Manzanar

ID Card

In 1942 the United States Government ordered over 110,000 men, women, and children to leave their homes and detained them in remote, military-style camps. Two-thirds of them were born in America. Not one was convicted of espionage or sabotage.

In this booklet, you will read the story of a person who lived this history, in his or her own words.

GLORIA MORITA

Family # 7611
Camp: Tule Lake, CA
Address: 46-16-D

Gloria Morita, 1943

My father Jinjiro Tamura came to the United States from Japan about 1906, seeking a better life. He later returned to Japan to marry my mother Toku Koide.

They settled in the Sacramento area and worked in a tomato cannery for a while, and then my father leased land and began raising strawberries. They raised four children on that strawberry farm.

Since Japanese immigrants were legally prevented from owning land, my father was going to buy land and put it in my older sister's name,

My parents' $5,000 . . . assets in a Japanese bank were frozen when war broke out. They later received five cents on the dollar.

WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY
WARTIME CIVIL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION
Presidio of San Francisco, California
May 3, 1942

INSTRUCTIONS
TO ALL PERSONS OF
JAPANESE
ANCESTRY
Living in the Following Area:

[illegible]

Pursuant to the provisions of Civilian Exclusion Order No. 33, this Headquarters, dated May 3, 1942, all persons of Japanese ancestry, both alien and nonalien, will be evacuated from the above area by 12 o'clock noon, P. W. T., Saturday, May 9, 1942.

No Japanese person living in the above area will be permitted to change residence after 12 o'clock noon, P. W. T., Sunday, May 4, 1942, without obtaining special permission from the representative of the Commanding General, Southern California Sector, at the Civil Control Station located at:

Japanese Union Church,
120 South San Pedro Street,
Los Angeles, California.

Such permits will only be granted for the purpose of assisting 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 Monday, May 4, 1942, or between 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M. on Tuesday, May 5, 1942.
2. This responsible member should bring with him to the Assembly Center, the following property:
   (a) Bedding and linens (no mattresses) 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) Sufficient knives, forks, spoons, plates, bowls and cups for each member of the family;
   (e) 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. The pets of any kind will be left behind.
4. No personal items and no household goods will be shipped to the Assembly Center.
5. The Federal Government through its agencies will provide for the storage, at the sole risk of the owners, of the more valuable household items, such as refrigerators, washing machines, pianos and other heavy furniture, clothing 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 for a given item.
6. Each family, and individual living alone, will be furnished transportation to the Assembly Center or will be authorized to travel by private automobile in a supervised group. 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., Monday, May 4, 1942, or between the hours of 8:00 A. M. and 5:00 P. M., Tuesday, May 5, 1942, to receive further instructions.

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

but along came the evacuation. My parents had $5,000 worth of assets in a Japanese bank in Sacramento, which were frozen when war broke out. They later received five cents on the dollar.

War with their mother country was a shock and tragedy. When evacuation orders came, the strawberry crop, which they had worked so hard on since the last season, was ready to harvest. Father almost abandoned everything – house, crop, equipment, tools and more – when a Portuguese buyer who owned a local store offered $350 for everything. It was heartbreaking to give up 20 years of toil and assets for almost nothing.

We could not take our pets to camp. What do we do with Maru, our loving dog? To leave him behind to fend for himself was cruel. It was unlikely we would find someone who would adopt him, so my sister and brother put our faithful companion in

the car and drove toward the pound, a few miles away. Maru had never ridden in a car. He seemed anxious; but with the loving support of my young brother he stayed calm, looking out the window. With a rope for a leash, my brother guided Maru to the office of the pound, where a caretaker took over and took Maru to a pen. As my sister and brother were leaving, choking back tears, Maru perked up his ears, anxious but seemingly confident that my brother would be back to pick him up.

Our family was sent to the Marysville Assembly Center, where we lived for two months, before being transferred to the Tule Lake Relocation Center. They crammed the six of us into one little barrack room. My father built screens out of scrap lumber to privatize space. We brushed our teeth in the community washroom. The "sink" was a long, sloping galvanized metal trough with cold-water faucets spaced a few feet apart. If we got to the washroom first, we would be at the top of the slope. If not, we saw spittle flowing before our eyes as we brushed our teeth and washed up for the morning.

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Cross atop Castle Rock, Easter 1943

I always tried to get up early to beat the crowd. Sixty years later I cannot get the experience out of my mind.

I first worked as a waitress in the mess hall and then got a job working in the housing office as a typist clerk. The director, Mr. Smith, and his wife were the nicest people, who couldn't do enough for us.

Some of the meals were good, with innovative chefs, but we were given such things as smelly mutton, that I can still smell today; and brain, a shocking experience.

Tule Lake was built on a lake bottom, and there were many small shells that we collected and made into necklaces. We went to dances and played pinochle day after day. I could have done with something more constructive.

My girlfriend and I got a permit to leave camp and hike up to Castle Rock. One Good Friday before Easter, some internees carried a wooden cross and placed it atop Castle Rock. The wooden cross has since been replaced by a metal one.

At age 18, with my life in a stalemate I wanted to get out of camp. In August 1943, I left my family in Tule Lake and went alone to Chicago to attend school. I was naïve. When you're young, you think anything is possible, and you do it. The Quaker Church had set up a hostel in Chicago for internees, and a minister friend met me at the train station when I arrived.

Through the War Relocation Authority office, I got a job working as a schoolgirl for my room and board in a nice Jewish home, taking care of a little boy after school and helping around the home. I also attended Gregg Business College.

Being away from my family was lonely. I could not go "home" to where my family was, and there was no other home. But with the experience of enduring alone, I learned to be independent, gained perspective, and met people who shaped my future.

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My sister got married at Tule Lake and went to Chicago to settle with me.

My older brother answered the loyalty questionnaire NO and NO, then renounced his citizenship. Since then, his citizenship has been reinstated, and he eventually moved to Chicago.

Seeking employment after graduation from business college, I was rejected by many companies, obviously because of my race. After much legwork and response to ads, I was accepted as a secretary in a warehouse office. This position led to my acceptance in the company's nice main office in downtown Chicago.

Seventeen years later, I moved to the Bay Area.

In the 1970s, I went to attend the dedication of a plaque at the Tule Lake campsite. I know what they did to us was wrong, but there were positive things that came out of the experience. My world opened up and I had the opportunity to meet a lot of people from all races. I think how dull my life

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would have been if I had just gone back to Sacramento. I think it was important that we dispersed out into the country and were able to assimilate into society. My advice to young people is have a goal and stick to it.

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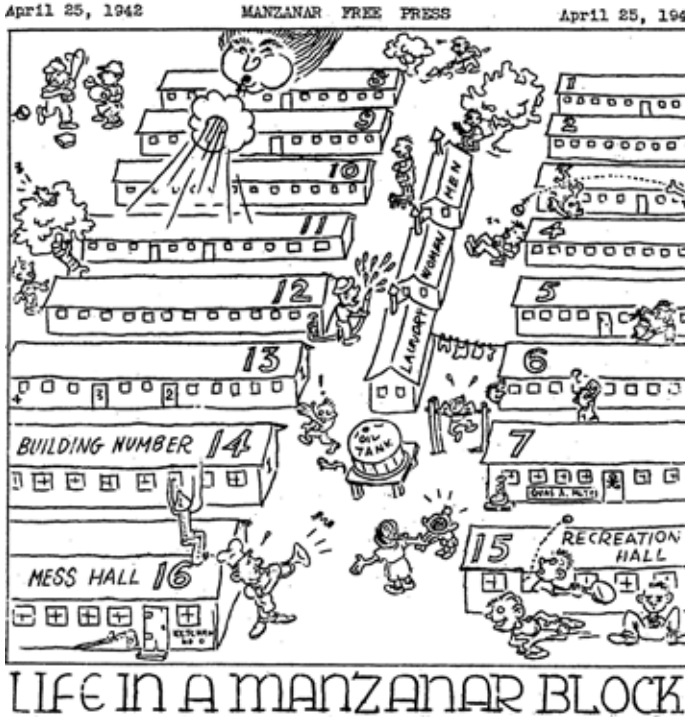
Historic Marker at Tule Lake, 2001

TULE LAKE

Location: Modoc County, California, near the Oregon border.
Environmental Conditions: Located on flat and treeless terrain with sandy soil. Winters are long and cold and summers hot and dry.
Acreage: 7,400
Opened: May 25, 1942
Closed: March 20,1946
Max. Population: 18,789 (December 25, 1944)
Demographics: Originally, more than 3,000 people were sent directly to Tule Lake from California assembly centers. Once Tule Lake became a segregation center, the population came from all five western states and Hawaii.



Wind and Dust

This wind and dust I have to bear
How hard it blows I do not care.
But when the wind begins to blow --
My morale is pretty low.
I know that I can see it through
Because others have to bear it too.
So I will bear it with the rest
And hope the outcome is the best.

-- George Nishimura, age 16 (1943)

Manzanar Cemetery, Winter 2002.

This booklet was developed by the park rangers at Manzanar National Historic Site in partnership with the individuals profiled and their families.

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage. To learn more about your national parks, visit the National Park Service website at www.nps.gov. To learn more about Manzanar National Historic Site, please visit our website at www.nps.gov/manz.

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