

It was a sudden shock to us when we received notice on Sunday, midnight - March 9, 1942, that father was to leave for road camp early in the morning of the 11th. Refusal meant internment so we were forced to succumb to the government's orders.

Dad left - leaving mother to shoulder all the responsibilities of making necessary arrangements as to how our properties should be disposed of. We had a number of farm implements still in our hands even though we had given up farming eight years before. We also owned two cows and about one hundred chickens. These had to be sold immediately since it was quite certain that we would evacuate soon. Many occidentals took advantage of this fact and we were obliged to sell these items at ridiculously low prices. All our household furnitures, tables, chairs, beds, dressers, cupboards, etc., were taken to the attic of our very good friend and neighbour who assured us that they'd look after them well and also keep an eye on our home.

For about three weeks we were kept in keen suspense, and time and again, false alarms were being made. During this period we had to sleep on floors and use odds and ends in Chinaware since the rest were packed in boxes and taken to our friends' home. We found great difficulty in acquiring clothes-bags since the stores had sold out their supplies so we had to buy khaki coloured canvass and managed as well as we could. The baggage was limited to clothes-bags and suitcases.

Finally words came to leave on the 15th of April. We reached Union Bay wharf by bus and went aboard the ship waiting for us. Most of us had nowhere to sit except on the floors or on our suitcases. When we reached Vancouver we were whisked into the waiting buses and taken to Hastings Park. Our first impression of our new confinement was, "It's like a prison!" High walls and fences enclosed the huge buildings. We were given our share of blankets and taken to our quarters. It was pitiful! Everywhere was cramped with double-decked beds and we were unfortunate to be assigned the middle row where we were allowed no privacy whatever. We had nowhere to hang our coats or put up a mirror. Three feet away on all four sides were occupied by people we had never seen before. Since we had four double-decked single beds, we put them together allowing a narrow aisle between thus forming two double-decked beds and covered all sides with sheets or other materials. This little space of about six feet wide and 8 feet long was our "home" where we dressed and slept.

The air was always stale and filthy. Sometimes a sickening odour came from some unidentified sources. The general noise going on all the time was nerve wracking. But as time went by we became used to it. The food quite often was not enough or unappetizing. Often at night we became so hungry so we were forced to buy fruit or cakes from nearby stores to satisfy our hunger.

When mumps broke out the sick were all taken to one part of the building and isolated from the rest but still their nearness and the fact that the walls were not built to the ceiling, compelled the healthy ones to breathe the same air and contact the disease quite easily.

On June 20, we were given orders to leave for Sandon. The day was hot and mother was really sick. We reached our destination, tired, dirty and uncertain of our new home. One look was enough to throw us to the depth of disillusionment. There were eight of us and we were given only two small rooms in an apartment building. We had to cook our meals from that night even though we had no water on our floor til often a week. It was the first time we had to practise joint co-operation and it was very trying. About two years later we were allowed to move to a house but within a few months Sandonites had to relocate.

During our sojourn here we received notice that part of our furniture had been sold at greatly reduced prices but that the money was in the hands of the Custodian.

We relocated to Slocan. Here the conditions were similar to that of Sandon. Maybe worse. We received words that our piece of land consisting of 50 acres which had cost us around \$1,500.00 was to be sold at a much reduced price. When signing for repatriation came around in April, 1945, we did a considerable amount of thinking, but finally we came to the conclusion that with four of us still going to school and no older boys in the family our venture out east will rather be a risk. Since we were told that if we did not sign, we'd be sent out east right away or be taken off the payroll, our only alternative was to sign. We had no desire to break away from our parents in this manner, moreover mother was not well, so against our will, we signed for repatriation. My parents are nationals. We asked them why they did not become naturalized. They replied that around the year 1925 they wanted to acquire their naturalization but were told that it was impossible. This impossibility was made clearer when an honest young Issei of good reputation, quite well versed in the English language tried to become a citizen of this country, but was rejected. They gave up this hope when they learned too, that, even if they do become naturalized, the Canadian of Japanese origin were interdicted from certain profession.

My parents are good citizens of Canada. I can vouch for them. Dad has lived in this country for 30 years and mother 25 years. Their minds are much Canadianized. They have tried their best in co-operating with the government, not putting up one protest even though in some instances they were due. They have broken no law, nor have they been convicted of criminality. If we - the Nisseis - their sons and daughters are given the right to remain in Canada, we ask to allow them to be given this privilege also for they have guided us thus far in loving and believing in Canada.

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