



UNDERSTANDING
SACRIFICE

Activity: A Japanese American Family's Experience During World War II: A Living DBQ



Guiding question:

How did Japanese Americans make sacrifices to help the United States win World War II?

DEVELOPED BY MATTHEW ELMS

Grade Level(s):

6-8, 9-12

Subject(s):

Social Studies, English/Language Arts

Cemetery Connection:

Lorraine American Cemetery

Fallen Hero Connection:

**Private Victor Akimoto
Private First Class John Akimoto**

Overview

Students will be given a series of document packets concerning the Akimoto family during World War II. Each of the four groups of documents deals with a different time period in the lives of the Akimotos. Once the students have reviewed the documents, they will act out specific scenes for the rest of the class. While students are acting out the scenes, the rest of the class will be completing a visual graphic organizer.

Historical Context

Most middle school students have a vague understanding of Japanese internment in the United States during World War II. However, the events leading up to Japanese internment, prior to the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and the role of Japanese-American soldiers in World War II help to expand students' knowledge of U.S. history and issues related to World War II including training camps, shipping out overseas, loss of life, and prisoner of war camps.

Private First Class John Akimoto and Private Victor Akimoto are one of 26 sets of brothers buried in a special section at Lorraine American Cemetery. These Japanese American brothers and their families back in the states directly felt the implications of internment.

Objectives

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to

- Explain anti-Asian and anti-Japanese sentiment before Pearl Harbor;
- Discuss the internment of 110,000 Japanese Americans;
- Examine issues related to the military service of 33,000 Japanese Americans; and
- Reflect on how these topics affected an individual family.

“This lesson allows students the opportunity to explore primary and secondary resources without writing an essay or document based question (DBQ) response. Instead, students are encouraged to act, write, and draw to facilitate their understanding of the material while gaining a deeper understanding of the issues that confronted Japanese Americans during World War II.”

—Matthew Elms

Elms teaches at Singapore American School in Singapore.

Documents Used ★ indicates an ABMC source

Primary Sources

Group One: Anti-Asian Sentiment and Introduction to the Akimotos

Photograph, *The Akimoto Family*, 1927

Akimoto Family Collection

Photograph, *Door of barber shop owned by Andy Hale, in a little desert town of Parker, 15 miles from where is located the Colorado River Relocation Center...*, November 11, 1944

National Archives and Records Administration (210-CC-IN-4)

Photograph, *Mary with Students*, 1907

Akimoto Family Collection

Photograph, *Masanori with Brothers*, c. 1906

Akimoto Family Collection

Photograph, *Ted and Johnny Akimoto*, 1925

Akimoto Family Collection

Photograph, *The USS West Virginia and USS Tennessee after the attack on Pearl Harbor*, December 7, 1941

Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum

Photograph, *Victor Akimoto by Bank*, 1940

Akimoto Family Collection

Political Cartoon, Dr. Seuss, *Waiting for the Signal from Home*, February 13, 1942 University of California at San Diego Library

library.ucsd.edu/speccoll/dswenttowar/index.html#ark:bb5222708w

Poster, *Chinese Excluded...*, 1882

British Columbia Archives

pbs.org/becomingamerican/ap_prog2.html

Poster, *Mass Meeting of the Oregon Property Owners' Protective League, Inc.*, 1945

Densho

Group Two: Internment

Granada Pioneer, March 31, 1943

Densho

Letter from Johnny Akimoto to Mary and Masanori Akimoto, April 13, 1943

Akimoto Family Collection

Letter from Johnny Akimoto to Ruth and Hideo Kodani, February 19, 1943

Akimoto Family Collection

Letter from Johnny Akimoto to Mary and Masanori Akimoto, February 3, 1943

Akimoto Family Collection

Loyalty Questionnaire, War Relocation Authority, January 1943

Densho

Mary Miki Shiritori Akimoto, Santa Anita Assembly Center Painting, 1942

Akimoto Family Collection

Photograph, *Amache District Headquarters, Boy Scouts of America, Granada Relocation Center*, May 10, 1943

National Archives and Records Administration

Photograph, *Military Police on Duty in Watch-Tower at Santa Anita Park Assembly Center...*, April 6, 1942

National Archives and Records Administration (537019)

Photograph, *Arcadia, California. Evacuees of Japanese Ancestry from San Pedro, California, Arrive by Special Trains for Santa Anita Assembly Center...*, April 5, 1942

National Archives and Records Administration (537038)

catalog.archives.gov/id/537038?q=santa%20anita%20arrive

Poster, *Instruction to all Persons of Japanese Ancestry...*, May 23, 1942

National Park Service

nps.gov/manz/learn/historyculture/images/Poster.jpg

Group Three: Military Life and Death

Letter from Major General J.A. Ulio to Masanori Akimoto, August 21, 1944
Department of the Army

Letter from Johnny Akimoto to Mary and Masanori Akimoto, June 21, 1943
Akimoto Family Collection

Letter from Ted Akimoto to Mary and Masanori Akimoto, August 21, 1944
Akimoto Family Collection

Letter from Victor Akimoto to his family, April 29, 1942
Akimoto Family Collection

Photograph, *Johnny, Jane, and Ted Akimoto*, c. 1943
Akimoto Family Collection

Photograph, *Members of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team are seen in the Vosges mountain range in France*, October 1944 ★
U.S. Army Signal Corps, American Battle Monuments Commission

Photograph, *Sergeant Victor Akimoto and Private Johnny Akimoto*, c. 1943
Akimoto Family Collection

Photograph, *Two color guards and color bearers of the Japanese-American 442nd Combat Team, stand at attention, while their citations are read...*, November 12, 1944
U.S. Army Signal Corps (SC-196716)

Photograph, *Victor on Guard Duty*, c. 1943
Akimoto Family Collection

Group Four: Life of a Prisoner of War (POW)

Comite International de la Croix-Rouge, December 1944

Department of the Army

International Committee of the Red Cross Report, April 17, 1945

Department of the Army

Letter from Major General J.A. Ulio to Mary Akimoto, November 11, 1944

Department of the Army

Letter from Major General J.A. Ulio to Mary Akimoto, April 19, 1945

Department of the Army

Letter from Mary Akimoto to War Department, February 14, 1945

Department of the Army

Missing Report, 1944

Department of the Army

Photograph, *Liberated Soldiers at Bad Orb Eating C-Rations*, April 2, 1945

US Army Signal Corps (111-SC-231077)

Photograph, *Reenacting the liberation of Stalag IX - B*, April 2, 1945

U.S. Army Signal Corps (111-SC-339369)

Request for Disposition of Remains, November 24, 1947

Department of the Army

War Department Telegram to Mary Akimoto, May 8, 1945

Department of the Army

Secondary Sources

Becoming American: Between Two Worlds

PBS

pbs.org/becomingamerican/ap_prog2.html

Eulogy for Private First Class John Akimoto, 2015 ★

National History Day

nhsilenthheroes.org/profiles/john-akimoto/

Eulogy for Private Victor Akimoto, 2015 ★

National History Day

nhsilenthheroes.org/profiles/victor-akimoto/

Lesson Video, 2015 ★

American Battle Monuments Commission

youtube.com/watch?v=44lZr3_Vrls

When the Akimotos Went to War, 2015 ★

American Battle Monuments Commission

abmc.gov/learning-resources/publications/when-akimotos-went-war

Materials

- Four source packets of primary and secondary resources
 - Group One: Anti-Asian Sentiment and Introduction to the Akimotos
 - Group Two: Internment
 - Group Three: Military Life and Death
 - Group Four: Life of a Prisoner of War (POW)
- Journals or online notebook
- Large, plain white paper to be used as the graphic organizer
- Assessment Writing Rubric

Lesson Preparation

- Teachers are encouraged to read the book, *When the Akimotos Went to War*. A free copy of the book can be downloaded at abmc.gov/learning-resources/publications/when-akimotos-went-war.
- Print one copy of each of the source packets (consider laminating for future use):
 - Group One: Anti-Asian Sentiment and Akimoto Family
 - Group Two: Japanese-American Internment
 - Group Three: Military Life and Death
 - Group Four: Life of a Prisoner of War (POW)
- Have students create a Graphic Organizer of Events (a large sheet of white paper folded into four quadrants marked as Section One, Section Two, Section Three, and Section Four) to track the story.

Procedure

Activity One: Sponge Activity (15 minutes)

- **Teacher Tip:** Depending on the level of knowledge of the students, the teacher may want to play one or both of the video clips by Aleksí Solorio or the *New York Times* to introduce the topic of Japanese-American soldiers of World War II.
- Ask students to respond to the following question in a student journal or notebook:
 - After Pearl Harbor was bombed on December 7, 1941, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 in January 1942. The order forced 110,000 Japanese Americans, many of them citizens of the United States, to leave their homes in California, Oregon, and Washington

State and move into internment camps surrounded by barbed wire and guarded with machine guns. If you were an eligible Japanese-American male, living in an internment camp during World War II, would you enlist in the United States Army? Why or why not?

Activity Two: Document Analysis and Presentation (60 minutes)

- Explain to the students that they will be assigned to one of four groups. Teachers may want to have a balance of male and female students in each group. Each group will be given a series of primary and secondary sources to examine.
- Ask students to read through the documents and work as a team to interpret and discuss the various items.
- Ask students to prepare a creative skit or dramatic reenactment of their evidence. Each piece of information as well as each student should be used in the group presentation. Each presentation should last two to three minutes.
- Circulate the room and help the students interpret the evidence, provide support for historical questions, and advice or ideas for acting out the skit.
- Distribute a piece of paper to create the Graphic Organizer of Events to each student. Ask each student to construct their organizer (fold to create four equal quadrants, label as sections one through four) and start by making a quick sketch/description of their part of the story.
 - **Teacher Tip:** Remind the students that they are reenacting events that directly affected the real lives of specific individuals and families. Their behavior and attitude should be respectful.
- Ask each group to present their skit or dramatic reenactment to the class. Provide time after each skit for the students to draw and write.
 - **Teacher Note:** It is very important to recap the scene and clear up any confusion, misconceptions, or questions for the entire group.

Activity Three: Reflection (15 minutes)

- Watch the eulogy for Johnny Akimoto or Victor Akimoto presented at the Lorraine American Cemetery.
- Watch the video about the Akimoto story filmed on location at the Lorraine American Cemetery.
- Engage students in discussion as to what they have learned and what questions still remain.

Adaptations

- After the presentations, have the students respond to the following questions in their reflection journals or notebooks:
 - Considering what you now know about Victor and Johnny Akimoto, if you were an eligible Japanese-American male, living in an internment camp during World War II, would you enlist in the United States Army? Why or why not?
 - Given these circumstances, are there other perspectives on the issue of enlistment for Japanese Americans during World War II? Discuss one or more perspectives.
 - Cite evidence from the performances to support your response.
- Teacher can assess student responses using the Writing Assessment Rubric.

Methods for Extension

- More advanced students may want to investigate the resources provided in the bibliography of the book to gain more insight into this time period and these events.
- The American Battle Monuments Commission maintains U.S. military cemeteries overseas. These cemeteries are permanent memorials to the fallen, but it is important that students know the stories of those who rest here. To learn more about the stories of Americans who made the ultimate sacrifice, visit abmc.gov/education and NHDSilentHeroes.org.
- Teachers can enhance students' interest in World War II on the homefront by exploring these related lesson plans:
 - [Decisions in Postwar America: Remembrance of our Nation's Fallen Heroes](#)
 - [Industry's Role in the Strategic Bombing Campaign](#)
 - [Race and Tragedy on the Homefront: The Forgotten Port Chicago Disaster](#)
 - [Sacrifice, Loss, and Honor: A Simulation of the Homefront in World War II](#)

Adaptations

- A support teacher could read aloud the captions and content of the letters when necessary.
- Teachers can orally record a written document so students can play back and repeat as needed.

Writing Assessment Rubric

Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Emerging
Cites evidence from all four groups of documents	Cites evidence from at least three groups of documents	Cites evidence from at least two groups of documents	Cites evidence from only one group of documents
Well-developed response that considers multiple perspectives on the issue of internment	Well-developed response that considers at least two perspectives on the issue of internment	Response is standard, included minimal reference to more than one perspective	Basic response that is limited to one perspective

Group One: Anti-Asian Sentiment and Introduction to the Akimotos

Primary Sources:

Photograph, *Japs Keep Out You Rats*, November 11, 1944

Poster, *Mass Meeting of the Oregon Property Owners' Protective League, Inc.*, 1945

Political Cartoon, *Waiting for the Signal from Home*

Photograph, *Masanori with Brothers*, c. 1906

Photograph, *Ted and Johnny Akimoto*, 1925

Photograph, *Mary with Students*, 1907

Photograph, *The Akimoto Family*, 1927

Photograph, *Victor by Bank*

Photograph, *The USS West Virginia and USS Tennessee after the attack on Pearl Harbor*, December 7, 1941

Chinese Exclusion Act, 1882

Secondary Sources:

Excerpt, Matthew Elms, *When the Akimotos Went to War*

Group One Task Card

You will have 30 minutes to prepare a two to three minute skit that includes all of your group members. The skit will:

1. Introduce anti-Asian racism in America between 1880 and 1945. You should include quotes, posters, cartoons, etc.
2. Introduce Akimoto family members including Masanori (Father), Mary (Mother), Victor (Son), Johnny (Son), and Ted (Son) as they struggle to deal with anti-Asian sentiment.

Photograph, *Japs Keep Out You Rats*, November 11, 1944

Densho and the National Archives and Records Administration (210-CC-IN-4)



Door of barber shop owned by Any Hale, in a little desert town of Parker, 15 miles from where the Colorado River Relocation Center was located. Evacuees from the center, who cannot leave its confines without a pass, are discouraged from shopping in Parker, by WRA officials, Parker, Arizona, November 11, 1944

Poster, *Mass Meeting of the Oregon Property Owners' Protective League, Inc., 1945*

Densho

How Will We Rid The
Coast of the Japs?

Get the answer to this problem that vitally affects you and every Oregon resident at the patriotic

Free MASS Free
MEETING

8:00 P.M. Tuesday, Mar. 13
UNION HIGH SCHOOL
GRESHAM, OREGON

- 1. Rep. Warren Erwin** of Multnomah county, who introduced the anti-Jap memorial in the legislature at Salem.
- 2. Dale Bergh** Damascus farmer, just ordered to vacate his home as a result of court action by an evacuated Jap, and who is carrying this precedent setting case to the supreme court.
- 3. Geo. H. Crandell** of Seattle, famous western attorney, who knows the Japs and their peril, in a straight-from-the-shoulder talk on how to meet it.
- 4. Spokesmen** from the American Legion post at Hood River, whose anti-Jap fight has attained national prominence.

MEETING STARTS PROMPTLY. BE THERE EARLY TO GET A SEAT!

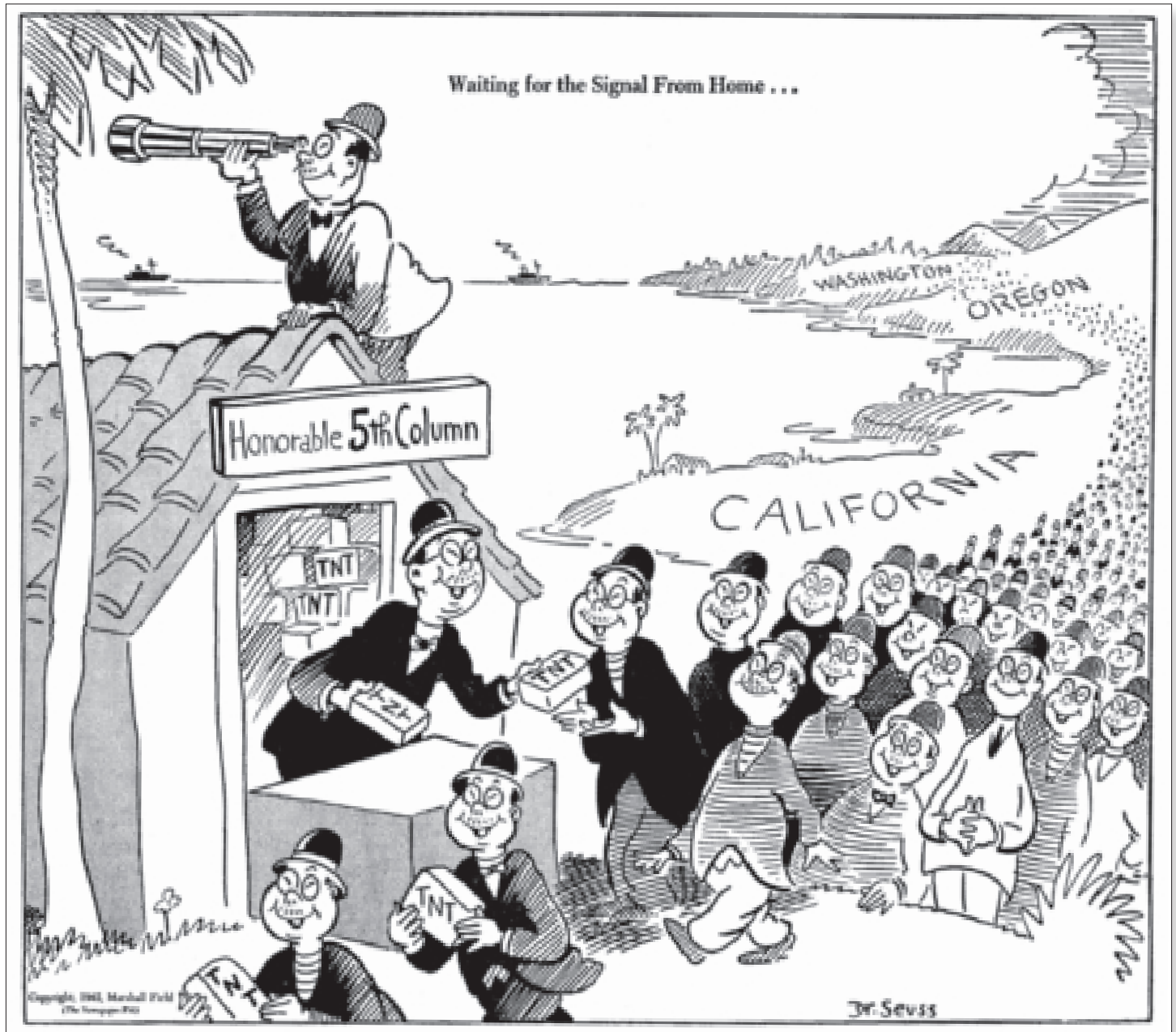
\$100 WORTH OF DOOR PRIZES GIVEN AWAY

MEETING UNDER AUSPICES OF
Oregon Property Owners' Protective League, Inc.

Advertisement for a meeting held by the Oregon Property Owners' Protective League, Inc., 1945

Political Cartoon, *Waiting for the Signal from Home*

University of California at San Diego Library



The "Honorable 5th Column" refers to an undercover Japanese spy organization. The Japanese Americans are depicted with racially stereotypical hats, round glasses, and slanted eyes. Dr. Seuss editorial cartoon, February 13, 1942

Photograph, *Masanori with Brothers*, c. 1906

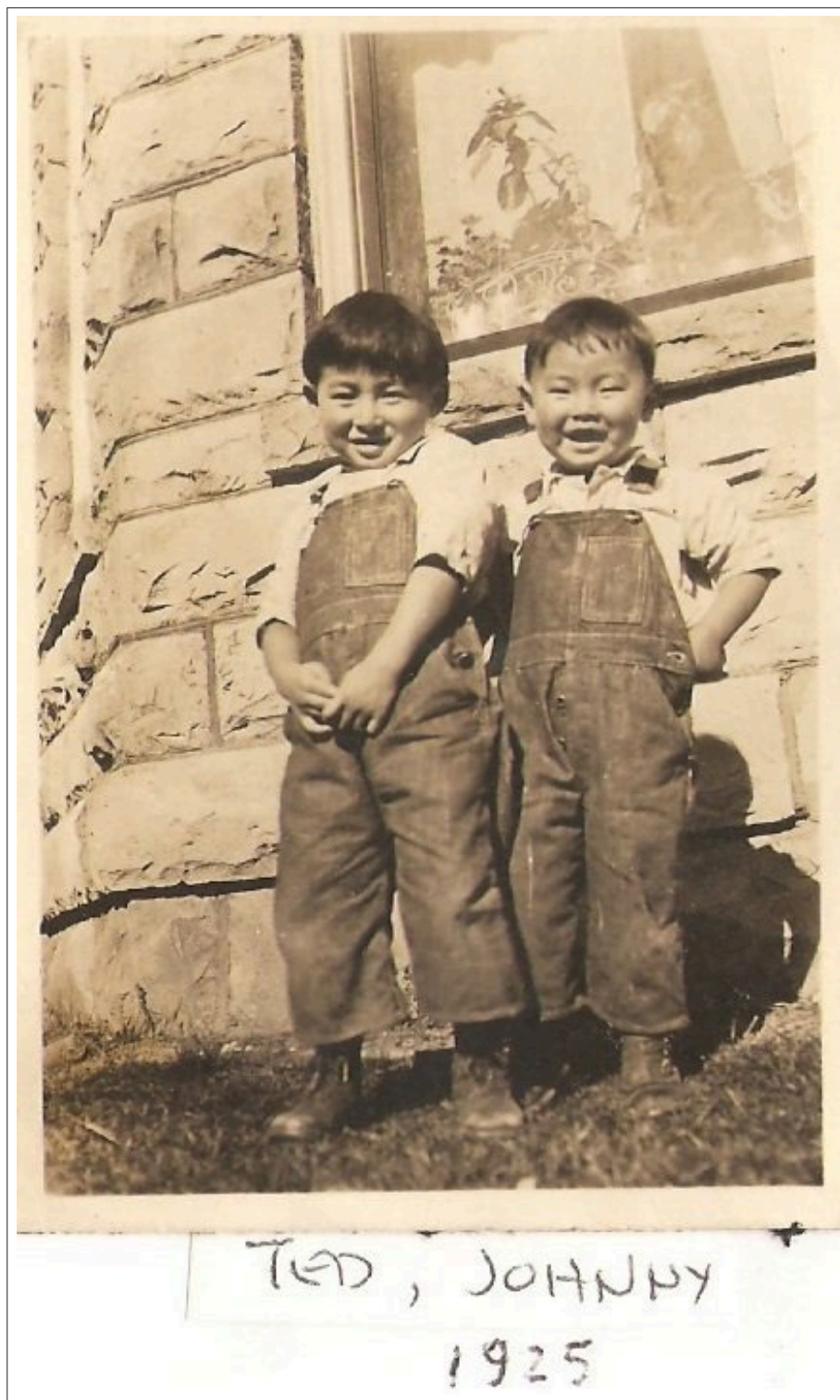
Akimoto Family Collection



Masanori Akimoto (middle) with brothers. c. 1906

Photograph, *Ted and Johnny Akimoto, 1925*

Akimoto Family Collection



Ted and Johnny Akimoto, Idaho, 1925

Photograph, *Mary with Students, 1907*

Akimoto Family Collection



Mary "Miki" Shiratori with her first pupils prior to her marriage to Masanori Akimoto, c. 1907.

Excerpt, *When the Akimotos Went to War*

As Victor grappled with the ways of the U.S. Army, his family struggled with new obstacles placed in their path. In Los Angeles, California on Dayton Street, the Akimotos opened their home to another Japanese American family. The parents had been fired from their jobs due to their Japanese ancestry. One day after Victor wrote to his family, on February 19, 1942, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066. This powerful executive order changed the lives of hundreds of thousands of Japanese Americans living along the west coast of America. Within weeks, the isolation and forced incarceration of Japanese Americans would reveal long held prejudice against Asian Americans. Even Theodor Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, used his artistic skills to portray Japanese Americans as traitors wearing stereotypical bowler hats, round eyeglasses, and leering through slanted eyes.

Photograph, *The Akimoto Family, 1927*

Akimoto Family Collection



Akimoto family in Idaho, c. 1927

Photograph, *Victor by Bank*



Photograph, *The USS West Virginia and USS Tennessee after the attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941*

Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum



Chinese Exclusion Act, 1882

British Columbia Archives (PDP03732)

HIP! HURRAH!

CHINESE EXCLUDED

—The—
Democratic Chinese Exclusion Bill
Has Been Signed by
OUR DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENT

Hip! Hurrah! The White Man is on Top.
Let every DEMOCRAT and all other GOOD Citizens turn out and Ratify this
DEMOCRATIC MEASURE

At the
HORTON HOUSE PLAZA
This Wednesday Evening at 8 O'clock.

To-Night

Speeches will be made by Leading Democratic Orators.

COME OUT AND RATIFY:
Come Everybody!

NO MORE CHINESE!

By Order of
Democratic County Central Committee.

Frederick, Langsdorf & Co., Steam Printers, 424 Fourth Street.

Reaction to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882

Group Two: Japanese-American Internment

Primary Sources:

Mary Miki Shiritori Akimoto, Santa Anita Assembly Center Painting, 1942

Photograph, *Arcadia, California. Evacuees of Japanese Ancestry from San Pedro, California, Arrive by Special Trains for Santa Anita Assembly Center...*, April 5, 1942

Granada Pioneer, March 31, 1943

Photograph, *Amache District Headquarters, Boy Scouts of America, Granada Relocation Center*, May 10, 1943

Loyalty Questionnaire, War Relocation Authority, January 1943

Poster, *Instruction to all Persons of Japanese Ancestry...*, May 23, 1942

Letter from Johnny Akimoto to Mary and Masanori Akimoto, April 13, 1943

Photograph, *Military Police on Duty in Watch-Tower at Santa Anita Park Assembly Center...*, April 6, 1942

Letter from Johnny Akimoto to Ruth and Hideo Kodani, February 19, 1943

Letter from Johnny Akimoto to Mary and Masanori Akimoto, February 3, 1943

Secondary Sources:

Excerpt, Matthew Elms, *When the Akimotos Went to War*

Group Two Task Card

You will have 30 minutes to prepare a two to three minute skit that includes all of your group members. The skit will:

1. Introduce Executive Order 9066
2. Internment process from homes, to assembly centers, to permanent camps
3. Introduce the Loyalty Questionnaire

Mary Miki Shiritori Akimoto, *Santa Anita Assembly Center Painting*, 1942

Akimoto Family Collection



Watercolor of the Santa Anita Racetrack Assembly Center painted by Mary "Miki" Akimoto. Notice the guard towers with machine guns pointed toward the internment barracks. The small fort and post office fly the American flag outside the fence. The San Gabriel Mountains are portrayed in the background, 1942.

Photograph, Arcadia, California. Evacuees of Japanese Ancestry from San Pedro, California, Arrive by Special Trains for Santa Anita Assembly Center..., April 5, 1942

National Archives and Records Administration (537038)



Granada Pioneer, March 31, 1943

Densho



Vol. I, No. 52 Amache, Colorado March 31, 1943

INDUCTION TO BEGIN

AKIMOTO AND YASUDA WILL REPORT TO DENVER APRIL 6

WRA TO GIVE ASSISTANCE

Transportation and initial living expenses for evacuees who leave the project on indefinite leaves and who need financial assistance may now be paid by the WRA, according to word received by Project Director James G. Lindley yesterday.

WRA will make cash grants at the time an evacuee leaves the center. The maximum grant includes coach fare for each member of the immediate family; \$3 per person for meals for each day of travel; and initial living expenses at the place of employment, \$50 for wage earners, plus \$25 each for two dependents.

Interested evacuees must obtain indefinite leaves from Leave Officer Willis Hanson before applying at the office of John G. Moore, public welfare counselor, for the cash grants.

If a cash-on-hand and cash income statement which is required shows insufficient funds to cover transportation costs and initial living expenses, Director Lindley will issue a cash grant for the difference.

If all the members of a family do not leave together, only that part of the grant allowance which the worker needs will be issued at that time, and the remainder when the dependents leave.

GRANT PAYMENTS MADE BY WEILER

Cash payments for public assistance grants will be made only between the hours of 1 and 4 p.m. by Herbert Weiler, agent-cashier, room 10, north administration building, effective March 29, according to T. Read Hanson, fiscal accountant.

CALENDAR

TODAY
 7:00 p.m.--Movies, 12F mess hall.
 7:30 p.m.--Senior high play, Terry hall.
 7:30 p.m.--Movies, 12H mess hall.
 7:30 p.m.--Japanese record hour, 7E mess hall.

TOMORROW
 7:00 p.m.--Movies, 11H mess hall.
 7:30 p.m.--Senior high play, Terry hall.
 7:30 p.m.--Movies, 11K mess hall.

FRIDAY
 7:00 p.m.--Movies, new picture, 9H mess hall.
 7:30 p.m.--Movies, "Gunga Din," 9L mess hall.
 7:30 p.m.--Senior high play, Terry hall.

COUNCIL MAKES REPLACEMENT

Akira Inaba, of Block 8E, District 1, and Toshio Sakai, of Block 10E, District 4, were elected to the Executive committee of the council Monday morning. They replaced Toshi Ninomiya, who is leaving shortly for Denver, and Masao Satow, who recently resigned.

Shig Hashii, of Block 12H, District 5, was elected vice chairman of the committee, and will serve as a temporary chairman until the return of Katsuki Iki.

George Matsushita, newly elected block representative of Block 8E, replaced George Dote, who left for Denver recently.

Hostel Head Visits Center

Ralph Smeltzer, director of the Church of the Brethren Relocation Hostel for Japanese in Chicago, left the center this morning after a two-day visit here.

After meeting with the block managers yesterday morning, he spent the afternoon interviewing applicants interested in the hostel, which provides evacuees with a place to live while seeking positions. The evacuees are asked to pay a dollar a day for room

-----continued on page 8

Article announcing the induction of Johnny Akimoto out of the Amache Internment Camp in Granada, Colorado. Granada Pioneer, March 31, 1943

Photograph, *Amache District Headquarters, Boy Scouts of America, Granada Relocation Center, May 10, 1943*

National Archives and Records Administration



Loyalty Questionnaire, *War Relocation Authority*, January 1943

Densho

27. If the opportunity presents itself and you are found qualified, would you be willing to volunteer for the Army Nurse Corps or the WAAC: _____

28. Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or any other foreign government, power, or organization?

29. Have you ever worked for or volunteered your services to the Japanese or Spanish government? _____
If so, indicate which and give date: _____ (Yes) (No)

Excerpt from the Loyalty Questionnaire created by the War Relocation Authority, January 1943

Poster, *Instruction to all Persons of Japanese Ancestry...*, May 23, 1942

National Park Service

**WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY
WARTIME CIVIL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION**

Presidio of San Francisco, California
May 23, 1942

**INSTRUCTIONS
TO ALL PERSONS OF
JAPANESE
ANCESTRY**

Living in the Following Area:

All of that portion of the County of Santa Clara, State of California, lying generally north and northwest of the following boundary: Beginning at the point on the Santa Cruz-Santa Clara County line, due west of a line drawn through the peak of Loma Prieta; thence due east along said line through said peak to its intersection with Llagas Creek; thence downstream along said creek toward Madrone to the point where it is crossed by Llagas Avenue; thence northeasterly on Llagas Avenue to U. S. Highway No. 101; thence southerly on said Highway No. 101 to Cochran Road; thence northeasterly on Cochran Road to its junction with Siskey Road; thence easterly on Siskey Road to Madrone Springs; thence along a line projected due east from Madrone Springs to its intersection with the Santa Clara-Siskiyou County line; together with all portions of Santa Clara County not previously covered by Exclusion Orders of this Headquarters.

Pursuant to the provisions of Civilian Exclusion Order No. 96, this Headquarters, dated May 23, 1942, all persons of Japanese ancestry, both alien and non-alien, will be evacuated from the above area by 12 o'clock noon, P. W. T., Saturday, May 30, 1942.

No Japanese person will be permitted to move into, or out of, the above area after 12 o'clock noon, P. W. T., Saturday, May 23, 1942, without obtaining special permission from the representative of the Commanding General, Northern California Sector, at the Civil Control Station located at:

Men's Gymnasium,
San Jose State College,
4th and San Carlos Streets,
San Jose, California.

Such permits will only be granted for the purpose of uniting members of a family, or in cases of grave emergency.

The Civil Control Station is equipped to assist the Japanese population affected by this evacuation in the following ways:

1. Give advice and instructions on the evacuation.
2. Provide services with respect to the management, leasing, sale, storage or other disposition of most kinds of property, such as real estate, business and professional equipment, household goods, boats, automobiles and livestock.
3. Provide temporary residence elsewhere for all Japanese in family groups.
4. Transport persons and a limited amount of clothing and equipment to their new residence.

The Following Instructions Must Be Observed:

1. A responsible member of each family, preferably the head of the family, or the person in whose name most of the property is held, and each individual living alone, will report to the Civil Control Station to receive further instructions. This must be done between 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M. on Sunday, May 24, 1942, or between 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M. on Monday, May 25, 1942.
2. Evacuees must carry with them on departure for the Assembly Center, the following property:
 - (a) Bedding and linens (no mattress) for each member of the family;
 - (b) Toilet articles for each member of the family;
 - (c) Extra clothing for each member of the family;
 - (d) Essential personal effects for each member of the family.
 All items carried will be securely packaged, tied and plainly marked with the name of the owner and numbered in accordance with instructions obtained at the Civil Control Station. The size and number of packages is limited to that which can be carried by the individual or family group.
3. No pets of any kind will be permitted.
4. No personal items and no household goods will be shipped to the Assembly Center.
5. The United States Government through its agencies will provide for the storage, at the sole risk of the owner, of the more substantial household items, such as iceboxes, washing machines, pianos and other heavy furniture. Cooking utensils and other small items will be accepted for storage if crated, packed and plainly marked with the name and address of the owner. Only one name and address will be used by a given family.
6. Each family, and individual living alone, will be furnished transportation to the Assembly Center. Private means of transportation will not be utilized. All instructions pertaining to the movement will be obtained at the Civil Control Station.

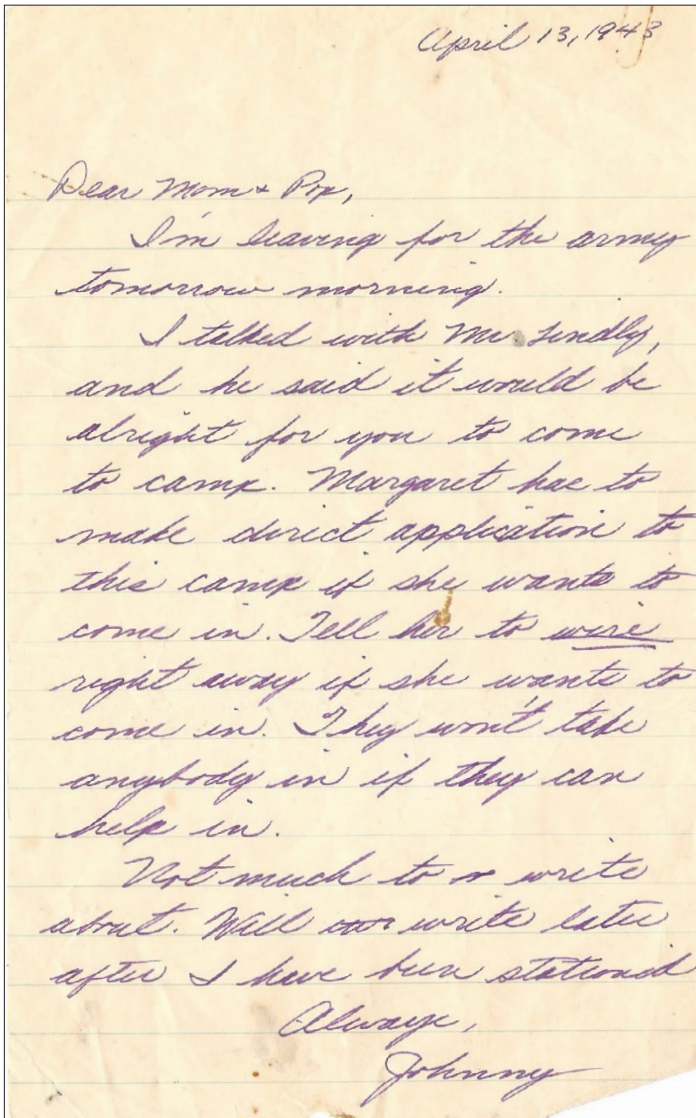
**Go to the Civil Control Station between the hours of 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M.,
Sunday, May 24, 1942, or between the hours of 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M.,
Monday, May 25, 1942, to receive further instructions.**

J. L. DeWITT
Lieutenant General, U. S. Army
Commanding

SEE CIVILIAN EXCLUSION ORDER NO. 96

Letter from Johnny Akimoto to Mary and Masanori Akimoto, April 13, 1943

Akimoto Family Collection



Transcription

April 13, 1943

Dear Mom & Pop,

I'm leaving for the army tomorrow morning.

I talked with Mr. Findley and he said it would be alright for you to come to camp [Amache.] Margaret has to make direct application to this camp if she wants to come in. Tell her to wire right away if she wants to come in. They won't take anybody if they can help in.

Not much to write about. Will write later after I have been stationed.

Always,

Johnny

Letter from Johnny Akimoto to Mary and Masanori Akimoto, April 13, 1943

Photograph, *Military Police on Duty in Watch-Tower at Santa Anita Park Assembly Center...*, April 6, 1942

National Archives and Records Administration (537019)



Excerpt, *When the Akimotos Went to War*

In Washington, D.C., despite the lack of evidence of Japanese American traitors, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt made his most controversial decision during his nearly four full terms in office. He issued Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942, sealing the fate of nearly 120,000 Japanese Americans. In the weeks and months that followed, Japanese Americans along the West coast of the United States were rounded up and put into internment camps. While Victor trained with the U.S. Army to defend America, that same U.S. Army put his family under armed guard.

Thousands of Japanese Americans, faced with threats of bayonets and machine guns, sold their homes. Victor's family unloaded their home, as well as household furnishings and family heirlooms, at cut-rate prices. As his family departed their home, eagerly awaiting profiteers snapped up the riches left behind. Items such as cameras, shortwave radios, and ceremonial Japanese swords were forbidden in the assembly and internment camps. These articles were discarded or sold for pennies on the dollar.

Letter from Johnny Akimoto to Ruth and Hideo Kodani, February 19, 1943

Akimoto Family Collection

Transcription

Dear Ruth & Hideo,

Well, I guess I might as well get to the point. I joined the army. I done a lot of thinking about it before I signed so don't think I done it on the spur of the moment.

Feb. 19, 1943
Dear Ruth & Hideo,
Well, I guess I might as well get to the point. I joined the army. I done a lot of thinking about it before I signed so don't think I done it on the spur of the moment.
You know I never did like any part of farming, and about getting jobs in defense plants are a bunch of baloney. I didn't want to be a farm laborer, and don't want to stay in camp so I signed up.
Another thing, on our registration we got a couple of questions concerning our loyalty & willingness to fight for America.

Well, to those two questions, 3 to 1 nusub put no to that question. Well, that would take away all our rights & stuff. Well them dumb guys just make things tough for everybody else. Don't think I'm patriotic or stuff but I'm just looking out for myself. We'll be going the 1st of next month.
Ask Ned if he wants my clothes or what. Only thing he probably could wear would be my shirts. I was thinking of leaving them with my friends or something.
How is everything down

in Idaho? How is the PH situation coming along? Has mom gone to Arizona yet?
The weather down here is well. Haven't seen any snow since I hit camp. For the last 2 weeks, it's been just like L.A. weather. The food is good & bad. We have roast pork or beef at least once a week. The barracks are a lot better than Santa Anita but spread out to far.
Well, not much more to write about so I'll sign off. Be seeing you. (I hope)
Just Johnny

You know I never did like any part of farming and about getting jobs in defense plants are a bunch of baloney. I didn't want to be a farm laborer, and don't want to stay in camp so I signed up.

Another thing, on our registration we got a couple of questions concerning our loyalty & willingness to fight for America. Well, to those two questions, 3 to 1 nusub put no to that question. Well, that would take away all our rights & stuff. Well them dumb guys just make things tough for everybody else. Don't think I'm patriotic or stuff but I'm just looking out for myself. We'll be going the 1st of next month.

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Well, not much more to write about so I'll sign off. Be seeing you. (I hope)

Just Johnny

Letter from Johnny Akimoto to Mary and Masanori Akimoto, February 3, 1943

Akimoto Family Collection

Transcription:

Dear Mom & Dad,

February 3, 1943

Arrived in camp Monday [sic] night.
Everything is pretty good out here. Its
[sic] not like Santa Anita though.

I'm staying with Ioshi Mori & Yammy in
a barracks.

The floor is brick & the inside is like our
bunkhouse, lined with seltex.*

There's a coal stove in every barrack
and they furnish all the coal. It sure is nice & warm in the room.

I've seen Watada san already & he sends his regards.

So far the food is pretty good. Haven't seen everybody yet cause the camp is pretty well spread out.

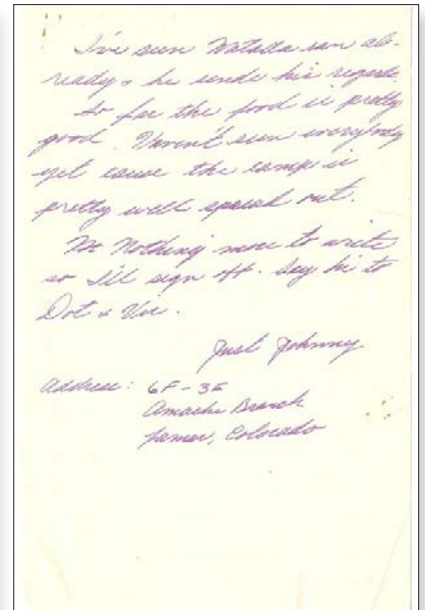
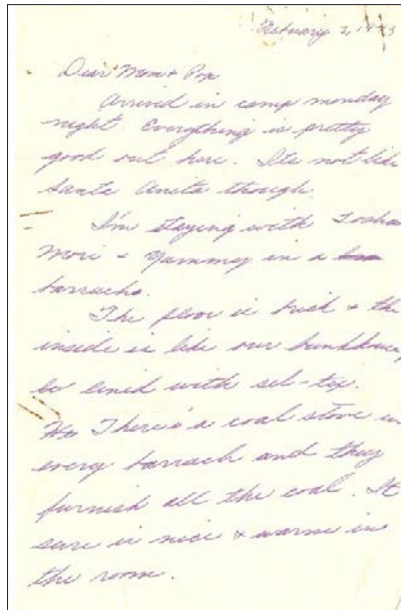
Nothing more to write so I'll sign off. Say hi to Dot & Vic.

Just Johnny

Address: 6F - 3F

Amache Branch

Lamar, Colorado



*Seltex – a thin-coated paper product used to cover the outside or inside of wall to keep dust, dirt, and wind out of the internment camp barrack building.

Military Life and Death

Primary Sources:

Letter from Victor Akimoto to his family, April 29, 1942
Akimoto Family Collection

Photograph, *Members of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team are seen in the Vosges mountain range in France*, October 1944
U.S. Army Signal Corps, American Battle Monuments Commission

Photograph, *Two color guards and color bearers of the Japanese-American 442nd Combat Team, stand at attention, while their citations are read...*, November 12, 1944
U.S. Army Signal Corps (SC-196716)

Photograph, *Sergeant Victor Akimoto and Private Johnny Akimoto*, c. 1943
Akimoto Family Collection

Photograph, *Johnny, Jane, and Ted Akimoto*, c. 1943
Akimoto Family Collection

Photograph, *Victor on Guard Duty*, c. 1943
Akimoto Family Collection

Letter from Major General J.A. Ulio to Masanori Akimoto, August 21, 1944
Department of the Army

Letter from Ted Akimoto to Mary and Masanori Akimoto, August 21, 1944
Akimoto Family Collection

Letter from Johnny Akimoto to Mary and Masanori Akimoto, June 21, 1943
Akimoto Family Collection

Secondary Sources:

Excerpts, Matthew Elms, *When the Akimotos Went to War*

Group Three Task Card

You will have 30 minutes to prepare a two to three minute skit that includes all of your group members. The skit will:

1. Re-enact the demotion of Victor
2. Accurately present the death of Johnny in Italy
3. Present the Battle of the Lost Battalion in France

Letter from Victor Akimoto to his family, April 29, 1942

Akimoto Family Collection

Transcription:

April 29, 1942

Q.M. Detachment

Building 212

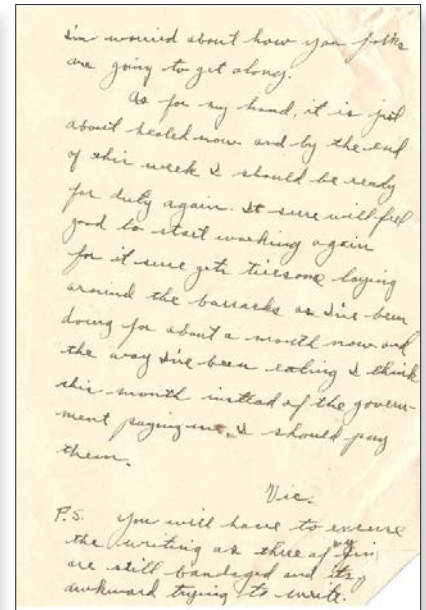
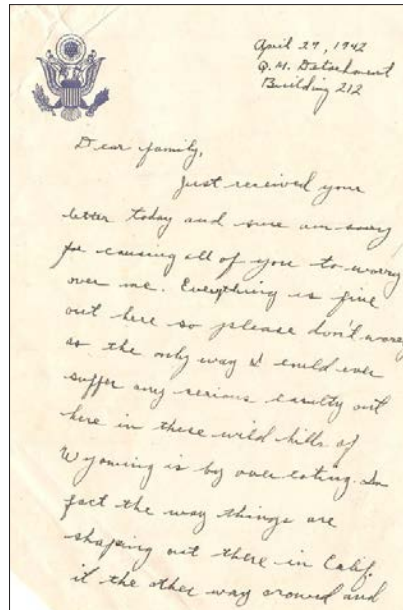
Dear Family,

Just received your letter today and sure am sorry for causing all of you to worry over me. Everything is fine out here so please don't worry as the only way I could ever suffer any serious casualty out here in these wild hills of Wyoming is by overeating. In fact the way things are shaping out there in Calif. It the other way around and... I'm worried about how you folks are going to get along.

As for my hand, it is just about healed now and by the end of this week I should be ready for duty again. It sure will feel good to start working again for it sure gets tiresome laying around the barracks as I've been doing for about a month now and the way I've been eating I think this month instead of the government paying me, I should pay them.

Vic.

P.S. You have to excuse the writing as three of my fingers are still bandaged and its [sic] just awkward trying to write.



Excerpt, *When the Akimotos Went to War*

As fall became winter in central Europe, the world braced for the final European battles of World War II. By the time the 442nd Regimental Combat Team arrived at France's Vosges Mountains, the fighting was frantic. Adolf Hitler had ordered his troops to fight to the last man to defend Germany from the Allied advance. Victor's company would be fighting in mountain terrain, much trickier than the flat plains of Italy. Here, they had to contend with trees, rocks, fog, and rain, as well as a highly trained, professional German Army fighting to defend its homeland.

The 442nd Regimental Combat Team was ordered to rescue the 141st Infantry Regiment, composed of members mostly from Texas. Allied bombers air-dropped supplies to the surviving 275 Texans. But the weather conditions were so poor that most of the supplies fell into German hands. Artillery shells stuffed with emergency supplies, aimed at the entrenched Americans, fell into enemy hands as well.

The 442nd Regimental Combat Team battled for five days before finally breaking through the German defenses. On October 30, 230 men of the 141st Infantry Regiment came out alive. The 442nd suffered over 800 casualties, deaths and injuries combined. More Japanese-American soldiers sacrificed and lost their lives in what became known as the Battle of the Lost Battalion than soldiers of the 141st Infantry Regiment were saved.

Photograph, *Members of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team are seen in the Vosges mountain range in France, October 1944*

U.S. Army Signal Corps, American Battle Monuments Commission



Photograph, *Two color guards and color bearers of the Japanese-American 442nd Combat Team, stand at attention, while their citations are read...*, November 12, 1944

U.S. Army Signal Corps (SC-196716)



Photograph, *Sergeant Victor Akimoto and Private Johnny Akimoto, c. 1943*

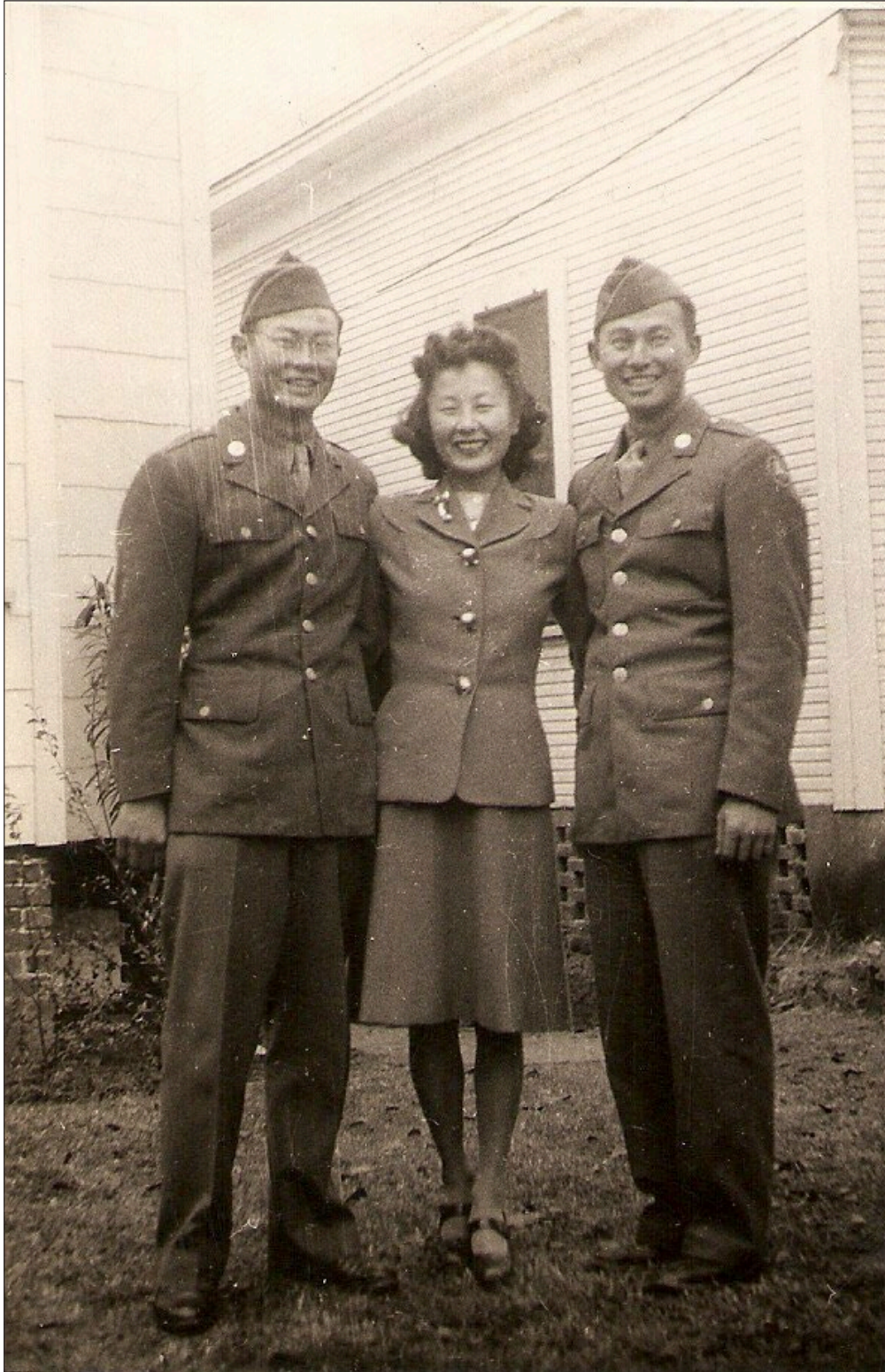
Akimoto Family Collection



Sergeant Victor Akimoto (left) and Private Johnny Akimoto (right) at Camp Shelby.

Photograph, Johnny, Jane, and Ted Akimoto, c. 1943

Akimoto Family Collection



Photograph, *Victor on Guard Duty, c. 1943*

Akimoto Family Collection



Excerpt, *When the Akimotos Went to War*

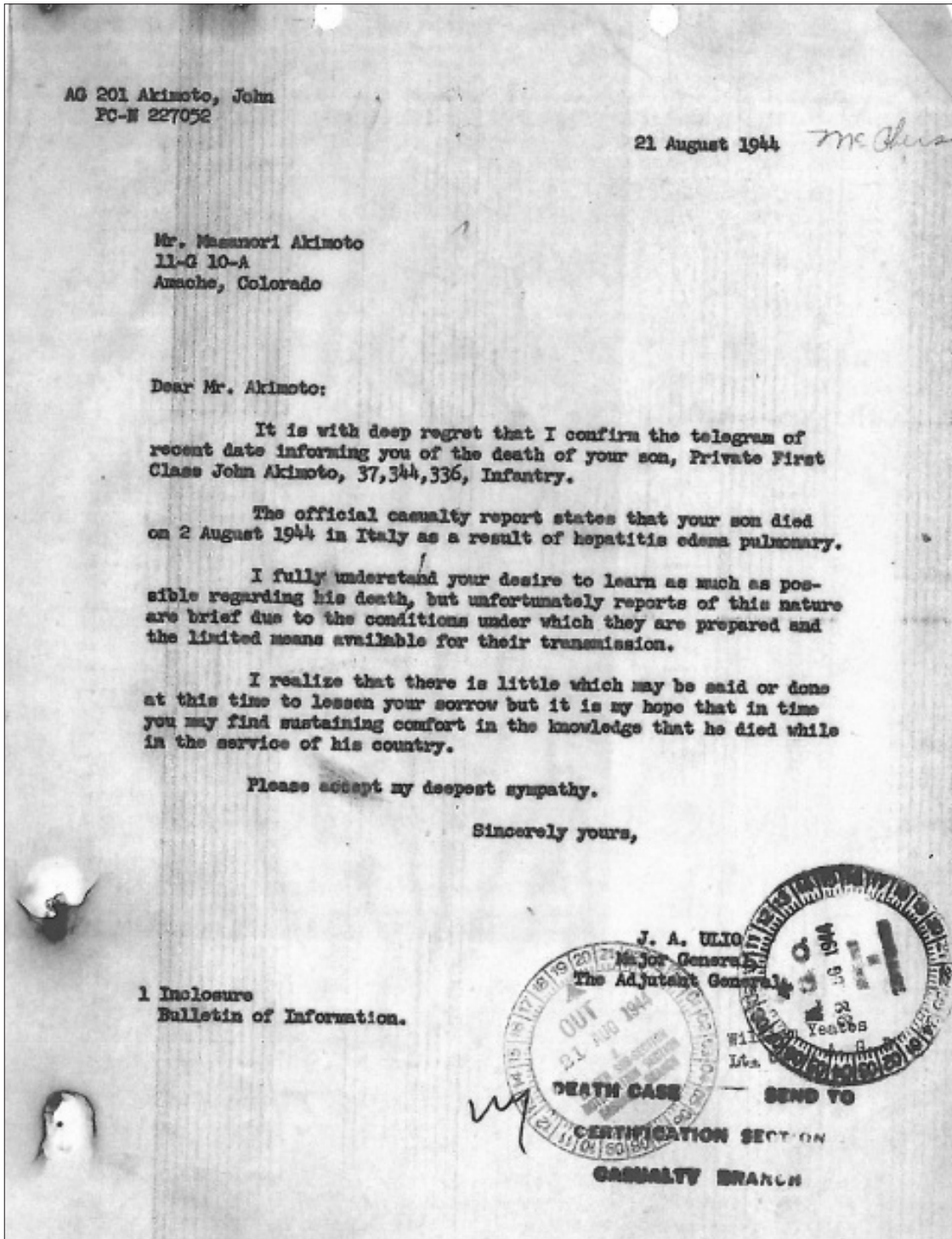
As the oldest son, Victor believed in his family duty to look after his younger brothers. As any good son would do, he promised his mother to keep Ted and Johnny safe. Yet, the U.S. Army decided to keep sergeants of the 100th Battalion stateside to continue training new soldiers. In order for his commander to give him permission to go overseas, Victor willingly gave up his rank as sergeant, demoted to private.

But Victor, trained by a Glove Gloves contender on the streets of Los Angeles, had one more left hook in his arsenal.

During that same conversation in 1943, Victor had the chaplain and commander make a promise. He made them promise neither to send Ted into battle nor to allow Ted to take a reduction in rank to go into battle like Victor.

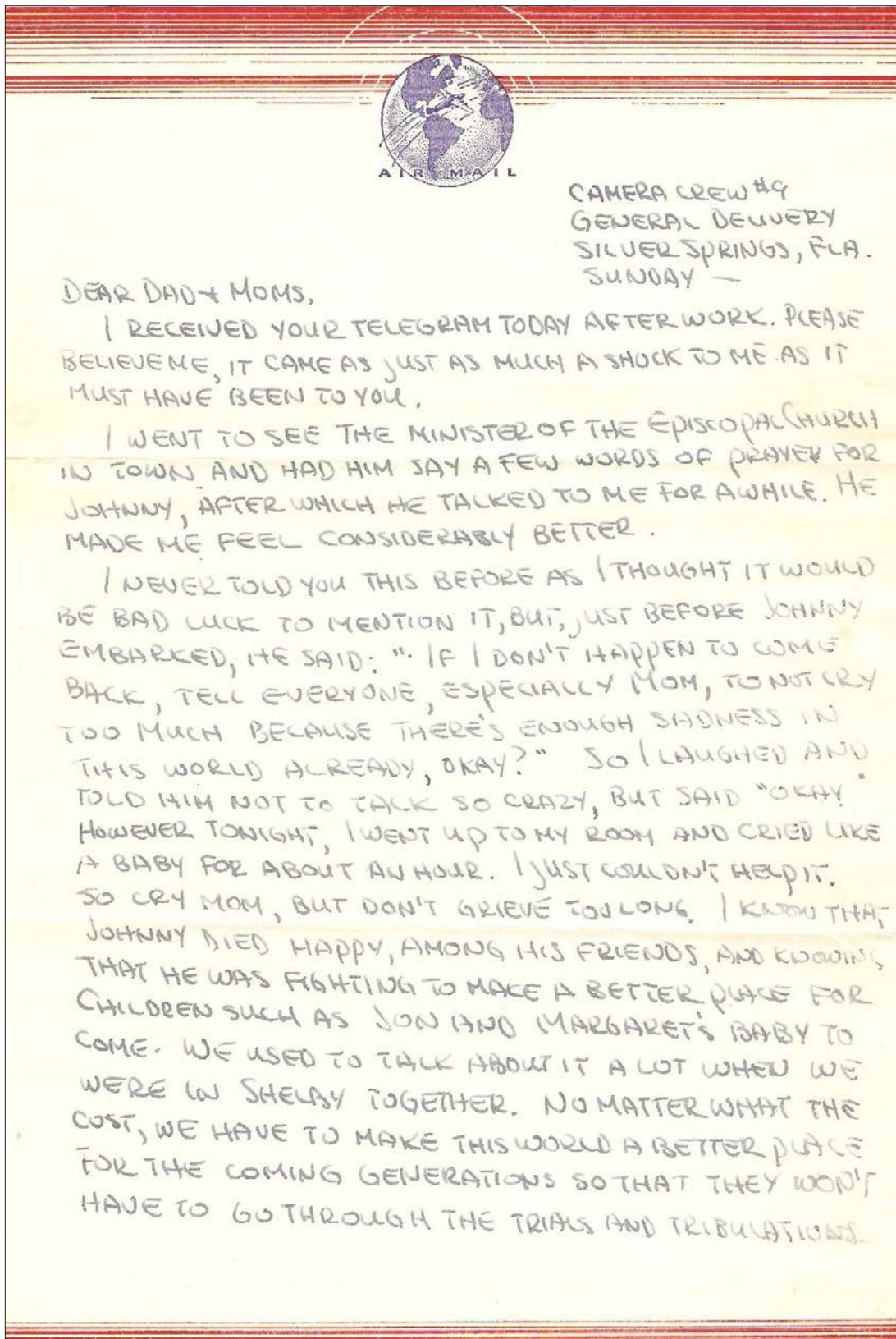
Letter from Major General J.A. Ulio to Masanori Akimoto, August 21, 1944

Department of the Army



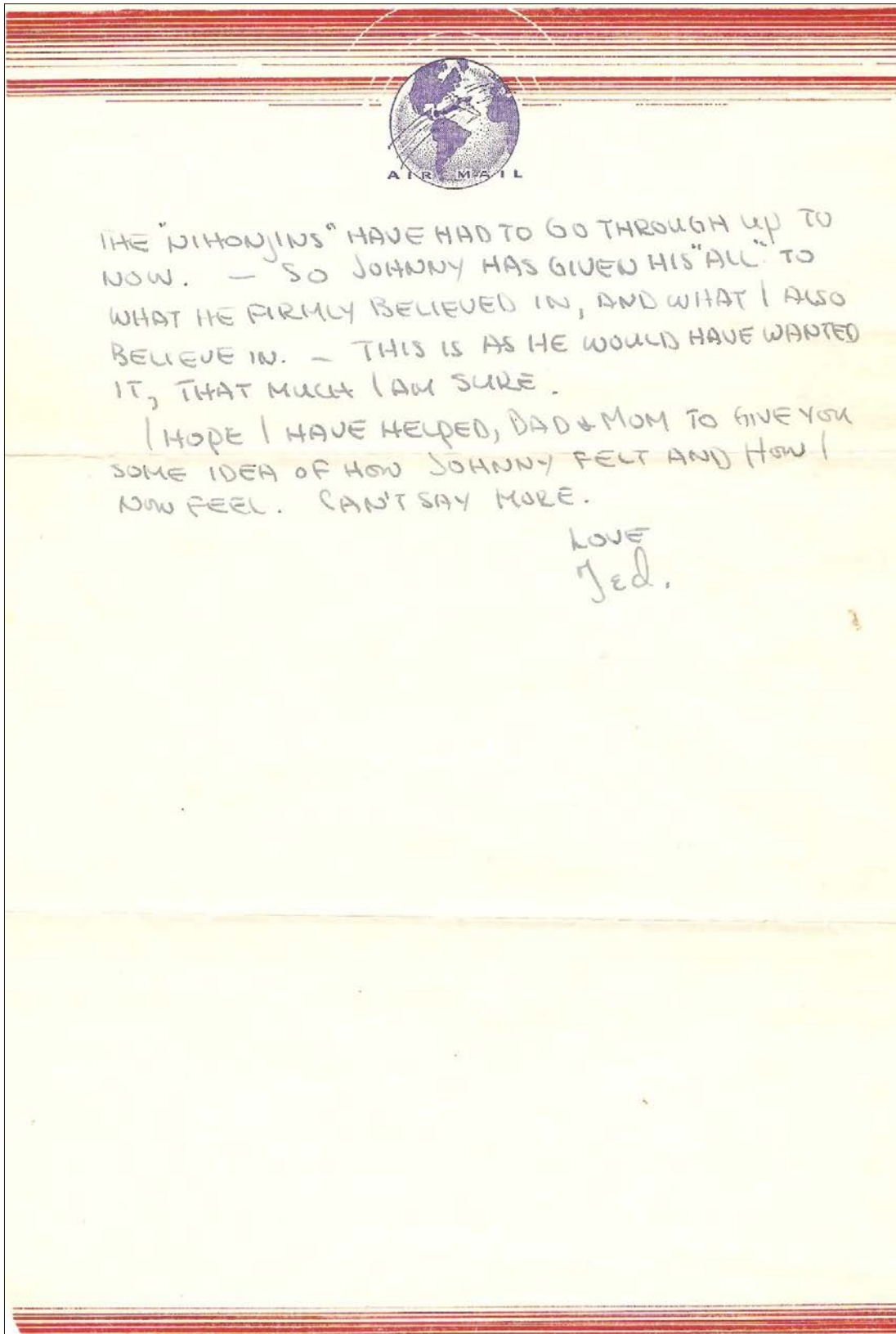
Letter from Ted Akimoto to Mary and Masanori Akimoto, August 21, 1944

Akimoto Family Collection



Letter from Ted Akimoto to Mary and Masanori Akimoto, August 21, 1944

Akimoto Family Collection



Letter from Johnny Akimoto to Mary and Masanori Akimoto, June 21, 1943

Akimoto Family Collection

Transcription

June 21, 1943

Monday Nite

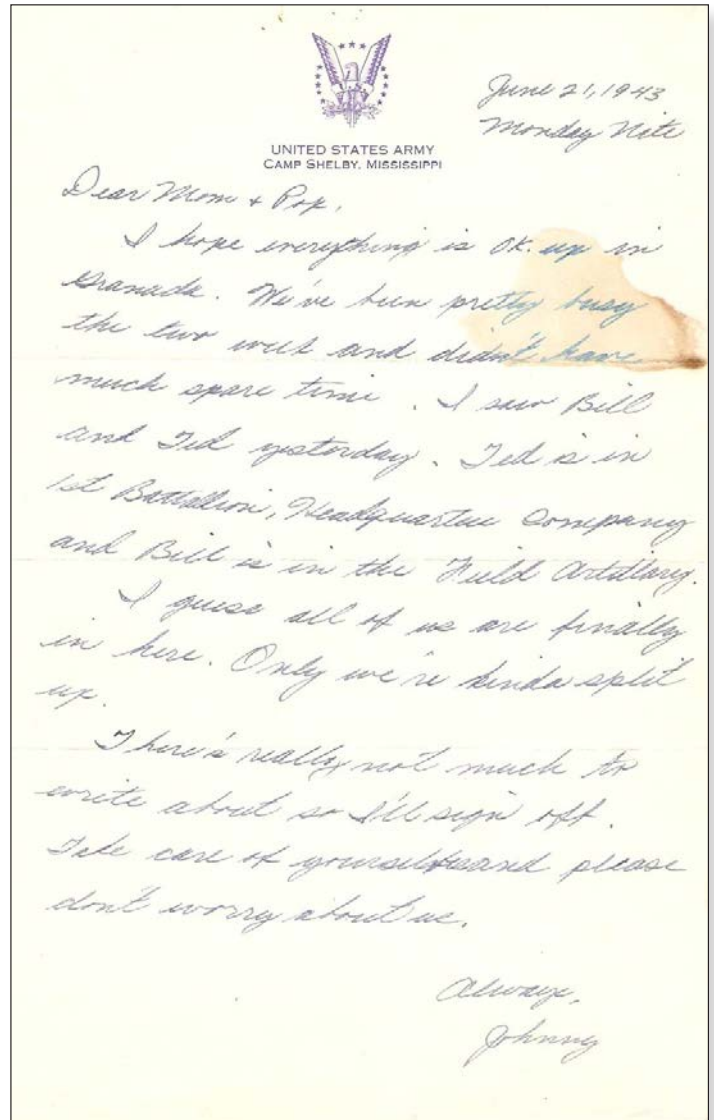
Dear Mom & Dad,

I hope everything is OK. up in Grenada. We've been pretty busy the two a days and didn't have much spare time. I saw Bill and Ted yesterday. Ted is in 1st Battalion, Headquarters Company and Bill is in the Field Artillery.

I guess all of us are finally here. Only we're kinda split up.

There's really not much to write about so I'll sign off. Take care of yourselves and please don't worry about me.

Always,
Johnny



Life of a Prisoner of War (POW)

Primary Sources

International Committee of the Red Cross Report, April 17, 1945

Missing Report, 1944

Letter from Major General J.A. Ulio to Mary Akimoto, November 11, 1944

Photograph, *Reenacting the liberation of Stalag IX - B*, April 2, 1945

Comite International de la Croix-Rouge, December 1944

Letter from Major General J.A. Ulio to Mary Akimoto, April 19, 1945

War Department Telegram to Mary Akimoto, May 8, 1945

Letter from Mary Akimoto to War Department, February 14, 1945

Photograph, *Liberated Soldiers at Bad Orb Eating C-Rations*, April 2, 1945

Request for Disposition of Remains, November 24, 1947

Secondary Sources

Excerpt, Matthew Elms, *When the Akimotos Went to War*

Group Four Task Card

You will have 30 minutes to prepare a 2 - 3 minute skit that includes all of your group members. The skit will:

1. Introduce the capture of Victor Akimoto
2. Present conditions of POW Camp at Bad Orb
3. Present Mary at Amache Internment Camp

International Committee of the Red Cross Report, April 17, 1945

Department of the Army

DECLASSIFIED
 Authority NWD 927605

COPY OF INCOMING CABLEGRAM: Ref. C/x

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS
DELEGATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Translation

Cable received from: Intercroixrouge
 Geneva, Switzerland

Date sent: April 17, 1945 **Date received:** April 19, 1945

1564 GENERAL VISIT WEHRKREIS IX FROM 6TH TO 21ST MARCH FOLLOWING CAMPS
 OFLAG IX/A/H/Z STALAGS IX/A IX/B IX/C LAZARETTES STADTRODA HILDBURGHAUSEN
 BADSDEN OBERMASSFELD MEININGEN SCHLEITZ TREYSA SITUATION CRITICAL FOR
 THOSE THERE SINCE BEGINNING AND PRISONERS EVACUATED UNDER VERY BAD
 CONDITIONS FROM CAMPS IN THE EAST CONSIDERABLE LOSS OF WEIGHT/ DYSENTERY/
DIARRHEA/ HEMORRHAGICA/ GENERALIZED PNEUMONIA/ HYGIENE NONEXISTANT/ VERMIN
SWARMS/ DANGER TYPHUS/ CLOTHING IN SHREADS/ STOP BARRACKS AND TENTS
OVERCROWDED/ PRISONERS SLEEP ON BARE FLOORS OR UNCLEAN STRAW/ STOP
EXTREMELY SMALL PORTIONS OF FOOD/ STOP STALAG IX/B WITHOUT SALT FOR WEEKS
STOP NO SHIPMENTS SINCE SEVERAL MONTHS/ SUPPLIES EXTREMELY URGENTLY
 NEEDED FOOD CLOTHING SHOES DRUGS INPARTICULAR SULFOGUANIDINE SULFOPYRIDINE
 OPIATES DISINFECTANTS SUCH AS IODEMERFEN ("SWISS PREPARATION ZYMA MERCURY-
 BROMAT WITH IODINE") ANTIDYPHTHERIA SERUM TYPHUS VACCIN PENICILLIN
 MATERIEL FOR DRESSINGS BLANKETS UTENSILS STOP GRAVE DANGER OF EPIDEMICS
SANITARY INSTALLATIONS ALTOGETHER INSUFFICIENT SOAP TOILET PAPER
 COMPLETELY LACKING STOP GENERAL APATHY REPRESENTATIVES HARRASSED WITH
 QUESTIONS HIGH PERCENTAGE DEATHS STOP OF LAGS RELATIVELY BETTER NO NEW
 ARRIVALS OF PRISONERS FOOD CONDITIONS BETTER BUT NO SHIPMENTS OF FOOD
 RECEIVED NECESSITY CONSTITUTE RESERVES FOR FORESEEN ARRIVAL EVACUES STOP
LAZARETTES NOT IN AS POOR CONDITION AS STALAGS BECAUSE PRISONER LESS
 NUMEROUS MEDICAL CARE STILL SUFFICIENT BUT SYMPTOMS OF DISEASE CAUSED
 BY UNDERNOURISHMENT

INTERCROIXROUGE H9746

Missing Report, 1944

Department of the Army

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MISSING REPORT

Classification ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
Date Jan. 4, 45

To accompany WD AGO Forms 66-1 or 74 of Missing or Missing in Action Personnel
(Other than those covered by Missing Air Crew Report.) ADD

NAME AKIMOTO, Victor ASN 19 078 557 GRADE Pvt Arm or Service Inf

ORGN Co & 100th Bn, 442d Inf APO 758 Date Reported NIA 23 Oct 44

MISSION Being evacuated to the rear aid station

POINT OF DEPARTURE Biffontaine, France DATE 23 Oct 44

INTENDED DESTINATION Bn Aid Station, V295576

LAST KNOWN WHEREABOUTS V312582, Map, Eastern France, Bruyeres, 1/50,000

BRIEF RESUME OF CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING DISAPPEARANCE:

Pvt Akimoto, 19078557, was a litter case and he was being evacuated to the rear aid station with several other wounded soldiers. Apparently this group lost their way in the thickly wooded area and ran into an enemy patrol. The entire group were presumably captured with the exception of a few who escaped.

STATEMENTS OF WITNESSES, IF ANY:

REMARKS: (Any information not covered above, including details and results of search, if any, conducted)

*Enlisted Branch papers
checked
Cas. Br. 4630
12 marks*

Albert A. Koby
(Signature of preparing officer)
ALBERT A. KOPY
WOJG USA, 442d Inf
Asst Adj

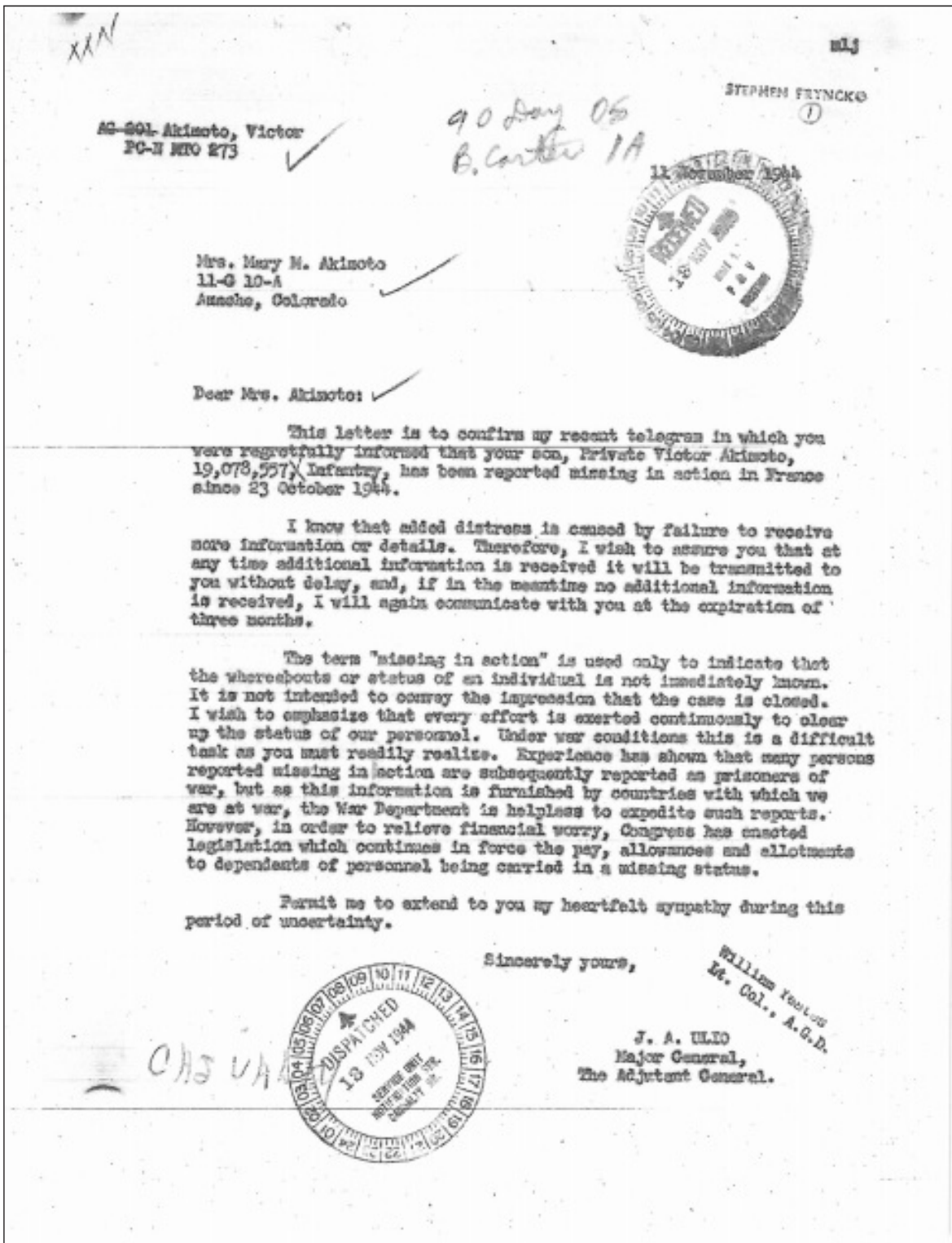
Determined to be an Administrative Marking Not National Security Information By NARA Date 11/16/5

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AM I.P.T., A.G.O.
CASUALTY STATUS VERIFIED
Group 12 Feb 45
Date of Report 2 Nov 44
Walt
Submitted in duplicate

Letter from Major General J.A. Ulio to Mary Akimoto, November 11, 1944

Department of the Army



Photograph, *Reenacting the liberation of Stalag IX - B, April 2, 1945*

U.S. Army Signal Corps (111-SC-339369)



Comite International de la Croix-Rouge, December 1944

Department of the Army


German

Nach der Amputation des rechten Beines hat Kranker der Artzin die Mitteilung gemacht, sterben zu wollen und daraufhin jede Nahrungsaufnahme verweigert.

English Translation

Following the amputation of the right leg, the patient informed the doctor that he wants to die (sterben zu wollen) and therefore refused all food (Nahrungsaufnahme).

St. G. A. 101/45



COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE
GENÈVE
AGENCE CENTRALE DES PRISONNIERS DE GUERRE

DÉCÈS - TODESFALL

A k i n o t o , Victor

Nom et prénoms
Name und Vornamen

Lieu et date de naissance
Geburtsort und -datum

Lieu et date du décès
Ort und Datum des Todes

Unité (corp., rég., bat., comp.) et No. de matricule
(inscriptions figurant sur la plaque d'identité)
Truppengattung und Erkennungsmärke

Adresse de la famille
Anschrift der Angehörigen

Où et quand a-t-il été fait prisonnier?
Wo und wann geriet er in Gefangenschaft?

Cause de la mort
Todesursache

Lieu de sépulture
Gräbnis

La tombe est-elle marquée et pourra-t-elle être retrouvée plus tard par la famille?
Hat das Grab ein besonderes Kennzeichen und könnte es später von der Familie aufgefunden werden?

De quels objets se composait la succession?
Welche Gegenstände bildeten den Nachlass?

Seront-ils envoyés avec l'acte de décès, par les soins du Ministère de la guerre?
Werden dieselben der Familie durch das Oberkommando der Wehrmacht mit der Sterbekunde zugestellt?

Dans le cas où la famille n'aurait pas encore été prévenue, un ecclésiastique, un médecin ou une infirmière ayant assisté le défunt dans sa maladie ou à ses derniers moments, pourrait-il nous faire parvenir, afin que nous les transmettions à la famille, quelques détails sur les derniers moments et l'ensevelissement?
Falls die Familie von dem Ableben des Soldaten noch nicht unterrichtet worden ist, könnte uns etwa ein Geistlicher, ein Arzt oder eine Krankenschwester, die sich während der Krankheit oder in den letzten Augenblicken beim Verstorbenen befanden, einen kurzen Bericht zukommen lassen, damit die Angehörigen über seine letzten Stunden und das Begräbnis in Kenntnis gesetzt werden können?

(Date, timbre et signature de l'autorité compétente.)
(Datum, Stempel und Unterschrift der zuständigen Behörde.)

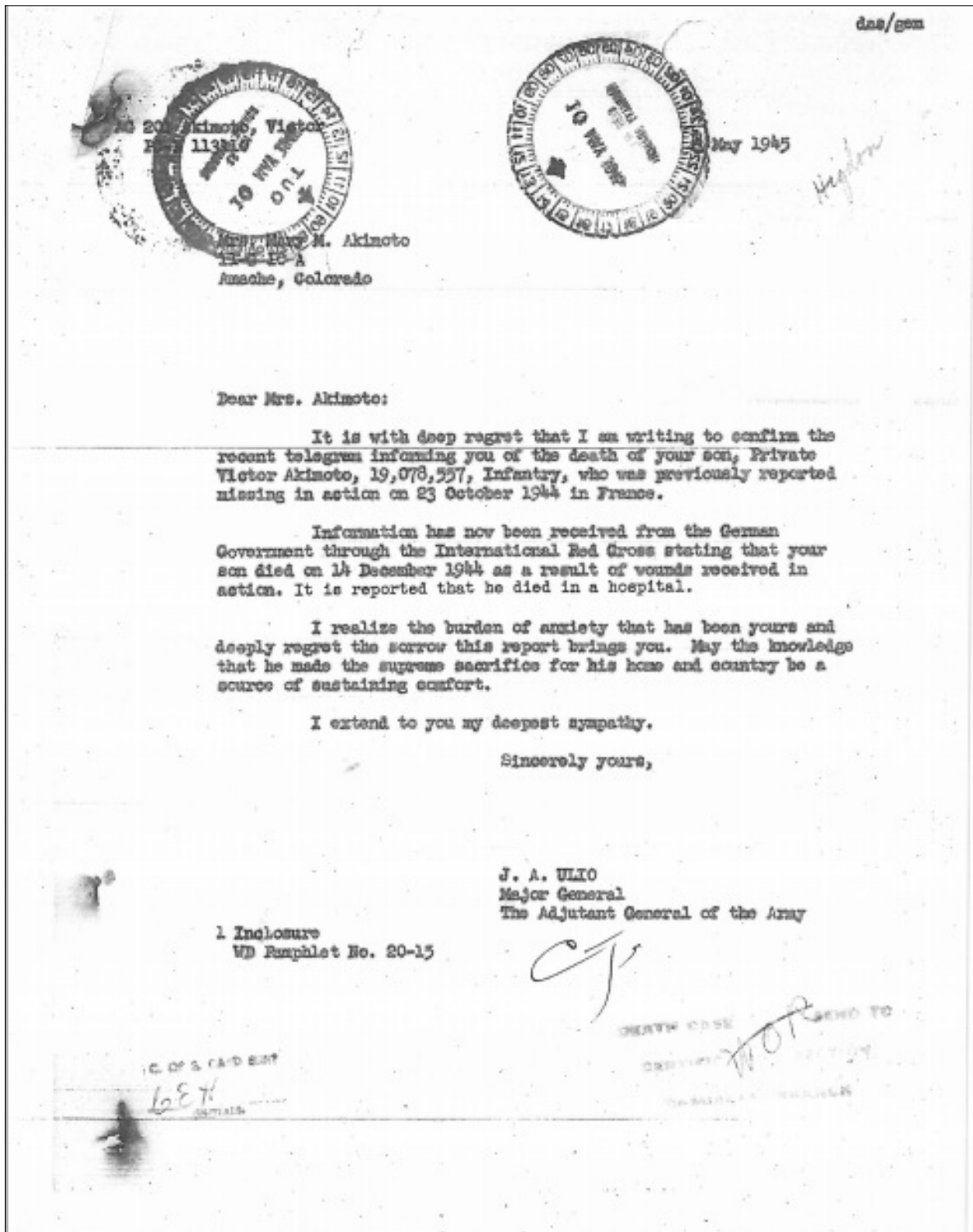
Signature et adresse de deux témoins.
Unterschrift und Anschrift zweier Zeugen:

Annahme / Colorado 19.11.1918
Teillac, Selingenstadt / Hess. 14.12.1944
T. 42/43 B - 19078557
Mutter: Mary Akimoto, Annaha / Colorado
Worten, Datum unbekannt
Kopie nach Oberkommando: Eisenbruch, Kniegelenkverletzung re. mit nachfolgender Amputation.
Gemeindefriedhof Selingenstadt / Hessen.
Kreuz mit Aufschrift des Verstorbenen
Hatte kleineren Nachlassgegenstände
Nach der Amputation des rechten Beines hat Kranker der Artzin die Mitteilung gemacht, sterben zu wollen und daraufhin jede Nahrungsaufnahme verweigert.

Selingenstadt / Hess. Kr. Hess

Letter from Major General J.A. Ulio to Mary Akimoto, April 19, 1945

Department of the Army



War Department Telegram to Mary Akimoto, May 8, 1945

Department of the Army

STANDARD FORM NO. 14A
APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT
MARCH 16, 1932

TELEGRAM

OFFICIAL BUSINESS—GOVERNMENT RATES

FROM	WAR DEPARTMENT
BUREAU	AGO
	AIR

AG 201 AKIMOTO VICTOR PVT 19 APR 45 SPXPC-113110-2-23 29 APRIL 1945
ASN 19 078 557 SON

MRS MARY M AKIMOTO
11-G 10-A
AMACHE COLORADO

REPORT NOW RECEIVED FROM THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE
INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS STATES YOUR SON PRIVATE ~~XX~~ VICTOR AKIMOTO
WHO WAS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED MISSING IN ACTION DIED OF WOUNDS ON
FOURTEEN DECEMBER THE SECRETARY OF WAR EXTENDS HIS DEEP SYMPATHY
CONFIRMING LETTER FOLLOWS

ROBERT H DUNLOP
ACTING THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

OFFICIAL ~~SKIN~~
ADJUTANT GENERAL

BATTLE

Letter from Mary Akimoto to War Department, February 14, 1945

Department of the Army

Transcription

11G - 10A

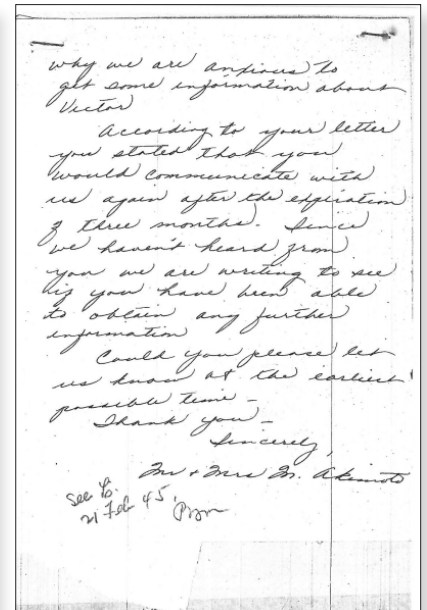
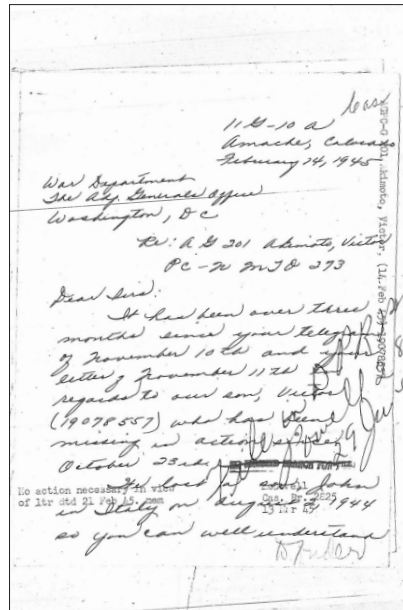
Amache, Colorado

February 14, 1945

War Department

The Adj. Generals Office

Washington, D.C.



Re: A G 201 Akimoto, Victor

PC - N InJO 273

Dear Sirs:

It has been over three months since your telegram of November 10th and your letter of November 11th in regards to our son, Victor (19078557) who has been missing in action since October 23rd. We lost one son, John in Italy on August 2, 1944 so you can well understand why we are anxious to get some information about Victor.

According to your letter you stated that you would communicate with us again after the expiration of three months. Since we haven't heard from you we are writing to see if you have been able to obtain any further information.

Could you please let us know at the earliest possible time?

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mr. & Mrs. M. Akimoto

Excerpt, *When the Akimotos Went to War*

When amputation became the only option, new problems faced Victor. With medications in short supply, including anesthetics such as ether, Victor faced having his leg removed while still conscious. Anesthetics allowed doctors to put patients to sleep and to conduct operations without causing pain to the patient. However, these drugs were probably not available to Victor or any other POW. Germany reserved medical supplies for soldiers and civilians, not Allied prisoners of war. Perhaps the doctors had access to a bit of alcohol, which would have made him drunk, or chloroform, which would have helped to put him to sleep. Both of these could have helped to reduce the pain.

Other POWs held down Victor's shoulders, torso, and legs. A tight belt or piece of rope, used to restrict blood flow, may have been used. The tourniquet would reduce bleeding. Victor bit down on a stick while the doctors sawed through the thigh tissues and bone.

They amputated his infected leg.

After the procedure, Victor recovered enough to speak to his doctor. He had one request, no more food.

Photograph, *Liberated Soldiers at Bad Orb Eating C-Rations, April 2, 1945*

US Army Signal Corps (111-SC-231077)



Request for Disposition of Remains, November 24, 1947

Department of the Army

BUDGET BUREAU NO. 49-7037

REQUEST FOR DISPOSITION OF REMAINS

L 2-20

GRADE OF DECASED, NAME, ARMY SERIAL NUMBER AND REPORTED PLACE OF BURIAL: **Pfc John Akinoto, 37 344 336**
 Plot A, Row 12, Grave 142,
 United States Military Cemetery
 Yade, Italy

DATE: **24 November 1947**

A	C	D	E
B			

DO NOT WRITE ABOVE THIS LINE

NOTE—The next of kin should familiarize himself with the contents of the pamphlet, "Disposition of World War II Armed Forces Dead," before filling out this form. When the proper part of this form is filled out and properly signed by the next of kin, it should be returned to the OFFICE OF THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL, MEMORIAL DIVISION, WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON 25, D. C., in the self-addressed postage-free envelope provided for this purpose. If you are the next of kin or authorized representative of next of kin and desire to direct the disposition of the remains, please fill in PART I of this form.

PART I

MR + MRS
I, Masanori Akinoto ((Please indicate relationship to the decased by placing an "X" in the proper box.)
(PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE NAME OF NEXT OF KIN)

WIDOW WIDOWER SON OVER 21 YEARS OLD DAUGHTER OVER 21 YEARS OLD
 FATHER MOTHER BROTHER OVER 21 YEARS OLD SISTER OVER 21 YEARS OLD
 RELATIONSHIP OTHER THAN ABOVE (Specify): _____

BEING FAMILIARIZED MYSELF WITH THE OPTIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN MADE AVAILABLE TO ME WITH RESPECT TO THE FINAL RESTING PLACE OF THE DECASED DESIGNATED ABOVE, NOW DO DECLARE THAT IT IS MY DESIRE THAT THE REMAINS: (Please place an "X" in the box opposite the option you have selected)

1. BE INTERRED IN A PERMANENT AMERICAN MILITARY CEMETERY OVERSEAS - **ST AVOUD, FRANCE**
 2. BE RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES OR ANY POSSESSION OR TERRITORY THEREOF FOR INTERMENT BY NEXT OF KIN IN A PRIVATE CEMETERY
(NAME AND LOCATION OF CEMETERY) _____
 3. BE RETURNED TO _____ THE HOMELAND OF THE DECASED OR NEXT OF KIN, FOR INTERMENT BY NEXT OF KIN IN A PRIVATE CEMETERY LOCATED AT _____
(FOREIGN COUNTRY) _____
LOCATION OF CEMETERY SELECTED _____
 4. BE RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES FOR FINAL INTERMENT IN A NATIONAL CEMETERY LOCATED AT _____
LOCATION OF NATIONAL CEMETERY SELECTED _____
(Please indicate if your own religious convictions are a location other than the selected national cemetery are observed by placing an "X" in the proper box.)
 YES NO

THE NAME OF THE DECASED, THE SERIAL NUMBER AND GRADE ARE CORRECT EXCEPT FOR THE FOLLOWING CHANGES (or no corrections are necessary, indicate this fact by inserting the word "NONE" in the space below.)

None Side by Side Burial Overseas
PVT VICTOR AKINOTO, 19078557
ST AVOUD, FRANCE TTT-2-19
10 P. 8 AM
11-13-47

BROTHERS

RECEIVED
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