

ALL WE COULD CARRY  
TRANSCRIPTION with time stamp

0:14 - 0:16

TEXT [December 7, 1941]

0:25 - 0:30

Franklin Delano Roosevelt: ... "a date which will live in infamy."

0:32 - 0:36

The news came that Pearl Harbor had been bombed, and it was a shock.

0:39 - 0:43

My dad always felt, you know, that he was really proud of being an American and so, naturally, he wanted us to feel the same.

0:48 - 0:54

Even at that age, I knew that we were in trouble. I knew that there would be hatred toward us.

0:57 - 1:02

TEXT [February 19, 1942, President Roosevelt authorized the removal of all Japanese and Japanese Americans from the West coast]

1:09 - 1:14

I don't recall real animosity but there was some feeling of tension.

1:16 - 1:22

Having to sell our farm I know was some stress I noticed among the family members at that time.

1:27 - 1:44

They were just yanked out of their livelihood, their homes. In some ways I think my folks felt they were being loyal doing what the government wanted them to do. I don't think that they ever thought they had any rights.

1:47 - 1:54

All of your possessions that you had, you either had to store or give it away. We lost everything.

1:58 - 2:01

The government told us that we could take that which we could carry.

2:02 - 2:06

All we had was what we wore and one suitcase.

2:12 - 2:16

Not knowing what's going to happen, you know. When you're that young, you just do what you're told.

2:18 - 2:31

All of us were being corralled and shipped somewhere. For what reason we don't know. And we had no notion that we were suspect. We had no notion that the government felt that we were potentially dangerous.

2:35 - 2:38

All of a sudden, I'm beginning to understand what racism is.

2:45 - 2:47

TEXT [The Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation presents]

2:48 - 2:50

TEXT [A Farallon Films Production]

2:51 - 2:58

TEXT [All We Could Carry]

3:02 - 3:08

TEXT [March 1942, 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry were forced into temporary "Assembly Centers"]

3:09 - 3:13

TEXT [Two thirds were American citizens]

3:28 - 3:41

I carried with me the 48-star American flag that my father used to fly and it went with me all through camp and relocation.

3:42 - 3:46

OVERLAPPING TEXT [19 years old at the time]

3:42 - 3:54

I was American and I loved my country and I loved my flag. But the general population didn't view us in that way.

3:58 - 4:07

Most of us had no idea what was happening to us or our families or to the Japanese people at the time.

4:02 - 4:04

OVERLAPPING TEXT [11 years old at the time]

4:08 - 4:15

It was bewildering for me. We didn't do anything, so why are we being treated this way.

4:12 - 4:14

OVERLAPPING TEXT [14 years old at the time]

4:16 - 4:23

In those days, we obeyed what the government says, what authorities say.

4:19 - 4:22

OVERLAPPING TEXT [15 years old at the time]

4:23 - 4:38

So you just did it. Because, I guess being Japanese American, I don't know whether we were not able to express our opinions.

4:26 - 4:30

OVERLAPPING TEXT [19 and 22 years old at the time]

4:40 - 4:55

Being Japanese, I felt that the Caucasians were in a different category. And I never really felt that I was equal to them. Because they have always been the boss.

4:40 - 4:43

OVERLAPPING TEXT [11 years old at the time]

4:57 - 5:02

What were we going to do? Rise up and fight? We couldn't do that.

5:04 - 5:12

We were just like a herd of cattle or sheep. They just directed us and we went there. We could have gone to our slaughter.

5:15 - 5:18

They ordered us to go there, we went there. They ordered us to do this, we did that.

5:19 - 5:24

The guards were watching you. And the spotlights would follow you at night.

5:25 - 5:39

We were not free. I saw the barbed wire fence around us and the guard towers and I thought, my god, this is a camp, a concentration camp.

5:42 - 5:53

It was a rude awakening. Yes, we were cognizant of that feeling, of being imprisoned.

5:55 - 6:00

TEXT [The government built ten "Relocation Centers" in remote areas of the country]

6:01 - 6:05

TEXT [In August 1942, the first groups were sent to Heart Mountain, Wyoming]

6:06 - 6:10

TEXT [14,025 people were imprisoned there, many for more than 3 years]

6:12 - 6:22

I remember going on the train and looking at my folks' sad faces. It must have been really hard. They didn't know what was going to happen to us.

6:27 - 6:43

We had to pull down our shades in the trains, especially when we came to a populated city or something. They said it was for our own protection, because maybe some of the people in the community might throw rocks or bottles at us. So we had to pull down the shades.

6:29 - 6:31

OVERLAPPING TEXT [11 years old at the time]

6:46 - 6:48

OVERLAPPING TEXT [Heart Mountain, Wyoming]

6:46 - 6:58

It was a long trip and when we got to Heart Mountain, we were all pretty exhausted. I wasn't very happy coming from California. I wished pretty hard that we would get back to San Jose some day.

6:56 - 6:58

OVERLAPPING TEXT [11 years old at the time]

6:59 - 7:04

Everybody was struck by the mountain. And when you see that, you know it's Heart Mountain. You can distinguish it from all the other camps.

7:05 - 7:11

I didn't think that there were so many Japanese around. I'd never seen that many Japanese before in one place.

7:12 - 7:16

We had something like 500 barracks or 20 blocks.

7:17 - 7:20

We were in a Block called Block 15, Barrack 1, Apartment E.

7:21 - 7:23

I lived in 27-17-B.

7:24 - 7:25

Block 23-6-E.

7:26 - 7:27

We were in Block 6 at the beginning.

7:28 - 7:32

And we lived in Block 2 and I even met some, a lot of California people.

7:33 - 7:36

We had people from Washington, San Francisco, San Jose, and Los Angeles.

7:37 - 7:39

It was the third largest city in Wyoming.

7:40 - 7:53

You had no privacy at all since it was my husband and me and my in-laws, his parents - mother and father, so the four of us were in one room.

7:44 - 7:49

OVERLAPPING TEXT [21 years old at the time]

7:54 - 7:58

There was a lot of adjustment. It was a lot of adjustment to bathing, even going to the bathroom.

7:59 - 8:00

Everyone can take a look at you.

8:01 - 8:10

When you went to the bathroom, we had to sit next to strangers and do our personal business. That was really, it was shameful, you know.

8:15 - 8:29

You're not just rounding up people and incarcerating them, it's total disruption of a society. What does a family have to look forward to, and what do I have now to look forward to, not knowing what was gonna happen in the future?

8:23 - 8:28

OVERLAPPING TEXT [16 years old at the time]

8:31 - 8:40

Our life was really stalemated and I think the family life was broken because at home a family has to stay together.

8:41 - 8:45

So it really, shall we say, disrupted the family cohesiveness.

8:46 - 8:49

I don't ever recall eating with my family.

8:50 - 8:55

The food was kind of so-so. I don't remember anybody getting fat there.

8:56 - 9:03

I remember one meal where we got a bowl of canned tomatoes and rice and that was our meal.

9:10 - 9:19

That first fall, there were a lot of dust storms, dust just coming right underneath the cracks and piling up inside the room.

9:20 - 9:24

It was really a sagebrush desert. There were rattlesnakes.

9:25 - 9:30

Coming from California, we were dressed, you know, for California weather.

9:31 - 9:36

It was really cold. Gee, the minute you stepped outside, it was so cold.

9:37 - 9:43

You had those potbelly stoves with, you would always go out and get a lot of the coal and keep warm.

9:45 - 9:51

TEXT [Drawings by Estelle Ishigo, Block 14-6-A]

9:54 - 9:59

That's the way it was, you know. We never complained or anything.

10:00 - 10:26

There were things to eat and running water. I think people adapt to things and they quickly make it into a positive experience. That's our strength. That's one of the things about the Japanese spirit where you just endure. And that's what we did.

10:27 - 10:29

My son, Ross, was born in Heart Mountain.

10:30 - 10:31

My dad died right in camp.

10:32 - 10:33

I graduated from Heart Mountain High School.

10:34 - 10:35

Boy scouts really kept us busy.

10:36 - 10:49

One of the gals in my block said, "I'll fix you up" so she fixed me up with this fellow and we went to the Sadie Hawkins dance and it turns out that I ended up marrying him.

10:50 - 11:08

When I turned 18 in Heart Mountain, then I became eligible for the draft, I was surprised that there were 63 of us out of Heart Mountain who had then resisted the draft notice. The thing about going to jail, I figured we're already in jail behind barbed wire so what difference did it make?

10:56 - 11:01

OVERLAPPING TEXT [63 men demanded their freedom before joining the military]

11:03 - 11:07

OVERLAPPING TEXT [They were sentenced to three years in federal prison]

11:09 – 11:22

My three brothers were drafted or enlisted. They were willing to give their life to prove that they were Americans.

11:17 - 11:20

OVERLAPPING TEXT [Nearly 800 men from Heart Mountain joined the army and fought in Europe]

11:23 - 11:27

TEXT [The 442nd was one of the most decorated combat teams in U.S. history]

11:29 - 11:39

There was never any doubt in my mind that we will be out eventually after the war was over. You knew that we were not going to be there forever.

11:58 - 12:29

We just did what anybody our age would do. Played football, basketball, baseball, and, you know, cards and things like that but we never discussed that this was a, you know, massive denial of human rights to take us without any due process and put us in, you know, these camps.

12:23

TEXT [The war ended in August 1945]

12:26

TEXT [In November the last Japanese Americans left and dispersed throughout the country]

12:32 - 12:41

We packed and we went to the front gate. Everybody gets \$25 and a ticket, that's it. So you made it with what we had.

12:42 - 12:54

We had nowhere to live. We stayed at a friend's house. We might go to the Twin City areas. I think we'll come to New Jersey, or maybe we'll go to Cleveland. And then my parents found a place in West Los Angeles.

12:55 - 13:01

When the war was over and we came back everything was stolen, so we had to start everything from scratch.

13:02 - 13:07

It was the ten years after camp that was probably the hardest. Because we came out with nothing.

13:08 - 13:14

I remember being spit on and I remember this woman looking at me and calling me a "Yellow Jap."

13:15 - 13:17

Well we hope that it never happens again.

13:18 - 13:29



Even though it was a lot of hardship and having to start life all over again, you can't be worrying about what you lost always. You just keep going.

13:36 - 13:41

TEXT [Interviews, Jeanette Misaka Block 23-6-E, Amy Imai Block 24-17-C, Raymond Uno Block 27-17-B, William Higuchi Block 6-10-D, Yaeko Abe Block 2-19-C, Shig Honda Block 15-1-E]

13:42 - 13:47

TEXT [Dorothy Shundo Block 15-3-E, Helen Nishimura Block 2-19-C, Jene Hori Deguchi Block 2-19-D, Bill Shishima Block 28-18-E/F, Mary Furuta Block 2-1-E, Takashi Hoshizaki Block 12-5-C/D]

13:49 - 13:52

TEXT [Produced, Directed, and Edited by Stephen Okasaki]

13:55

TEXT [Advisor Eric Mueller]

13:57

TEXT [Director of Photography Bart Nagel]

14:01

TEXT [B&W Photographs by Yoshio Okumoto Block 29-5-B, Color Photographs by Bill Manbo Block 28-7-F]

14:06

TEXT [8mm Home Movies by Naokichi Hashizume Block 28-2-C, Eiichi Edward Sakauye Block 23-16-E/F]

14:12

TEXT [Associate Producer Zand Gee, Production Assistants Brittany Powell, Noah Dassel, Yohannes Skoda, Assistant Editor Greg Knowles, Licensing Coordinator Joyce Shue, Transcriber Heather Larsen]

14:15

TEXT [Audio Post Production Berkeley Sound Artists, Sound Design James LeBrecht, Sound Editors Patti Tauscher, Jamie Branquinho, Chase Keehn, Digital Post Production Video arts, Inc., Colorist Ed Rudloph, Online Editor Loren Sorensen]

14:19

TEXT [Archival Resources, National Archives, Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project, Hashizume, Uemura & Ouchi Families, Japanese American National Museum, Seattle Post Intelligencer, Museum of History and Industry, Library of Congress, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, The Bancroft Library at University of California, Berkeley, Minnesota Historical Society]

14:24

TEXT [Special thanks to Bacon Sakatani, Tom Ikeda, San Jose Japanese American Museum, James Yamaichi, Chuck Uyeda, Alfed Saito, Majorie Matushita Sperling, Donald Yamamoto, Elaine Tanaka, Elaine Kondo McEwan, Tom Gorai]

14:30

TEXT ["Silent Flight, Sleeping Dawn," "A Heart Has Asked For the Pleasure," Written and Performed by MONO, Courtesy of Bank Robber Music, "Otomi-San," Performed by CLUB NISEI ORCHESTRA, Courtesy of Cord International, "Sunlight" and "Song," Written and Performed by MAX RICHTER, Courtesy of Music Sales & Bank Robber Music, "Blue Bicycle," Written and Performed by Haushka, Courtesy of La Chunga Music & Bank Robber Music]

14:36

TEXT [Major funding for the Interpretive Center provided by The Atlantic Philanthropies, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Ford Foundation, Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation, Higuchi and Saito Family]

14:41

TEXT [Hoshizaki Family, Ishiyama Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, The Kresge Foundation]

14:46

TEXT [Doug & Linda Nelson, Takata Americas, Marguerite A. Walk Private Foundation, Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund, LaDonna Zall]

14:51

TEXT [A Farallon Films production for the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation]

END OF TRANSCRIPTION