

The Case of Jiro TOGAWA of Popoff

I had been employed at Vancouver on the Canadian Pacific Railway for a period of twenty years, but I was immediately laid off when the war in the Pacific broke out. Very shortly afterwards, I was forcibly sent to a Road Camp. Next came the announcement that all people of Japanese origin were to be evacuated. Unable to secure any help, my wife had to pack whatever she could manage, and left most of the household goods in the hands of the Custodians, of Alien Property. Later we asked the Custodian for our belongings, but not even a reply reached us.

Our living quarters in Slocan City were found to be quite different from what we had anticipated. The apartment house in which my family was quartered was overcrowded; and the heating system in the rooms was exceedingly poor, as winter in this interior district of the province is comparatively severe from what we were accustomed to face at the coast. Illness resulted from such lack of proper living facilities.

I had faced many hardships before, but I firmly believe that the inconvenience and hardships which confronted us from Pearl Harbour have been of an entirely different nature, quite different in many respects from what we had previously experienced. In plain words, these hardships were forced upon us.

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The Case of Sanji KIMOTO of Popoff

When the war in the Pacific was declared, the thought never entered our mind that we had to evacuate our home in Cumberland on Vancouver Island. What we never dreamed of had come to stark reality. We were bluntly told that we were to be sent to Hastings Park Manning Pool in Vancouver. With only three days to prepare, we packed and departed early in the morning with limited baggage of one clothe bag and a hand luggage. The rest of our belongings had to be disposed of by selling them at a greatly reduced price. What we could not dispose of prior to departure time, such as our house and chattels, were, I learned later, sold by the Custodian without our consent.

In Hastings Park where living facilities were inadequate, two of my sons were ordered to go to a Road Camp. They argued to go provided they were given a written statement of their destination. For some reason or other, this simple request was flatly refused. Hence, my two sons refused to move. The result was that they were thrust into an internment camp.

In the spring of 1945, we were asked to choose between remaining in Canada, with the understanding that we would move to the east and seek work there at once, or go to Japan after the war, with the understanding that until deportation, we could remain in the shelter of Slocan Housing Settlement. Under these circumstances we signed for repatriation since a decision to remain in Canada entailed separation of families and was complicated by real