



FOREWORD

After Japan bombed the US naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, in December 1941, the United States officially entered World War II (1939–1945). The US government sent people of Japanese ancestry who were living on the West Coast of the United States to incarceration camps. These people had committed no crimes. Our grandparents Shinji and Tomomi Sato were shipped to the barren camp at Poston, Arizona. They were Issei, a Japanese-language term for first-generation Japanese immigrants to the United States. Under US law, Issei were prohibited from becoming American citizens even though they had lived and worked in California for decades. Their children are Nisei, a Japanese-language term for second-generation Japanese people who were born in the United States and are therefore US citizens. Our grandparents and eight of their nine children—Kiyō, Sanji, Aizo, Kozo, Kazu, Naoshi, Tomoko, and Masashi—were held as prisoners at Poston. Their oldest son, Seiji, served in the US Army.

Details of the World War II internment of Japanese American families are becoming more widely known as a tragic yet significant part of American history. Our Auntie Kiyō has taken the responsibility of ensuring that we all learn the stories and lessons of our parents' and grandparents' time in the Poston internment camp. She describes the