

Your husband was taken into an inland camp? Do you remember about the FBI coming to your home?

Yes, he had been waiting for them to come because he had packed his suitcase; every morning after he brushed his teeth he put his toothbrush in the suitcase again. They didn't come and we waited until about the middle of March. By then he was the only man in the whole valley at home so every day women and children came and then, "yoroshiku tanomimasu", you know and everything. But yoroshiku tanomimasu was taken because when he was cleaning the church with my son the policeman found the Japanese textbook. We had a Japanese language school on Saturday in the church, so that's why he was taken to Roseburg, New Mexico.

It must have been very difficult for you. Your husband was not with you and you just had your 13 year old son to prepare for the evacuation?

Yes, and then on top of it, the church people decided on an evacuation sale which just put everything on the table for friends to come to buy because the financial condition....so busy and I couldn't think of myself. It kept me busy. The minister was taken so it happened to be my house was next door to the church. It was very convenient so even at night I could lock up and everything, and so I couldn't think of anything.

What center did you go to?

Gila, Arizona. From the assembly center we took the train. There in the train we had real coffee so it was a good treat. And then we went there and as far as you can see, just sand and desert....One thing I remember that my husband said, the FBI told me, count your blessings every day and just take every step day by day.

Do you have anything particular you would like to share with us?

I didn't say much but what the government did to the Nisei people in the camp. They put them in camp even though they are citizens and why did they draft from there? Every time I go to the people who are sending a boy to the army, it made me angry.

What brought you here?

I don't know whether you know the place called Kamakura? Its a very famous historical place. I was teaching kindergarten there and then I met a wonderful, fine Christina lady who was an independent missionary in Japan. Then in 1923 we had that great big Kanto earthquake. We went through that awful days together. We didn't have any electricity... nothing for 3 weeks. And then she had to come home because of her father's illness. She said she would wait for me if I could get the passport. Oh no, I said, you have to go and in 5 days she sailed for America. And then-- that was September--and then in March I was able to come to America because of her earnest determination for me to come into the U.S.. At that time the Exclusion Act enacted so very special students were accepted as American students from American schools but I was able to come then because of her and I came to America in 1923, 1925.

What were you doing before Dec 7?

We were living in Santa Maria, Calif. just about 125 miles from Los Angeles. And my husband's business was the lettuce business. Not growing it but he was the, what do you call it, _____ pricing the market. And then he gardened three times a week from Santa Maria to Pismo Beach, back and forth on the coast, not inland, the coast. That's where the trouble was--that's why he was suspected as signaling to the battleships from Japan. That's why he was taken in custody. We lived in Santa Maria and were evacuated from Santa Maria.

What were your feelings on Dec 7?

The next day was Monday. The day after Pearl Harbor we were worried. He didn't go to work and we sat down and just looked at each other and then our son came home and nothing happened. So I asked him, How was it? What? he said. He was only 13. So afterward I heard the principal called all the students to an assembly and gave them a talk. And very nice-- the attitude of the people was so nice. So we were quite relieved but still kind of scared.