

Transcription of the diary of Marion Bell, September 19 through November 21, 1942

Note: All spelling, punctuation, and paragraph breaks are recorded exactly as written. Some names were originally written in multiple ways, and misspellings were transcribed (not changed to the correct spelling). Best guesses for unclear handwriting are in brackets []. Pages are numbered on the original diary simply with a plain number – in this transcription, the page numbers are written in brackets for visual clarity (example: [p.12]).

[[diary starts September 19, 1942]]

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My Experiences at Topaz, Utah

Introduction:

Lorne drove a '36 Chevrolet pick-up

I drove a '39 Mercury sedan

Both heavily loaded with our belongings

Lorne & I left Thelma Marie's in South Pasadena, Calif at 2:30 PM on the afternoon of Sep. 19th 1942 (Saturday). My journey to Topaz was full of adventure. When we left the service station in Rialto I was to lead the way with Lorne following after. By misfortune I took a different turning than he did which made my path out to the Cajon Pass longer than his. Because of this mistake Lorne un-knowing took the lead. When I was only 2 or 3 miles up the Pass the motor refused to turn over. I waited by the side of the road for a half-hour. Lorne did [not] appear. I began to believe that he had had difficulty then I began to believe that possibly I had made a wrong turn and he was ahead of me.. At last a motor cop came along. I stopped him & told him my trouble. He said that he would see what he could do. He thought the car had vapor-lock. He finally got it started and I thanked him & drove on. After another six miles or so the motor stopped again. I finally waved down 2 soldiers who were driving by. They pushed the car around so that I could coast down hill to the last garage we had passed. They followed in their car to be sure that I reached the garage.

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I'm now of the firm opinion that many kind & helpful people live about if only they know that one is in distress.

The garage mechanic said that I needed a new fuel pump. He put it in to the tune of \$3.00 and I went on my way again after having lost 1 ½ hours. I continued on my way until I arrived in Barstow. [There/Then] I went to the Standard station hoping that Lorne would be waiting for me. He wasn't. Then I asked one of the men if he had been there. He didn't think so. The next best thing I could think of was to try to contact the station in Rialto to see if Lorne had had trouble. When I finally got the telephone operator on the busy busy party line phone,

she said that she couldn't put through a call for 2 ½ hours. This left me no alternative but to proceed. Before doing so I asked another man at the station if Mr. Bell had been there. It was my good fortune that this man remembered having waiting on him & that he had asked if anyone had left a message for him. Now I knew that he was ahead of me. I asked the man to say I was on my way to Los Vegas if he should contact the station again.

By this time I had lost another

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half-hour.

When within 5 miles of Los Vegas I nearly ran over a calf that appeared on the road out of the darkness. I swerved to the left and missed it by inches nearly scaring me to death. A mile or so farther on there had been an accident with a truck that appeared at first to look like ours but, thank Heaven, it wasn't when I inquired. At last at 11:30 P.M. I reached the first Standard Station in Los Vegas. The man there had no record of Lorne's having been there but directed me to another station 5 blocks up the highway. Driving slowly I [inde...indeavored?] to see the truck in the station parking lot.

Just as I had made up my mind that it wasn't there & decided to sleep in the car until morning, I heard Lorne's voice calling my name.

I gave a sigh of relief and almost wept with joy to see him there waiting for me. He was more worried than I, I do believe, & was about ready to try and phone Barstow to see if he could trace me.

We found a place to get a bite to eat and then hunted for a hotel room but to no avail.

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all rooms were taken so we drove on for ten miles, pulled over to the side of the highway and slept in the car for 4 or 5 hours. Then, somewhat refreshed we preceded on our way and at last arrived in Delta about 3:00 P.M. Sunday.

We left the pick-up truck in a storage garage and drove together, in the Mercury, out to the Relocation Project which is 16 miles out of Delta. About half of the distance was oiled road, the other half is gravel & dust.

I was very fortunate to arrive in good weather with no dust storms as it was we could identify the Project by the clouds of dust way off in the distance. It was a pleasant surprise to find that the Project is in the center of a valley completely surrounded by beautiful mountains. Nearby is a very small town, the county seat, call[ed] Abramam.

The Mormon families here claim that in their book of prophecy it says that some day Abraham will have a larger population than any of the counties in Utah. They also claim that Topaz is built on the original site of Abraham.

My first close-up view of Topaz was far from discouraging. It was much

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as I expected after visiting the Tule Lake Project. The buildings seem to be better constructed and built for cold weather. There were 1800 people living on the grounds when I arrived with 500 arriving each day.

The first meal I had there was on Sunday evening. We had very good food consisting of a mixed vegetable salad, chicken, rice, noodles, bread & jam, canned apricots, & coffee. The next night was also chicken, carrots, rice, gravy, celery, bread, coffee, milk or tea & fresh oranges.

About 250 people are served in a dining room. The service is cafeteria style. It reminds me very much of a YMCA or YWCA camp dining room.

I meet some very interesting people, both Japanese & Caucasian the first night.

The second night (Mon) I attended a mass meeting held for the newcomers. The supervisors told the group about the jobs they were trying to do with the help of the Japanese & how successful the community could be if they all worked together.

About 10:30 P.M. we drove back to our hotel room in Delta. The sight was beautiful with the glow from the moon which was nearly full.

It still seems like a dream that I am

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here. I suppose I shall not fully realize it until I'm living out at the Project. I hope that will be soon.

Today, Tuesday, we arose at 6:30 and had breakfast together before Lorne left for Topaz. One of the men said the trains would arrive at 7:30. There will be 51 small babies arrive today.

(I forgot to say that the project where the buildings are is 1 mile square & the military area which will eventually be put under cultivations is 5 x 7 miles. This outside boundary is patroled by the military police who stop you twice as you enter & as you leave.)

For dinner to-nite we had chop suey, soup, ice tea, and chocolate pudding. (We only pay 25¢ per meal) At the evening meeting Rev. Goto spoke to the newcomers in Japanese and later gave a brief summary of Mr. Earnst talk. Three of the school people were introduced; Dr. Carlisle the Supt. And the adult Supt & Elementary Principal.

It was announced that a baby girl had been born in the settlement today. Near the end of the meeting a small Japanese boy came running in to his mother shouting "The mattresses have come. The mattresses have come." Everyone

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had to smile. Folks were happy then because they had been afraid that they'd sleep on the floor for their first night.

The trains operate in a strange manner. The people seem to always arrive before the mattresses & stoves do. The builders are having a hard time getting the buildings up ahead of the daily arrival of the Japanese.

After the meeting Lorne had a meeting so I waited in his office until he returned. Our rug and bookcase are there for him to use until we get our apartment.

I got acquainted with the Roscoe Bells' today. He is in charge of agriculture for Topaz. They have four children.

Everyone seems very friendly and very interested in the success of Topaz.
We finally reached our hotel room by 11: P.M. thusly allowing 7 hours for sleep.

Wednesday Sept. 23 ---

Today the first baby was born at Topaz. A little girl. Fifty-one babies arrived by train also. I didn't go out to Topaz for dinner. Lorne came in town. Just as we were about to go to our hotel for any early sleep Lorne met three Japanese young men on the street. One of them was a

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soldier in uniform. After making inquiries of them he discovered that two of them wished to get out to Topaz to visit relatives. Phoning was done and passes were arranged for them Lorne offered to drive one of the young men and a girl who was also from Denver out to Topaz. This took time so we finally ended up by getting to be[d] at 11:00 as usual.

Thursday. Sept. 24 ---

Today I have a cold & slept in until 9:30 not leaving my room until 11:00 A.M. I met Mrs Lafabrique on the street and she asked me to go home with her for lunch and then drive out to Topaz for dinner. This I did. We got out there by the middle of the afternoon so we hunted up some addresses & started out to do some visiting. First we called on the Rev. Mrs Goto and met her and her two small boys. We had only been there a few minutes when Signe Lafabrique got sick so I went for her car & took her to the hospital. She stayed there until her husband took her home about 6:00 P.M.

A young Japanese ordained minister took me to the room where the new entrants were being inducted into Topaz.

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He showed me the things they had to do; first they signed a slip with their name, age, number in family. Next they had their luggage examined, next, they were assigned to their residence and next given a physical check-up. This takes considerable time and they are all very tired by the time it is over.

At the meeting this evening I met professor Obada from the faculty at the University of Calif at Berkeley. He showed me & others a sketchbook full of sketches he had made while on the train riding between Tanforan & Topaz. He is certainly a fine artist of line & brush design.

Friday Sept. 25

Today I arose with Lorne & went over to stay with Signe while she rested in bed. I sat outdoors & got a good sun bathe which helped my cold a lot. At 4:15 the ladies all drove in one car out to Topaz where we had supper then a meeting of all the Caucasian staff. Mr. Earnst, the Director, appointed the women as an auxiliary group to take care of the duties that need to be performed for us. I was asked to be chairman of the group who are

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to furnish the recreation room but before that is ready for operation I'm to assist on the house furnishing committee with Mrs Lafabrique.

Saturday Sept. 26 ---

I helped type out some forms needed by the house furnishing committee. After supper Lorne & I unloaded our things from the Mercury at our apartment in Block 2 house 1 apt C-D.

About 8:30 we looked in on the first dance that the C activities group (Japanese) were putting on. As so often happens at affairs of this kind, first the lights wouldn't work. Then it was discovered that there were no needles for the phonograph. Finally these matters were taken care of and the dance began. After 2 or 3 piece had been played, the light fuse blew out so it had to be fixed. I don't know how the rest of the evening went because we left & came back to the hotel.

Sunday Sept 27 ---

This morning I slept in trying to rid myself of a bad head cold. Lorne went out to Topaz to attend the church service.

At 11:30 A.M. Signe Lafabrique woke me and she had with her a thermos of hot tea,

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and a box of wafers for my lunch. I certainly appreciate her thoughtfulness.

Lorne returned about 2:30 and we pack the car up and moved out to Topaz. Our apartment number is block 2 Unit 1 Sec CD

We have the two middle rooms in Unit 1. Our door faces South. There are four windows to each room. The rooms are about 18 x 18 feet. An old fashioned coal stove is in each room for warmth.

We dumped everything into one room then sat down & played [Strauss?] records on the phonograph. What a blessing & joy is music. I opened a can of grapefruit juice & we supped a glass of it while we listened.

This interlude refreshed our spirits and our body and then we were equal to the task of making up our beds.

I think Lorne had his first moment of homesickness for the city-life we had left. The dust had begun to blow a little & continued to blow until after sundown.

The sunset was really lovely. It seemed strange to see such lovely colors above the clouds of dust that were puffing up from the earth.

We had a good ten hours sleep this

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night & woke up refreshed for a new day.

Monday Sept. 28 ---

But what a day it proved to be.

By 10:00 o'clock the dust was blowing worse than at any time since I'd arrived. You could see across the street only when the gusts of wind died down & that wasn't often.

The painters came to paint our apartment which hadn't been finished so everything had to be stacked in the middle of the room and the windows kept closed because of the dust.

Signe Lafabrique stayed with me all afternoon & we entertained our selves by playing all the records and the reading.

One of the Japanese boys came in and tried to get our painter to leave $\frac{1}{2}$ hour early. He said, "Why hurry. We have the duration to finish this job." I wanted to say to him maybe for some of the houses but not this one. Our painter stayed on till about time before he quit.

Thank goodness, the dust storm died out about 6:00 P.M. Lorne left for some evening meetings and I took a shower & feel better.

I've prepared a table to serve us each a

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bowl of soup when he returns at bed time. Things seem cosy & nice with a soft light & the music on the radio. Of course everything is still stacked in the middle of the room for the painters won't finish until tomorrow.

Tues. Sept 29 ---

Did I say the painters would finish today?

Well, I was wrong. They finally finished our room but that is all. I give up on guessing when it will all be done.

Wed. Sept. 30 ---

I mean I th'ot they'd finished our room They were back this morning to give a second coat of paint to the wood work & put on the baseboards which will now have to be painted tomorrow. The other room is a yet untouched.

I getting slightly tired of sitting in such a heaped up mess, but there seems to be nothing I can do about it.

I spent have the day in Delta shopping and picking up Lorne's laundry so now that I'm back I find that someone has been moved into our one almost finished room.

It seems queer to be dressed in a dress again after almost a week of slacks.

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I had to put my slack shoes back on though because the dust is too too deep

In the evening I attended a community meeting that was most interesting. It was the forming of the self-govt plan, election of Councilmen and presentation of immediate problems. A Dr Hiroto, a dentist was elected for the first chairman. The immediate problems presented were of acute interest to the community. They were: landscaping of the city of Topaz, housing problems. Partitions within rooms to separate parents & children, young couples & boys & girls. The need for immediate help on nearby farms in harvesting the crops, the forming of a School Board & PTA.

Thursday Oct 1, 1942

In the wee small hours of the morning, 4:00 AM to be exact we arose to drive into Delta to meet a train which was bringing Eleanor Gerard to be one of the school teachers. As usual, when we got to the station we found that the train was 2 1/2 hours late. We drove to the [Barque?] Hotel & had breakfast, then sat around talking until nearly train time. (It was 41° this morn) [% may be temperature?]

After another wait at the station

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the train finally arrived at 10 of 8:00 AM. Eleanor & a Miss Millings, librarian got off & we returned to Topaz.

The painters & carpenters were working in our rooms when I returned. So you see we are still in the middle of getting fixed up.

In the eve we attended a welcome meeting for the new Japanese arrivals. There really wasn't any meeting when we got there because the trains had arrived so late that the busses were bringing the last group in at 9:15 P.M. The poor folks were so tired that some of the children could hardly eat the dinner which had been saved for them.

I felt so sad because of the manner in which such humanity was herded around. Their previous meal [/meal?] that day had been at 10:00 AM. That meant the last meal for the children as well as the adults. To make matters worse the houses had not been completed for them to stay in and many of them slept without a roof over their heads & some even had to sleep on the floor for lack of beds.

The night was very very cold too.

It is hard for us to understand why in Heaven's name they can't be kept at Tanforan until their houses are completed.

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Frid. Oct 2

Today the painters finally finished in our rooms & the floors were mopped. Now I just have to see that things have a place around for then, then we will be settled.

After supper this eve. we attended a Review put on by the Japanese in dining Room 10. It was a wonderful show. It was directed by and had for its master of Ceremonies a Japanese young man who had been a professional master of Ceremonies at the Sky Room Nite Club in San Francisco. There was Japanese dancing in costume, a skit, solos, glee club & a mimic of Charlie McCarthy. I haven't laughed so much in weeks.

All this time we were having fun, we found out afterwards, the new arrivals for the day were shivering in their cold incomplete houses. Just another repetition of yesterday.

I went with Lorne in the car to hunt unused blankets anyone might have. We found 15. Others had been found by other workers. These were all taken to help out, kitchens were heated up for the people to move into and the small babies & their mothers were put in the hospital & clinic for the night.

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Let me say with great piety – “God have Mercy on the souls of the people who have caused such things to take place day after day.

One's soul gets sick with the shame for one's country's policies when one sees such trials & tribulations forced upon innocent women, children & other people.

I heard today from a Japanese nurse whom I took to the train that there are several Japanese young men here who had scholarships offered them in college with govt. permission to attend, these young men preferred to be with their people to serve at this time for they said, “we can go to school another time in life”

Practically all of the Caucasians who have come here as teachers & workers feel the same way in relation to service of their fellow man.

The Christian faith is certainly a step forward when so many people are willing to live the life we live here in order that they may serve at this time in a constructive rather than a destructive way.

It is now 11:45 P.M. and Lorne is still in his office trying to get things in better running order for the rest of the night

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Sunday Oct. 4, 1942

This morning I attended the Protestant Japanese church. There was a very fine sermon preached by a Holiness minister. His text was “I can do all things thru Christ which strengtheneth me.”

At lunch hour the Caucasian group was introduced to Mr Dillon Meyer who was visiting from Wash. D.C. He is the National Director of the War Relocation Authority. He is a splendid person & folks liked him. A Colonel Willetts who has been loaned from the army visited with him. That night he spoke to the reception assembly of the Japanese. While the meeting was going on Dr. Ramsey was called out to see a 12 yr. old boy who had taken ill. It developed that he had an abscessed appendix & would need an immediate operation which would have to take place in Delta because the Surgery is not completed here. The way things developed Lorne & I were to take the visitors in to their hotel and then wait until after the operation & bring the Japanese doctors back to Topaz. There was a long wait & I went to sleep in the car but Lorne wandered about town until the time was up. It was 2:00 A.M. when we reached Topaz.

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Monday Oct 5 ---

Today I really “went to town” cleaning our rooms. I've sorted out our things and stacked our boxes where I think we can easily get things out of them. This afternoon, I made window draw curtains out of an old bed spread & hung them in our bedroom. Now we can have more privacy when we get ready for bed.

Saturday Oct. 10, 1942

I attended a very exciting meeting tonight. The council was having its first hearing. The matter considered was school housing against family housing. The reason for this subject was because of the fact that the gov't, while providing for Schools had not given, as yet, priorities for materials to build the schools. This means that the Schools will have to be housed, at present, in houses already built. Whether to house them in Recreation Halls, Dining halls or in homes is the question. The families are already so crowded that there is a problem there. There is a need for recreation Bldgs. because of the housing problem & already 2/3 of the Rec. Bldg are used for other things, such as: Canteen, Barber shop, Wardens office, city Hall, etc.

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Before the council the various divisions presented their cases then the residence that were present were allowed to express their opinions if they desired. A great many did so. Most of their talks were in Japanese then interpreted for our benefit.

It was amazing how much we could understand without the interpretation. They sprinkle English words throughout their conversations. Two or three of the men who spoke were fiery orators & they created applause & outbursts of praise for the viewpoint expressed.

The audience was so eager to express themselves, that they would have talked all night, I do believe. The chairman, who felt that enough opinions had been expressed, called adjournment at 11:00 P.M. announcing that the council would hold a meeting Monday in which they would draw up recommendations to present to the administration

Sunday Oct. 11.

This morning we slept in until 9:00 AM then had breakfast in our rooms. After that Lorne felt ambitious enough to build a shelf in our bedroom closet for all our boxes of unneeded articles. It certainly makes things neater. Last Friday the carpenters finished the

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Kitchen closet in our living room and it works fine. Of course have no running water as yet.

I forgot to say that we had a lovely rain Saturday morning. It settled the dust fine. The only drawback was the fact that the people who had come in Thursday from Santa Anita were in houses that had no tar paper on the roofs. Their things were all rained on and it was very uncomfortable for them. Because of all their discomfort and their bad experience at Santa Anita the administration expected a possible difficulty had the Sunday evening meeting of Welcome.

The meeting was advertised during the day to have an added attraction of entertainment.

Lo and behold, when we arrived a half-hour ahead of time at the dining hall in Block 30 we found a line up of young people waiting to enter. After the doors were opened they poured in. Only then did the leaders realize that almost the total crowd were "old-timers" and practically no one was from Santa Anita. They asked the young people to go home & bring back

the parents from Santa Anita. Hardly anyone moved. The children & young people just sat tight, probably saying to themselves – “we have

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come out to see a show & we are going to see one.”

A few finally left & soon some older people came in. The Hall was more than crowded.

The program of C singing & introductions took place & then the program began. It had been planned primarily for the Isai [Issei] & the young people weren't too interested. They kept stirring around in their seats & whispering to each other while the songs were sung in Japanese.

It was just another case of the young generation hating to acknowledge even a cultural allegiance to their parents place of birth which was so different from their own.

When we arrived home after the meeting we found that Emily Minton & her friend [Ms/Mr Center?] had finally arrived. Lorne had been anxiously waiting her arrival on the staff for many problems in C Services need her guidance. They had no dinner so we had them over & fixed soup, salad and onion sandwiches & coffee. Eleanor Gerard & Mr. [Setrack? Fetrack?] were also there. It seemed like home to have folks in for a bite to eat, to talk & play music.

Mr. Hendrick, [Setrack? Fetrack?] & Eleanor had been over before lunch & we had danced to the music of records for a while.

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I think life is great here & am thoroughly enjoying every experience as it comes along. [Ms/Mr Center?] slept in for the night.

Monday Oct 12 ---

Today began the first day for us to have housekeeping help. It really is fun to be able to have that job done. It is the first time in my life that I've had such service in my home.

The weather today is much cooler & very cloudy. I've built a fire in our stove again.

Tues. Oct 13 ---

This evening I had a great pleasure in meeting the artist Mr. Kwakami (pen name Nanpo) who has had a watercolor exhibit hanging in our dining hall this week. He is a very old man who speaks very little English. His son, who came with him, says that his father studied for ten years in Japan. When he came to the U.S.A he started a dry cleaning business and did nothing with his art, but since he has been in Tanforan & here he has made one picture each day. The pictures are all very fine. Most of them are scenes at Tanforan. A few are of views of Nevada that he saw from the train made final sketches of & painted after arriving here.

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Wednesday Oct. 14 ---

Today I had a nice surprise, Michi Nakashima came to visit me. She used to be an office secretary for the girl Reserve office in Los Angeles. I hadn't known that she was here. She lives at the other end of Topaz from me so she had a walk of about one mile to come & see me.

During the morning & part of the afternoon I worked with several of the wives in making outfits for the girls who serve in the dining room.

Thurs. Oct. 15 ---

This morning while I was sewing in our house I had a visitor, Mrs Goto whose husband is a Japanese Methodist minister. Mrs. Signe LaFabrique also came over with her sewing & we had tea & talked. Signe invited Mrs Goto to dine with us in the Caucasian Dining Room & when Lorne came home for lunch he said that a policy had already been established which would make it impossible for Mrs Goto to eat with us. We had to tell her and I'm afraid she felt badly about it because she didn't return in the afternoon as she said she would. Signe & I walked over to her house to tell her how badly we felt about the situation but did not find her at home. I explained the situation to her husband so I hope he carried our apologies to his wife.

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Friday Oct. 16

The evening of this day Lorne & I dressed up and went to Delta for the evening to attend the movie there. We were interested to watch the people who assembled to wait for the opening of the show house. There were children under 8 yrs of age with no adult to chaperone them. One child of about three was with his sister of about 6 or 7. Some of the boys had no sweaters or wraps & to us the air was cool then & would be colder at 10:00 when the show was over. At last we entered. The first picture "Meet the Stewarts" was terrible. It certainly was a class D picture. Besides that the sound track kept going on and off. Thank goodness the second picture was O.K. It was "The Atlantic Patrol" a mystery war story taking place in Iceland. [[note: pretty sure it's a 1940 documentary about Canadian shipping across the Atlantic, but okay...]]

After the show we had a bowl of chili & arrived home about 10:30. That was our first excursion of the kind for a month, in fact, since I arrived here.

Sat. Oct. 17

Today I visited the first Art & Hobby exhibit to be held in Topaz. Professor Obata engineered the idea with the help of Madam Obata who is an expert in Flower Arrangements. There were many lively things there some of which had been made at Tanforan. I was especially amazed at the

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beautiful pieces of furniture made from scrap wood. Unless one examined one closely he would never realize that scraps had been used. Many lovely wood carvings were also on display. Crafts of all kinds, knitting, weaving, painting, flowers arrangements, etc. Over 1000 people visited the exhibit during the 3 days it was open.

In the evening we entertained with music & talk Mr & Mrs Ernst & Mr & Mrs Roscoe Bell. I served fruit juice & cheese on crackers. We had a very pleasant evening & were in bed by 11:00

Sun. Oct. 18 ---

The weather is beautiful today. I forgot to say anything about the wonderful sunset yesterday. Lorne drove me 5 miles out to the nearest Buttes where we got out of the car & watched the last glowing colors on the clouds & mountains. One can get such a wonderful feeling of quiet & peace in one's soul looking out over this broad expanse of desert & mountains.

Well, to tell more of this Sunday. I attended one of the Protestant church services & heard a sermon preached on the subject of "The temptations about us in this city of Topaz". I felt it was very specific for the young people here & the kind of home conditions to be dealt with.

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At 1:30 the hospital had its dedication or rather the laying of the corner stone as it were. It was a very interesting ceremony and while it was going on I watched the small children who were present. One 3 yr old girl was very busy trying to curl the top lock of her 5 yr old brother who was playing in the dirt. For at least ten minutes the young lady persisted in twining her brother's hair around her small finger without any visible results since his hair hadn't the least bit of curl in it. Another small 3 yr old boy finally succeeded in isolating a large plot of ground for himself by throwing dirt on anyone who attempted to approach closer than he wished. Just about the end of the program a 12 yr old girl fainted in front of me and after being revived she was taken home in an auto.

Following all of this we attended a football game which was played by the high school boys. Another amusing incident took place there. A small boy liked the looks of the red flag on the stick which was the goal pole so out he went and pulled the stick out of the ground. Everyone nearby called to him so that he realized he had done the wrong thing & quickly replaced the post.

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Mon. Oct. 19

This morning Signe, Mrs Ernst & I went to Delta to shop. We arrived home just in time for lunch. After lunch Signe & I started to go to the building where we were to register for art classes when her husband stopped us and asked us to drive a Japanese lady to the undertakers home outside of Delta. We were to take a suitcase of clothes belonging to the lady's friend who had died last Friday. The undertaker was to take out the clothes needed & we would bring back the others. The Japanese lady understood very little English so it was difficult, in fact, impossible to carry on any conversation with her. We were given directions for finding the man's home but with great ease lost ourselves twice before reaching the proper destination.

The roads here have no homes so one has to go by rt & left turns past so many roads. It is very confusing to one brought up in a city.

After returning home I spent the remainder of the after noon in hauling rocks to border our hoped for doorstep garden.

At last we got Lorne's first check. It covered the time from Sept 1st. We were certainly

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relieved to see it. I only hope the ones from now on will be on time.

Tues. Oct. 20

Today I had fun. Signe & I left home in the pick-up truck about 9:00 A.M. and drove out to the Buttes, five miles from here. There we climbed the hillside and threw down large flat rocks which grow in loose layers. After throwing them down we climbed down and lifted them into the truck. The altitude made us stop very often to catch our breath. We expected to dig up desert plants also but were much too tired after doing the other thing. On the way home we stopped at the wood pile and filled a box full of kindling wood.

At lunch time I met Mrs Carlyle & her son and went walking with them to the South border of Topaz. We covered about 2 miles before we reached home so I was really tired by evening.

Wed. Oct. 21

Today I had a very enjoyable experience. Dr Sayre the International Chairman of the Fellowship of Reconciliation visited Topaz and spent the night in our apartment.

We were invited to attend the F.O.R. evening

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meeting which the Japanese were having. There were probably twelve Japanese, half of them girls and seven Caucasians attending the meeting.

Dr Sayre spoke and then the group asked questions of him.

After he returned to our apartment we sat talking, over a bowl of soup, until 11:45 P.M. and he had to leave at 5:00 AM the next morning.

We learned a lot about the recent work of the Fellowship and he learned a lot about Topaz.

Lorne feels that the F.O.R. group in Topaz and other such settlements can do much in the way of reconciliation with labor problems, religious groups, etc. if the members are encouraged to spend their energies in that way.

Thurs. Oct. 22

Today I met George Corwin at the train. He is to be at Topaz for 2 days. His job is with the National YMCA in young men's work.

Before he reached here he had visited four Projects. Besides that he had just come from Los Angeles and had visited with most all of our friends there. It was certainly good to hear all about the things that had been happening in LA and California.

Mr & Mrs Ernst had us all over for the evening where we talked of many

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things and had a very sociable good time.

One of the amazing things that George had heard one of the Japanese young men say at another Project was this: "I just can't understand the psychology of these Japanese."

Frid. Oct 23 ---

This morning I walked to the South border with Mrs Carlyle, Johnny & the dog and looked over the spot where the men are preparing seed beds & planting cuttings for the landscaping of Topaz. While we were out there we gathered some cutting for ourselves and when I returned home I got industrious and started my own rock garden with plants.

Of course, some of my inspiration came from seeing a very large rock garden the one of the Japanese families has begun. A great many of them have good beginnings for fine gardens in the spring.

We also looked in on one of the children's recreation rooms where small activities were going on.

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Sunday. Oct. 25

Today we took a 30 mile trip into Oak City Canyon. I was very thrilled to see the trees in their beautiful autumn colors. It was my first experience to see & gather the red & yellow leaves.

I made two water color sketches while Lorne napped.

Mon. Oct. 26

Today the art classes began. I signed up for every morning. This morning was a design class with Professor Obata. He told us to work for designs that could later be used in ceramics. There were 2 other Caucasians in the group.

I was amused to watch and listen to the young Japanese girls. They would giggle and chat and giggle & chat continuously.

They really sounded just like the three little maids in the Mikado Opera.

Tues. Oct. 27

Today the art class was portrait drawing. The young instructor's name is Taira. There were 3 other people besides

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myself. We took turns posing for each other.

The classes are very disorganized at present. The workmen are building a store room & counters at one end of the building & the supplies haven't arrived yet.

We are well on the way with plans for a Hallowe'en party this Thurs. I hope everything goes off O.K.

Wed. Oct 28th

Last night sometime after mid-night we could feel & hear that there was a bad dust storm. The dust sifted in all the crevices & when we woke we found everything covered with dust. We also found that it had begun to snow. It snowed all morning and still there was no snow left standing on the ground. The wind blew & whistled around the corners all day.

At 3:00 P.M. I was in Town to meet Gertrude [Klussmann?] at the train. I was very glad to see her for it had been 2 yrs since our last visit. We drove back to Topaz; had supper and then drove around the project explaining everything as best we could.

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Thurs. Oct. 29

This morning Gertrude & I talked and talked until we had pretty well caught up on events. At 11:00 A.M. we walked over to the nearest Nursery School and visited it for awhile. There were 43 children there from 2 to 5 yrs of age. They were scattered about the room in small groups which were supervised by seven different teachers. Some of the children were listening to stories, some learning songs, some playing at housekeeping, some stringing beads, some resting on mattresses.

About 2:00 in the afternoon Lorne & I drove Gertrude in to catch her train for the East.

Frid. Oct 30

I had a very interesting art lesson with Prof. Obata this morning. He explained principles of design & made a demonstration.

I spent the afternoon popping corn for our staff party.

The party was held between 5-11 PM. About 50 people attended and we all had

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a very fine time with lots of laughter, ghost stories, dancing, games, food (cider, peanuts, popcorn & apples).

Sat. Oct. 31

This morning Mochi's sister came to visit me. I was very glad to see her and had an interesting visit, learning something about her family.

Sun. Nov. 1

This afternoon we drove for 35 miles into the mountains West of Topaz. We drove at least 20 miles before we saw anything other than sagebrush, then we saw a few, a very few, cypress trees. We drove to the end of one road and there were found a caved in abandoned mine. We got out of the car & looked around then drove back to another road which went further west. After several miles of very bad road we reached a crest where we could look for miles across low mountains to some beautiful blue mountains.

Before we left the mountains we dug up a very small red cedar tree & when we got home we planted it by our doorstep.

Tues. Nov. 3, 1942

This is a day & night we will long remember all day long the wind blew. The dust rose like a fog

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all about us. At sundown the dust stopped blowing but the wind continued though not so strong.

After supper Lorne left for his office and I worked at home. About 9:00 o'clock there was a terrible pound as of hail against the windows. I went to the door & looked out and what was my amazement to find not hail but gravel and dust beating against the building. I went back to my reading but I couldn't concentrate because the force of the wind. Besides that the dust began to seep into the room through every crack & crevice & there are plenty of them. Soon the room appeared as through a haze. I went about frantically stuffing papers into the cracks but the wind was so terrific that it blew some of the papers right out of the cracks.

The building shook & trembled & felt as though it might cave in. I felt sure that Lorne could never get home against such a wind but I was mistaken for at 10:15 he arrived practically driven by the force of the storm.

Soon after he arrived it began to rain and by 11:00 it was snowing.

When we awoke in the morning the buildings & the ground were covered with snow and ice, The Mountains looked like cones of vanilla ice cream as they were covered in white from the bottom to the top.

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Thurs Oct 5 ---

Mochi Takashima came to see me again. She is teaching one of the classes of 3rd grade children but hopes soon to leave for a job in St. Paul, Minn.

Mon. Nov. 3 ---

Last night we had a storm the like of which I have never dreamed. The wind had blown a duststorm all day long but by evening the dust had settled. Around about 8:00 P.M. the wind began to tear around the buildings again.

Soon I thought I heard hail hitting the windows, but when I looked out to see what did I find but gravel & dust, no hail or rain. The wind continued to gain in fury until I thought the building would collapse. Then, of all things, the room began to fill with dust. It poured in through all the many cracks until I was looking through a fog of dust. I hastened to stuff papers in the window-cracks but the wind was so strong that it blew many of the papers right out.

About 10:00 PM Lorne literally blew in and then it began to rain. So then the rain dropped in where the dust had come and we had mud. By another half hour the rain turned into sleet and in the

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morning when we arose everything was covered with snow & ice.

Wed. Nov. 11th ---

This evening Lorne & I left for Los Angeles and would return Sunday. He had to see his Draft Board about a deferment since he had his call for a physical exam.

They gave him a 3B classification which means deferred because of the kind of job.

Sun. Nov. 15th --

We arrived back in Topaz at 5:30 P.M. after a very hectic trip. We had a good time while in L.A. seeing both of our children and both of our mothers also a good movie.

When we were within 130 miles of Topaz we had a blow out. The canyon where it happened was terrifically windy and Lorne lost his hat twice before getting the wheel changed. Then we drove on for 15 miles when we had another blowout with the spare tire. That left us in an awful fix with tires & tubes on the ration list. We were about 20 miles from the next town of Fillmore so we drove

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slowly in on the rim. After reaching the town we tried every place to get an old tire and tube but the only place it would be possible to get one the man was out of town. Lorne decided to travel on on the rim. When about 10 miles from Delta there was a dreadful noise so we stopped. Lorne got out & found that the rim had flattened out and let the car drop down so that it had cracked the brake drum. I forgot to say that by this time we had driven through a dust storm which was now settling into a wind driven snow storm.

The only thing to do was for Lorne to hitch a ride into Delta & try to get a used tube in the good tire. He left the motor running so the radiator wouldn't freeze.

He was gone 2 ½ hours & when he came back he had 2 of the Japanese men from Topaz. They found that the radiator was frozen & all because we had left the motor going. (I can't understand that.)

So they pushed us all the way to Delta where we drained the radiator & preceded on our way to Topaz.

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Sat. Nov. 21

Today we are expecting Taylor Reedy and his family to look over a job here.

[[no more writing, but pages are numbered to the end of the book through page 64.]]

Transcription by Jamie Henricks, completed December 2016.