

(4)

1911

1 Ada Endo Interview
2 Date: 8/18/94
3 Experiences at Heart Mountain Relocation Camp
4 Heart Mountain, Wyoming.

5 AE: Now what do I do just talk into this?

6 SM: Yea that is fine.

7 SM: I think as we begin I would like you to start telling me a
8 little bit of the background, about getting to Heart
9 Mountain, the experiences of being relocated from your home
10 of what that was like for you and you can go in any order
11 you want.

12 AE: Ok, well, that picture, I gave you the picture didn't I?

13 SM: Yes

14 AE: You can keep that.

15 SM: Ah the..

16 AE: This one you can keep this.

17 SM: Thank you, the bathtub picture.

18 AE: Well, let's see now, I'll have to start with the day we
19 left.

20 SM: Could you tell, ok, you have the bathtub. Lets see could
21 you start and just give just a little information like when
22 you were born and where you were born just for the record?

23 AE: OK, and then when you want to put something in stop and
24 then, you know. Is it on already?

25 SM: Umhmm

26 AE: Oh, it is, lets see, I was born in Seattle, Washington, the
27 youngest of five children. I was the only one born in the
28 United States so my mother never gave me a Japanese first
29 name. It is Ada and one of the teacher's of my oldest
30 sister named me after her, Miss Ada Mayhem. From Seattle we
31 moved to Los Angeles.

32 SM: When were you born?

33 AE: May 31, 1911. I do not remember much about Seattle, a few
34 things, but ah we moved to L.A. and I went to various

1 schools. I graduated from LA Polytechnic High School in
2 1928 and then I worked for one year to save money to go to
3 College and in 1929, the first year that UCLA started their
4 Westwood Campus I went there as a freshman. I was there for
5 three years. I knew that I would not be able to graduate
6 because I knew the money would run out, also my mother was
7 working and she was unable to work any longer.

8 So after that why it is chasing around, having a good time,
9 getting married, having children and just before Pearl
10 Harbor, well I shouldn't say just before Pearl Harbor, but
11 the marriage was a little rocky or I should say very rocky
12 and I thought well after my second child was born, I have
13 had it, I was getting a divorce, I felt that I could support
14 the family by myself.

15 When Pearl Harbor came along I was stuck, I was trapped.
16 Then the suspicion of being moved away and everything I said
17 I have got to make this marriage work, I have got to do
18 everything I can to make it work and in May we were
19 scheduled to leave L.A. for Santa Anita.

0 SM: And you had two young children, how old were they by then?

21 AE: The oldest was not quite five and Douglas was two and a half
22 months old when we went to Santa Anita. The family did not
23 want to be separated so we registered under one name and we
24 were told to take out baggage on a certain day and line it
25 up along the street in what is now the Japanese-American
26 Museum.

27 SM: So it was actually up in the Little Tokyo side of Los
28 Angeles.

29 AE: Little Tokyo uhuh, and we could very well take everything
30 down the same day that we moved out of the house so we took
31 things a little at a time to my brother's upstairs taylor *taylor*
32 shop and we left things up there.

33 SM: You stored them there.

34 AE: Everybody did, all of us did.

35 SM: Your family.

36 AE: Uhuh, and then the day of the evacuation my mother was
37 living with us, my husband's father was living with us, my
38 niece had come to live with us to help with the baby so
39 there was seven of us. We went to downtown Los Angeles in
40 two taxis because by that time we didn't have a car.

2 1/2 mo to prepare for
relocation

anger

1 SM: You sold your car?

2 AE: Uhuh

3 SM: How much time did you have to take care of all your personal
4 affairs?

5 AE: About two and a half months.

6 SM: Two and a half months? You knew you were going to be
7 relocated?

8 AE: Uhuh. Shortly after Douglas was born executive order 9066
9 was announced. We were told that we would have to leave
10 L.A. so the day of the evacuation we went down in two taxis
11 and then we would have to take all the luggage that was up
12 stairs down to the corner where we were told to put them
13 down.

14 Anyway, we had a whole lot of stuff with a big family like
15 ours, and as the trucks came with the soldiers to load up
16 the truck with our belongings I noticed that they were
17 saying (throwing things out), "we can't take this," and they
18 would just toss it out, "this can't go," and toss it out. I
19 had a baby bed in there plus a baby bathtub, among other
20 things, and I thought "oh, if they toss those out I'm sunk."
21 So I made a suggestion to the men folks in our group,
22 suppose, why don't you help them. Hand up the baggage up to
23 them in the truck. That is what we did, we brought
24 everything.

25 SM: Just by helping, using a little psychology didn't you?

26 AE: Uhuh, and so I was able to bring all the necessities for the
27 baby and I had the babybed, the mattress, and the baby
28 bathtub.

29 SM: Tell me, do you remember some of the thoughts going through
30 you mind as this was occurring?

31 AE: I was angry. Before executive order 9066 was announced I
32 said they wouldn't dare do it to us. I am an American
33 citizen, they won't dare put me in a camp and there was talk
34 that citizens would be able to stay, but non-citizens would
35 be put into camp and my sister's husband asked me if I would
36 take care of his children. They asked me if I would take
37 care of their three children if they were separated and they
38 had to go to camp. Of course I said yes. As it turned out
39 we all went to camp.

- 1 SM: Being the mother of a young baby and a small child seems
2 like that would have made it even more difficult.
- 3 AE: It was very difficult. Of course my niece, Bea, being there
4 to help was a big help. She helped take care of the baby
5 and also in the packing, getting things ready, getting the
6 house emptied. I owned the house, my mother bought it in
7 1923 for \$5,000, so we owned the house. We put things up in
8 the attic, but we had to empty the house for the new
9 tenants, so we sold what we could, junked what we could and
10 saved what we could. It was frantic, but Bea was a great
11 help.]
- 12 SM: Were you breast feeding your baby?
- 13 AE: No. With my first baby I found out that I had no milk. I
14 was very upset during those days with the marriage and I
15 guess the milk just dried up. In fact I think they were a
16 little bit worried about my (?).
- 17 SM: Because your milk had dried up you were worried about your
18 mental??
- 19 AE: No, before that. I went to the clinic, White Memorial
20 Clinic, and (name of the child) was born there for \$50,
21 doctor fee, hospital fee, two weeks stay, all for \$50. And I
22 was supposed to be in the clinic, but I think they were
23 worried about my well-being and they put me into a private
24 room and my sister visited me every day. My husband twice
25 during the two weeks.
- 26 So, the day of the evacuation we were going upstairs, down
27 stairs, running over to First and Central, back again
28 carrying the things and I said "this is going to take
29 forever," so I went over to the catty corner from the museum
30 where I had to work the (?) there was a fish company there
31 and I went there and asked the owner if he could spare a]
32 truck and a driver to help us move the stuff and he
33 willingly did. We unloaded the belongings in the second
34 floor of the building into the truck and with one sweep we
35 got it out to First and Central where we were supposed to
36 leave our things. That was a big help, but before that I
37 was carrying Douglas in one arm and a parcel in the same arm
38 and one package at a time, back and forth, back and forth
39 along with the men folks.
- 40 My other sister was watching our baggage and I can still
41 remember to this day, she had her little purse and a little
42 potted plant that one of her neighbor's had given her. She
43 was walking around, just walking around, that's how upset

SMA for baby
washing

- 1 she was.
- 2 Then we got into the bus and we nearly occupied all the
3 seats.
- 4 SM: All your family did?
- 5 AE: Uhuh. And the minister and his wife they were laughing. He
6 says "we're the only outsiders on this bus." When we got to
7 Santa Anita...
- 8 SM: You went to the race track, Santa Anita race track.
- 9 AE: Santa Anita race track, one of my other nieces was already
10 there and she was the one who had written to me saying "we
11 brought only two suitcases with us, bring all you can when
12 you come." She was the one who gave us to tip to bring all
13 you can. We also took lunch with us, chicken and all the
14 goodies that we had cooked the night before, my mother and I
15 and when we got there we said "we brought some food with us,
16 we brought rice (?) and we brought some chicken and ococo
17 and they just loved it and oh they just loved it. Just, oh
18 we haven't had food like this for a long time, because the
19 mess hall food was so terrible.
- 20 SM: What did the baby eat?
- 21 AE: I took SMA with me. I took a supply with me and then I ran
22 out so I ordered some more to be delivered and they
23 confiscated it and I had to fight to get that out of the
24 warehouse where they held it, but I managed. We got the
25 milk out alright and I was able to have that milk for him.
26 See he was two and a half months old when we went there and
27 we were not supposed to wash in the barracks. This was
28 still at Santa Anita and my husband complained that he had
29 to wash the family things, but I could be going to the wash
30 everyday and take the baby and all that so I expected him to
31 do that. Grumbeling he did it, but the baby was washed, we
32 did it in four buckets in the barracks. The heavy stuff I
33 would take it to the latrine and rinse it out, but we, my
34 brother, one of my brothers brought four buckets of water
35 and we would line them up. We would wash in the first
36 bucket, then we would rinse in the next three and then we
37 would hang it up. The water we through out on Sea Busquit
38 Avenue. *threw*
- 39 SM: You threw the water out?
- 0 AE: On Sea Busquit Avenue. We lived on Sea Busquit Avenue.
41 That was the street out there. And it was illegal, but I

hot plate
spying

1 did it anyway. I had a hot plate to warm up the milk and it
2 was no fun. But there were highlights, you want to know the
3 highlight?

4 The highlight was, my next door neighbor to where I was in
5 the barracks at Santa Anita was a family of a mother and
6 four children. I heard her voice and I said I know her and
7 so I went over and we talked and she recognized my voice and
8 I recognized her voice, she was a customer at the fish
9 company and we became very good friends and since they had
10 no small children they did not have a hot plate so I said I
11 will make some hot water for you every night and she said oh
12 that would be wonderful because want to drink tea every
13 night. And to this day that family have been one of the
14 best friends I have ever had. We are still very close.

15 SM: You're still in contact?

16 AE: In contact, and they call me, they see me, it is one of the
17 nicest families I have ever known and it is all through
18 recognizing a voice.

9 SM: Are they living nearby?

20 AE: No, they live in Gardena and Los Angeles, Orange County,
21 Ventura County, they live all over, but the feeling is very
22 tender.

23 SM: Very special, you shared experiences that nobody else could
24 understand.

25 AE: Umhmm and their father was interned at that time, but he
26 came, he was released and he rejoined his family at Santa
27 Anita and of course he and I talked about things that we
28 shouldn't talk about and I don't dare talk about it now
29 either except that, well maybe you should know.

30 We found out and it was suspicioned before, but all of us
31 were spied upon years before Pearl Harbor. Some of the
32 places they went, the parties they went to, the amount of
33 the bill of the party, the tip, who was there all that. The
34 FBI had a record of it. And coming to that, oh when I made
35 the remark "they wouldn't dare put me in camp because I'm a
36 citizen," a close friend of mine told me, "Ada, shut up, you
37 don't know who is listening." So it ties in.

38 Anyway, one of their sons had a friend and they liked to
39 play bridge, but lights were out at a certain time. I had a
40 baby so I could keep the lights on later so they would come
41 over and we would play bridge. Then he said, you know I

Santa Anita?

1 work in the mess hall (I'm not giving names because I would
2 have to look it up), but he said I work in the mess hall so
3 if I get a piece of meat, you have a hot plate, can you cook
4 it and we could eat it? I said sure, so whenever he brought
5 meat we had a feast. As if the other people in the barracks
6 didn't know that we were eating good food, cause the tent
7 was all open.

8 Those friends that I met at UCLA, a Jewish girl were married
9 the only son of Kamaria. I think you have heard the name
10 Kamaria, anyway, she was Jewish, he was Mexican. He was
11 Catholic and the father was so upset that his only son would
12 marry a Jewish woman that he did not talk to her so we were
13 very close friends and she had the key to my garage in the
14 back where we had stored other things and it was padlocked.
15 So I had written to her and asked her if she could bring the
16 typewriter that was in there. Naturally she did, but she
17 also brought two pounds of Sees Candy, which I did not know
18 was so hard to get and watermellon, grapes, and peaches, and
19 it was just in time for Arthur's 6th birthday so we had a
20 birthday party for him with the children in my barracks and
21 the barracks in back. Of course the adults were watching
22 too, we wanted to eat some of that, but the children came
23 first, and of course, what was left over we adults woofed it
24 up. It was wonderful.

25 When she came to visit me and she did that twice, she sat on
26 one side of the table, I sat on the other side of the table.
27 There was a screen between us and we talked to each other
28 through that screen. What she brought had to be all
29 processed and checked over before I could receive it.

30 SM: What was the screen for?

31 AE: So that we wouldn't pass anything to each other. It was
32 like jail.

33 SM: Oh it was to..., oh I see.

34 AE: To separate us so that we couldn't touch or we couldn't pass
35 things back and forth, no letters, no nothing. She was
36 crying all the time she was there and she came twice to see
37 me. So to this day, when I hear antisemitic remarks I think
38 about her and how good she was to me. People are people you
39 know, good and bad in everybody.

40 SM: It made a big difference to you to have somebody like that
41 who cared about you.

42 AE: Uhuh, that's it. She is the only one who came and took a

1 picture of Douglas right after he was born. That is the
2 only picture I have of him in L.A. before Santa Anita and
3 from there until Heart Mountain I don't have a single
4 picture of him.

5 SM: Well, you weren't allowed to have cameras were you?

6 AE: No we weren't, and so when one of my grandson's says, "do
7 you have any pictures of my dad when he was a baby," I said
8 no I only have one.

9 SM: And that was the one. What a precious picture for you.

10 AE: Umhmm, I don't know where it is right now, I know it is in a
11 box in that room.

12 SM: How long were you at Santa Anita?

13 AE: About five months. We went there in May and May, June,
14 July, August, September, so sometime in September we went
15 to..

6 SM: Heart Mountain.

17 AE: Uhuh.

18 SM: And the barracks, as I understand it, at Santa Anita were
19 really horse stables that were cleaned out, is that right?

20 AE: Not all of them. One of my nieces was in the horse stable,
21 but we had barracks similar to what was at Heart Mountain,
22 except that the upper maybe one third was all open.

23 SM: Oh, ok.

24 AE: It was only a partition with the top open, but we did have
25 barracks.

26 SM: They were army barracks type?

27 AE: Yes, uhuh, very crude and we were given just a cot and a
28 mattress and I guess that was it, oh a blanket, we received
29 an army blanket.

30 SM: And that is all you had?

31 AE: Uhuh. Oh we took some ah, we took a card table and four
2 card table chairs, so we did have a table and chairs.

33 SM: You took that with you?

1 AE: Uhuh, well you know how we did it, I told you what we did.
2 By helping them onto the truck we got everything.
3 SM: You must have had so little privacy.
4 AE: Very little privacy.
5 SM: How did families manage that?
6 AE: I don't know, I guess we couldn't fight very often and if we
7 wanted to fight it had to be quietly. Of course I remember
8 banging the door when I got angry, but no there was no
9 privacy and father, mother, children all lived in one room.
10 It was not the ideal way for a family to grow up. I think
11 maybe we learned a lesson too, it taught us the value of
12 privacy, the value of neighbors being good to each other, to
13 help each other out because when I had pneumonia at Santa
14 Anita, this same next door neighbor, the oldest daughter
15 came and she did the washing for me, took care of Douglas.
16 I mean, we helped each other out in whatever way we could.)

17 But the day of the riot, I think I had walked out to the
18 administration building to protest the possibility that they
19 would take our hot plates away from us. I was upset about
20 that so I went down, but they said "come back in the
21 afternoon, we are having a meeting on it." Well, before the
22 afternoon there was a riot at Santa Anita and ah..

23 SM: What did the people do?

24 AE: It was ah, the people, it was ah a certain mess hall got
25 wind of the fact that there were some enu or dogs around
26 there. They were the ones who were spying and reporting on
27 other evacuees and so they spotted them and they were
28 chasing them, trying to you know hit them or do something.
29 They were chasing them around all over the camp, started
30 from one mess hall down to all over and all this was going
31 on before I went down to the administration building. So I
32 didn't know about it except that they were saying that there
33 was a riot, they were going into barracks and taking things
34 and go home and watch our barracks. Riot

35 Anyway, I was walking down to the administration building.
36 I had shorts on because it was hot. I was sauntering along
37 and my next door neighbor, their oldest son says, "Ada, look
38 in back of you there is machine guns." I looked back and
39 sure enough there were machine guns coming down that main
40 drag and I got out of their way so fast. He told me later I
41 jumped over a hedge. I don't recall it.

1 SM: Well I think I would too.

2 AE: I don't recall it, all I know is that I got out of their
3 way.

4 SM: I mean machine guns seems way out of proportion to what any
5 of you could have done.

6 AE: That's it, but there they were coming down.

7 SM: It must have been awfully scary.

8 AE: It was scary, fortunately they didn't shoot them. They
9 didn't have to use them. I think that they got some of the
10 so called, and I don't say positive because I don't have
11 proof, but they got rid of the so called dogs, out of camp
12 for their own safety so that they would not be attacked by
13 other evacuees. And the more I think about it I could just
14 about name who they were because I know who were taken out
15 of the camp, but that would be unfair to their children and
16 grandchildren. They don't have to know about their parents'
17 shortcomings, right?

18 So we went to Heart Mountain.

19 SM: When was, tell me, ok you went to Heart Mountain and can you
20 kind of remember when you heard where you were going and did
21 you know where you were going?

22 AE: Eventually they told us where we were going, but, I think I
23 did, I think we knew, because we had to pack our things and
24 I think we had to label them.

25 SM: Where the luggage would go?

26 AE: Uhuh. Because everybody at Santa Anita didn't go to Heart
27 Mountain. Some went to other places (?? name of a place),
28 and ah, ^{Tule} Tooley Lake, and whatever, the other camps.

29 SM: Where did your neighbor go, the one you became so close
30 with?

31 AE: They went to Heart Mountain.

32 SM: They went to Heart Mountain also?

33 AE: Uhuh, but they weren't as close to me, I lived in one edge
34 of Heart Mountain and they lived in the other end of Heart
35 Mountain so they did not come to see me as often and they
36 could not play with the children as often, because they were

1 great with the children. But their son, the oldest son was
2 in the, he was an interpreter in the Pacific, and he said
3 that they had to have someone ride shotgun with him so that
4 the American soldiers would know that he was not a Japanese
5 soldier, not an enemy rather. But he was an interpreter so
6 he was away, but the other second son used to come over and
7 when we got to Heart Mountain we had the L.A. times
8 delivered to us. ✓

9 SM: You did?

10 AE: Uhuh.

11 SM: It came in on the train?

12 AE: I guess so. I guess it came on the train. We did have a
13 radio but I couldn't keep track of the news. I didn't know
14 what was going on.

15 SM: Can you tell me a little, before we get, I want to hear
16 that, that is very you know, interesting that you actually
17 had the newspaper delivered, but do you remember the train
18 trip to Heart Mountain, what that was like with your
19 children?

20 AE: Well, ah, oh that was terrible. I had the second, we had
21 the pullman, but it was never made up during the day, it was
22 a pullman, it was a sleeping quarter, upstairs and
23 downstairs. Upper and lower.

24 SM: So it never was converted to seating.

25 AE: To seating, uhuh, and so we did (??) to see who would get
26 the upper and, of course, I lost. So Douglas and I were in
27 the upper bunk during that entire trip. Douglas got sick,
28 he threw up, he had diahrea, he threw up, it was horrible.
29 All I could think of was to clean him and that he would
30 hopefully keep the milk down, but he couldn't keep it down.
31 So there was an ambulance waiting when we got to Heart
32 Mountain and took him to the hospital.

33 But, on the trip the blinds, the curtains were down. We
34 didn't know where we were. I have no idea what route we
35 were taking.

36 SM: They made you keep the curtains down?

37 AE: Uhuh

38 SM: They wouldn't let you look out?

off train x1 SLC
converted cot to sofa

Page 12

"Lucky Strike Hit Parade"
bridge

- 1 AE: We couldn't look out. Maybe they were afraid we would
2 signal.
- 3 SM: ?????
- 4 AE: Well, I don't know, I am supposing. But when we got to Salt
5 Lake City we were able to leave the train and there was one
6 family that I had known in L.A. and they were there. In
7 fact they were there to meet all the evacuees. They would
8 scan us over to see who they could see that they knew and it
9 was wonderful to see them. But that is the only time that
10 I, or any of us got off the train before we got to Heart
11 Mountain.
- 12 SM: And so that was the only time you knew where you were?
- 13 AE: Uhuh, that's right. We knew it was Salt Lake City because
14 they were there.
- 15 SM: They told you.
- 16 AE: Uhuh, but I was glad when that train ride was over. And in
17 Santa Anita, no in Heart Mountain we had a 20x20 barracks,
18 four of us and as usual we got four cots, mattress and
19 blanket and since I had a card table and four chairs we had
20 something to sit on. And since I had the baby bed.
- 21 SM: You had the baby bed and the baby bathtub.
- 22 AE: I had the baby bed and the baby bathtub, so we did was
23 convert it into a sofa and that is where we sat to enjoy
24 music and I was a fan of the Lucky Strike Hit Parade and I
25 just had to listen to that every Saturday night--Frank
26 Sinatra. Oh it was wonderful.
- 27 SM: That was one small pleasure you had.
- 28 AE: Yeah
- 29 SM: I mean a big pleasure.
- 30 AE: Uhuh. And then I had a, one of my nephews and his friends
31 used to drop by and then my next door neighbor from Santa
32 Anita, he would bring his friends over and they came to read
33 the paper and other young men came to read the paper and uh,
34 they came over to play cards. And at night sometimes they
35 go to dances or they go to party. It all ended early, there
36 was no place to go after that. They couldn't go to a drive-
37 in or have a snack someplace, so they came over, they called
38 it the Endo night club. And we played bridge, they would

weeds, watch tower,
barbed wire

1 take care of the kids so that I could play. I always
2 managed to have some sort of a desert, it was easy. Jello,
3 not even cookies, just jello maybe. We were happy with any
4 kind of food. It all tasted good as long as it wasn't in
5 the mess hall.

6 SM: Backing up just a little bit, you were saying earlier that
7 Douglas was taken to the hospital by ambulance when you
8 arrived and did you go with him or?

9 AE: No

10 SM: You did not?

11 AE: No, they just took him, so I have know idea of the care or
12 what or wherfor. And they brought him back to the barracks
13 when he was well.

14 SM: How did that feel to be separated immediately from your son.

15 AE: Well, I didn't have time to think about it too much because
16 we had to unload the baggage and get our barrack in order,
17 make it livable, sort of. And, I was so busy with all that
18 that in a way it was a blessing that I didn't have to go to
19 the hospital. It helped me to prepare for him when he did
20 get home.

21 SM: How did Heart Mountain look to you when you arrived? Do you
22 remember that impression you had?

23 AE: I had no impression.

24 SM: No impression?

25 AE: No impression, all I could think of was Douglas is sick.

26 SM: Oh yeah

27 AE: So I didn't look around. It was he is sick, hope he gets
28 well and that was the only thing. I can't recall anything
29 about my impressions, how dusty it was, all that came later.

30 SM: That came later, and you do remember that.

31 AE: Uhuh. And the bushes, what is it, the weeds, tumble weeds.
32 All the tumble weed and, of course, the watch tower and the
33 barbed wire. Those are things that we had it in Santa
34 Anita, so what, Heart Mountain was no different. But I was
; angry, I was really angry that they did it to us.

1 SM: And did that angry feeling stay with you the whole time? Or
2 was that just when you got there?

3 AE: Ah, it slowly diminished, or maybe I was too busy. But, ah,
4 I wrote to a couple of people in Los Angeles and ah, my
5 neighbor across the street says, "the street looks the same,
6 your home looks the same, there seems to be no change in our
7 neighborhood." And then a man who was vice president of the
8 Bank of America went into the service and he wrote and says
9 "my life has changed also. I am confined, I am not as free
10 as I used to be. I can understand what your life must be
11 like." I don't know if he is alive. The neighbor across
12 the street...

13 SM: But the anger was the main emotion that you were feeling,
14 because you mentioned that earlier?

15 AE: Uhuh. I was angry, I was bitter, but ah...

16 SM: Yes, that is understandable. Did you, ummm, we talked a
17 little bit before we started taping, about this ah sense of
18 being an enemy in your own country. Ummm, can you tell me a
19 little bit about what that was like as you were in Santa
20 Anita and then onto Heart Mountain, or perhaps even before
21 then?

22 AE: Even before that.

23 SM: Because you said you were spied upon.

24 AE: Well, I don't know if I was that important, but the
25 important people were spied upon.

26 SM: Uhuh, ok.

27 AE: But ah, Monday after Pearl Harbor I had to take the public
28 transportation to go to work and I took Arthur with me and
29 then ah, the Marine bus picked them up at my work which was
30 at First and Central, and I thought, well, with Arthur with
31 me they wouldn't dare attack me with a little boy
32 accompanying me, but I was scared.

33 SM: You were scared?

34 AE: Uhuh

35 SM: Did you feel like people, I mean paid special attention to
36 you?

37 AE: I did, but I didn't pay any attention to them. I just went

lumber

not fearful

1 about my routine of getting on the bus, paying my fare and
2 getting off and keeping Arthur quiet so that he would not be
3 rambunctious on the bus, whatever, he was a good child, he
4 behaved, so I had no problems that way. And the other thing
5 was, there were so many things happening. You know there is
6 many many things that I can't remember.

7 But, this is a funny thing and maybe I shouldn't put my
8 sister on the hot stove, but she and her husband and family
9 are devoted Christians. In fact, one of her friends from
10 the church brought a baby buggy for me while we were still
11 at Santa Anita, but you know I would never think of her
12 doing anything out of line.

13 One night she came over and she said, "you know there is a
14 lot of lumber down there and there is only one guard. Let's
15 go down and get some lumber." I looked at her, I was sure
16 surprised. But I said, "sure, why not." So we went down
17 when the guard was not making his rounds or he was on the
18 other side. We would go in and grab a lumber, we would wait
19 awhile and she and I only, she held one end and I held the
20 other end. I don't know how many pieces of lumber we
21 brought back, but we divided it and she took it to her
22 barrack and I kept my half and that is what we made shelves
23 with and whatever was left over we would make a shelf here
24 and a shelf there in the barrack to make it more accessible
25 for our things as in having to keep it in suitcases all the
26 time. She is going to be shocked when I tell on her.

27 SM: That was ah, unsafe something to do however.

28 AE: Yes, and then years later I thought. You know one should
29 never judge a person. Circumstances make us do certain
30 things that we wouldn't do under ordinary conditions. And
31 she probably wouldn't ever do it again. She probably
32 wouldn't even steal a penny, but we stole lumber that night
33 and we were happy.

34 SM: Did you ever fear for your own safety? Being taken to Heart
35 Mountain, did you understand that it was a temporary place
36 where you would be?

37 AE: I never felt that way.

38 SM: What?

39 AE: I never felt fearful, either at Santa Anita or Heart
40 Mountain. But, of course, we didn't try to escape and we
41 didn't go near where the watch towers were, where the
42 machine guns were. We stayed away from them. But otherwise

1 I had no fear. Either that or I was too busy with the babys
2 and when that I knew that I was pregnant with Victor, I
3 couldn't be going to the hospital, seeing the doctor, and
4 taking care of Douglas because he was still quite young, a
5 year and a half apart and he needed care. And taking care
6 of their physical needs in the barrack was bad enough, let
7 along having to go down to the wash room to do the washing
8 every day. So I just went once before the actual delivery.

9 SM: One time?

10 AE: One time.

11 SM: Let me ask you, I would like to hear about that one visit,
12 but also, it is interesting that with the lack of privacy so
13 many women still managed to get pregnant at Heart Mountain.

14 AE: Ah, well if you had small children they went to bed early,
15 right?

16 SM: That took care of it?

17 AE: That took care of it. And, ah, also if they had grown up
18 children I don't know what they did. Oh, some people hung
19 bedspreads between units, between bed units. For instance,
20 if the young childre, teenagers, were on one side and their
21 parents were on the other they had a bedspread hung between.
22 But, of course, any love-making had to be very quiet.

23 SM: Be a little tough.

24 AE: It could be tough, but ah, they managed. }

25 SM: The children may have learned some things earlier in those
26 circumstances.

27 AE: You know, children being children and being curious, they
28 could have learned a thing or two. But how many, how
29 many...(end of side one-3.5 hours)

30 SM: Just one pregnancy visit when you were pregnant with Victor?

31 AE: Uhuh

32 SM: And ah, you went to the hospital for that to see some of the
33 doctors?

34 AE: I don't know who.

35 SM: You don't know who, and do you remember what was done during

help with the children
husband gone
bedbugs

1 that visit?

2 AE: Two (??) that I was pregnant and when the baby was expected.

3 SM: And that was it?

4 AE: Uhuh, cause I knew I was pregnant, but they wanted to
5 determine when and that was all.

6 SM: You weren't examined?

7 AE: No I don't think so. Fortunately I was fairly healthy.

8 SM: And tell me about your pregnancy. Do you remember about
9 your pregnancy in the camp, what that was like and when you
10 went into labor?

11 AE: Oh, well, fortunately in camp I had an uncle who loved
12 Douglas and so in the morning after Douglas was cleaned up
13 he would come over and carry him, take him around the camp
14 until it was lunch time and he would bring him back. And
15 after he had his afternoon nap he would carry him around, so
16 he watched Douglas for me.

17 Arthur was more or less on his own because he was six, six
18 or seven, so he did not have to have the close supervision
19 that Douglas did. And then at mess halls different friends
20 came and helped me with the children so that I could eat.

21 SM: So you had help with the children. You haven't mentioned at all!
22 your husband. Did he help with the children?

23 AE: Ah, to a degree, but he went to Idaho to pick apples so he
24 was gone for a little bit there. And then he went to
25 Chicago to work. To this day I don't know what he did,
26 but he must have done something. So he had two leaves out of
27 camp to live the outside world. So when there was a crisis
28 in camp he was never around to help out.

29 Like the time we had the bedbugs and we had to empty
30 everything in the barrack while the people from the
31 administration came to spray the barrack and I could never
32 have done it if it wasn't for my relatives that were there
33 because they came and helped take things out, helped bring
34 things in. We found out that the bedbugs came from the baby
35 bed that I had borrowed when Victor was born. It was in the
36 screws. They checked them and sure enough, so they took the
37 bed away and sprayed that. My first experience with
38 bedbugs. I had heard about them but didn't know what they
39 were nor how vicious they were.

"honey bucket"
provide own soap,
toilet paper
diapers
menstruation
clothing
allotment

1 SM: Did they bite?

2 AE: Oh, they bit Victor like crazy. He cried, he would have
3 welts all over his body and I would have welts too. Douglas
4 and Arthur to a lesser degree. But Victor and I really got
5 it. And that was a horrible experience. And, of course,
6 washing the diapers for two babys was no fun, every day,
7 every day, cold or hot or whatever.

8 Emptying the honey bucket was no fun either, especially if
9 it was blowing hard, I had to be careful I didn't spill it.
10 So I had to carry that back and forth from the latrine and
11 every time we went to the latrine we had to be sure we took
12 soap and toilet paper with us. It wasn't provided at the
13 latrine, we had to take our own. You can imagine, I mean
14 those were things that after awhile it got routine, but at
15 the beginning it was rather hard to cope with. Half way
16 over said "oh I forgot the toilet paper" and have to run
17 back.

18 SM: So you had to take care of diapers, take your own toilet
19 paper and then do you have any sense of how women handled
20 their menstrual periods, because that adds another dimension.

21 AE: Well that, I had enough privacy that I could take care of
22 it. And the napkins, why I think I usually put it in a sack
23 and disposed of it the next day.

24 SM: Did you have like sanitary napkins?

25 AE: Yes

26 SM: You bought those?

27 AE: They had a px, we could buy it there. We could buy candy,
28 we could buy different things. Whatever money we had was
29 spent on things like that and I guess some people ordered
30 it, mail ordered too, cause we mail ordered some clothes.
31 We didn't have all that heavy clothing you need for a
32 Wyoming winter.

33 SM: For people who didn't have money, it could be a real
34 difficult situation.

35 AE: Well we were given an allotment, it wasn't much, but we were
36 given a clothing allotment and so people who didn't have
37 money had to spend that for their personal needs.

3 SM: I see.

1 AE: But, it wasn't easy, at least my husband went out to work so
2 when he came back he was able to buy a few things that we
3 needed.

4 SM: He brought his money back to the family?

5 AE: Uhuh. By the way, let me go back to before going to Santa
6 Anita. Let's see now, Douglas was born Friday. December 7,
7 1941, war was declared, Douglas was born February 14, 1942.
8 I worked all of January and quit work in February. A few
9 days after executive order 9066 was announced, stores along
10 East First street slowly began closing in preparation for
11 the evacuation. Many stores were not open, grocery stores,
12 whatever, vegetable stands, they were closing. There was no
13 place to buy food. Fortunately the fish market where I
14 worked, the owner, it was a wholesale/retail fish, the owner
15 had one of his customers take over the place while he was
16 gone so it was open all throughout that entire time and one
17 day I went down to apply for unemployment because I thought
18 well now I can't go to work, might as well collect some of
19 it. And I went down to see him, my husband drove me, and he
20 had the front area of the store empty, unoccupied. And I
21 saw stores, grocery stores closing, I said "Frank, why don't
22 you put in fresh vegetables and fruit here, you don't have
23 to display them and have beautiful arrangements, just sell
24 them right out of the crates and boxes." He said "hey,
25 that's a good idea, Art, you want to do it?" He says "well
26 I don't have a truck." He says "you could use one of my
27 fish trucks." So that's how it started and my husband had
28 lost his job before Pearl Harbor so money was scarce, and so
29 he would drive down and take Mac's truck and go down to the
30 wholesale produce and buy things and then unload and display
31 it in the front and sell it. He got so busy that he had to
32 have one of his brothers come and help him, because they
33 were out of work. Most people were out of work by that
34 time.

35 Then the two of them were so busy that they had to have
36 another brother come down. To finance the thing, my husband
37 didn't have any money and he lent me, I think it was \$50 and
38 that took all of my saving, but I lent it to him and he made
39 money hand over fist. He didn't have to pay for the truck,
40 he didn't have to pay for the upkeep of the truck, the
41 gasoline, the rent, it was all clear. And so when we
42 finally quit he gave me \$100 back. A hundred percent of
43 \$50.

44 SM: It was your idea, the whole thing.

45 AE: And he kept the rest of it, I'm sure he kept quite a bit of

Delivery

1 it. But, ah, that was a godsend for him because at least he
2 had something to hang on to.

3 SM: And you were probably glad to have a hundred dollars.

4 AE: Ah, I got my \$50 plus \$50. I mean I had forgotten about
5 that part. And toward the end, of course, we sold our car
6 so they went down by taxi and came home by taxi, still he
7 saved money.

8 SM: Now go back to Heart Mountain and I would be interested in
9 hearing a little about when you had your baby if you
10 remember what your labor was like and how they took care of
11 you.

12 AE: Oh that labor, well all my labors were bad. I remember
13 asking a doctor to give me something like ether or
14 something.

15 SM: For right at the time of delivery?

16 AE: Uhuh

17 SM: Do you remember earlier on when you went into labor?

18 AE: At the time of the delivery I had asked for something.

19 SM: OK, the ether.

20 AE: Uhuh, but he wouldn't give it to me and the attending nurse,
21 who happened to be the sister of a friend of mine and I hear
22 she got disciplined for telling me this later,

23 SM: Was she Japanese-American?

24 AE: Japanese-American, and she said that I cussed the doctor out
25 for not giving me anything. I don't remember that part,
26 because the actual delivery of my three children I do not
27 remember.

28 SM: And so they had the ether then?

29 AE: I just passed out.

30 SM: Do you remember earlier in labor anything about it, in the
31 hospital?

32 AE: Just an ordinary labor, I mean the pain, but there was
33 nothing unusual about it, I had gone through it twice
34 before. It was the actual delivery that killed me.

- 1 SM: But during the earlier labor, were you in bed or did you
2 walk around or...
- 3 AE: Oh, I was in bed. They didn't tell us about this breathing
4 and all that that the modern women have for ease in
5 delivery, none of that for my three children, I didn't have
6 any of that prenatal training of making delivery easier. I
7 don't think they knew at that time did they?
- 8 SM: So you were in bed?
- 9 AE: Uhuh
- 10 SM: And was that in the hospital most of the time or did you
11 stay home until...
- 12 AE: Oh I went to the hospital the day of the delivery.
- 13 SM: Yes, I just wondered if, what I was curious about is that
14 when you started labor if you just stayed in the barracks or
15 if you went right to the hospital.
- 16 AE: No I went right to the hospital. I was at the hospital and
17 that last pains was all at the hospital, because I knew in
18 the morning that the baby would come. I don't recall how
19 many days I stayed there.
- 20 SM: Did you have your baby with you after the birth?
- 21 AE: Yes, but I can't, right away I don't know, I think it was
22 the next day. I just passed out, I'm not a very good baby
23 deliverer. It takes time for me to recoupe after that. You
24 see pictures of the mother with a baby right after delivery,
25 I don't remember that at all.
- 26 SM: You didn't have that experience?
- 27 AE: No never did. I just have to sleep until I could get my
28 energy and strength back. In fact, when Douglas was born my
29 doctor said "they ought to make these rooms noise proof."
- 30 SM: Oh really, you made noise?
- 31 AE: Uhuh, I must have made a lot of noise, I don't remember.
- 32 SM: Thats interesting.
- 33 AE: No life in the camp was not easy for a woman with small
34 children. Always on the lookout taking care of the kids,
35 watching what they were doing and the inconvenience of the

life not easy with small children

weather laundry

Page 22

- 1 latrine and the washing and the mess halls. You know it's
2 not a smooth household.
- 3 SM: And how did the weather contribute to the difficulty or ease
4 of taking care of small children?
- 5 AE: Oh, that was horrible. When they went out you had to be
6 sure that they were dressed properly. When you take the
7 honey bucket out if the wind was blowing you had to hang
8 onto the cover.
- 9 SM: The honey bucket huh.
- 10 AE: And ah, you didn't want to go to the latrine too often
11 because it was so cold, and when you went washing it was
12 cold by the time you got to the barrack the clothes began to
13 freeze. In fact, unknowingly I hung out diapers one day and
14 low and behold they were all frozen and I had to bring them
15 in quick and unfreeze them. So we had lines all over.
- 16 SM: Inside the barracks in the winter time?
- 17 AE: Uhuh
- 18 SM: You didn't have much room and then you had clothes lines on
19 top of that.
- 20 AE: That's right.
- 21 SM: And they must have always had diapers on them.
- 22 AE: Yes they had diapers, cloth diapers, plus all the other
23 washing that had to be done.
- 24 SM: Was the washing that the major difficult job that you had?
- 25 AE: Washing and the taking care of their daily needs, physical
26 needs. And then of course bathing them wasn't so bad
27 because we could make the hot water on top of the stove.
- 28 SM: How did you bathe?
- 29 AE: We had to go to the bathroom, to the shower room.
- 30 SM: OK, but for the babies you did it right in the barracks with
31 the hot water on the stove?
- 32 AE: Uhuh. Well we didn't have running water so we always had
33 running water in buckets in the barrack, so if the water was
34 too hot I would have to add cold water to test it out so

1 that it wasn't too hot, but we always had water. Then we
2 had another bucket for waste water. Clean water and waste
3 water and the other thing that we worried about was having
4 enough clothes to keep warm.

5 Cause they would dump the coal and we would go out and get
6 the coal and keep it at the barrack and then we worry do we
7 have enough coal, when is the next load coming. If the load
8 comes we had to go fast or it would be gone.

9 SM: So you had to be careful about how much coal you used
10 because you never knew exactly when you would get the next
11 supply.

12 AE: Uhuh, we always wanted to be sure there was enough on hand
13 to keep warm.

14 SM: Did you stay warm enough?

15 AE: Yes we did, uhuh, we managed to stay warm and I don't know
16 if you have seen the barrack, but there was one outside door
17 to each two units. This was a small unit for couples or a
18 couple with one child and this was another unit for four.
19 There was one outside door and you go into a vestibule and
20 then there is a door into that unit and a door into this
21 unit. Something like the eastern houses where you have the
22 outside door and the inside door, and every two units had
23 that outside door. So if I wanted to harden some jello all
24 I had to do was put it in the vestibule and in no time I had
25 jello to serve. We didn't have all the other goodies to go
26 with it, but it served its purpose. !

27 SM: We were talking earlier before we started taping about the
28 way women spent their time when they weren't working all the
29 time because it sounds like with young children you spent a
30 great deal of time working to take care of everybody's
31 physical needs, but ah when did you have time with other
32 women and what did you do?

33 AE: I don't think I had time with other women at all. The
34 social, my social life was when the young men came over to
35 read the paper or to play bridge or they would bring their
36 girl friends and we would sit and talk. That was the only
37 social life with other women. There was one in particular,
38 one fellow brought his girl and they made the drapes for my
39 windows for me. Wyoming cowboy, heart mountain on it. You
40 want it, you want a panel of that? *

1 SM: Do you really have it?



1 AE: I still have it.

2 SM: Oh, I would love that. But somebody made that, you got that
3 fabric of a Wyoming Cowboy.

4 AE: He designed it. He was an artist and later on he worked for
5 Sears as an artist, but he was in camp and he did that so he
6 said if you buy the material I'll design it and we will silk
7 screen it and we'll make it for you. So he and his girl
8 friend, he designed it and his girl friend helped him and
9 they silk screened it for the windows. I must have had four
10 windows, five windows, I can't remember.

11 SM: And you still have it.

12 AE: I still have it and he was called for a physical and he came
13 over one day and told me he wanted my opinion about
14 something. He says, "I'm being called for a physical,
15 suppose I'm accepted and I have to go into the army. I'm
16 going with this girl, I haven't said anything to her. I
17 don't think it is fair to say anything in case I don't come
18 back." I said "well, I can't tell you how she thinks, but
19 I'll tell you what I think, and that is that if I loved a
20 man and he loved me and he went away without saying anything
21 and left me I wouldn't like it, I would rather he spoke up
22 and said what he felt about me." As it turned out he was
23 rejected, 4F or something, he didn't go into the army. They
24 got married, they had I think four kids, they have
25 grandchildren and still happily married.

26 SM: And he was probably grateful for the advise you gave him.

27 AE: Well maybe he has forgotten because in those days everybody
28 was upset. He probably forgot, but he must have said
29 something to her.

30 SM: People were, when you say everybody was upset, that was kind
31 of the ongoing feeling people had who lived in the camp?

32 AE: Because things were uncertain. Life was uncertain, they
33 didn't know where they were going. Some were being drafted
34 into the army, being called in for a physical. It was all a
35 question mark, nothing was positive so that uncertainty
36 dwelled in most of us.

37 I did have one day of vacation and that was when different
38 friends of mine took care of my children and I went out to a
39 nearby town. It must have been Powell, is Powell the
40 closest to Heart Mountain?

pass to town

1 SM: Well Powell and Cody are about the same distance, and Heart
2 Mountain is right in the middle.

3 AE: Well it was one or the other that I went to but I don't know
4 which one and had lunch and came back and it was so
5 wonderful to be waited on, to sit at a table, not worry
6 about the children being fed. Just put food in my own mouth
7 and have someone bring the food to me.

8 SM: You were in a restaurant then?

9 AE: Uhuh

10 SM: And was that ok, I've heard some stories about signs in the
11 windows about signs in the windows about Japanese and did
12 you experience anything from the people in the town?

13 AE: I didn't have any experience like that. No negative
14 feeling, no negative experience. It was wonderful. It made
15 my day. The one vacation that I had while I was at Heart
16 Mountain.

7 SM: Do you remember what you had to eat?

18 AE: No, is that funny? I know who I went with. He was the man
19 who owned that fish company in L.A.

20 SM: How did you get a pass to go?

21 AE: He got it for me. He did, because he was a visitor.

22 SM: I see.

23 AE: He came to see his brother who was in camp and so he had a
24 pass and he got this pass for me to go out. That is the
25 only time that I had left until we went to Cleveland.

26 SM: So how long did you actually live in the camp?

27 AE: Ah, lets see now, '41, '42, Christmas, '43 Christmas, ah, I
28 think June of '44 we left camp so that would be about two
29 and a half years. *2 1/2 yrs*

30 SM: Almost the whole time, not quite.

31 AE: Two Christmases at Heart Mountain.

32 SM: It closed in '45.

33 AE: Closed in '45.

1 SM: And about '44 was a list was in the Heart Mountain papers,
2 around that time and even more thereafter there was a lot of
3 emphasis on people relocating to other cities, I think
4 especially the last year of the paper, they keep talking
5 about in fact they wanted people to leave and people didn't
6 necessarily want to leave and do you remember that, some
7 people, it may not have been when you were there, but the
8 paper kept urging people not to be lazy and to use their
9 initiative and move out of the camp, that they were getting
10 too comfortable in the camp and they were maybe afraid to
11 relocate and didn't want to do that. That might not be
12 something that you were aware of. I just noticed that as I
13 read the paper that there was more and more emphasis on you
14 know, you need to get out of the camp, go relocate, these
15 camps are temporary they were not intended for you to stay.
16 It was only to segregate out people who were perceived as
17 possibly dangerous. But anyway that's ah..

18 AE: I don't remember that.

19 SM: Well you may not have read that, you know I read that in the
20 paper 50 years later and I would read it very differently
1 than you would have at the time too.

22 AE: That's right, uhuh.

23 SM: Tell me about, you were talking about the gossip, when we
24 were having lunch earlier, that there was a lot of gossip in
25 the camps.

26 AE: Oh yeah.

27 SM: Will you tell me a little bit about that and how that
28 happened and oh, what kind of things people gossiped about?

29 AE: Well, ah, actually I had no contact with other people during
30 the day, it was only during the mess halls that I would hear
31 gossip. Other people talking and I could hear and there was
32 one couple that the wife had left her husband and children
33 to live with this man or maybe they were married. They were
34 both very talented, artistic people, and I could, knowing
35 them and they lived in our block, knowing them and liking
36 them I could understand her fascination with him and his
37 fascination with her. They were kindred spirits in mind and
38 in interests and maybe her husband was one of those very
39 uninteresting men that didn't do anything for her soul or
40 for her ambition of expressing herself artistically. So
41 they were there and no one gave them a second thought.

42 I mean they were accepted and we also had a lady who was a

1 mistress of a man and she had formally ^{never} been driven out of
2 another block and she came to our block and we liked her.
3 We didn't ostracize her. And, ah, when a man came to visit
4 we would snicker and keep track of how long he was there and
5 you know, but she was a nice person. At that time I
6 couldn't see why people did those things because,
7 comparatively I was young, 30 and ^{naive} niece. But as I grew
8 older and saw life as it is why I thought gee, we were
9 pretty broad minded in that block, to have two people like
10 that, one a mistress and another a couple like that. But,
11 ah, nobody seemed to mind. No one seemed to ostracize or be
12 mean to them. They were accepted as human beings which they
13 were.

14 SM: But people maybe talked about them?

15 AE: Yeah, we talked about them. It was sort of fun to talk
16 about them, but we weren't mean to them. We had to have
17 some sort of a scandal. Most of us didn't have a paper to
18 read about the outside scandal that was going on.

19 SM: So you needed something in the camp?

20 AE: Uhuh

21 SM: There may have been a number of things going on in the camp.

22 AE: There could have been a lot more going on that we didn't
23 know about. Wish we did, it would have been fun. 😊

24 SM: It would have been fun to know wouldn't it?

25 AE: Uhuh, I can't think of everything, but I did not want my
26 children to know that life in camp was what life was about,
27 that it was not an ordinary life, that the outside world was
28 different and when my sister's husband bought a rooming
29 house in Cleveland and they moved out and I had written to
30 them, they said "well, maybe Tom can buy another rooming
31 house and you can come and run it and get rent free," so
32 eventually we went to Cleveland and I ran the rooming house
33 which I hated. My first experience with a rooming house and
34 oh it was terrible. But it was a three story rooming house
35 and eventually most of my friends who had gone back east
36 moved in so then it was nice, it was more like one big
37 family. But, ah, that gave us the incentive to leave camp
38 and my husband worked as a machinist for Thompson Products. >

39 SM: Thompson Products?

40 AE: Uhuh, it is now TRW in Cleveland.

Cleveland

Page 28

"I didn't have the watch tower"

- 1 SM: Oh, downtown Cleveland?
- 2 AE: Downtown Cleveland. He worked there and I took care of the
3 rent and the coal and swept the stall and take care of the
4 kids.
- 5 SM: You had three small children.
- 6 AE: And took care of the grocery shopping.
- 7 SM: How did people in Cleveland, you know here you went from
8 Santa Anita, to Heart Mountain, and now to Cleveland and how
9 did people respond to you in Cleveland, you know the country
10 was still at war at that time.
- 11 AE: Right, no problem in fact when I went to the grocery stores
12 I got VIP treatment because I had five books of coupons, oh
13 we didn't eat so much, meat coupons, sugar coupons,
14 whatever, so I knew that I could not use them all so I asked
15 the grocer if they could use them and I gave them to him, so
16 if I needed butter I got butter. If I needed bacon I got
17 bacon, if I needed meat, sugar, whatever I needed I got
18 because I gave them all my extra coupons. No problem,
19 shoes, I mean there was no way I could use... Oh and then I
20 had two more sets of coupons because Bill was living in the
21 same rooming house.
- 22 SM: That was who?
- 23 AE: Bill [?]Mumble, he was the photographer that took those
24 pictures of my children at Heart Mountain. He went to
25 Cleveland before his wife just to case out the joint and so
26 I did the cooking for him. And then my niece came and so I
27 had seven ration books and there was no way I could use all
28 that.
- 29 SM: So you were more comfortable in Cleveland?
- 30 AE: Yes, I didn't have the watch tower. Life was not easy, but
31 it was a lot better than having to carry the honey bucket,
32 the toilet paper and going out to do the washing. It was
33 all done at the rooming house.
- 34 SM: Is the watch tower kind of a symbol of what Heart Mountain
35 was for you, because you said "I didn't have the watch
36 tower"? Were you well aware of that all the time?
- 37 AE: You can't help but be aware of it.
- 38 SM: There was several wasn't there?

- 1 AE: Uhuh, around the perimeter and we lived near the perimeter.
2 At Santa Anita, as well as Heart Mountain, we were near the
3 watch towers. And, ah, oh I think, I think that some of the
4 young girls used to (this is some more gossip), used to like
5 to go near the watch towers because there were young men up
6 there. I don't know what happened, but I had heard people
7 say so and so is always walking toward the watch tower. *Stores*
- 8 SM: They liked the young men there?
- 9 AE: Uhuh, the young men.
- 10 SM: Did they have guns?
- 11 AE: Yes
- 12 SM: You could see the guns?
- 13 AE: Ah, I never did look that close.
- 14 SM: Oh, you stayed away?
- 15 AE: I stayed away.
- 16 SM: Except when you went to get the (?) that time? When you
17 were near the fence.
- 18 AE: Oh he didn't have a gun that I can recall, he was just
19 walking, I don't think he had a gun. Maybe my sister would
20 remember. But he was just making his rounds so when he was
21 over there so we got, but ah...
- 22 SM: Do you remember when you left what that was like for you to
23 leave Heart Mountain?
- 24 AE: I was happy. I was happy to get out. For some reason it
25 was a challenge to go out and see what happened. Never been
26 further east of Riverside before the war, I wanted to see
27 and ah, oh I don't know if I, camp life after all the young
28 people left got a little bit dreary, you know the young
29 people got out as soon as they could. Some to the service,
30 some to as soldiers, but some went back east to go to
31 school. Whoever could left and then it was nothing but old
32 people and young children.
- 33 SM: Well mothers with children might have trouble leaving too.
- 34 AE: Yes, and mothers with children.
- 35 SM: Did that change things a lot then when you had older people

1 and then families?

2 AE: Yes, I didn't have the help at the mess hall that I used to
3 have. Which was a big help and ah, didn't have the help
4 with the children during the day where they would come play
5 with them, they didn't have that. But I don't know my
6 having to cope with everything more or less by myself since
7 my husband had his fling so to speak, leaving camp and here
8 I was stuck and I felt the iniquity of the whole thing. A
9 woman is left to, is stuck with everything, a man is free as
10 a bird and they don't share with the care of the children or
11 the worry about their future or anything like that they just
12 go their own way.

inequity

13 SM: So then do you think that other women felt that way?

14 AE: I don't know, I felt that way.

15 SM: Well it certainly is a common feeling that women have
16 accepted over time that when they have children it changes
17 their lives much more than perhaps it does the men's.

18 AE: Uhuh, and of course the children are important and I
19 remember when before Douglas was born and I thought well, I
20 have had it I am going to devote myself to my kids and
21 forget him. We have to help with the kids, they are
22 important and if the woman didn't give up a few things and
23 do it willingly, that's the important part, not
24 begrudgingly, but be glad to give up things for their kids,
25 that is important. Thank ~~god~~ there are a few people who
26 will give up things for their children.

27 SM: Did you stay with your husband then over time?

28 AE: No

29 SM: You didn't?

30 AE: I don't know, well see, I was in love with him. That's my
31 problem. Well one day, well, we came back to L.A. and one
32 day out of the clear blue sky I found I was no longer in
33 love with him and so I said "well, all I have to do is
34 budget myself, see what I could do, get out of debt so that
35 my earnings will support the family. I am through with him,
36 I have had it. I'm going to devote the rest of my life to
37 my kids." And may I tell you something that maybe I don't
38 want my kids to know?

tape off

39 SM: Do you think that many relationships might have been
40 jeopardized by the (?? the microphone is being moved)

talked of her affair

1 between men and women (still too much microphone noise)
2 while they were staying at Heart Mountain. I know we were
3 talking a about this a little bit about this over lunch
4 because we were talking about somebody else (???) that met
5 somebody else at the camp and then was divorced and I just
6 wondered if that may have been a common experience going
7 through such a traumatic time.

8 AE: I'm sure that some relationships were weakened because when
9 that loyalty thing came up some women were loyal, the
10 husbands were not. I'm sure there was disagreement there
11 and yet in some cases the relationship got stronger. I have
12 two older sisters and their husbands were very supportive
13 with them. They helped with the wash and with the children
14 and I could see how their husbands cared for the well-being
15 of the family, the wife and the children. I think it made
16 them stronger. So it could work both ways.

17 SE: Umhmm, that's a good point, adversity can weaken or
18 strengthen a relationship. It depends on the people
19 involved but it does seem it such a strange piece of
20 American history what happened to the Japanese-American
21 people and the kind of stuff that you experienced being
22 relocated and living in conditions that were so unlike what
23 you were used to.

24 AE: It was an awful experience, but I think some people disagree
25 with me, but if it were not for the fact that we were
26 evacuated and if it were not for the fact that the 442nd and
27 the 100th set such a wonderful role model in what they did
28 for us, my life could have been very different. I would
29 have never developed fully as an understanding woman because
30 I feel that I understand people more, that I am more
31 compassionate, before I was not that compassionate. Also we
32 had more opportunities opened for us that were closed
33 before.

34 After the war men who had college degrees in their field
35 were able to find work in that line. Before they were just
36 plain market swampers, pushing a hand truck with vegetable
37 crates on them. They were able to go into the professions
38 and I began working in an all American company instead of a
39 Japanese company. Before it was nothing but Japanese
40 companies and Japanese bosses, whereas I found employment in
41 an American outfit and probably I was one of the few early
42 Japanese-Americans that they had hired and I told myself
43 that I've got to make good so that they will hire some more.
44 You know we were an unknown quantity, people didn't know
45 what to think of us, they didn't know what kind of work we
46 did because they never tried us out.

Jap
service
men

?

- 1 SM: So you liked this world change that forever changed the
2 direction of your life.
- 3 AE: Yes we've changed.
- 4 SM: Changed the kind of person that you were.
- 5 AE: Umhmm, from a narrow minded to larger horizons and see and
6 appreciate more. Appreciate other people's ideosyncrises
7 and their failures and try to concentrate on appreciating
8 their good points. It's funny, maybe some people became
9 bitter and stayed bitter, but for me it opened me up to life
10 as it is.
- 11 SM: That's wonderful. Well thank you, that may be a good place
12 for us to stop and I appreciate very much what you have
13 shared it will help to paint a larger picture of what life
14 was like when we have women's studies too.
- 15 AE: Well it's just that it was a very boring life in camp, but
16 it did me a lot of good.
- 7 SM: It did you a lot of good?
- 18 AE: Uhuh
- 19 SM: Thank you.