

Rev. Namio Yanagiwara, middle of the front row with glasses in this 1906 photo.

MISSION

**The role of the Mission among the Alameda Japanese
JME at 2416 EAGLE AVENUE, ALAMEDA, CA**



Seen here is 2416 Eagle, photographed in 2022. The exterior has not changed much since it was built in 1869.

JAPANESE EMPLOYMENT OFFICE
 2416 Eagle Avenue, Alameda
 furnishes most reliable and expert help
 of all kinds promptly.
 Telephone Eagle 532.
 THE STUDENT CLUB OF J. M. E. C. S.

The Japanese Mission at 2416 Eagle Avenue served many purposes, including finding jobs for Issei men.

The identity of the man at left will forever remain unknown... but he was one of hundreds of Alameda Isseis who found work. J.M.E.C.S. stands for Japanese Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

There were two problems that prevailed among the earliest Japanese immigrants in Alameda, CA. A bachelor society (gambling) and the need to learn the culture of a new country. Thus Delia Dibble and Pearl Standerfer initiated a night school to deal with those issues at 2312 Encinal Avenue in 1898.

By 1902 or 1903, 2312 Encinal, or what the Issei called *The Mission*, was too small. It then moved to a large, two story home at **2416 Eagle Avenue**. The Mission now served as boarding house, English school, employment office and house of worship. And it got a name: Japanese Methodist Episcopal Church, South, officially recognized with a full time minister, Rev. Namio Yanagiwara, and 20 members.

POSITIONS WANTED.
 SITUATION WANTED—Competent woman wishes housework, cooking, washing, etc. References, if required. Address Box 479 Argus.

Alameda Daily Argus • December 19, 1908

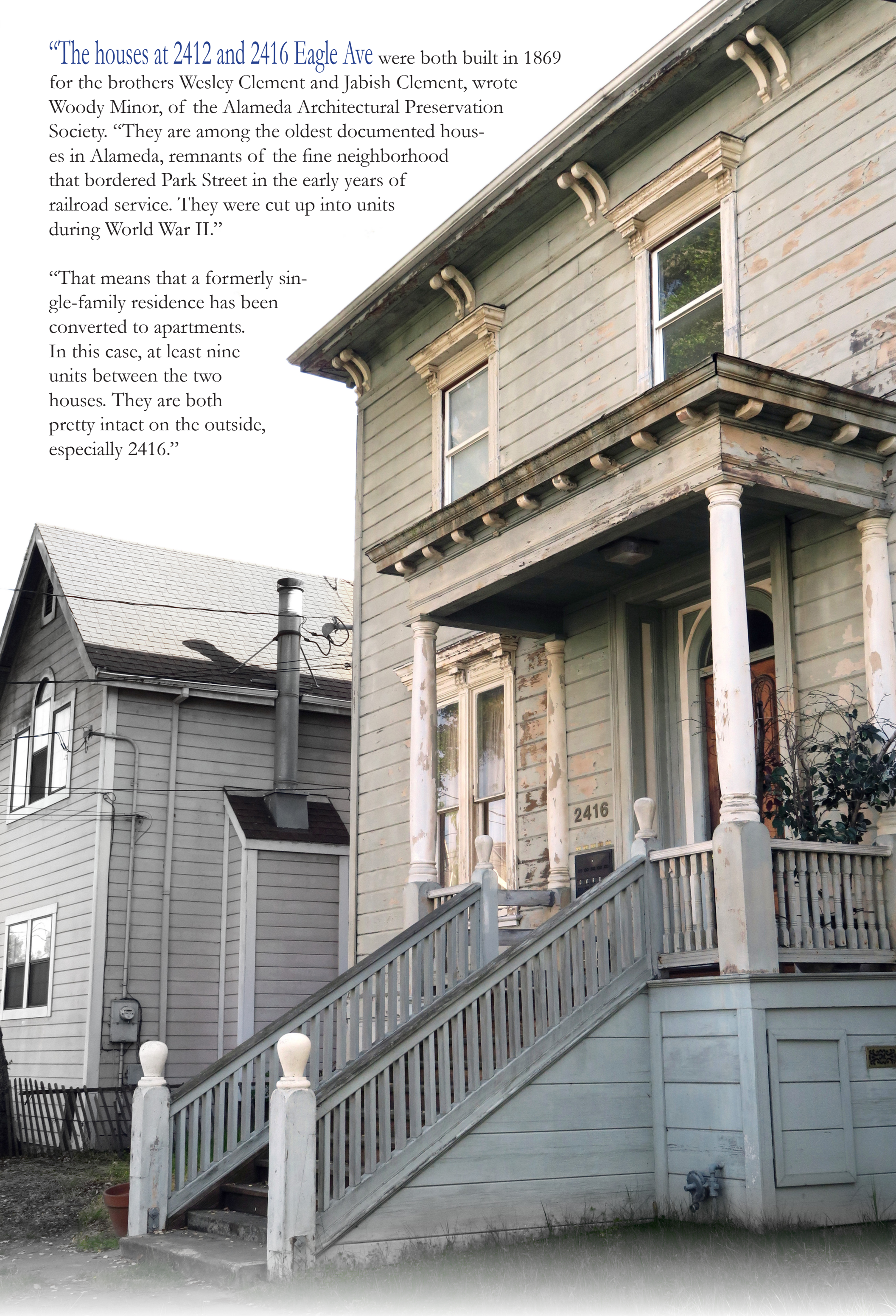
Alameda Japanese men worked first as shoemakers, “schoolboys” or house servants, gardeners, ferry boat cooks, carpenters and, in the summers, as cannery workers with the Alaska salmon fleet which was berthed on the Alameda side of the San Antonio (now Oakland) Estuary.

When women arrived, they rode bicycles to work as household domestics. Many families started small businesses, including laundries, nurseries, groceries, barbers, florists, bathhouses and bicycle repair shops. Alameda had its own tofu and seimin (noodle) factories.

Five years later, the church moved to its present location at 2311 Buena Vista Avenue.

“The houses at 2412 and 2416 Eagle Ave were both built in 1869 for the brothers Wesley Clement and Jabish Clement, wrote Woody Minor, of the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society. “They are among the oldest documented houses in Alameda, remnants of the fine neighborhood that bordered Park Street in the early years of railroad service. They were cut up into units during World War II.”

“That means that a formerly single-family residence has been converted to apartments. In this case, at least nine units between the two houses. They are both pretty intact on the outside, especially 2416.”



The house to the left is 2418 Eagle. 2412 is unseen and to the right.

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About six weeks after advertising themselves as the Japanese Employment Office, their ads in the Alameda Daily Argus changed to The Japanese Mission. November 25, 1903

2416