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My name is Aiko Horikoshi Pease. These are my memories as a camp internee during World War II.

My father, Tokujiro Horikoshi, came to the United States from Japan in 1906. He landed in Seattle, WA and worked his way down to Hollywood CA. He got a job doing housework and gardening for a lady while going to school. He was graduated from Polytechnic High, USC and BIOLA (Bible Institute of Los Angeles). Somewhere along the line he became a surveyor and surveyed many of the streets in Hollywood.

My mother was Caucasian of mostly German descent, having blue eyes and light brown hair. She was born in Des Moines, Iowa and was graduated from college there. I don't know when she came to California. She was a teacher and spent her evenings teaching English to the Japanese immigrants.

Since my father had some command of English, he became her translator. They fell in love and eloped to Seattle, WA in 1917. At that time, Japanese were not allowed to marry Caucasians. My mother lost her American Citizenship when she married my father. The couple was rejected by both families as well.

My father later went to Chicago, IL and earned his DD degree from McCormack Seminary. After coming back to Los Angeles, he founded the Japanese Presbyterian Church of Hollywood. I was born in 1923 and am their only child.

Around 1931 or so, a new law was passed and my mother was allowed to reapply for her American Citizenship. I still remember going with her when she was sworn in. She developed cancer and passed away in July of 1934. A couple of years later, my father went to Japan to visit his relatives. He returned with a new wife.

I vividly remember December 7th, 1941. We had just gotten out of church when a friend approached us and told us about Pearl Harbor. I was shocked, but had no idea it would affect my life so drastically. After all, I was born here and considered ^{myself} a loyal American citizen.

I was graduated from Belmont High School under the threat of curfew and threats of being rounded up and sent away. I was very confused and scared and couldn't figure why I was considered an enemy. What had I done? I, nor any of my friends, were a threat to our country.

Since my father and our church were the center of our community, all the Japanese came to him for guidance. All the registrations for our neighborhood were done there. I remember feeling mad, hurt and numb, not knowing from one day to the next what was going to happen to us. I remember an incident that happened in that time.

Someone in my neighborhood became very ill and needed some medicine from the drug store several blocks away. The curfew was on and they were afraid to venture out, so they called my father. I was asked to pick up the medicine and deliver it, probably because I don't look like a Japanese. Thank goodness I was not picked up and was able to help in that situation.

I registered at City College in a pre-med course. I remember how hard it was to concentrate on my studies with all the uncertainty and confusion going on around me.

When we were notified to evacuate on May 6 Or 7 (?) it was like a whole neighborhood having a garage sale. We set tables up on our front lawns and tried to sell as much of our possessions as we could. Much was just given away. We had been given two or three weeks to get rid of everything except what we could get into a duffle bag and carry with us by hand.

Then came the day I was forced to check out of college. One of my professors suggested I change my name and stay. I found out later that that wouldn't have worked. Anyway, I remember crying as I crossed Vermont Avenue and read the notices that were posted on all the telephone poles. They said: WARNING: All Japanese are not allowed to go beyond this point after 12 noon on that day and something about punishment if we did. I felt like all of my freedom had been taken away from me... and I guess it had.

The night before we were to leave for camp, I ran away. I remember sitting in a friend's car for hours trying to decide how I could get out of this terrible event that was going to happen the next morning. Finally, about 4:30 A.M., I crawled back through my bedroom window - right into my father's arms. He was so glad that I had come home. We cried together and he gently said I'd better get as much sleep as I could.

We were due to leave at 7 A.M. that morning. Friends took us to the Japanese Union Church on San Pedro St. near First St., where we were met by many large buses and soldiers with bayonets slung over their shoulders. I thought, "My goodness! They really think we are the enemy!!" I think all of us were in shock because everyone was very quiet and fearful. I remember crying all the way to the Pomona Assembly Center. There we were assigned to ugly, barren black barracks. We were given three cots with 2 inch mattresses - and nothing else as I recall. We were fed in mess halls - Army style. The food was lousy and not what we were used to eating. No rice, but potatoes. Not much vegetables or fruit, but bread and gravy. Everything was seasoned differently - no sho-yu.

The latrines were one big room with 4 or 5 toilets lined up with no partitions. The showers had no partitions, either. I remember taking a shower with my bathing

suit on. Menstrual periods were especially difficult to handle until my girl friend and I worked out a look out system where we'd take turns watching the door.

For the first three days, I was so overcome with depression and anger that I couldn't do anything but cry. My father finally said to me, "Aiko. You always wanted to be a nurse, so why don't you go to the hospital and get a job? I did, and I was hired as a nurse's aide. My life began to take on some meaning and purpose and my strong faith in God pulled me through.

We entered Pomona around the 6th or 7th of May, 1942. In August of that year, my family was told that we were being sent to "destination unknown" as the first people to open up another camp. We had no idea where we were going. We had to pack our meager possessions and some soldiers escorted us onto 3 or 4 train cars and off we went again. My parents were the chaperones for our car. The Japanese fellow who was our car monitor later volunteered for the Army. He was killed in action.

We were on the train for three days and three nights. Every time we went through a town, we had to pull our window shades down. There were also long delays along the way when we had to wait for other trains to go by. We went through a very long tunnel and came out all looking like Sambos covered with soot. The hard seats did not recline and we were all exhausted when we pulled in to our destination at 1:30 in the morning. We found ourselves in Heart Mountain, Wyoming in the middle of a dust storm. We first gathered in a mess hall and it was people from neighboring churches who welcomed us with hot cocoa and sandwiches. I will always be grateful for their hospitality, although I was so mad I couldn't eat.

Morning came and I found myself in a crudely built barrack in a camp built for 10,000 people. The set up was the same as Pomona with a mess hall and latrines in the middle of each block. The food was terrible until more people started coming in and cooks were hired. My job was to clean the newly constructed hospital and organize the supplies.

As the camp filled, so did the hospital. We had wings for men, women, children, obstetrics, pharmacy, administration, a mess hall and a wing for supply and laundry.

Our shifts were rotated: 2 weeks on days; 2 weeks on evenings and then graveyard. I had little spare time but enjoyed my work very much. If I remember correctly, they had three wage scales. The maintenance workers got \$12 a month. Nurses aides and other skilled workers got \$14 a month. Professionals, like doctors and ministers, got \$16 a month.

The canteen was a popular place right after pay day, as were the Sears and Montgomery Ward catalogs. Since we were all from Southern California, we had to invest in heavy jackets, gloves and boots to endure the cold blizzards of Wyoming. I didn't enjoy the weather there. It went from 106 above to 106 below with lots of snow and

the worst dust storms!! . Of course, we were surrounded by barbed (bobbed) wire fences, guard towers and soldiers walking around on foot.

We were on a plateau among sage brush and rattlesnakes. The barracks were covered with black tar paper. Each family had one room. Since there were only three in our family, we had the smallest room, somethink like 20 by 20 feet, with one door and two windows. We had a black, pot bellied stove which kept us warm during the bitter winters provided someone kept a supply of coal on hand. The coal was piled near the mess hall. The floor and walls were bare wood, some with wide cracks in between. Little by little our room became liveable.

My father got together with other ministers and conducted worship services. He had Bible study groups during the week, visited his former congregation and wrote to those who had gotten separated and were in other camps. There was one barracks set aside for meetings, church services, movies at night and occasional dances. Schools were started for children to continue their education. Clubs were started, as were baseball games and the like.

During the last few months of my stay in Heart Mountain, I took a temporary job in in Powell, a nearby town, as a domestic helper for a lady who had beoken her arm. That was a nice change, but it was there that I encountered the most prejudice. There were "No Japs allowed" signs in shop windows and we had to sit with the Indians on one side of the little theater. Powell had one department store on its two blocks of "downtown". It was one big room with several tables piled with merchandise like shoes, yardage and the like. There were two Japanese ladies at the yardage table and over by another table were three Caucasians talking about "those hicks from camp". I was standing nearby and my feathers were ruffled, to say the least. I went over to them and said, "Don't you call us hicks. We are from Hollywood, California. You don't even have one escalator in the whole state of Wyoming!", and walked away. I still remember how mad I was...ha-ha. My job lasted only three weeks, and I returned to camp.

I had been in camp one and a half years when I left to attend college in Wheaton, Illinois. My girl friend, Mary, had a domestic job in Chicago and we travelled together, first stopping over at a hostel in Chicago. I found it difficult ^{to adjust} to college and studies and after a year went up to Minneapolis, Minnesota to get married.

My father became very ill with cancer and stayed in camp until it closed in November of 1945. He was taken by train to County Hospital in Los Angeles. They sent him home the following February. They sent for me in March and I was with him when he passed away in April. Camp had destroyed his lifework and dreams, but I helped to reopen our church in Hollywood and it is thriving today.

My stepmother went back to Japan in 1952 where she passed away in 1955.

How do I feel about the government's apology? Well, I didn't think it would ever

happen. It took fifty years and a lot of hard work by people like Senators Matsunaga and Inouye of Hawaii. It will never erase the bitter memories, but I pray that it will never happen again.