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Number Five February 2001

Mission of the Journal of the Riverside Historical Society

- To publish carefully researched and documented articles of broad popular appeal relating to Riverside personalities, events, and institutions of the past.
- To publish personal accounts by witnesses of or participants in significant past events. These are to be derived both from manuscripts and from planned oral history interviews.
- To encourage both established and new historians to research and publish articles on previously unexplored aspects of Riverside's history.
- To foster among Riverside's newer residents a lively interest in Riverside's history and an active concern for Riverside's historic resources.
- To increase participation in Riverside Historical Society membership and activities among the publication's readers.

Adopted by
Historical Society Board
March 1996

INFORMATION FOR CONTRIBUTORS:

The *Journal of the Riverside Historical Society* is currently an annual publication devoted to the history of the City of Riverside. It is the stated intention of the Board of the Society to increase the frequency of the *Journal*.

Contributions of articles, edited documents, and book reviews are welcome on a continuous basis. They should be submitted (at the owner's risk) to: Publications Committee, Riverside Historical Society, P.O. Box 246, Riverside, CA 92502. The *Journal's* Publications Committee will also announce a specific period of solicitation for each issue.

The authority for matters of style will be the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 14th edition. The Editorial Committee reserves the right to return accepted manuscripts to authors for required changes. An author whose article is accepted for publication will receive ten gratis copies of the issue in which his or her article appears. Statements and opinions expressed in articles are the sole responsibility of the authors.

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JOURNAL
of the Riverside Historical Society

Number Five February 2001

This issue is dedicated to the memory of
Sumi Harada
1910-2000

Riverside, California

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Foreword

This, the Journal's first issue of the Twenty-first Century, is dedicated to the memory of a woman whose life spanned most of the Twentieth Century. Sumi Harada was, from childhood, both witness to and participant in our City's history. In his article Tom Patterson reminds us of the significance of Sumi Harada and her family to the civil rights movement in Riverside and in California.

Next we have a letter by Lucy Gilliland Bettner which was supplied to us by Harry Lawton. In this letter she reminisces about her family's Chinese servants. The letter is put in context by Professor Deborah Wong's excellent introduction. This is followed by two letters from Mayor S. C. Evans, Jr. to Frank A. Miller discussing the Fairmount Park plunge, its use by African Americans, and solutions to a perceived problem. Sue Strickland, president of the Riverside African American Historical Society, has provided an introduction. The letters are from the Riverside Municipal Museum's Frank Miller Hutchings Collection. The issue closes with Mabel Sumiko Zink's memoirs of Japanese-American relocation camps during World War II.

These articles all touch on issues of ethnic/race relations in Riverside's history and may bring up some difficult issues for some readers. Nevertheless they can provide us insights and teach us lessons, not the least of which is that those who went before us were no more perfect than we ourselves.

William Swafford, Editor

About the Authors

Tom Patterson, the dean of Riverside historians, was born in 1909 in Yuma Valley, Arizona Territory. He began his journalism career in 1927 as a reporter for the Long Beach *Press-Telegram*. In 1946 he came to Riverside to accept a position with the Press-Enterprise. The following year he became city editor of the Riverside newspaper, a position he was to hold until 1955. Early in his career with the *Press-Enterprise*, he began to do feature articles on local history topics. These resulted in two full-length books: Landmarks of Riverside in 1964 and A Colony for California: Riverside's First Hundred Years in 1971. The latter title, the only book-length history of Riverside, has recently been reprinted. Mr. Patterson retired in 1974 but agreed to continue doing occasional local history feature articles for the Press-Enterprise. By 1978 these articles had evolved into a weekly column called "Out of the County's Past," which ran until December of 1996.

Deborah Wong is Assistant Professor of Music and Director of the Center for Asian Pacific America at the University of California, Riverside. Her grandfather, grandmother, and great-grandfather emigrated to the United States from a small village in Toishan, Guangdong Province, China, not far from Gom-Benn, the home village for most of the early Chinese settlers in Riverside.

Lucy Gilliland Bettner, the daughter of a wealthy English physician, William L. Gilliland, was prominent in Riverside's "high society" and a member of the Casa Blanca Tennis Club. Her family is credited with introducing to Riverside the English custom of afternoon tea. Her husband, Robert Lee Bettner was a founding member of the Riverside Polo Club.

Sue Strickland was born in Loma Linda and grew up in Riverside. She attended Riverside schools and went on to

teach in them. She is president of the Riverside African American Historical Society.

Mabel Sumiko Zink, one of six children of George Toranosuke Fujimoto and Suna Sugi Fujimoto, was born and attended school in Riverside. She is active in the First Congregational Church and the Japanese American Citizens' League. She currently works as a volunteer at the Riverside Community Hospital and the InnCredible Gift Corner.

Samuel C. Evans, Jr., son of Riverside pioneer Samuel C. Evans, Sr., was mayor of Riverside from 1907 to 1911 and from 1922 to 1925.

Sumi Harada[1]

by Tom Patterson

For many years anyone reviewing the story of the Japanese and Japanese-Americans in and near Riverside has relied extensively on the memory and the humanity of Sumi Harada who died in May 2000, at the age of 90.

As a child she was aware of the meanness of some and the decency of others of her Riverside neighbors. She was also a defendant in a lawsuit of major significance in race relations and in the ultimate improvement thereof.

Of course much of the story was told to her by her elders, including their recollections of the lawsuit bristling with anti-Japanese prejudice in which sanity and fairness ultimately prevailed.

Japanese, as a significant minority in California, followed the adoption of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Roy Ito, in a study of Japanese language recollections, found information that as early as 1887 there was a seasonal encampment of Japanese field laborers under the eucalyptus trees of Magnolia Avenue at Adams Street.[2] Other records tell of side-by-side barracks for Mexican-American and Japanese workmen on Jackson Street between Magnolia and Cleveland Avenues.[3] As late as the eve of World War II there was housing operated by the English-owned San Jacinto Land Co. for Japanese field workers, on Hawarden Avenue near La Sierra Avenue.[4]

Disputes by Anglo and foreign-born workers, carried on in the form of racial disputes and slogans, favored employers over workers of any nationality, but legal disputes may have ultimately figured more importantly.

Sumi's father, Jukichi Harada, born in Japan in 1875, was one of many Japanese arriving in the United States about 1900. He had been a food service worker on United States Navy ships and after the first such trip he married Ken Indo. Their first child, a boy named Masa Atso, was born in Japan and arrived with his mother in Redlands in 1903. Jukichi Harada had been workimg

Ladies Tea at the Mission Inn. Sumi Harada is second from right in back row. Her mother, Ken Harada, is second from right in front row. Suna Sugi Fujimoto, Mabel Zink's mother, is third from the right in front row. (Courtesy of Riverside Public Library, Shades of Riverside Collection)

then in a Redlands restaurant but they soon moved to Riverside where he also worked in a restaurant. Soon he opened a restaurant of his own, which he named the Washington, with a picture of George Washington on its menus. Next he opened a rooming house (with Japanese and Mexican American workers as principal roomers). Harada soon had a substantial business in rooming houses and the restaurant.

The Haradas eventually had five children, four of them born in Riverside and therefore United States citizens at birth. Tadao, born in Riverside, died of diphtheria. Health conditions and other disadvantages of rooming house life were part of the reason the Haradas sought a better home. They bought a six-room house on Lemon Street near Fourth and the purchase was immediately challenged by Riversiders who considered the Japanese inferior or even sinister. The Haradas refused offers to buy the house

The Harada House on Lemon Street. (Courtesy of William Swafford)

from them at a profit of $500.

Although State Attorney General U.S. Webb had concern about its constitutionality, he joined with local complainants in filing suit in 1916 under the Alien Land Act of 1913 which legislated that aliens not eligible for citizenship could not own California property. The purchase of the house had been made in the names of the three children who had been citizens at birth—Mine, Sumi

and Yoshizo, ages nine, five and three respectively. The lawsuit argued that the real purchaser was Jukichi Harada, who had supplied the purchase price.

Possibly there had been some reduction of anti-Japanese attitude because Japan had become an ally of England and France, and eventually of the United States itself, in World War I. Judge Hugh Craig in Superior Court rejected the complaint and the house was formally recognized as properly owned by the three children. It was a significant victory, reducing expressions of hate against those of Japanese ancestry.

Reducing, but not abolishing. The anti-Japanese attitudes in Riverside were never entirely gone. They emerged again in force as the government of Japan gave indication of complete agreement with the fascist powers, Germany and Italy. After Japan entered World War II by the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the anti-Japanese attitude in California intensified and much of it made no distinction between citizens and non-citizens of the United States.

In January 1943, the United States government, responding to the agitation , began rounding up in the Western states persons of Japanese background, citizens or not, and confining them to hastily build barracks in many western locations. The elder Haradas were confined at Poston, Arizona. Later they were transferred to the Topaz Relocation Center at Topaz, Utah where some of the younger Haradas joined them. Jukichi Harada died there.

Eventually in the aftermath of World War II the U.S. recognized the wrong it had dealt to those of Japanese descent. The Haradas were more fortunate than some others in one respect. Riverside friends took care of their house during their absence. Sumi Harada lived there for decades, owning it until she died in 2000. It had long been a meeting place of friends of many racial backgrounds. Sumi made it a virtual museum, not only as a

meeting place and part-time residence of relatives and friends but as a place of many exhibits.

With Sumi's passing the house became the property of Harold, the youngest, who is a retired dentist now living in Culver City. He is discussing with relatives and friends a plan to make a real museum of it, with non-profit ownership and management.

Notes

[1] This article is based primarily on Rawitsch, Mark Howland, *No Other Place: Japanese American Pioneers in a Southern California Neighborhood*. (Riverside: University of California, Riverside, 1983). It is recommended for further study.

[2] Patterson, Tom. "Japanese in the Riverside Area," *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 21 February 1971.

[3] Patterson, Tom. "Martinez Camp," *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 21 March 1982

[4] Patterson, Tom, "Japanese in the Riverside Area," *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 21 February 1971

Lucy Bettner with her daughter, Dorothy
(Courtesy of Rriverside Municipal Museum Collection)

A Chinese American Perspective on Mrs. Bettner's Letter: Asian American Studies and Local History

by Deborah Wong

The following letter is an artifact of one moment in Riverside's history of race relations. It provides a particular window on such matters, and it needs to be understood as such. The field of Ethnic Studies is founded on the argument that race and ethnicity are not only culturally constructed but that they assume specific meanings in interaction with other kinds of difference, including class, gender, sexual orientation, age, etc. Mrs. Bettner's letter must be seen through these lenses: she was an upper-class Euro-American woman, in fact a landowner in a city that was initially organized around a number of citrus plantations. At that point in time, Riverside was essentially run by a handful of landowners who employed large numbers of laborers, and the confluence of race, class, and gender inherent to those power structures is present in Mrs. Bettner's letter even if she herself would not have put it in these terms. She may have had warm feelings toward her Chinese servants but, as Shelly Raven has noted, this letter contains "a tension between closeness and social distance."[1]

Racist representation is always complex. Mrs. Bettner's attitudes were and weren't her own: this letter certainly provides a compellingly personal window on how she regarded her Chinese servants, but it reveals more than that, too. Clearly, she was fond of Yum, Ah Kim, Quong, Jim, Sam, and Louie, but from the standpoint of the twenty-first century, that affection contains pronounced elements of condescension. She writes about these men as if they had the limited emotional and intellectual resources of children, and her insistence that "a China-boy even if he should be 60 years old was a 'China-boy' still" infantilizes

them in complicated ways. Asian American Studies scholar Robert G. Lee has written that the turn-of-the-century Chinese house servant was constructed by American popular culture as both a child and as feminine: the "Oriental domestic" was, after all, engaged in women's work' such as cooking, cleaning, and laundry, and his role as "surrogate child" reinforced the employer's authority over him.[2] Shelly Raven makes much of "the overwhelming tone" of "mutual respect and mutual love" between Mrs. Bettner the employer and her Chinese servant, but we must remember that this letter, like other accounts from the period, is written from a decidedly Euro-American perspective.[3]

It is hard not to wonder what these men were 'really' like. If only we had access to Ah Sam's full history; if only we could sit down with him and conduct an oral history of him, his hopes and dreams in coming to Gold Mountain and the City of Churches, his motivations in becoming a house servant rather than a laborer in the groves. When "Jim" made the decision to stop sending money home, was he committing himself to a life in America? At other points in time, Chinese laborers' long-term efforts to send money home was seen as opportunistic and as a sign of the unmitigated foreignness of the Chinese – the refusal to put down roots in the new land. Mrs. Bettner interprets Jim's effort to put distance between himself and his family as morally reprehensible, but one could also ask what complicated factors came into play when Jim made his decision to cut off ties. There is so much we can't know, and what we read here is so thoroughly refracted through Mrs. Bettner's attitudes that one can't help but wonder whether the resulting portrait of her servants tells us more about Mrs. Bettner than anything else.

Scholars in Asian American Studies offer a number of theoretical handles on how we might 'read' representations of Asians by non-Asians. James S. Moy has considered how the Chinese have been portrayed over more than a century's time as "forever foreign, unassimilable."[4] Tropes of suspicion appear in

Mrs. Bettner's letter that evince widespread Euro-American attitudes toward Asians at the time. When the cook is 'permitted' five days of leave in order to celebrate Chinese New Year's, Mrs. Bettner assumes that part of his purpose was to foist an incompetent substitute on the family and to thus drive home his own importance. She portrays him as calculating and somewhat duplicitous, and the family as gullible but munificent, generous, and understanding. As Moy writes, "the alien Chinaman's apparently amiable efforts to adjust to American life could be dismissed as a mask for hidden, unarticulated nefarious intentions. [E]ven the most apparently docile houseboy maintained a secret life on his day off which likely included gambling, opium, and other unspecified debaucheries."[5] The devious Chinaman is of course one of the oldest and most persistent racist tropes in America; one could say that its latest manifestation was around the Wen Ho Lee case, which ended in embarrassment for the United States government after a focused call by Asian Americans for justice led to Dr. Lee's release. Mrs. Bettner's enactment of these beliefs begins to look less benign if we consider the ways in which the politics of suspicion were played out more broadly through legislation, including – most dramatically – the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

As an Asian American and as a scholar, I read this letter with both fascination and dismay. It is indeed a window on Riverside's history, but any consideration of history is contingent and ideally leads us to reflect on the present. What has changed? What hasn't? Who will read this letter, and how? When I walk through downtown Riverside, I can't help but remember that the Chinese were driven out of the Chinatown on 9th Street by Euro-American business interests in 1885. When you read this letter, remind yourself that any historical account is partial, in both senses – incomplete and deeply subjective, a product of its time.

Notes

[1]Shelly Raven, "Red Paper and Varnished Ducks: Subjective Images of Riverside's Chinatown," in *'Wong Ho Leun: An American Chinatown, Vol. 1* (San Diego: Great Basin Foundation, 1987), pp. 241-42.

[2]Robert G. Lee, *Orientals: Asian americans in Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), pp. 100-105.

[3]Raven, ibid.

[4]James S. Moy, *Marginal Sights: Staging the Chinese in America* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press), p.80.

[5]Ibid., p. 73.

Our "China-boys" of Long Ago

Lucy Gilliland Bettner

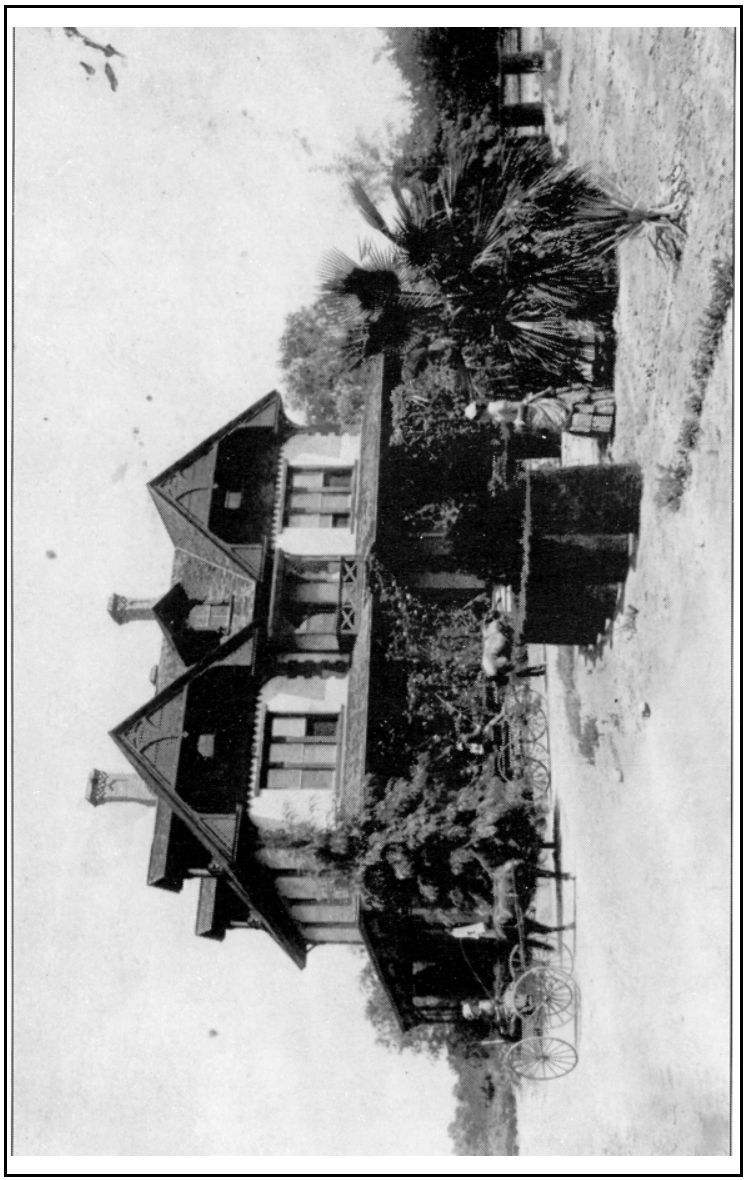
Chere Amis – In your last most welcome letter you asked me, before old Father Time with his hour glass dulls my faculties to write a few of the memories of the old times in California when we first came out from England to spend six months and return, and then stayed over forty years.

You say, "Don't tell me the usual. What California was then and what it is like now. With the also usual refrain, the 'old days' were best. Tell me, you say, all of those fascinating stories you used to tell me, about the Chinese cooks you had, before the Japanese, Colored, Swedish and imported foreign domestics were heard of."

Well, I'll try, but its hard work to write so that People who did not know the Chinese and live as we did in daily contact with them can understand.

Their subtlety, their faithfulness, their quaint philosophy and their vast stoicism, their honesty, and if, as years went by and they stayed with you, their love for, "Allee samee my famblee."

When we first arrived we brought, as you know, English servants who seemed, after a time to think, America being a free country, all men (and women) should be equal. So we parted and let them try their new doctrine on new people and most reluctantly took the advice of friends and embarked in fear and trembling on "Chinese cooks." We were fascinated by their appearance. This was before the order came from the "Flowery Kingdom" for them to attire themselves in European clothes. They were so utterly picturesque and so beautifully, beautifully clean. Dark blue or white trousers tied in around the ankles, white socks, adorable chinese shoes, white coats with, if "high-toned" cooks, real gold buttons. Their nice shining, well shaved heads – shaved every Sunday – and last but far from least, the long braided pigtails looped all week at the nape of their necks and "he go down Sundays" hanging way below their waists. The



Casa Grande, Lucy Bettner's girlhood home. (Courtesy of Riverside Public Library)

almond shaped finger nails and the clever brown hands that could do almost anything from cooking a dinner fit for the Gods, to harnessing a ranch team or tenderly soothing a teething baby.

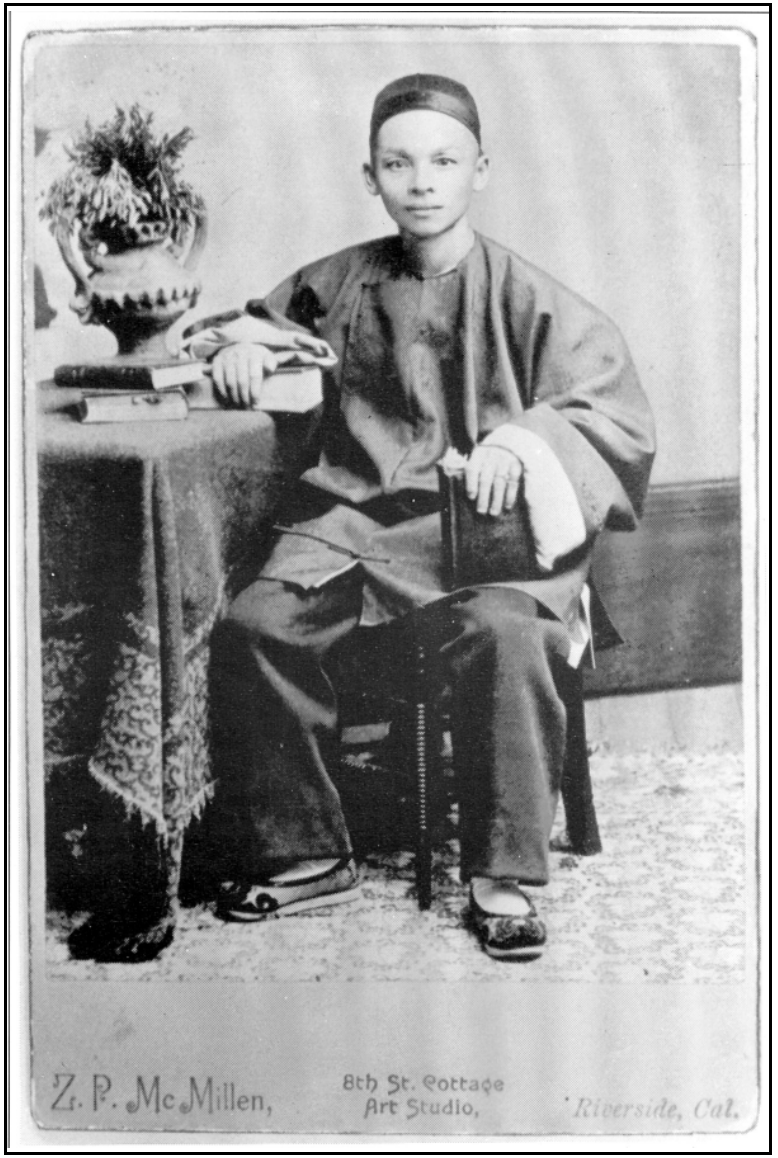
Some few were "Clystians", some plain "heathen Chinese", and after nearly 40 years experience, I can candidly say I preferred the "worshipers of Idols."

One "Clystian" cook of my mother's Ah Kim, was very devoted to her, but also, alas, a sincere disciple of Ananias and she believing a Christian Chinaman always spoke the truth, they got along excellently.

When her birthday came, Kim made, baked and presented her with a cake. Kim was an "A1" cook and this cake was gorgeous to behold. It was frosted (being English I should say iced, perhaps) pure white with much lace-like decoration. In the center on the white background was a pink cross with a pink figure of our Saviour hanging on the Cross. Underneath, also in pink was "happi Burfday." My mother's face and choked words of thanks and the agony of control practiced by the family, I still remember.

I have come to the conclusion that it must be a very remarkable missionary who can boast, which, I fear, in nine cases out of ten, is a suitable word to use, that he (the missionary) has made a real Christian out of a Chinaman. One good man, sent out by a special college that turned out teachers to the heathen, like hot cakes, plenty on the plate, more to come, ran up against "The Trinity." After some days discussion and argument with Ah Chung, he said. "Why Ah Chung, do you worship idols and not turn to the One God?" With the exquisite brevity of the Chinese, came back the surprising answer "You too many Gods." "Why, said the Reverend gentleman indignantly, "Have I not told you many times that Christians have only one God." Unchanged came the reply "Too many Gods, Papa God, Son God, Ghost God, too many Gods."

In our personal experience a God of Ah Sams was really reliable as the following story will show. Ah Sam was a very tall



Hom Kip, a Bettner houseboy. (Courtesy of Riverside Municipal Museum Collection)

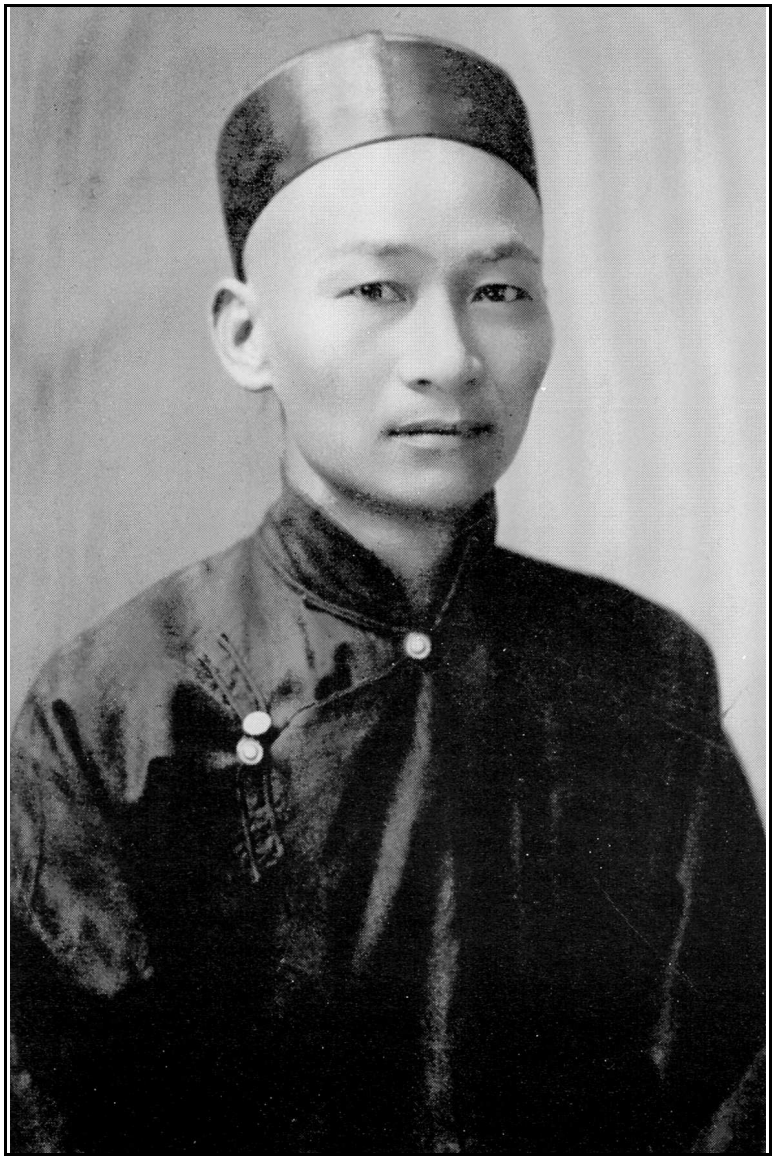
Chinaman whom we had for a short time and did not much care for. He had a perfect mania for haunting the stables and meddling with the Polo Ponies, especially in the absence of the Boss and the stable boy. No Warning took effect. The stable drew him like a magnet.

One night when he passed the vegetable dishes at dinner, his hands visibly shook and he appeared shaken out of his usual oriental calm. One of the family asked him the reason of his brain storm, and this is the unsurpassed tale we soon heard. You see, we had a pony called "Lucy Glitters", rather a misnomer as the only glitter about her was shown in her heels. Sam had been warned not to go into her loose box. After the stable boy had taken the ponies out for their exercise that day, for some reason or want of reason, the stable boy left Lucy Glitters in the box with her blanket on. The temptation, like the serpent in Eden, was too much for Sam and as he waved the vegetable dishes, this was what he told us.

"Sun he get plenty hot, I tink I take Loosey Glit's coat off. I go in box, undo strap round neck, turn back coat some (fatal some) when she beglin klick. I no can get out. She klick plenty high, much high. I no can get out. I say, Wo- Wo-, Why for you klick poor China-boy. He never for hurt you, Loosey Glit. She klick um (this came in like a chorus). I play my God not let Loosey Glit kill for me. My God he hear me. Blelly Bland break. Coat he go off. I go velly quick."

In the way he described it and with fear still in his eyes and shaking hands, we could picture him crouching under the corn crib, and Lucy Glitters, the blanket half off flapping at her heels, kicking frantically, as frightened as Sam. And in imagination and a good deal of the latter Buddha with his divine calm coming to the rescue.

Chinese New Year was a "Red Letter" day for the china-boys, but a day of weeping and gnashing of teeth for "The famblee." We were served five long endless days of amateur cooking, greasy saucepans, endless dishes, and living as long as possible



A Bettner houseboy (Courtesy of Riverside Municipal Museum Collection)

on the funeral baked meats of "I cook em plenty before I go." If we insisted on a "cousin", to replace the cook, (all Chinatown consisted of "cousins") it was invariably the custom to send a "cousin", in those long ago days, who could not cook or wait on table or even wash dishes properly. So when those five days of purgatory were ended and our cook appeared, smiling and bland, bearing "pleasants" galore Chinese lichee nuts, preserved ginger, cigars, sugared cocoanut strips and Chinese lichee nut brandy (which we pretended to drink and disposed out of the nearest window when the donor turned his back) we forgot our troubles of the past few days and readily forgave him.

The welcome he got from the family was tremendous and that night when we ate a perfectly cooked and served dinner over our black Coffee, in the rapture of a well fed tummy, we told him of the iniquities of his substitute "cousin." His well feigned surprise was most beautiful to see. There were no signs of the subtle plot to show us what a treasure we possessed. "He not cookie well, too bad, I velly solly." And until time and experience made us wise, we swallowed it hook and line.

When one engaged a new cook and said "I think I pay not so much money", he would remark, "I velly good cook. I savy worcester sauscee." Which meant that he understood flavoring – and if you loosened the purse strings – I will say for him, he generally did know.

We could in those blessed old times make a swift change if not satisfactory to all parties concerned. Wong, Sing, Jim, whatever the incumbents name might be, were all alike. When you stated, "I think I get another boy", there were no expostulations, no come back. "That so. Too bad. I have cousin all samee my tong. He heap good cook. I send him." A smiling bland "Goo bye" and the agony was over and the "cousin" arrived shortly. "My cousin he send me. He say heap good famblee."

You might not believe it, but there was such a thing as a Chinese snob. We had that experience.

Sam was one of the snobbish variety, who greatly objected to serving "left overs." He had lived with Mr. F. a banker, in Los Angeles. When economy in the kitchen called for Roast Beef Hash, his oriental nose pointed to the blue sky and he remarked, "Mr. F. he never have meat two times on table." If you were weak minded and explained that even Delmonico made a speciality of "R.B.H.", and sketched a small picture of Fifth Avenue, he listened politely and came back with, "I no know him. Mr. F. he never have meat two times on table." Therefore it was a great satisfaction to my feminine soul that before we disposed of Sam, Mr. F. was in the "Head lines" as departing from his home town without a "P.P.C" and with sixty thousand from the Bank in his luggage. I read the account slowly and carefully to Sam, taking care to stress the magnitude of the offence. When I finished and looked up triumphantly for the effect, his remark came, "That so? Mr. F. he never have meat two times on table." Well, as the Bible says, "Selah", or in good American, "Whats the use."

Then there was Louie, also a bit of a snob, though a very likable one. He dearly loved the seats of the mighty and nothing pleased him as much as a high-toned dinner party. He watched until I had changed my gown and if I wore a low necked frock, he remarked, "Oh, you wear no clothes on top. I wear my gold bluttons", and he did, and believe me, whether it was a subtle influence of the low necked dress or the gold buttons, the company got a first class dinner for he was an "A1" cook. The company also got more frills than the family did.

Perhaps by this time you have had enough of my memories of the old days which at this stage of the game we are so apt to eulogize, but I think I must add one more true story to my reminiscences.

A China-boy even if he should be 60 years old was a "China-boy" still (apparently age being ignored in a tactful manner in China) alas – such is not the custom of the America of today. One

"boy" we had for a long time felt probably that youth was leaving him, so he left us and went back to China to marry a wife and beget sons, (daughters don't count in China) otherwise who would there be to include him in that exquisite old rite "The Worship of Ancestors" which always reminds one of that lovely old English saying "Lord keep my memory green."

Well, he has quite recently died. He became cook to, as he said to me, "A velly lovely Lady." For years and years he was a devoted servant and, as they were in the old days, one of the "famblee." When he grew old and the end was coming his mistress sent him to the hospital in town. The Chinese hate the County Hospitals, a mark, I suppose of the oldest civilization on earth. Naturally a Chinese was a novelty in a hospital and a great many nurses dropped in to see him. So he evidently meditated on the importance of his illness. When he asked to be taken home for the last few weeks he said, "I think hosplital velly good. I have eight nursees."

Then when the time came for the great adventure, and he entered into the last silence his "Lovely Lady" sent for the Head of his Tong in a neighboring City in order to send what he had left to the widow in China and to notify her of his death. But the Chinese Envoy assured her there was no need, as the Chinese lady had for some years known she was a widow. The 'lovely Lady" asked how that was possible as it was only a day or two since he had passed to his ancestors. The answer came. "Oh, longee time ago Jim, he get tired for to send too much money, so he get flend write he dead. She know he dead longee time before." And I am sure that he was much surprised that the "Lovely Lady" did not see it that way.

Well, there they lie, our china-boys of long ago, in the most beautiful cemetery I have ever seen. Under the green sod with the rose trees, pepper trees and palms over them and the brown California hills around them and some of our youth and joy of living lie buried I think with the old California that has gone.

But, if ever I should enter the "Pearly Gates", (I have not much hope) I would like to think that the first to meet me would be Yum (for 13 years our "boy" and faithful friend). Quong, Jim, Sam and Louie. I don't want then in white robes and golden harps, but in the way we knew and loved them, in their satin coats, Chinese shoes and pigtails. And they'll tell me "You come. I velly glad." And I'll be glad too.

Fairmount Park Episode

by Sue Strickland

In 1920, without written rules on record, it was understood that Thursday was the day when Negroes could swim in Fairmount Park plunge. That had presumably been the rule since the plunge opened in 1912.

Alice Johnson, a high school student and a Negro, went with a friend to the pool in August 1920 on a different day of the week and was refused admission.

Her father, Frank M. Johnson, part time minister and operator of a rental service for horses and horse-drawn implements and vehicles, took the matter to court with the help of the National Association for Advancement of Colored People and its Los Angeles attorney, Burton M. Cerutei. City Attorney Miguel Estudillo filed a series of demurrers raising such questions as "whether the City of Riverside was acting in a governmental or in a proprietary capacity."

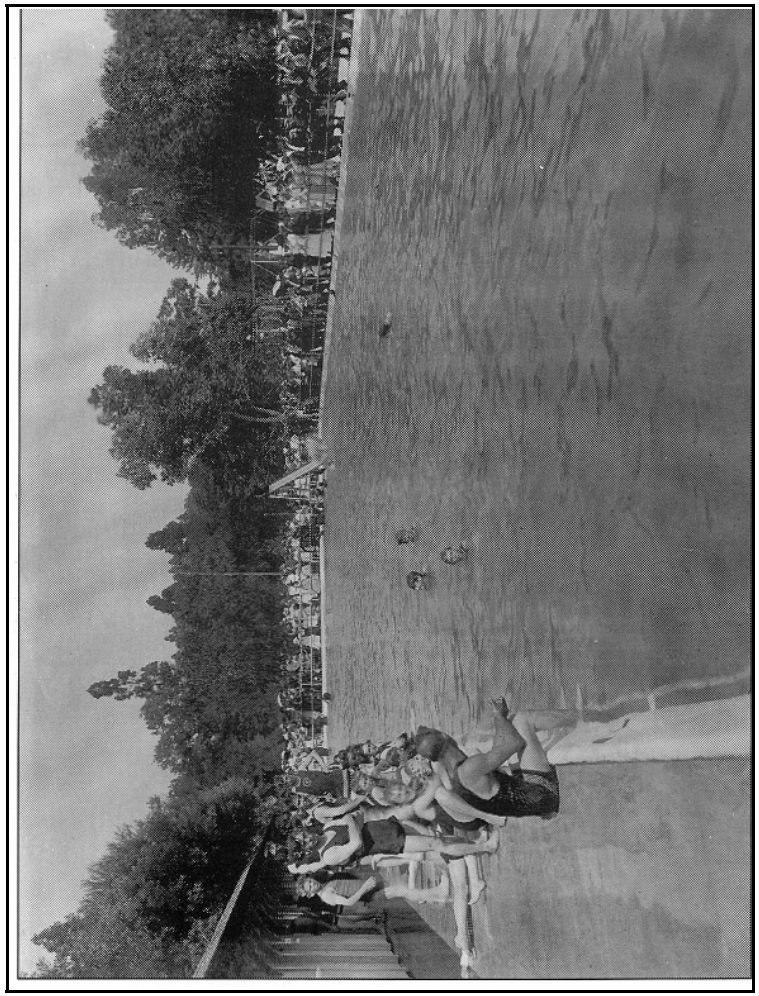
Alice Johnson had been born in Riverside. Her mother, Alice Rown Johnson, had taught in the Belltown school of the West Riverside District (now part of Jurupa Unified School District) and is believed to have been the first certificated Negro teacher in California.

The episode finally got the attention of the newspapers early in 1921. The *Daily Enterprise* referred to "Alleged refusal of bathing privileges." A publication called "The Citizen" the organ of the Riverside auto dealers, urged that the city "enforce the park board ruling to the letter and if these agitators start anything a little action will soon clear the atmosphere."

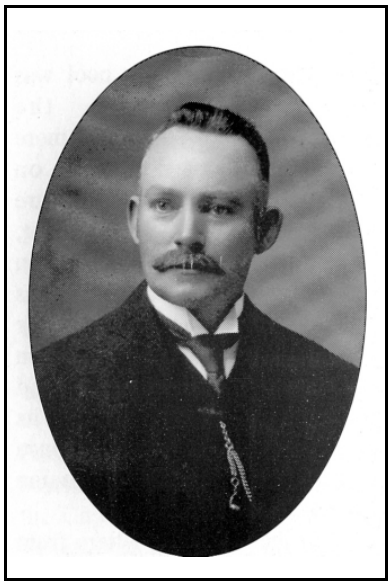
No one really denied that the Park Department practiced such discrimination, although the policy apparently was not in writing. Mayor Horace Porter, former minister of First Congregational Church, an advocate of clean government and public power, obviously had no zeal for changing such an accomplished racial fact. He called an unofficial meeting in his office. Johnson and his attorney were there. So was the current minister of the First

Congregational Church, Dr. John Gardiner. So also were the editors of the two daily newspapers, Dr. E.P. Clark of the *Press* and J. Ray Gabbert of the *Enterprise*. Others included Park Board President Walter C. Banks and two city councilmen.

According to the *Enterprise* in April 1921, Cerutei and Johnson agreed to withdraw the suit if the council would adopt a



The Fairmount Park Plunge. (Courtesy of Riverside Public Library)



Mayor Samuel C Evans, Jr. (Courtesy of Riverside Public Library)

resolution recognizing the law and specifying that all city residents had the right to use the plunge. There was a catch. It was to be understood that "the Colored people would do as they have for the first nine years and abstain from the use of the plunge excepting at the particular times agreed upon for them as their period."

If Cerutei and Johnson agreed, the council apparently did not. Its minutes do not mention the suit. But nearly a year later, in February 1922, the suit was dismissed on Cerutei's stipulation, with the explanation that the issues had been settled out of court.

The result was that, for a few years at least, Negroes could swim at Fairmount plunge whenever it was open to anyone.

In 1925 the city opened a new swimming pool in the recently acquired park on the East Side, and named it Lincoln Park. Although there was still no formal policy, Negroes for the most part used the pool in the neighborhood where most of them lived. While there seems to have been no similar incident involving Mexican Americans, they followed substantially the same practice.

Segregation had developed among both minority races for a variety of voluntary and contrived reasons. Economic, cultural and language problems had pushed them together. The East Side had become a neighborhood in which Negro and Mexican American were jointly concentrated.

Frank A Miller (Courtesy of Riverside Public Library)

The Lincoln Park pool was modern and for the neighborhood it was more convenient. Whether on account of unofficial pressure or convenience, or both, Fairmount Park and pool again were recognized unofficially as for whites only, or substantially so. The tradition developed that Negroes could use Fairmount Park and its swimming pool only once yearly, for an annual union church picnic.

In the following letters from Mayor Evans to Frank A. Miller, "Master" of the Mission Inn, we see evidence of crucial decisions affecting the racial situation in Riverside during this time period, and the ramifications of these decisions from the viewpoint of some of the city's "movers and shakers."

Source : Patterson, Tom. *A Colony For California.* (Riverside: Press-Enterprise, 1971), p.299.

City of Riverside
City Hall
Riverside County, California
S. C. Evans, Mayor

November 24th, 1925

Mr. F. A. Miller
Mission Inn

My Dear Mr. Miller:

Enclosed find my check for $3500.00, being the amount you advanced to help procure Lincoln Park for our City.

It has taken much more time than I had expected to consumate (sic) this work, but after several vexatious delays we have reached a fairly satisfactory conclusion. Others, following me in the City work, must in time procure the balance of the land, but we have accomplished the main objects you and the others had in view.

I am writing you a more personal letter giving more in detail some of the problems we met and stating some of those which yet face the Community in regard to our Negro population.

At times the work has been discouraging and a wide difference of opinion has prevailed among those usually helpful in these public matters.

I desire to express my personal appreciation and that of our City for your very timely help.

Yours truly,
S. C. Evans

City of Riverside
City Hall
Riverside County, California
S. C. Evans, Mayor

11/24/25

Mr. F. A. Miller

Dear Frank:

I have sent you a somewhat formal letter regarding Lincoln Park and the return of the $3500.00 you advanced to get it started. I regret that the matter has gone so long, but after the neglect of the two others to advance the part they promised I was forced to hastily make other arrangements, which in view of the large amount, at Fairmount Park, made the situation for a time a little embarrassing. However, I am out of the woods with a personal cost to myself of a little less than $500.00, and you are out the interest on your money advanced.

I have no kick, as I have learned we do not all look on such matters alike and it is usually the task of those who get into these problems to get in deep – sometimes too deep. So as far as I am concerned, forget it.

No one knows, though a few have an idea, how near we have come right here in Riverside to serious race trouble, and it surprises me to hear what some of our very best citizens say – it is an impossible situation, this whole Negro question. I have been one of their organization advisors for several years, as has yourself, and I have really tried to help conditions. To that end I have sought and read much of the Negro literature and their paper "The Crisis."

We have, for a time at least, solved the most serious part of our local problem, that of the two races entering the swimming tank together at Fairmount Park, and in this you have greatly helped.

"The Crisis" and other publications have reached a place where I cannot longer follow and I cannot agree with these Negro leaders – I think they are wrong and I must take the opposing side. They are now sending out a special fund appeal to raise a very large sum, $50,000.00 or more, with which to defend certain suits, among them a test residential segregation case at Washington D. C.

Here in Riverside we are inserting these racial restrictions in our Deeds, which they say is all wrong. Now I can go as far as the next man in giving the Negro his vote, his education, and his rights, but I can't agree on his "social equality" status & his right and his desirability to settle all through the City in white neighborhoods – it is not good for him, it engages strife and is out of place.

I decry any K. K. K. methods or any force, and yet I have had two recent very hard arguments to prevent a rash act by white people. I feel that these Negro leaders go out of their way to wrongly advise their people. I have been to one meeting in one of our school houses where very frank talk was had. Several committees of citizens have called to protest the purchase by Negro people of property in white sections and now, a large section of the City is petitioning to have all the property deeded to the Title Co. & then re-deeded with a racial restriction.

I am thinking of calling a conference soon, of a few at first, to discuss the problem and see if we can solve it legally. One or more of the Negro churches desire to build and they are asking the white people to raise ⅓ or more – I think we should act as a unit, have supervision and control of the money and have some assurance that if we help they are to cease these test and contentious cases – otherwise I for one am through. Think it over and at your convenience advise.

With appreciation,

Yours truly
S. C. Evans

Memoirs of Wartime Relocation

by Mabel Zink

When Pearl Harbor happened on Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, we first heard about it on the radio, as did everyone else in the United States and the world. I had never heard of Pearl Harbor until then.

My parents had already left for Los Angeles that morning to attend the wedding of our neighbor's daughter. We expected them home by evening, but midnight came and they still had not arrived. Finally, about 2 a.m. they appeared. We dashed out to find out what had happened. They had been stopped by the police in Ontario. Even though three sisters of the new bride, still in their formal bridesmaid gowns, were in the car with them, the police took all of them to the police station for questioning. This was when they learned about Pearl Harbor. We realized then that the "incident" that day at Pearl Harbor was of serious consequence to us who were of Japanese descent. Our Japanese ancestry placed all of us under suspicion, even if we were American citizens and had never been to Japan.

Mabel Zink (Courtesy of Riverside Public Library)

A curfew was established for all Japanese people throughout California. We could not stay out later than 7 p.m. A mileage limit was set up. We could not travel more than seven miles from home. No more than fifty Japanese people could assemble together at one place. You can imagine what this did to our social life as young adults and teenagers.

There was a Japanese Congregational/Methodist Church which most of us attended. Because our parents

spoke Japanese, services were conducted in Japanese. We young people born in the United States spoke English only, except to our parents. About the only social outlet we had was a youth group called Christian Endeavor which met every Sunday night; but after Pearl Harbor, every Sunday a police car parked in front of the church, to make sure we did nothing dangerous or subversive, I guess.

One Saturday morning my brother George, who was attending Riverside Junior College, had a class assignment from Dr. Edmond Jeager, his photography class professor. George was to turn in outdoor shots of his own choosing. He went to the Agua Mansa Cemetery in North Riverside and was taking pictures of old headstones. As night approached he had not returned home and he had chores to do. Dinnertime came, it was dark, and still no George. Around 8 p.m. the doorbell rang. There stood George with three policemen. They said that they had received a call from someone reporting that a "Jap" was taking pictures of the Colton Cement Plant…probably for sabotage purposes. They confiscated his camera and developed the film to see what had been taken.

The FBI came and took most of the fathers of each household to the Riverside County Jail. This was because all of our parents came from Japan in the early 1900s. The United States government would not allow Orientals to become American citizens. So, when Pearl Harbor occurred and war was declared our parents were classified as enemy aliens. They rounded up almost all the men.

At that time, I was 21 years old and working at Arlington Heights Fruit Company. I picked up my girlfriend on my way to work. One day in February when I took her home, there were two police cars parked in front. We dashed into her house and found her mother in tears and her father sitting on the couch with an FBI agent sitting there "guarding" them. The agent said they are taking Mr. Yonemura "in" because he is an enemy alien. I was dumbfounded and said, "Wait a minute! He is an 'alien' because the United States Government does not allow any Orientals from

Japan, China, Korea, or any of the eastern countries to become citizens. But as for being an enemy alien, they certainly are not!" I asked if my father was going to be picked up. He checked his list and said "Not at this time." I drove home, told my parents what had happened and advised my father to be prepared. He was stunned and said for me to go buy him a suitcase, shirts, underwear, pants, and toilet articles to be ready.

February 1942, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order #9066, which stated that all people of Japanese ancestry must be moved out of the West Coast to Relocation Camps, set up in desolate areas, away from the West Coast. In the meantime, Mr. Yonemura had been taken to La Tuna Canyon Detention Center in Tujunga, California. His daughter and I went to visit him every week. I arrived home from just such a visit one day in March and sure enough, FBI agents – three of them! – were searching our house. My mother and father were seated at the kitchen table looking hurt and worried I was told to sit there, too. The agents brought out letters I had received from some of my friends in the service and asked me why they were writing to me. I told them to read them if they would like. Of course, there was nothing subversive in them – only chitchat.

The agents completed their search and found nothing suspicious or worthy of confiscation; nevertheless, they took my father with them. He was taken to the Riverside County Jail. I visited him and found him sitting in a "cell" – a large room with several other Japanese men, all looking confused and frightened and wondering why they were there. He was there about three days and nights. On what would be his last night there, I happened to drive by on my way home from Christian Endeavor and saw my father and the other men being herded into a station wagon. I jumped out to ask what was happening and was told they were being taken to La Tuna Canyon Detention Center. At least I was able to say goodbye to my father – I was the only one there to do that.

Next day my mother and I went to visit him. We talked to my father through a fence because we were not allowed inside. He

told us not to worry, that Moses was taken captive and God took care of him, so he would be cared for by God as well. My father was a wonderful Christian man.

After a month or so at the La Tuna Canyon Detention Center, my father was taken with others to Santa Fe, New Mexico, another detention center. Others were taken to Missoula, Montana. This left almost all Japanese families without the head of the household. If families had older children, such as ours, we were able to pitch in and help provide a family income. In families with small children, this created extreme hardships.

After the War Relocation Authority was created, ten relocation camps were set up. Because many of these camps were not completed, many families were taken to assembly centers which were temporary holding centers. One such was the Tanforan Race Track in San Francisco and the Santa Anita Race Track in Santa Anita, California. The horse stalls were cleaned and whitewashed and the families moved into them. The smell of the horses still remained very strong.

At this time I was going steady with a young man. We heard that all persons of Japanese descent in California, Oregon, Washington and Arizona would be taken to relocation/evacuation centers in different locations. These were: Tule Lake and Manzanar in California; Poston I, II, and III and Gila River in Arizona; Topaz, Utah; Rower and Jerome in Arkansas; Heart Mountain in Wyoming and Crystal City, Texas. We decided to get married so that we would not be sent to separate centers. There was a minister named Rev. Loyal Herley who came to our Japanese church each Sunday to preach a sermon in English for the young people. Rev. Herley was from the Seventh Day Baptist Church, which met on Saturdays. We asked Rev. Herley if he would perform the marriage in his church. He said he would be very happy to do this but must get approval from the board of deacons and trustees of his church. They flatly refused to have any "Japs" get married in their church. This really crushed Rev. Herley. He was very hurt by their reaction. He felt he had failed

as a minister because his congregation was so prejudiced. He went to the Ministerial Association of Riverside and told them about this. Dr. Ezra Egly, minister of Calvary Presbyterian, the largest church in Riverside, offered his church for our wedding. So on May 7, 1942, we were married in the Milliken Room of Calvary Presbyterian Church with Rev. Herley officiating and Dr. Egly assisting. We had to comply with orders limiting mileage from home to seven miles, a curfew of 7 p.m., and restrictions as to how many Japanese could gather together at one time. We were married at 2:00 in the afternoon with fifty guests in attendance.

May 23 and 25, all people of Japanese descent in the Inland Empire came to Riverside to the Department of Employment, located at 5th and Main Streets at that time. We boarded buses, to be taken inland, to points at the time unknown. We were not told where we were going. We were allowed to take up to 40 pounds of personal belongings per person. The ride was very long and hot; through Indio, Desert Center, Blythe and finally, to Poston, Arizona. It was 117 degrees when we arrived. The place was a sea of tar-papered barracks, hastily constructed. There were guard towers as we entered the gates with military guardsmen armed with machine guns pointed at us. We were herded into barracks where we were registered. Paper cups of warm, sandy lemonade were served. We were told that it was safe to drink since the water had been treated. Many became quite ill with diarrhea and nausea. It spread rapidly, especially among the elderly and babies.

The ground had been tractored and graded to build these barracks. The sand and loose dirt were like fine powder. Puffs of dirt floated up with each step, filling our shoes with blistering sand. Each family was assigned to a block, barrack, and room. Each barrack was divided into four rooms, called apartments. No insulation. Floors were bare planks of wood; the walls were the same, with many large knotholes and large spaces between the boards. Absolutely no privacy. People could look into the apartments between the boards. We were not allowed any cooking facilities. We all ate at a central mess hall assigned to each block.

Many families requested tin can lids to use to cover knotholes in the wall and floors. The water pipes had been hastily laid and the water coming out was brown with silt. The water was treated, so we were told – supposedly safe to drink. NOT SO!

The rule was, each "apartment" was to house at least five people. If the family unit did not consist of five, then, in most cases, others were assigned to make the quota. Strangers or not. Since my husband and I were newlyweds, we took three of his brothers to occupy our "apartment" with us. It was just one big room. We strung ropes and hung blankets to make partitions to allow for some sort of privacy. There were five army cots folded up in each apartment and five canvas bags which we had to fill with straw for our mattresses. Bales of straw were piled in the "firebreaks." Here we filled our bags, then dragged the "mattresses" back to our barracks and laid them on the cots. That was our bed.

All adults had to work, signing up for various jobs such as cooks, kitchen helpers, teachers aides, nurses aides, farm laborers, etc. Professionals such as doctors, teachers, dentists, nurses, engineers, etc., were paid $19.00 per month. Semi professionals were paid $16.00 per month. Laborers such as dishwashers or janitors were paid $12.00 per month.

Every block had a mess hall, laundry room, two sets of latrines, one for men and the other for women. Ten toilets were set up back to back with no partitions. A large room was set up for bathing – gang showers with ten showerheads along the walls, but again, no partitions. As quickly as possible the men scrounged scrap lumber left over from building the barracks to build partitions in the restrooms. Families scrounged the scrap lumber to make closets, partitions and shelves for their rooms. Montgomery Ward and Sears did a landslide business, as everyone ordered necessities such as clothing, baby furniture, etc.

Slowly the barren, desolate camp began to look better as trees were planted, vegetable gardens and flowers planted. Curtains

made from fabric ordered from Sears and Wards made the rooms livable.

Schools were quickly set up. Many Caucasian teachers came to be administrators in the school system. People with a college education volunteered as teachers. In the state of California at this time, teaching credentials were not granted to people of Oriental descent. I taught the elementary school, second, third, and fourth grades, under the direction of a teacher named Mrs. Myrtle Hunt. My husband was an engineer and he volunteered to work on a survey crew with Mr. Jerry Hunt. They were in charge of building a canal; bringing water into the camp from Headgate Dam in Blythe. All in all, the camps finally became quite livable. Churches, schools, social clubs, and athletic clubs were set up. In about one year the WRA began the process of screening couples and young adults who applied for permission to leave camp and take jobs in the Midwest or East.

As soon as clearance was established, these people could accept jobs, "outside" (as long as the jobs were not in the Western Defense Area of California, Oregon or Washington). Hostels were set up by the Quakers in major cities, such as Chicago, Kansas City, New York City and Philadelphia. Here these people could stay until they found housing on their own. Many young people left camp within the first year. My husband left for Philadelphia after two years. He was invited into the home of a Quaker family. I could not leave with him because I was expecting our second child. He felt it was safer for me to stay in camp until the child was born, so I stayed for three years and three months.

When the war ended in 1945, the WRA began the process of closing these camps. The remaining people had to leave and go back to their homes if they still had one, or to hostels set up to receive them, or to join friends and relatives if they could. No one knew what the reception would be like for those who returned to California. Would people still be hostile? Would we be accepted again as friends? It was an unsettling and insecure

feeling. Fortunately, as time went by, we found that our former friends were still our friends.

The Nisei, as we young adults born in the United States are called, were determined to prove our loyalty to the United States despite the relocation of the 120,000 into these concentration camps. When the United States government decided to enlist the Nisei young men for service in the military, a special Army unit was formed; the 442nd Regimental Infantry Combat Battalion and the 100th Battalion from Hawaii. They fought in the European Theater of War for the United States Army while their parents were still held in these camps. They became the most decorated Army team of servicemen ever. The award most bestowed on them was the Purple Heart.

Finally on 27 June 1952, Congress overrode President Truman's veto and passed the Walter-McCarron Act which made it possible for Japanese pioneers from Japan to become American citizens. Old folks by the thousands enrolled in citizenship classes offered in churches and by other organizations. I remember my parents studying the United States Constitution. They could recite the preamble, they knew the Bill of Rights and memorized many of the amendments. It was a proud and happy day in their long life here in America, from 1903 to 1954, when they finally became citizens of the United States. My father was 72 years old. Mom was 67. They had come a long, long way.

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