Manzanar

ID Card

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.

SHINO BANNAI

Family # 1107
Camp: Manzanar, CA
Address: 5-5-1

I was a 43 year old housewife with a husband and five children living in Los Angeles when the unbelievable news of war exploded the life of our family with drastic anxiety and uncertainty that would last for the next six years.

Prior to leaving for the desert camp we had only a few days to dispose of a lifetime's possessions at ridiculous prices set by merchants who knew we had no choice. The only items I would not sell were the china pieces we had used to share meals together as a family. These I shattered piece by piece in the backyard so none could violate what had been our personal ritual of being a family.

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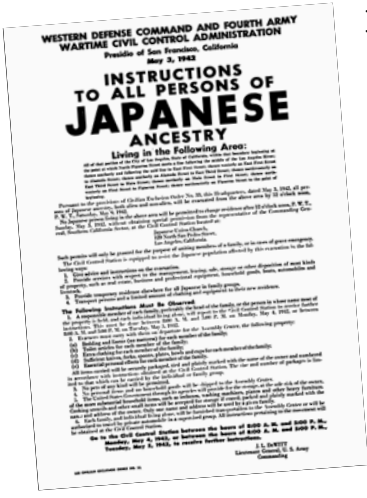

WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY
WARTIME CIVIL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION
Presidio of San Francisco, California
May 3, 1942

INSTRUCTIONS
TO ALL PERSONS OF
JAPANESE
ANCESTRY
Living in the Following Area:

Pursuant to the provisions of Civilian Exclusion Order No. 33, this Headquarters, dated May 3, 1942, all persons of Japanese ancestry, living in the above area will be permitted to change residence after 12 o'clock noon, P. W. T., Monday, May 4, 1942, without obtaining special permission from the representative of the Commanding General, Southern California Area, at the Civil Control Station located at:

Japanese Union Church
120 Hope Street
Los Angeles, California

Such persons will only be granted for the purpose of uniting members of a family, or in cases of great emergency. The Civil Control Station is equipped to assist the Japanese population affected by this evacuation in the following ways:

1. Give advice and information on the evacuation.
2. Provide assistance with respect to the management, leasing, sale, storage or other disposition of most kinds of property, such as real estate, business and professional equipment, household goods, boats, automobiles and livestock.
3. Provide temporary residence elsewhere for all Japanese in family groups.
4. Transport persons and their baggage and household goods to their new residences.

The Following Instructions Must Be Observed:

1. A responsible member of each family, preferably the head of the family, or the person to whom some one of the family has delegated his responsibility, is hereby directed to report to the Civil Control Station located at the address shown above, between the hours of 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M. on Monday, May 4, 1942, or between the hours of 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M. on Tuesday, May 5, 1942.
2. This family will then receive from the Station for the Assembly Center, the following property:
   (a) Enough more cards like this one to provide for each member of the family.
   (b) Bedding and linen (not sheets) for each member of the family.
   (c) Toilet articles for each member of the family.
   (d) Extra clothing for each member of the family.
   (e) Sufficient knives, forks, spoons, plates, bowls and cups for each member of the family.
   (f) Essential personal records and papers of members of the family.
   All items carried with them must be clearly marked with the name of the owner and numbered in accordance with the number obtained at the Civil Control Station. The size and number of packages is limited to what can be carried by hand by each individual or family group.
3. Any other articles to be carried by hand must be approved by the Assembly Center.
4. The pets of any kind will be provided with suitable quarters for the storage at the side risk of the owners.
5. The personal care of livestock will be provided for by the owners, who must make arrangements for the storage of other heavy furniture.
6. The United States Government through its agencies, will now take over the management, care, and custody of these properties and other such property as may be accepted for storage if room, place and facility worked with the name and address of the owner thereon. Only the most valuable articles will be accepted for storage.
7. Each head of the family or responsible member of a separated group, will further be prepared to give such information as may be required by the representatives of the Wartime Civil Control Administration.
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Go to the Civil Control Station between the hours of 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M.,
Monday, May 4, 1942, or between the hours of 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M.,
Tuesday, May 5, 1942, to receive further instructions.

J. L. DeWITT
Lieutenant General, U. S. Army
Commanding

I knew they had no future staying in the desert behind barbed wire, and despite my reluctance to lose them and break up the family, I encouraged them to apply for schooling through the help of the American Friends (Quakers) whose caring support was a rare beacon.

When my son, Paul, volunteered for the Army I was ostracized by my neighbors and questioned as to how I could allow such a thing. I could only reply that we had always told him since childhood that he owed America his patriotism. He was our firstborn, and being born on the 4th of July we had named him for Paul Revere, a great patriot. My three daughters left, one by one, and while I had fearful concerns on how they would

When my son, Paul, volunteered for the Army I was ostracized by my neighbors and questioned as to how I could allow such a thing.

be treated, and how they would manage. I knew I could not keep them with me, limiting their future. At the time I was losing my eyesight, but the presence of my last child, 7 year old Ted, was my help and consolation.

My son spent the war years serving in the U.S. Military Intelligence in the jungles of New Guinea, Borneo, Philippines, and loaned to the Australian Army. I worried about what could happen to him if he became a prisoner of the Japanese, being seen as a "traitor" because he looked Japanese.

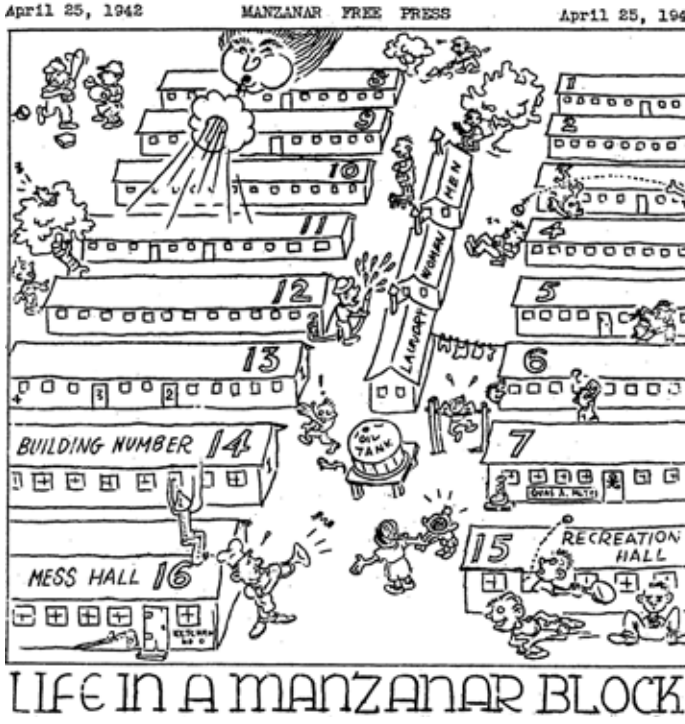
My daughters returned one by one to California in the years 1946 to 1948. I studied for my citizenship papers when the laws were changed to allow it, and though blind by this time, I was allowed to answer orally, and proudly passed the test.

On the day that my husband and I attended the induction of our son, Paul, as the first Japanese-American to sit in the California State Legislature I felt rewarded for the way I had always told him to serve his country as the first son of the first son, recorded for 43 generations of Bannais but the first born in America.

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.



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 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.

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage. To learn more about your national parks, visit the National Park Service website at www.nps.gov. To learn more about Manzanar National Historic Site, please visit our website at www.nps.gov/manz.

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