

Manzanar



ID Card

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

Residential Area:

1. Within the boundary hereinafter set forth, all persons of Japanese ancestry are to remain in their homes, unless otherwise ordered in their homes, these shall be places listed in the area of

2. All persons, dated May 3, 1942, all persons from the above area by 12 o'clock noon or earlier after 12 o'clock noon, P. M. T., representative of the Commanding General.

3. If a family, or in case of grave emergency, as allowed by this restriction to the

4. Any other disposition of these kinds, including goods, items, accounts and

5. Do not

6. Do not





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.

HOMER YASUI
Family # 16261
Camp: Tule Lake, CA
Address: 74-11-C



Homer Yasui

My father Masuo Yasui came to the United States in 1903, at 16. Six years later, my mother Shiduyo Miyake arrived in the U.S., at age 26.

My mother wasn't a "picture bride" in the usual sense, because my parents knew each other while growing up in the small village of Nanukaichi, in Japan. Nevertheless, in accordance with Japanese custom, theirs was an "arranged" marriage.

My father owned several farms and orchards in the Hood River Valley, Oregon, but almost never worked them himself. He was also a co-owner, with my uncle, of a Japanese general store that sold selected Japanese foods and gifts, curios and some American goods.

My father owned several farms and orchards in the Hood River Valley, Oregon...

My younger sister and I were the only two of the seven Yasui children at home in Hood

River, Oregon, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. That was a huge shock to all of us.

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**INSTRUCTIONS
TO ALL PERSONS OF
JAPANESE
ANCESTRY**

Living in the Following Area:

All of that portion of the City of Los Angeles, State of California, within that boundary beginning at the point at which North Figueroa Street meets a line following the middle of the Los Angeles River; thence easterly and following the said line to East First Street; thence westerly on East First Street to Alameda Street; thence easterly on Alameda Street to East Third Street; thence northerly on East Third Street to Main Street; thence easterly on Main Street to First Street; thence northerly on First Street to Figueroa Street; thence northerly on Figueroa Street to the point of beginning.

Pursuant to the provisions of Civilian Exclusion Order No. 31, this Headquarters, dated May 3, 1942, all persons of Japanese ancestry, both alien and non-alien, will be evacuated from the above area by 12 o'clock noon, P. M. 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. M. T., Sunday, May 3, 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 North San Pedro Street,
Los Angeles, California.

Such permits will only be granted for the purpose of visiting 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 residences.

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. 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) 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. 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 irons, 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 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. DWYTT
Lieutenant General, U. S. Army
Commanding

This was a very bewildering time, because my father had been arrested by the FBI and was being held as a “suspected dangerous enemy alien.” All *Nikkei* (people of Japanese ancestry) were required to turn in so-called “contraband,” as listed by the Justice Department. All German and Italian aliens, as well as all persons of Japanese ancestry living within the Western Defense Command, were forced to obey a restrictive curfew law.

My older brother got himself arrested in order to challenge the curfew order, and spent nine months in jail.

This was a very bewildering time, because my father had been arrested by the FBI and was being held as a “suspected dangerous enemy alien.”

My older brother, Minoru, got himself arrested March 28, 1942 on the streets of Portland in order to challenge the curfew order issued by General John L. DeWitt in March 1942. The case went to the Supreme Court in June 1943. The justices upheld the curfew order under the doctrine of military necessity, and Min spent nine months in jail.

Minoru did not contest any of the evacuation orders. He challenged only the curfew order. Eventually all *Nikkei* were sent to American prison camps under Executive Order 9066, signed by President Roosevelt.

All but one of my father's farms was sold during the war. The remaining one is still owned and operated by my two nephews. Our home at the time of evacuation was eventually sold during the war.

We stored all personal possessions we could not take to camp in the basement of my father's store. Nothing was stolen, vandalized, or

We stored all personal possessions we could not take to camp in the basement of my father's store. Nothing was stolen, vandalized, or torched

torched; and a great deal of our store possessions, which were still in good shape, were donated to the Oregon Historical Society in 1991.

The train ride to our "Assembly Center" at Pinedale, California, was exciting for me, a 17-year-old boy, as I suspect it was for many other young people. Of course, I was stupid and naïve. Our civil liberties and rights were being

systematically trashed, but I didn't really think about it — not then.

We eventually left Pinedale and arrived at the Tule Lake War Relocation Authority Center. My mother, younger sister and I lived in a barracks, and were issued “family numbers” and “individual numbers.” As at Pinedale, I worked as an orderly at the camp hospital.

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One day, a young white man who had been terribly burned was carried into our hospital. That afternoon, as directed by the doctor's orders, I painted his charred body with gentian violet, a medicine used to treat burns. As I did so, he told his anxiously waiting folks that he didn't want to be in "a damn Jap hospital." This man died. I never knew his name, but I remember his dying words. I don't know why he said them.

From Tule Lake, I went directly to Denver University, on September 16, 1942. The National Japanese American Student Relocation Council helped with my application and the paperwork required to obtain clearances from the authorities. The committee didn't provide any financial support for me, but I've always believed that in some cases, it did give scholarships or financial aid to needy *Nisei* college students.

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I don't know whether my experiences as a medical orderly in the camp hospitals influenced my decision to become a medical doctor. It probably did, because I became a general surgeon and

practiced for 29 years before I retired in 1987.

Because of the bad things that happened to me as a *Nikkei* before, during and for too many years after World War II, I no longer accept the words of our leaders at face value. The American people were led down the primrose path of misinformation and lies about the *Nikkei* by some of our greatest wartime leaders. It must not happen again to anybody in our great land.

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Americans ought to have the absolute right to ask questions of anybody, our president and his principal assistants included, at any time, for any reason, because all of us are mortals.





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.

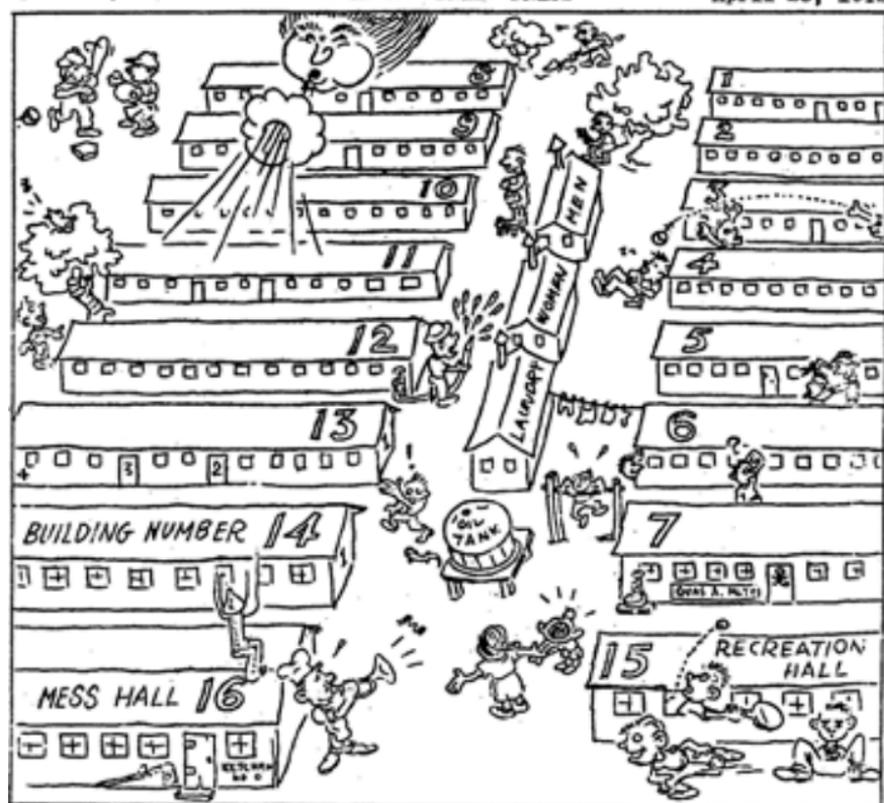
Acreage: 7,400

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.



LIFE IN A MANZANAR BLOCK

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.

Manzanar National Historic Site
P.O. Box 426, Independence, CA 93526
Tel. 760-878-2194
E-mail: manz_superintendent@nps.gov

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