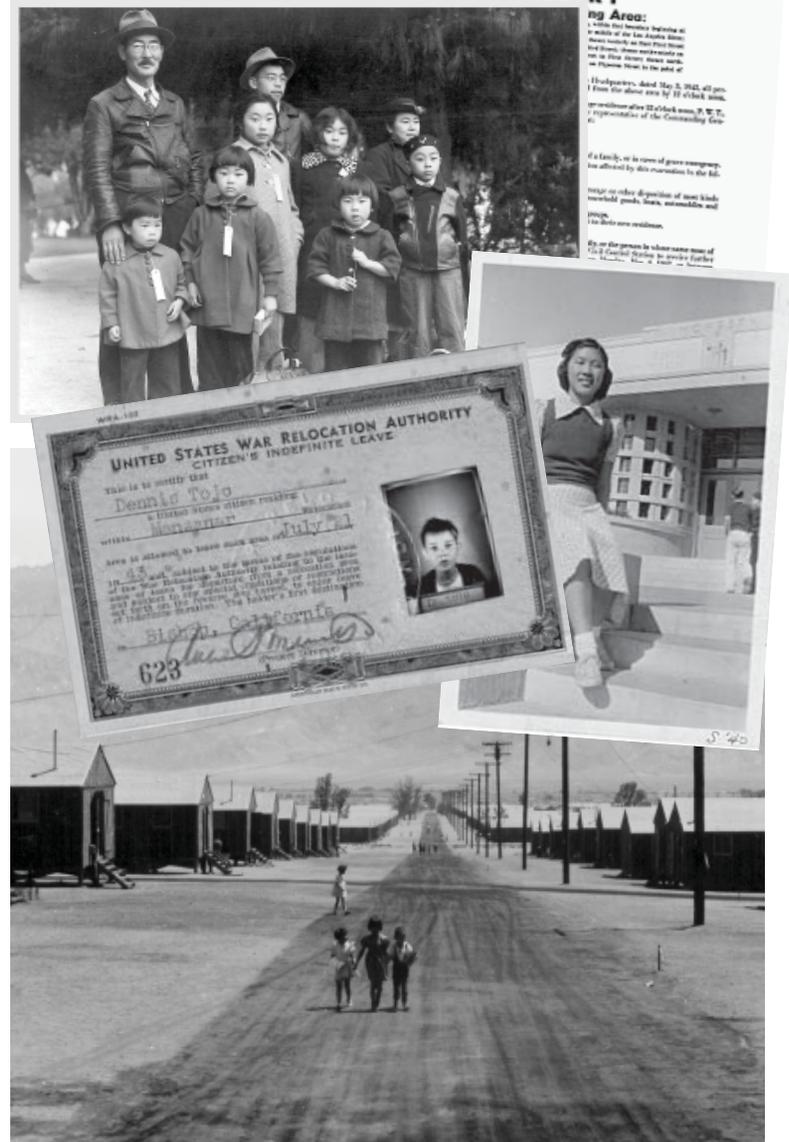
# Manzanar

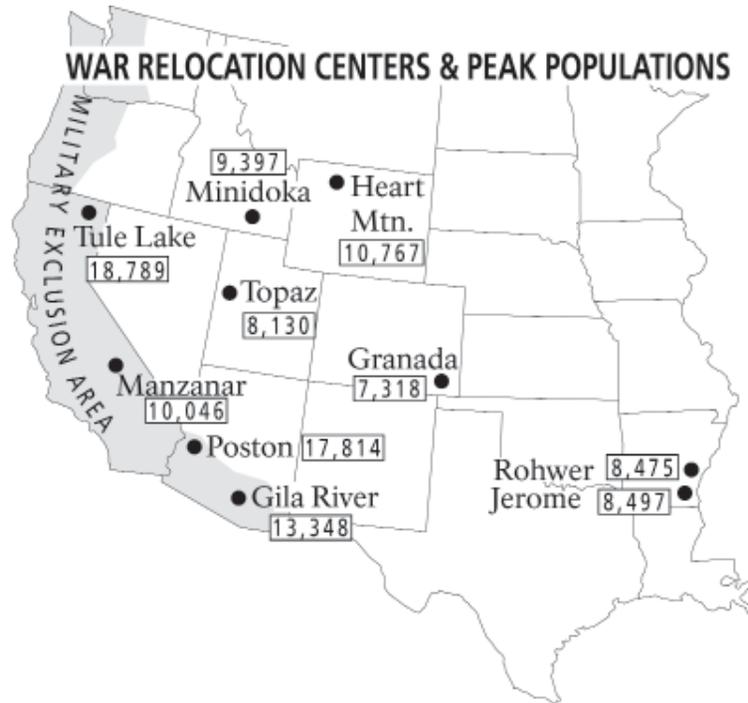


## ID Card

WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY  
 WARTIME CIVIL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION  
 Presidio of San Francisco, California  
 May 3, 1942

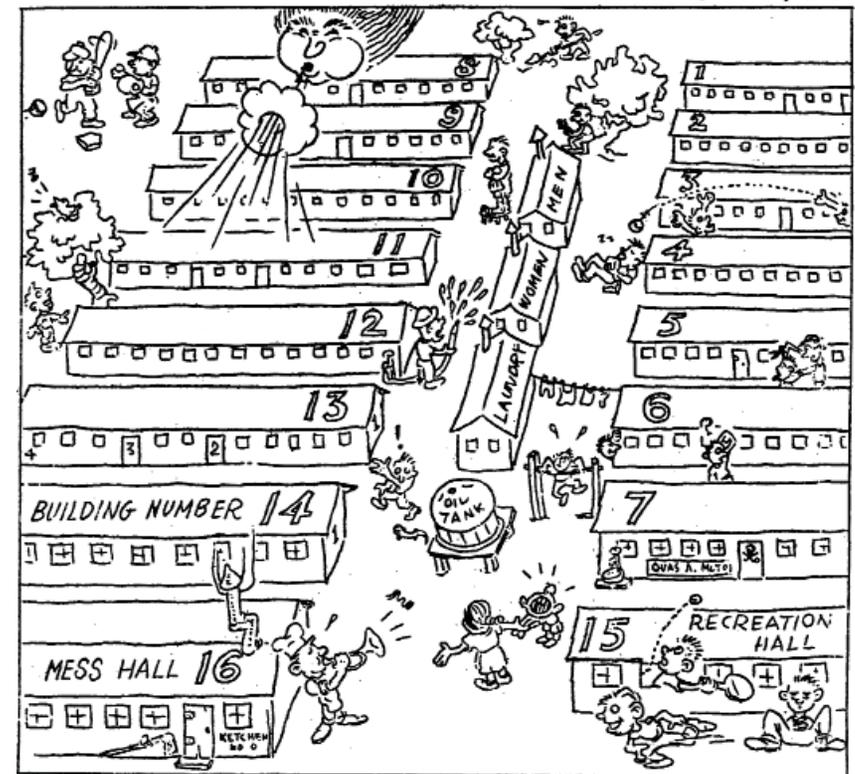
### INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL PERSONS OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY





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.

-- George Nishimura, age 16 (1943)



## **ROHWER**

**Location:** Desha  
County, Arkansas

### **Environmental**

**Conditions:** Rohwer  
War Relocation Center  
was located five miles  
west of the Mississippi

River in a swampy area intertwined with canals,  
creeks, and bayous. Forests had once covered the area,  
but by 1940 had been replaced by agricultural fields.  
Rohwer was at an elevation of 140 feet.

**Acreage:** 10,161

**Opened:** September 18, 1942

**Closed:** November 30, 1944

**Max. Population:** 8,475 (March 11, 1943)

**Demographics:** Most people interned at Rohwer War  
Relocation Center came from Los Angeles and San  
Joaquin counties in California, via the Santa Anita  
and Stockton assembly centers.



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## **EIICHI "H.E." KAMIYA**

**Camp: Rohwer, AR**

**Address: 38-11-A**

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My father was born in Hawaii, went to Japan at age 5  
when his father died, but returned to the U.S. at the age  
of 19. My mother was born in CA, went to Japan for  
education at age 5, and returned to the US at age 15.  
My father was the principal of a Japanese language  
school in Long Beach, CA. I was born in 1936 and had  
two sisters.

When Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, my parents were  
afraid of the impacts on our family. Soon thereafter, the  
FBI searched our house and took my father to prison  
for several weeks.

In March, 1942, we were  
given a few weeks notification  
of evacuation. Since we could  
only take what we could  
carry, most of our family  
possessions and valuables  
were put in storage. Many of  
our valuables would be missing  
after the war. Our suitcases  
included baby clothes, baby  
bottles, diapers, etc. for my  
six month old sister.

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On April 5, we were sent to an assembly center at the Santa Anita horse racing track in Arcadia, CA; the next day was my sixth birthday. But, my sisters were in the hospital with pneumonia so they joined us a few days later. We lived in horse stalls and slept on straw mattresses. We stayed at Santa Anita for 3 months awaiting completion of our camp.



Santa Anita Assembly Center

We took a train to a camp in Jerome, Arkansas. After 3 months we went to a camp in Rohwer, Arkansas. Rohwer had about 9000 people living in a mile square. This area was hot, rainy, with all kinds of bugs and snakes. Our family lived in one room of a barrack.

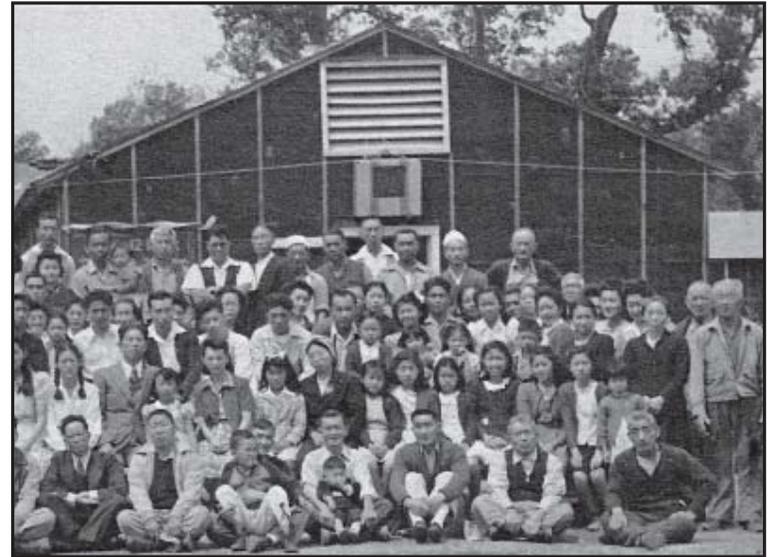
We had schools and studied the traditional lessons. I remember being an Indian chief in a Thanksgiving program. I made many new friends.

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**We had no toy store so we made them ourselves with a few scraps and lots of imagination.**

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We had no toy store so we made them ourselves with a few scraps and lots of imagination. We would play soldier, and cowboys and Indians. We would hunt with slingshots. When guards no longer patrolled the barbed wire fences, we would crawl out and go to the bayou to fish.



A week before the end of the war, we returned to Los Angeles. My father found a job at a coat factory and rented a house in east L.A. My mother worked as a house keeper and took in ironing. My parents would talk of our camp experiences without sadness or bitterness. They encouraged us to excel as students and citizens. My father went to school at night and built a successful business, and was able to send us all to college. My sisters became teachers. I got my BS and MS in Engineering from UCLA and worked in the aerospace industry until my recent retirement. I am married and we have two children who have completed college and are married.