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The Happenings From December 7 and on (41-42)

Pearl Harbor was attacked a little over a year ago on Sunday, December 7, 1941, by the Japanese. On the eighth of the same month and year the United States declared war on Japan.

Yes, it is over a year since the war had begun, although it seems only yesterday. In many varieties of magazines, newspapers, over radios, all we read or heard about was the war. United States had entered. Everywhere we go war! War! War! When trying to retire from work or school, trying to relax our minds by getting a good nights sleep, I can hear the words, war, WAR, WAR!, WAR! ringing in my ears.

Many days had passed, then weeks. Finally the day everyone had been waiting for had arrived. Yes, it was Christmas, as usual, the young and old had done their shopping early. Everyone in the United States tried to forget about the war, that certain day and tried to make the nineteen hundred and forty-one Christmas, the best Christmas they had ever had.

Again another holiday came. This time it was New Years day. It is the day to start another year from the beginning. Having a great celebration, I can see that everyone had a wonderful time.

Days, weeks, and then months had rolled by. I didn't realize war had been going on for so long. We worked, slept, and went to school as was, before the war had begun.

Then one day, we read about the evacuation order the Seattle Japanese residents were given. I knew then it wouldn't be long before our section of the country would begin moving out.

Soon after the Seattle Japanese were evacuated our definite order came. May 15, 1941. I'll never forget that day. Leaving my home in Alderton, about two miles south of a town called Sumner which had a population of less than one-thousand. One of the saddest moments of my life was the bidding of my schoolmates and friends farewell. And, of yes, my beloved dogs and cats.

Since we lived so near to the Puyallup Assembly Center, we had to find our own transportation. There were about seven Japanese families living in my district including us.

We stayed in Camp Harmony for about five months, when an official order for all of us in Puyallup Assembly center to move more inland came. There were a lot of rumors then going on, but none of us believed them.

Another definite order came saying where we will go. It said to a relocation center in Idaho.

We left Puyallup Assembly Center on September first, bidding our friends good bye again. I lived on first avenue, but since my sister had to ride on the Pullman we had to leave a few days before the rest of the people who lived on first avenue. I beleive we left the same time the fifth avenue people left.

The ride on the train was fun, although I did get a little dizzy. We stuck our heads out the windows for awhile and by the time it was dinner our faces were covered with soot. Maybe some mistook us with the cooks in the train who were all negroes.

One good thing, I believe everyone liked on the train, was the good foods they fed us. Honestly every meal was perfect.

We came to our destination on the next day about four o' clock. How happy we all were to get off of the stuffy train!

It seemed sort of queer to be in our new homes again which was to be ours for good till the duration.

By september four or five of the evacuees in Camp Harmony had been cleared out. Now, that all of us are quite settled down, things will begin to be better.

Following the fifth day the Portlanders began coming in. More and more people added. We liked the idea of them coming in because it meant new acquaintance.

Then the months had rolled by, September, October, and then December. November sixteen, the day school had begun.

We had our Thanksgiving dinner here in camp and should be mighty thankful for it. Since the meat rationing and all had started some of the outsiders couldn't afford to buy turkeys. Look back to Europe. Those poor children and their dads and mothers in the war torn zone. Some of them, are probably, starving to death, so you can all see why we all in this camp should be thankful about.

Then came Christmas again. I thought it would be a terrible Christmas day this year on account of the rainy days we have been having, and since we are in camp, but it turned out to be one of the best. I guess it is partly because our mess hall tied for first with dinning hall seventeen in the mess hall contest.

Now that Christmas is over we must look forward to New Years Day. Another holiday coming around the corner! I hope all of us will have fun and enjoy ourselves as we did on Christmas day!