



March 2020

Jimmy Yamamoto Autobiography, n. d.

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Yamamoto, Jimmy, "Jimmy Yamamoto Autobiography, n. d." (2020). *Guy and Marguerite Cook Nisei Collection*. 114.

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MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Jimmy Yamamoto

GUY W. COOK

NISEI COLLECTION

It was in not summer when I , Jimmy Yamamoto, on August 26, 1927, was born, the third child and second son of Mr. and Mrs. T. Yamamoto. This happened in Terminal Island, the men made island, now a naval base and a large part of the Las Angeles Harbor.

There were six in the family, my parents, two sisters and one brother, and I. We lived in a six room, red, wooden house. The rooms were not so large. We had beautiful gardens with flowers, specially roses, vegetables, catus and one orange tree growing. We also had gold fishes. The period of my childhood days were no different from any other boys of that age. I was fond of toy airplanes, cars, and marbles. I played with the age of my boys. My pets were dogs. I hate cats and other animals except dogs.

School began for me when I was six years old up to 6 in grammar school at Terminal Island. There were three or four American pupils and the rest were all Japanese. During the grammar school I was taught many of the fundamental things which are of much help to me.

My classmates were all Japanese until I enter Richard Henry Dana Junior High School at San Pedro, California. I learned many things and enjoyed the companionship of the occasional people. At school I played on a team all kinds of sports. At school I played basketball in the morning, afternoon, after school and physical education. I was interested in the sports. I enjoyed going to Dana Junior High School.

In the summer I went fishing with my father. My father was a fisherman. He had a small jig boat 33 feet long. I went fishing for Mackerel and Barracuda and once albacore. In the summer of 1941, we went to San Luis Obispo, California on our boat for albacore season.

I couldn't go fishing any more because school starts for me again after summer vacation. I had lots of fun going fishing with my father.

Everything seems to be rolling on so merrily until on Dec. 7, 1941, something terrible happened. Something that hit me harder and had more effect upon me than anything else in my life. Japan, the homeland of my parent and United States, my country declared war. Never did I feel so shocked and stunned from such unpleasant news. Yet ever under such circumstances we kept on going to school I didn't know how I could express my gratitude to the understanding of some of my friends of the position I was in and the problem I had to face.

My father was taken by the F.B.I. Dec. 9 because he was out fishing. He was taken to the Immigration Station, and then to CCC camp and later to Montana. He was away 8 1/2 months. Other fishermen were later taken by the F.B.I. While my father was away, we were making all kinds of plans for our evacuation and our future.

Then on Feb. 25, 1942, there was a blackout. It was terrible. The next morning three army officers, captain and two Sargent came to our house. They hand us a paper. It said that every resident in Terminal Island must evacuate within 48 hours.

There at Los Angeles I went to Lafayette Junior High School. There were many Negroes and Chinese. I went to school for about two to three weeks because we had to evacuate.

On May 6, 1942 we evacuate on a bus at Los Angeles and came to Santa Anita Assembly Center. There I had lots of fun. I did not have to go to school. I played baseball and basket-ball in the morning and afternoon. On hot day I went to the top of the barracks were not good. On cold day it is cold and on hot day the boys had motion movie pictures, Nessie and Issei talent program.

On Oct. 4, 1942 we evacuate on a train and came to Rohwer Relocation Center in Arkansas. On the way to Arkansas I saw the Salton sea. It was beautiful because it was sunset. About 10:00 P.M. the first night, past the Colorado River. And stop at Yuma, Ariz. Then went through New Mexico,

came to El Paso, Texas. Went through Del Rio, San Antonio and stop at Houston, Texas. Came to Beaumont then went to Lake Charles, La., up to Alexandria and went into Arkansas. Pass the Jerome Relocation Center, Arkansas.

It is 4 months since I came to this camp. I am getting use to Arkansas.

His father is here in center

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