



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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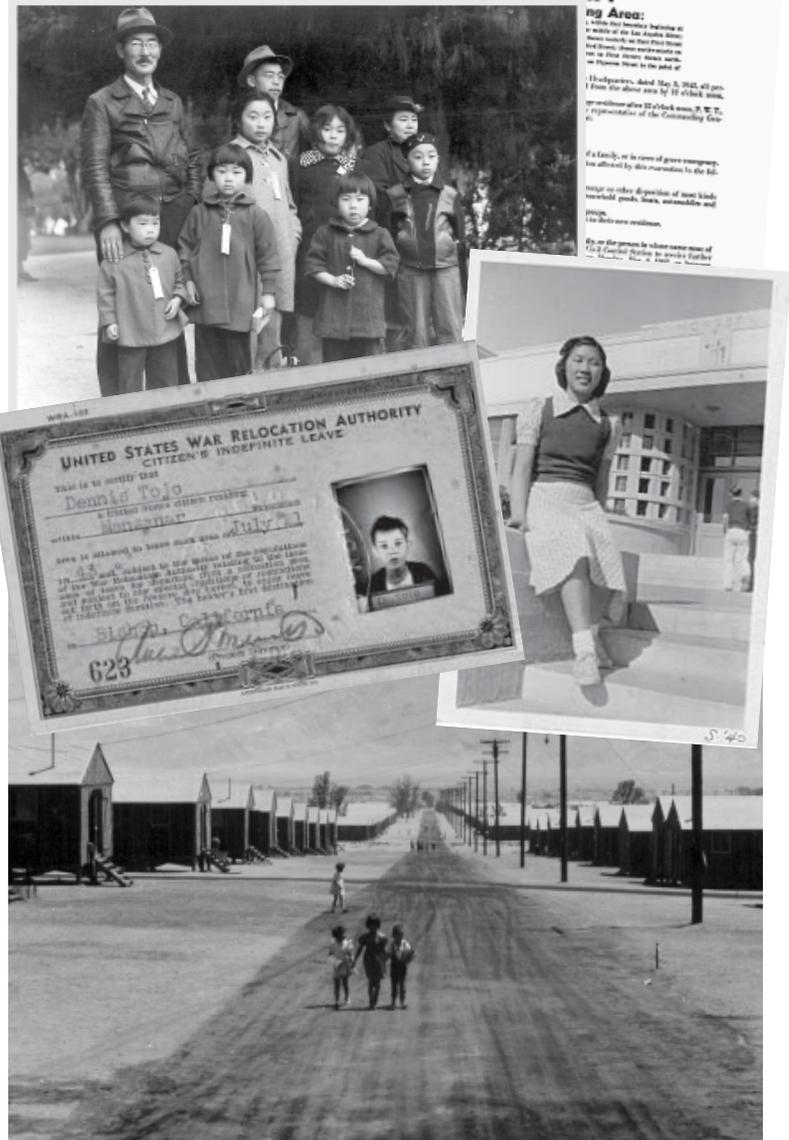
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Manzanar



ID Card

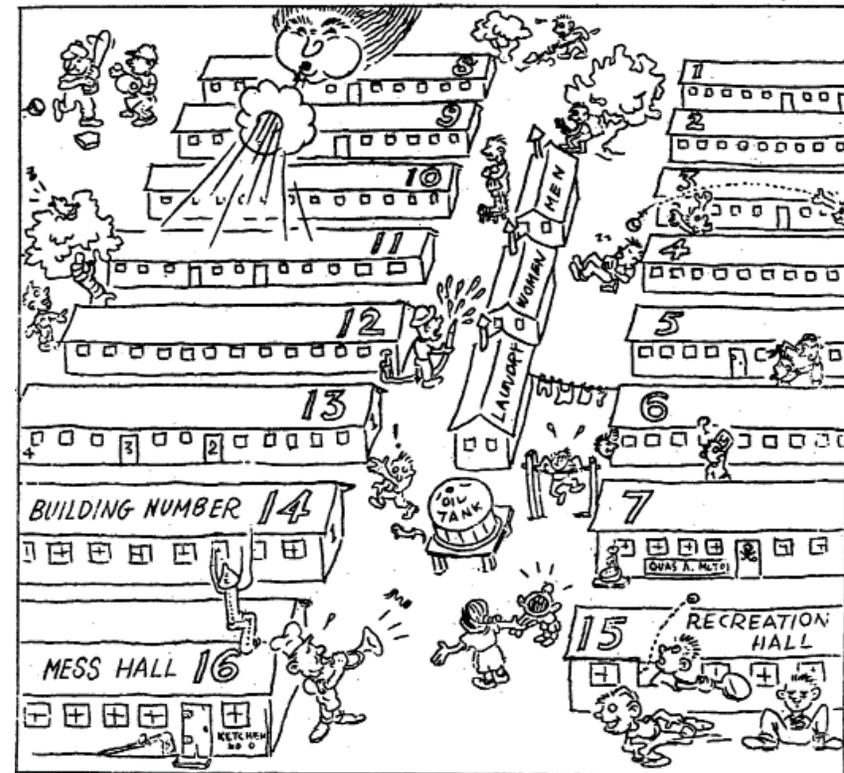
WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY
 WARTIME CIVIL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION
 Presidio of San Francisco, California
 May 3, 1942
**INSTRUCTIONS
 TO ALL PERSONS OF
 JAPANESE
 ANCESTRY**





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)

MANZANAR Free Press

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.



JOYCE NAKAMURA

Family # 1240

Camp: Manzanar, CA

Address: 12-9-4



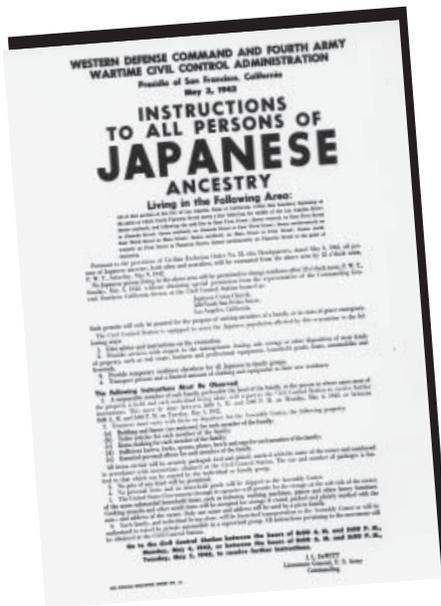
Joyce Nakamura 1943

My grandfather came to the United States in 1897 as a 17 year old from Odawara, Japan. My grandmother came from the same village to marry him in 1906. They lived in Pasadena where my mother was born. My father was born in Kyoto, Japan, and came to the United States in 1916 with his parents at the age of twelve. Both my parents graduated from college. My mother was a P.E. major, dad an architect, but there were no jobs for him because of the Depression and he was not a U.S. citizen. He worked at my grandfather's

“dry goods” store. My mother also worked at the store.

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When Pearl Harbor was bombed, our family was celebrating my grandfather's birthday at a Chinese restaurant. The FBI took my grandfather to jail, later



to prison camp in Missoula, Montana, as an enemy alien.

In order to stay together as a family, my parents decided to go to Manzanar with my grandmother, aunts, and uncles. They had a very short time to sell the car. Furniture and appliances

were to be stored in the basement of my grandfather's store, which was closed by the government and boarded up, but had a large basement. I remember having two dolls that were my favorite toys. I wanted to take one doll with me, but there was no room in the one suitcase per person we were allowed. My parents, my sister and I left for Manzanar Assembly Center on April 2, 1942, first by train, then



Train Arrival at Lone Pine

by "army transport". My grandmother, two unmarried aunts, one uncle, two married aunts and their husbands were in Manzanar by April 11. We arrived at night. It was dark and seemed scary.

hid where I was from, and my classmates had no knowledge of what happened in California, did not understand, and had never seen Japanese Americans. They did not treat me differently and I did not feel any prejudice.

I was elementary school age when I lived in Manzanar. Because I was with my parents, I felt secure. I remember that I did not like having to go outside to another barrack to go to the toilet or take a bath or shower. I did not like waiting in line to eat and I did not like the food. I hated canned green beans, spinach, pork and beans, and squid tough as rubber with tentacles and internal membranes. Many times I refused to take a bite, even though my mother would make me sit for an hour.

My advice to students who read this is to be tolerant of all people, learn about all the different cultures and people from different lands. Knowledge will prevent your being prejudiced against people different from you. Be concerned when the civil rights of one person or group of people are taken away. Don't sit back and say, "It's not my problem!" You never know if and event will occur when the same solution to the problem will be used in the future. We live in the U.S.A. and we all cherish our freedom. We need to protect it zealously.

Knowledge will prevent your being prejudiced against people different from you.

In Manzanar he raised rabbits. Of course, we know how they multiply. Well, there was always

...there was always a shortage of meat-beef, pork, and chicken—for our meals. We rarely had any to eat. I always think that is why am short today!

a shortage of meat—beef, pork, and chicken—for our meals. We rarely had any to eat. I always think that is why am short today! For Christmas of 1943, he came up with a plan to kill all the rabbits and we would have a feast. The day of the slaughter was a big event in our block. A crowd of people stood by the cages and watched as

men caught the rabbits, drowned them, skinned then and cut off their heads, drained the blood and put them in a pile. The fur was saved to sell and rabbits were eventually cut up and cooked for dinner. When it came time for the rabbit dinner, I took one look at the meat on my plate, took one bite, could not swallow it, and to this day, I will not eat rabbit. I stubbornly remained hungry that night.

We arrived in Chicago and lived in this apartment over a bar on the corner of Clark and Division for one month. My parents found an apartment in a tenement that was condemned, but because of the housing shortage, it was quickly renovated and reopened. We lived there for 6 years and I went to the local parochial school in this area. I never



Mrs. Naguchi with Joyce and Louise Nakamura

All four of us had to live in one room, which was occupied by my grandmother, two aunts and one uncle—eight of us! We had to live like this until more barracks were built. My relatives moved to another barrack in block 29 and we stayed in the original room, block 12, barrack 9, room 4, 12-9-4. School did not start until the fall. Since I was in 2nd grade at Maryknoll, I wanted to be in third grade. My mother let me go into third grade. All students were tested. My scores were such I was able to attend summer school for 4th grade and then go on to 5th grade in the fall. Fourth grade was very brief and 5th grade was a blur. Later, adjusting to

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Mrs. Nakamura with Joyce and Louise at Manzanar

regular school in 6th grade in Chicago, Illinois was difficult. I did not regain achieving at a high school level until 8th grade.

Ansel Adams, noted photographer, took our pictures, individually and with family for a book he would publish, *Born Free and Equal*. Our pictures have been featured in many museum and art gallery showings of this work or of camp life, in addition to appearing in the book.

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I had two friends with whom I played all the time. We'd play indoor games like cards or paper dolls,

and outdoor games, like hopscotch, circle scotch, and other sidewalk games. I have kept in touch with one friend through the years, although we never lived in the same area again. Now we keep in touch by e-mail. I saw my other friend at a camp reunion almost fifty years later. We now keep in touch once a year.



Manzanar War Relocation Center, 1942

My father decided to leave camp and go to New York to look for work. He left in February 1944 after completing the necessary paper work for permission to leave camp. He found work in New York, but the job was in Chicago, Ill. After he worked for a few months to build a nest egg, he found a place for us to live amid a city with a housing shortage and sent for us. We left camp in July of 1944, first by bus, then by train for Chicago. We stopped in Salt Lake City, Utah, to visit my grandfather, my dad's father, who had moved there earlier.