

# Relocation Center

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Composition II, 4



TYPICAL BLOCK

LAUNDRY + MESS HALL IN THE MIDDLE

BARRACKS ON EACH SIDE

# Relocation Center

## A Camp as a whole

1. The Blocks
2. Mess halls
3. laundry
4. Administration Area.

## B. Schools

1. Students
2. Teachers.
3. School Days

## C. Hospital

1. Staff
2. Nurses aide
3. Wards
4. Out Patient Dept.

## D. The Irrigator

1. Camp newspaper
2. Staff

## E. Dances

1. Annual Ball
2. Cafe Adios

## F. Entertainment

1. Carnivals
2. U.S.O.
3. Teen-age Canteen

## G. Fun wasn't all

1. Mess Hall strike
2. Boilerman strike

## H. Winter

1. Snowball fight
2. Ice-skating

## I. Christmas in Hunt

1. Best decorations
2. Christmas day.

g. Those last Days

1. Relocate now
2. Farewells
3. Gate Closes.

## Relocation Center

I have chosen this topic because I think it would be of interest to others and because it brings back camp memories. To others it may seem a dull life but I found it exciting and even thrilling.

My first impression of the camp was just a desolate sagebrush spot where barracks were lined up together. My heart sank and I couldn't bear to think of spending part of my life there.

Those first two months were the hardest; waking up to the sound of mess hall gong, using public showers, and eating in mess halls. School was nothing new but getting used to the weather was really new. During the latter part of November we witnessed the Idaho mud and snow. Mud was terrible as it was so sticky that when we finally got one leg out the other would sink in. It even got so that some lost their boots. Snow came in abundance children were delighted but old folks crowded about the stoves and traded gossip and current events.

I adjusted myself to that type of living and learned to like it. Camp was a wonderful experience and I wouldn't trade those years for anything.

## Camp as a Whole.

The camp was situated right in the depth of sagebrushes and therefore made it rather desolate place. But with the increasing population it began to be a community within itself.

Camp was shaped in "S" form and the blocks ran from one through forty-four. In each block there was a mess-hall and laundry right in the center and odd numbered barracks on one side and even on the other. The apts ran from A-7, "A" being the largest and "7" the smallest.

Laundry was the center attraction for all the up to date news could be picked up by the women who gossiped more than their intended purpose of washing or ironing. On the left was the showers, bathtubs, and basins. All the girls gathered there because of the two large mirrors on the wall.

The mess-hall was next to the laundry and in the front was a bell which rang at each meal time. Mess hall staff consisted of cooks, dishwashers, waitress, and storekeeper.

The so-called business section was the

administrative area where post office and other important offices were located. From each end they came to take care of legal matters, money orders, or C.O.D. and thus making it the most business and important section of camp.

At bus meet "2" in beyond road gate  
bus m. swt - ptof gowith one meet nos exch  
tigia jukin) bus 110 - team o now went work  
and no crossed boundary bus then return all in  
f.d. wait nos tgo sit. netto all no were bus abiz  
f. 23/11/1923 all "F" bus teams) all piled "D"  
not wanted to return all now returned D

All judge having al blues swim stop of gu all 110  
absolutely safe next man long stop abu newton  
now tpe it and privacy so pictures to swimming  
class all P.D. entries bus, established number all  
volunteer good out all so second night competition  
D

judged all of them long and swim all  
D to pass judge had a cool track all in bus  
exhibit to determine first best result, and long done  
longest distance bus cessation, 2nd place  
all cars which received bill no 20 all

## School

During my freshman year we studied the primitive ways of men, their living standards, daily traits, and above all how they educated themselves with signs and all. We, not only studied it but experienced it as well, of course all in a different way. But it might as well have been for studying in a room each one did his own reciting. Instead of having individual desks we studied on one long table barely having room for our elbow. Oh, but it was primitive to us.

If we had expected school to be the way it had been we were very much mistaken. We had known systematic ways but instead it was all hectic. We were supposed to have gathered for assembly and be assigned to rooms but somehow the word never had got along and teachers did their best to settle us. That first day disillusioned me and I wondered if everyday was like that.

Teachers, well they were same assigning homeworks and whatnot. But still that feeling

of curiousness remained for we wondered whether they had come on their own accord or was sent by the government. Later we learned it was their wish that they had come. We got to know them pretty well, they weren't only teachers. But friends. Perhaps it was that feeling of intimacy that made school so interesting. Some of them left on the second year either to further their education or to assume other positions. We were sorry to see them go.

Students, they didn't differ from any other. Wearing skirts and sweaters, worried about their exams, and excited about the coming dance. No, we weren't different just because it happened to be a relocation center.

Thinking back now to those "school days" they were wonderful. I wish that I could further time on some days.

I have gained knowledge of knowing other peoples trouble and sharing it. That you can start a primitive life and end up with wealth, not of money but richness of heart. Through school teachers, and camp life I have learned that which I wouldn't have otherwise.

## The Hospital

Hospitals all smell of antiseptic and ours wasn't any exception. As you came in through the main entrance the first that greeted you was the smell of the antiseptic. On your right was ward one and it extended on down to ward sixteen so you can see readily see how long the main corridor was.

The staff consisted of four doctors and about ten nurses. The rest were nurses aide, ages running from fourteen to forty. We attended classes and learned how to make a bed properly, give hypodermics, change minor dressings, and other duties. About the only thing we weren't allowed to do was the injection through the vein. We worked on three shifts of eight to four, four till midnight and midnight to eight in the morning.

Ward itself was built conveniently nurses desk, medication room, scrub room, private rooms, and finally the open ward. The only wards that differed was the obstetrical and the isolation ward. Walking further you come to the out-patient departments and there you see people waiting for

their appointments in dental, X-ray and so on.

Some sitting their nervously, few knitting and reading, and most looking as if the end had come.

You see girls about sixteen wearing the aide uniform Rushing about making themselves important as possible. But on the whole doing a splendid job of relieving the acute shortage of help. Once in a while a white capped nurse peek out of the curtain and ask for more morphine, bandage, or iodine. Ambulance drivers bringing in stretcher cases, boy with sprained ankle, appendix cases, and whatnot. One part of the hospital which is never dull.

Then on down to ward sixteen where the isolation patients are kept. You can't talk to them directly but through a glass window. They all smiling and anxiously waiting for the day when they too, can walk about freely.

Out through the back exit with the smell of antiseptic still following, you've just been through a hospital tour and you can't get rid of it soon.

## Newspaper.

Newspaper is essential in ones life for that is one way of keeping up with the world. Radio is another but when you are in camp you are in camp you can't turn the dial and find out what's going on in camp. So the only means was by talking, what you heard, and saw, which wasn't very accurate. That continued until the councilmen got together and decided upon establishing a camp newspaper, which would come out every Saturday.

The staff was chosen by teachers and councilmen. After much discussion on whether to have just American section or Japanese also, they decided on having both. Therefore the staff consisted of two editors, one for each section. Reporters were seniors who had intention of leading a newspaper career. Now, the only problem was the name for the paper. A contest was held and finally the title, "Ikkagator" was taken. The first edition came out on November 12, 1942.

They announced vital statistics, movies, dances, schedule for churches, and such. On special occasion such as Christmas, New Year, and Easter

an addition came out featured with cartoons, illustrations, and pictures.

The last edition came out on August 9, 1945. Newspaper was a essential part of us during our stay in camp.

## The Camp Dances

The traditional Valentine Day was observed with election of the queen and her courts. With the election over the project director presented her to her escort and that night there would be a camp wide dance. Main feature would be the presentation of her crown and the grand march. Refreshments would be served by girl scouts. So far that was one of the best dances during the first year.

On the second year our high-school auditorium was built and that hall was used for almost every social gathering. Memorial services and church affairs were also held there. So, it was natural for the committee to want to hold the, "Annual Sweetheart Ball". This time it was promised to especially be a big affair, the hall was decorated with roses and carnations, throne for the queen and her courts, and something they never had in other dances, checkroom. The dance was really successful.

Our last year in camp, though we didn't know it till late in May. So by then

it was too late to combine the Valentine and farewell dance.

"Cafe Adios" was chosen for the last dance ever to be held by the community activity. Decorations consisted of Spanish decorations and a couple did a tango during intermission. Though it should have been a gala evening, it held a sad atmosphere. By popular demand that since this was the last dance it would be longer than usual.

"Cafe Adios" and the "Sweetheart" was one of the best dances in camp.

## Entertainment in Hunt

One of the things Hunt was most noted for was the "United Serviceman Organizations." Headed by a veteran and his wife it was really a success.

When the first batch of boys came home on their furloughs they really received a welcome of dances, bonfires, parties, and best of them all a carnival. As all carnivals are, we had bingo games, stands, ring and penny toss, and door prizes. Because the high school auditorium was so big, it was held there. So instead of going all over to each concession, all we had to do was cross the floor to each of them. With the funds raised from the carnival a jukebox was bought which added a glony to the dances.

For the boys who came home on winter, when the snow was in abundance they went sliding, and ice skating. later cocoa and coffee was served to them. During the summer swimming and picnic was popular. Either winter or summer furloughs were enjoyed by all.

Pins were given out to the girls who served more than six months. With this the membership card

was also given. During the first few months, the girls washed the dishes, cleaned and did the so-called dirty work until they were familiar with the routine. later on they played ping-pong or sat around and talked with the soldiers. When the six months was completed they were full-fledged hostesses.

Because of this organizations, boys no further dreaded to come back to camp for their long-awaited furlough. Instead they looked forward to come back to camp and dreaded to see their visit end.

For this the members and the organizers were commended and were given a certificate. It surely was a worth-while organizations.

## Fun Wasn't All

Just as camp starts to organize and everything running smoothly, something must happen as an I thought it was too good to be true.

The people started complaining of the food, the way in which it was prepared, and so on. As a result the cooks started a strike. Certainly the kitchen administration tried his very best to calm it down and put an end to it, but the cooks were stubborn. After the way the people talked, what was the use of them sweating and working hard? Well, they had their points but so did we.

One good thing that came out of this was that school held an irregular session because the mess halls was being runned by block volunteers and thus couldn't have the lunch on time. We were satisfied and the food wasn't too bad either. Though the school boards weren't, late as we were in starting school missing out by weeks like this was terrible. So as an end must come to everything the administrator and chief cooks councild together and again same routine were resumed. Much as we hated to see it come to an

end because that excitement was just what we needed to buck up our spirits it was good to get back to the old routine.

If it isn't one thing it's another and the Boileman had to strike too, because they thought the houses were too long, and the children were using up too much hot water for some nonsense.

When it lasted about two weeks we became disgusted and also dirty from the lack of showers. Girls who took pride in their nice shiny hair didn't now they were too busy itching their scalps. At the end of the third week the strike came to a stop. With the understanding of course, that we were to appreciate hot water.

So the camp finally started going and life was same for a while. We looked forward for a school strike but no such luck.

## Winter in Hunt.

To most of us, winter consisted of snow, and cold weather. But the word, "cold" really NEVER meant anything until we experienced winter in Hunt. Rumors such as that it was so cold that everytime we talked outside our mouths would turn to icicles, were often heard. Ears would be frost-bitten and cause sickness. Not knowing what it was really like was bad enough but rumors such as this was unbearable. Believe me, we all hoarded coals by buckets and prepared to meet winter. The spirit that existed during that month was as if we were facing death any minute. Though, I can laugh at it now, it wasn't laughable then.

When snow did fall in early November we prepared for the worst. Snow came in abundance and we all took advantage of it. Snowball-fights WERE EVER SO popular among young and old. You would see an old man playing in the snow with his grandchildren enjoying every minute of it. It did one good to see sights like this. Then too, much sliding was done. From the steepest hill we could ever find we came down that hill

like an airplane coming down to an unexpected crash. It was breath-taking just to watch them come down.

Canals were thickly frozen and ice skating became one of the favorite pastimes. Because the canal ran from one end to another we skated back and forth. Though, it took us good half-hour to get to one end we, never the less skated that distance. The older folks predicted danger of ice-breaking and drowning but fortunately this, never occurred.

Though, it was cold ; pastimes such as, ice-skating and sliding made us forget. I hated to see that winter end and looked forward to another winter in Hunt.

## Christmas In Hunt

Holiday trimmings! Dull, black mess-halls suddenly took life with bright colors and wreaths hanging from the window. Every spare moment was taken up for decorating the mess-halls. Contests were going to be held and prizes given out. Every night we would help, some cut papers while others pasted, strung popcorns, and painted. It was fun and towards the end cocoa was served.

Then, came Christmas Eve. Though our mess-hall didn't win it went on the honor list. Just outside the laundry we built a bonfire, all gathered around and sang Christmas carols. Though, we didn't say it we were all thinking of how it would have been and should have been. Each of us aware of how, one another felt, but dared not to say anything for fear we would break down. A young lady was leading the carols. Her husband in the army, and two sons also. Yet, she was doing something to help make it cheerful. We all felt selfish and thought if she could grin and take it, so could we. After this, it was much more fun.

I attended the midnight-mass and it was very beautiful and inspiring. Maybe it was

different but never the less beautiful.

Christmas morning! gifts were out by  
Santa Claus and greetings exchanged. Camp-wide  
service was held at the gymnasium by Father  
Clement. To conclude this lovely Christmas, a dance  
was held in every mess-hall.

As I look back to those holidays I think,  
"The good old days?" Kind of wish I was back  
there again. Maybe it's the snow that made it so  
nice.

## Those hast Days

The enormous and complicated problem now confronting the Minidoka administrator was to urge the people to relocate and start a normal life again. But the people however, had different ideas and were not too enthusiastic about going out with bare hands and starting new in some strange community where discrimination or physical danger might be faced. The people couldn't be blamed for this, for more than a year they had lived in camps, crowded, without privacy, or conveniences, and with liberties denied. We were afraid to re-enter into normal life and compete with social life. With this thought in mind the administrator set about to urge the people to relocate now.

One by one, convinced that now was the time, made plans to relocate. Some went east, south, but the majority of us all went back to the west. Still, there was that feeling of doubt and uneasiness. Those who still weren't sure received letters from friends saying everything was fine and to hurry and come. By November, camp was cleared of all habitants.

As we look back our thoughts carry us to the days when we first looked upon the dusty land which was to be our home for awhile, that first winter in Idaho, school, skating, and carnivals. All those memories are wrapped up in one thought of the days spent in Idaho.

Now, the gate to Minidoka Relocation Center is closed forever, but not our heart which still carries the past.