Ella C. Evanson taught at George Washington Junior High School in Seattle. Among her students were many Japanese Americans who were sent off to Camp Harmony and later to Minidoka. Students were asked to write short messages in an autograph book prior to evacuation. Later students wrote Ella Evanson from camp.

Evanson Letters

A.

March 20, 1942

Dear Miss Evanson,
I will start out my letter by writing about the worst thing. I do not want to go away but the government says we all have to go so we have to mind him. It said in the Japanese paper that we have to go east of the cascade mt. but we were planning to go to Idaho or Montana.

Now that the war is going on many Japanese men, women and girls are out of jobs and a lot of my friends father are in concentration camp. If I go there I hope I will have a teacher just like you. And rather more I hope the war will be straighten out very soon so that I would be able to attend Washington school.

B.

April 17, 1942

Dear Miss Evanson,
It makes me sad to write in this book for it will mean departure.

I hate to be leaving Seattle, for I'll not see my friends, my teachers, nor my school but there is nothing I (we) or anyone can do about it. I have enjoyed being a pupil of yours very much.

C.

March 25, 1942

Dear Miss Evanson,
When the time comes for the Japanese people to move out of Seattle it will be hard to go because I was born here. But I will not forget the teacher of my old school and Washington School because they are so kind and I learn many things from them. I wish I can find some teacher that was as nice as you teachers was. I am a American.

D.

March 20, 1942

Dear Miss Evanson,
I will start out my letter by writing about the worst thing. I do not want to go away but the government says we all have to go so we have to mind him. It said in the Japanese paper that we have to go east of the cascade mt. but we were planning to go to Idaho or Montana.

Now that the war is going on many Japanese men, women and girls are out of jobs and a lot of my friends father are in concentration camp. If I go there I hope I will have a teacher just like you. And rather more I hope the war will be straighten out very soon so that I would be able to attend Washington school.

E.

Part XXXV of the WCCA Operations Manual. [Camp Rules]

2. All radios and lights of every kind in all evacuees' quarters shall be turned off by the occupants not later than 10:30 P.M. Lights shall remain off throughout the hours of darkness. Exceptions to lighting regulations will be permitted in case of fire, sickness, pregnant mothers, mothers with young children, and other necessary cases, with the written permission of the Center Manager.

3. All evacuees shall be in their own living quarters between 10:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M. Exceptions will be permitted for persons going to and from the nearest lavatory, or when necessary in caring for sick persons. The Center Manager may issue written exceptions in other cases which in his opinion are warranted by circumstances. Evacuees, when assigned to work between the hours of 10:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M., shall be provided by the Center Manager with a written exemption from this ruling, giving the evacuee's name and address; the duties to which he or she is assigned, and the hours and location of duty.

http://www.lib.washington.edu/exhibits/harmony/Exhibit
F. **AREA GROWS...**

With the arrival of 575 new evacuees from Seattle tomorrow, the population of the area will pass the 2,600 mark. The capacity of the area is 2,700. This morning, the population was raised to the 2,027 figure with the arrival of 26 Alaskan Japanese from Petersburg.

**MANZANAR GROWS... (Manzanar was another internment facility in California)**

Within 3 days during the past week the Manzanar reception center doubled its population from 3,309 to 7,181, according to figures released through the Manzanar Free Press. On three consecutive afternoons, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday caravans of busses brought new settlers in groups of 927, 973 and 1972.

Classification, registration and assignment of quarters started immediately as busses began unloading. There was no waiting or confusion. The long line of evacuees moved out of the other end within a few minutes.

Guided by voluntary workers who carried their bedding for them, the new arrivals were given maximum assistance in finding their new [rest of sentence missing]

Bus after bus emptied its occupants and all were handled in efficient style.

The personnel division and voluntary helpers corps, profiting from past experiences, avoided all possible bottlenecks. They were organized so that approximately 350 individuals were registered each hour.

Reception center administration officials were loud in their praise of the work of the volunteer crews.

"The wholesome, patient cooperation of Manzanar residents, who turned out by the hundreds to assist in the registration work, was commended by Harry L. Black, assistant camp manager.

Camp Harmony News-Letter Vol. 1, No. 2, May 7, 1942

G. **FIRST BABY EXPECTED**

The stork with Camp Harmony's first baby is hovering over the household of Mr. and Mrs. Koichi Sawa of Area A-2-88. When it will alight with the bundle is not definitely known but Mrs. Sawa is expected to enter Tacoma Hospital this week-end.

The prospective father was formerly a baker's helper until the bakery moved this week into Area "D". He has one child, Roland Kiyotake, age three.

Camp Harmony News-Letter Vol. 1, No. 3, May 14, 1942

H. **NISEI COUPLE FIRST MARRIED!**

Kiyoshi Nagai, 25, D-5-195, and Shizuko Fukumiyo, D-5-196, left for Tacoma and the marriage license bureau at 9:15 a.m. today and upon their return, were expected to be the first Camp Harmony nisei couple to be married. The couple, formerly of National, Washington, were expected back sometime before noon. They were to have moved into their new apartment, D-5-193, so-called "honeymoon quarters", over the door of which Area Chaplain Shizuo Yamada has discreetly posted "Do Not Disturb" and "Just Married" signs.

The required three-day waiting period after issuance of a marriage license was waived by the justice of the peace by whom they were married. A WCCA official accompanied the pair to Tacoma.

The bride is the eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hatsugoro Fukumiyo. Mr. Nagai is the third son of Mr. and Mrs. Yasutaro Nagai. They were engaged six months ago at National.

Camp Harmony News-Letter Vol. 1, No. 4, May 23, 1942
EDITORIAL:

"NOTHING IS USELESS"

Things are happening in this temporary community of ours which do much to remind us that it was no mere newspaperman's penchant for euphony which conferred the adjective "total" upon the present war. The current drive to salvage our waste materials and the donations of Camp Harmony blood to the "plasma-bank," not to mention the mounting sales of War Bonds and Stamps, serve to impress upon us the truth that there is no aspect of our existence which can escape the implications of total war. Nothing is too precious, nothing is useless, and nothing is immaterial to the great and necessary task of ridding the earth of Axis tyranny; and in being aware of this, and in acting accordingly, we are demonstrating to that part of America which may distrust us that barbed wire enclosures cannot stifle our democratic faith and convictions--nor prevent us from delivering our maximum for Victory.

Camp Harmony News-Letter Vol. 1, No. 10, July 18, 1942

J.

"Roll Call Started."

A twice daily door-to-door check of every evacuee in Camp Harmony was started Wednesday. WCCA officials making the announcement through Camp Headquarters stated the order was issued by Lt. General John L. DeWitt, commanding officer of the [part of sentence missing] At 9 a.m. and 9:30 p.m. daily, a designated checker visits each apartment in his block for a roll-call of all individuals in his territory.

Camp Harmony Newsletter, June 12, 1942.

K.

Exemption from Lights-Out letter to A.H. Ichihara, Director of Area D, dated July 24, 1942

I hereby submit application for permission to turn on a shaded light between the hours of 10:30 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., if necessary for the proper care of a child aged 20 1/2 months. Lights will be turned on for short intervals only, and only for the purpose of changing diapers or calming the child if necessary.

Thank you for your cooperation.

L.

Memo from Lefty (Hiroyuki) Ichihara to James Sakamoto dated May 30, 1942

Re: Placement of Armament within Area D

Apparently under the orders of the commanding officer, a machine gun has been set up on the roof of the grandstand in Area D at 11:10 A.M. today in the midst of our preparations for the Memorial Day Services. It has been our understanding up to this time that the evacuees now within Camp Harmony still enjoy their civil rights. Further, that the army supervises only the guard posted outside the confines of various areas.

In the interest of public morale, I request a clarification on the above action.

Hiroyuki Ichihara Papers. Reel 2. UW Libraries Special Collections.

http://www.lib.washington.edu/exhibits/harmony/Exhibit
"Lest We Forget"

April 27- 67 Alaskans arrive in Camp Harmony during rainstorm, set bad precedent.
April 28- 303 in advance crew from Seattle. Early bird get -- work. Also rain.
April 30- First movement from Seattle. Preview of Jackson Street. Rain.
May 5- First News-Letter published. Editor Takeuchi starts hunt for man-Friday.
May 10- Rain.
May 16- Last group leaves Seattle. Jackson Street takes over.
May 18- First baby born to Mrs. Amelia Kita of Area A. News-Letter scoops the world.
May 24- 200 volunteers leave for Tule Lake. 200 rumors coming.
May 30- Memorial Day programs held.
June 3- Coupon books sale starts. Popsicles sold out in one hour.
June 6- Graduation exercises for Garfield High School. Broadway grads fume.
June 8- Broadway exercises held. Garfield fumes.
June 10- Other Seattle High Schools hold exercises. All is well.
June 11- Roll call starts. Flat noses get counted.
June 11- No rain today.
June 16- Plebiscite votes to retain Japanese staff. Headquarters' headache becomes official.
June 16- Central library opens. Bookworms start worming.
June 18- Area D goes to A for showers.
June 22- Inter-area visiting starts. Area A goes to D.
June 30- Draft registration for 18-20 group. Camp Harmony registers potential battalion.
July 1- Free coupons issued. WCCA refuses to sell defense stamps for coupons.
July 4- Evacuees celebrate Independence day.
July 9- All-area University dance held in D. Hard-knocks college grads plan exclusive affair.
July 13- Bond drive starts.
July 17- First camp operation in hospital. Bring him back alive.
July 20- First pay checks issued. Poker games revive.
July 21- All-area married couple's dance held in D. Dog-house club in full glory.
July 23- Plasma drive begins. Donors demand beefsteaks for breakfast.
July 27- Wolves negotiate with Sears-Roebuck for sheepskins.
August 2- Advance crew signs up for Idaho. Early bird wants worm.
August 5- Official army orders come for relocation of Camp Harmony to Idaho. 7,000 rumors evaporate.
August 7- Advance crew leaves for Idaho. Hagiwara leaves on solo honeymoon.
August 9- Camp becomes hot-bed for rumors as Times reports Puyallup slated for Wyoming.
August 10- Amateur crate makers cause lumber famine. Carpenters lament.
August 15- First movement begins to Idaho.

Camp Harmony News-Letter Vol. 1, No. 12, August 14, 1942
April 11, 1943

Dear Mrs. Willis,

I do not know all the Garfield boys who volunteered but I gladly submit those names I can think of at the present.

First, of course, are Kay and Eddie Sato. Jun Hayakawa, Sadao Baba, Harry and Bill Yanagimachi, Frank Hatanaka are some others.

There are a few others already in the service I would like to mention. Sergeant Iwao Kawakami is stationed somewhere in Alaska. Private Jack Hamada is at Fr. Warren, Wyoming. I am wondering whether Staff Sergeant Paul Sakai was a Garfieldite because his brother, Sam, attended this school.

I wonder if you have Robert Kirk listed among your servicemen. He was stationed in the Philippines when the war broke out. I don't know where he is or what happened to him since then.

Henry Storeno is another boy who enlisted in the service and the last I hear (couple months ago) he was training at a flying school, I believe.

I don't know how to write articles or anything like that but I'll give some reasons why I did not volunteer. You must understand that I still had some grudge against the government but that was not all that governed my action.

I believed that the government was in no position to ask for volunteers right out of a concentration camp where residents were forced to stay. I had a "hunch" that we would be drafted anyway because American citizens are subject to draft. If I were to join I would join the army but I would like all branches of the service to be open for those who prefer others.

I think it would be all right for the government to call for volunteers from those who have gone out of this camp. I think it's all right to draft them after they're outside and had about 6 months to a year free from camp life.

Many Isseis are bitter because the American government feels so free about hurting their children and then asking them to volunteer and finally saying that they might be drafted.

Some of the Isseis volunteered in the last war. They were promised their citizenship to this country. They were promised better treatment.
Now these old folks say, what of us now. Have we got our American citizenship? Are we getting better treatment? What of our businesses? Our children are Americans yet they are bieing kicked around like dogs -- by Americans. The American government made a lot of promises in the last war. It is again making the same promises. The promises of today will be as good as the promises of the last war.

Do you wonder why so many of the first generation feel so bitter, Mrs. Willis?

But that is not all. When we moved into this relocation camp, the camp was still being constructed and many, many families had to share rooms with totally strange families while others lived in recreation buildings with a a number of others. The days were hot. The wind blew contantly [sic] and dust was always fogging up the rooms. It was impossible to keep rooms free of dust. I remember my mother mopping our room about a half dozen times in one day trying to settle some of the dust. We had no hot water. Our cold water contained chlorine and the smell and taste were repulsive. Our latrines were outdoor affairs. The men had not partitions (we still haven't). It was cold going to the toilets in sub-zero weather. There was a coal shortage. Rain settled the dust but made the ground so muddy people had to wear boots. In general, people suffered so much unnecessary uncomfortable situations that no one can really blame them for being bitter.

When the volunteers and many others are gone from here to continue their education or work there will be plenty of empty barracks. In other camps it will be the same way. One of these days the residents of the camps will be consolidated into one or two camps. Then I suppose we'll have to move again.

At the present I am trying to learn something in my auto mechanics class. That is one reason why I have not gone out to work elsewhere where I could make my own living. As soon as Kay Sato is inducted I intend to transfer to the garage as a mechanic's help to try to pick up more knowledge along that line. I feel that I could be of more use to the army after I learn a useful trade.

I am also not in favor of an all Japanese-American combat unit.

I thought we might have another and a better chance if I waited a while. I may be wrong but I am taking that chance and just hoping.

I hadn't intended to write a book but I hope you excuse my lengthy babble.

As ever,

Name