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MATSUOKA, MARY

1948 - 1960

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Provost Marshal's Office  
21st Infantry Regiment  
APO 24, Unit I % P. M.  
San Francisco, California  
7 May 1948

United States District Court  
San Francisco, California

Dear Sir:

Due to conditions beyond my control, I was forced to renounce my citizenship while at Tule Lake Center in California and this letter concerns the question of my possibility of reinstatement as an American citizen and gaining entrance to the United States.

At the outbreak of war, we were relocated to Tule Lake where many pro-Japanese fanatic organizations were allowed to form whose sole purpose were to spread misleading rumors, fear, intimidation, threat, force and coerce the residents into joining those organizations.

My family though threatened repeatedly managed to stay as non-members of these organizations.

Although representatives from the Justice Dept came to take requests for renunciation of citizenship, I did not at that time submit my application, since I was opposed to the whole idea even though I was threatened by the various organization members.

To these members, I had been saying that I had renounced when questioned so that I would be left alone. Finally it got to the stage where the pressure groups became too violent and I signed under duress at the age of 19.

At that time I did not think my application would be accepted but however, to my utter dismay, it was still being accepted through the mail and I was called in for a hearing before a Justice Dept representative and his secretary to my knowledge.

Another point was family pressure. The reason being my parents were deceived into thinking that I would be separated from the family unless I renounced.

At the time of evacuation, I was fifteen years of age and being the youngest and only girl in the family, I never had to do things for myself.

When I was called in, I repeated the words I was instructed to say and signed my name in a daze hardly realizing what was written at the top of the page.

I realized too late that I threw my citizenship away by taking such an action instead of standing up for my rights and pursuing my own course.

I have been writing to the United States Consul and other officials since my arrival in 1946 to have my status clarified, for the present time I am stateless.



All my applications for a hearing at the United States Consul in Yokohama have been rejected so far because I am considered a renouncee, but the other day the Armed Forces Newspaper "Stars and Stripes" contained the article I am enclosing.

The gist of my request is, there are certain questions on which I cannot find a satisfactory answer and feel you would be the logical party to see to give me the necessary answers.

Does the court action returning American citizenship to 2,300 Japanese Americans have any bearing on renouncees who accompanied their parents to Japan?

What is the proper procedure for persons in my predicament who renounced their citizenship under duress, to have their present status clarified?

Will it be necessary for each individual to hire a lawyer and have his case filed in court or will this be done through the United States Consul?

I have been employed by the occupation forces since the time of my arrival in Japan and at the present I am employed at the Provost Marshal's Office of the 21st Infantry as a secretary.

Name: Mary Matsuoka, Age: 21, Birthplace: Auburn, California, December 18, 1926. Evacuated Sacramento, California on 28 May 1942 and entered Arboga Assembly Center in Marysville, Calif.. 28 June 1942, left Arboga to be transferred to Tule Lake Center in Newell, California.

Date of embarkation: Boarded USS General Gordon 27 December 1945 and set sail from Portland Oregon on 29 Dec. 1945

Could you forward this information to this office without delay for I am more than anxious to have my status cleared, especially since my fiance is living in the States awaiting my outcome.

## Court Decision Gives Japanese Back Citizenship

Yours sincerely,

*Mary Matsuoka*

SAN FRANCISCO, April 30 (AP)—The United States District Court today ordered American citizenship restored to 2,300 Japanese-Americans who were interned during the war and renounced their citizenship in 1945.

Judge Louis E. Goodman criticized the Government for accepting the renunciations. He expressed doubt as to the constitutional authority for imprisoning these American citizens during the war years.

The court's decision climaxed years of litigations. The Japanese-Americans said they renounced their citizenship under duress from nationalistic Japanese interned with them at Tule Lake, Calif.

Judge Goodman said, "if a confession secured in a manner obnoxious to Congressional policy may not be used in a criminal case, it is equally true that a document releasing the priceless insignia of American citizenship should not be validated when executed in a like manner.... It must be kept in mind that Tule Lake was a center purpose not for relocation, but for segregation of aliens who placed loyalty to Japan, Americans of Japanese ancestry suspected of disloyalty, and others of Japanese ancestry whose loyalty to the United States was not questioned.



Mary Matsuoka  
c/o Provost Marshal's Office  
21st Infantry Regiment  
APO 24, Unit I c/o P. M.  
San Francisco, California

Wayne M. Collins  
Attorney-At-Law  
Mills Tower, 220 Bush Street  
San Francisco, 4 California

This is to notify you that my present address is as follows:

OR  
Mary Matsuoka  
c/o Provost Marshal's Office  
21st Infantry Regiment  
APO 24, Unit I c/o P. M.  
San Francisco, California

and not in c/o Sgt. John C. Antzack of Co. H, 21st Infantry  
for he has already returned to the United States in February  
of 1948.

My permanent address in the United States is:

Mary Matsuoka  
c/o Y. Matsunaga  
Rt. 1 Box 43-A  
Selma, California

Yours very truly,

*Mary Matsuoka*



*Form Set W 5/17/48*  
May 17, 1948

*W. M. Collins*  
*file*

Miss Mary Matsuoka,  
Provost Marshal's Office,  
21st Infantry Regiment,  
APO 24, Unit 1, c/o PM  
San Francisco, California

Dear Madam:

Your letter of May 7, 1948 has been  
forwarded to Wayne M. Collins, Attorney at Law,  
Mills Tower, San Francisco, for reply.

Mr. Collins represents all of the  
petitioners in the suit recently decided by Judge  
Goodman and is the one best able to advise you  
regarding your status. Since a final decree has  
not been entered in the case, he informs me that  
your name will be added to those already included,  
and thus avoid the necessity of filing a separate  
suit.

Yours very truly,

C.M. Taylor  
Deputy Clerk



*Answer*

Special Service Hilltop Club  
21st Infantry Regiment  
APO 24, Unit I  
% P. M. San Francisco, Calif.

24 May 1948

Mr. Wayne M. Collins  
Mills Tower  
220 Bush Street  
San Francisco, California

Dear Sir:

Pardon my abruptness but I have a few problems on mind on which I would like to have your consul and assistance.

Due to conditions beyond my control, I was forced to renounce my United States citizenship at the age of nineteen (19) at Tulelake Center and forced to accompany my parents to Japan for they were deceived into believing I would eventually be deported at a later date.

Through different sources here in Japan, I have heard something to the effect that if we wanted to regain our citizenship, we could file suit with you and you would handle our cases for us.

I would like to have this verified for I am more than anxious to get my citizenship restored and to gain entrance into the United States.

If you can give me the full story on the above, it would be greatly appreciated, such as: the cost of the case, the proper procedure I must follow, whether I will be permitted to return to the United States pending my trial, whether I will have to pay for my passport while the case is still pending etc.

At the present, I am employed at the Provost Marshal's office of the 21st Infantry Regiment, APO 24, Unit I, Kumamoto, Kyushu.

I was not a member of any pro-Japanese organizations and do not have dual citizenship and now consider myself stateless.

I sailed from Portland, Oregon on the 29 December 1945 aboard the USS General Gordon, a few months after receiving my approval of renunciation.

A member of the Provost Marshal's Office, Traffic Control Section, Sgt. John C. Antzack wrote to you the latter part of 1947 in my behalf but did not receive an answer and any information you can give me now will be gratefully appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

*Henry Matsushita*



% Special Service Hilltop Club

21st Infantry Regiment

APO 24, Unit I % P. M.

San Francisco, California



Mr. Wayne M. Collins  
Mills Tower  
220 Bush Street  
San Francisco, California

VIA AIR MAIL



[May 8, 1948]

Co "H" 21st Inf APO 24  
c/o Postmaster  
San Francisco, California

Dear Sir:

Pardon my abruptness but I have a few problems on my mind on which I would appreciate your counsel and assistance since I have heard from various parties you have an interest in such cases.

As a member of the American Occupation Forces, my present specialty is in the Traffic Section of the Provost Marshal's office in Kumamoto, Kyushu, Japan. In my official capacity, I have come in contact with many persons of Japanese ancestry (Niseis) who by coming to Japan with their parents after the end of hostilities forfeited their citizenship status as Americans.

Until my enlistment and subsequent arrival to Japan, I remained in total ignorance of their general state of affairs, and from the general impression I had gained from numerous previous second hand sources, I did not evince any actual interest or concern in their welfare.

However, since then, working with them as associates and as individuals, I have gained a new slant on the hitherto unknown elements, sweeping away most of my former mistaken conceptions. Viewing this situation dispassionately, and taking an unbiased point of view, I feel that there has been a miscarriage of democratic principles and of justice in certain cases which should be rectified immediately or brought under consideration. Do not misunderstand me, I do not have any selfish motive of personal gain in this matter, however, it is that I feel strongly that such people should be subjected to such ungenerous treatment and that more people should become acquainted with this subject in the interests of civil liberty and as students of world affairs.

The gist of my request is, certain problems crop up in our department, on which I cannot give a satisfactory reply since my knowledge of them is either too vague or limited and I feel that you would be the logical party to see in regards to these debatable points to give me the necessary answers.

As an example, I would like to take one specific case at random from my files. This person was born and bred in the US, and until the war enjoying the same rights and privileges of the other citizens of the United States, being brought up to believe in the fundamentals of democracy and justice.

Pearl Harbor came. She and all her family, neighbors, of her ancestry, were evacuated from the Pacific coast to relocation centers in the interior as a military necessity. They accomplished this, not without some murmuring of course, with severe personal hardships



and losses.

At the present time, she is one of the many who came to Japan with their parents, being employed by the Occupation Force in various positions, discharging their duties with efficiency and trust.

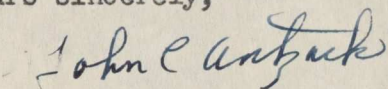
She is just one of the persons who have come to my section for information as to whom she should see in order to have her present status clarified; what procedure is necessary for reinstatement; what the present government policy is towards people in her predicament; whether or not the American Consul will grant her the hearing; all the data which I feel this section could and should supply.

Enclosed please find a brief outline of her personal history and facts pursuant to her renunciation and arrival to Japan.

If at all possible I wonder whether it could be so arranged to have your letter addressed to her in my care forwarded to my address since the local mail system leaves much to be desired.

Please forward this information to me without delay, since I would be leaving for the Zone of Interior in the near future and I would like to pass on to my successor and to the parties concerned this vital piece of information.

Yours sincerely,



Sgt John C. Antzack  
ASN 1623 2221



DEAR SIR:

Due to circumstances beyond my control, I was forced to renounce my citizenship while at Tule Lake Center in California and this letter concerns the question of my possibility of reinstatement as a American citizen and gaining entrance to the United States.

At the outbreak of war and time of evacuation, I was fifteen years of age and being the youngest and only girl in the family, I never had to do things or make decisions for myself, and with the evacuation and consequent detention in the relocation center my views and outlook on life was still vague and unformed.

We were relocated to Tule Lake where many pro-Japanese fanatic organizations were allowed to form whose sole purpose was to spread misleading rumors, intimidate, threaten, force and coerce the residents into joining these organizations, and shout defiance at the US.

My family though threatened repeatedly, managed to stay as non-members of these organizations.

Although representatives from the Justice Dept came to take requests for renunciation of citizenship, I did not at that time submit my application, since I was violently opposed to the whole idea, even though I was threatened by the various organization members.

To these members, I had been saying that I had renounced when questioned as I wanted to be left alone. Finally, it got to the stage where the pressure groups became too violent and I signed under duress at the age of 19. Another deciding point was family pressure. The reason being that my parents were deceived into thinking that I would be separated from the family unless I also renounced.

At that period I did not think my application would be accepted, but, however, to my utter dismay, it was still being accepted thru the mails and I was called in for a hearing before a Justice Dept representative and his secretary to my knowledge.

When I was called in, I repeated the words I was instructed to say and signed my name in a daze hardly realizing what was written on the page. I realized too late that I had thrown my citizenship away by taking such an action.

I would appreciate any light you could throw on the matter of reinstatement. Following are the facts correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.



Name: Mary Matsuoka

Age: Twenty-one (21)

Date of entry into camp: Evacuated from Sacramento, Cal., on 28 May 1942 and entered Arboga Assembly Center in Marysville, Cal.  
28 June 1942 left Arboga to be transferred to Tule Lake Relocation Center in Newell, Cal.

Date of embarkation : Boarded USS General Gordon 27 Dec 1945  
And set sail from Portland, Oregon on 29 Dec 1945.

Camp Activities : Attended school until graduation 24 Nov 1944. Worked at the Center Hospital as a tray girl; waitress at block mess hall. Took no part in any group or organization formed by the pro-Japanese organizations.

*Mary Matsuoka*  
Mary Matsuoka



Provost Marshal's Office

21st Inf. Reg't

APO 24 Unit 1 c/o PM

San Francisco, California



United States District Court

San Francisco, California

VIA AIR MAIL



c/o Provost Marshal's Office  
21st Infantry Regiment  
APO 24-1 c/o P.M.  
San Francisco, California

Mr. Wayne M. Collins  
Attorney At Law  
Mills Tower, 220 Bush Street  
San Francisco 4, California

Dear Sir:

8/23/48

At this time, I wish to inform you that due to financial difficulties, my brother Ted Yoshida and I cannot possibly pay the amount of \$300.00 which we were requested to pay by signing note enclosed within letter received by us in March 1950. Therefore, we request that our names be crossed off your list and we no longer be included in the mass equity suits Nos. 25294-5.

Words cannot express how deeply grateful we feel for all you have done and all you are doing for persons who were the victims of the war and we regret very much that we are unable to pay for your services and are forced to be dropped from your case.

Yours sincerely,

11/7/48

( Mary Matsuo )  
Judgment



August 4, 1952

Dear Sir:

I recd your letter dated July 16, 1952 and have been terribly disturbed as there has been a terrible misunderstanding somewhere.

In 1949, my brother Ted & I wrote to Mr. Collins from Kuremats, Japan stating that since we were in Japan, we had no way of paying Mr. Collins for his services & since my sister was also financially embarrassed, there was no alternative but to ask him to drop our names from his list & to consider us as forgiven in his case. We sent the letter registered through an Army Post Office, A.P.O. 37. From that date on, my brother & I did not receive any more letters from your committee & took it for granted our names were dropped. Then out of the clear blue sky, I rec'd a letter about 2 weeks ago from a Mr. Takeuchi & now this letter. I rec'd a letter from my brother Ted stay in Japan telling me the same thing. I cannot speak for my brother as I have no way of getting in touch



4/ wish him within the next ten days,  
how-ever, I will write & ask if he has a  
copy of that registered letter.

I no longer have the returned receipt  
for the registered letter but will inquire  
at the P.D. to see what the proper  
procedure is to trace such a letter.

I would appreciate it if you  
could advise me as to what to do  
in the meantime.

Yours sincerely  
Mary Miesner



*file*

*J. J. [unclear]*

August 5, 1952

Miss Mary Matsuoka  
c/o Rt. 44 Box 519  
Mitlars Lane  
New Brunswick, N. J.

Dear Miss Matsuoka:

This will acknowledge receipt your airmail letter of August 4th.

You and your brother Ted was joined in the mass action as you made your individual request to be joined in the suit.

Mr. Collins or the committee did not penalize any of the persons who made the request for assistance because they were financially embarrassed.

We have furnished you and your brother with a maximum of protection. The case was taken as high as to the Supreme Court of the U.S. The case was returned in favor of you and your brother, and you are now an American citizen by the Order of the court.

We have in our custody you and your brother's ORDER, JUDGMENT AND DECREE EXECUTING MANDATE OF THE U.S. COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT. This document has been properly certified by the Clerk of the U.S. District Court. It is a conclusive evidence that your citizenship has been reestablished from the beginning. This is the only manner in which your citizenship can be reestablished.

We shall advise you to make an arrangement to pay the cost, fee and expenses incurred in this litigation. You and your brother owe it to the group to pay this sum. Inasmuch as you are now in this country, it shall be possible for you to meet this obligation. Therefore it is your duty to the group to do the proper thing at this time.

If you shall begin the payment of your account and your brother's, we shall be very pleased to furnish you the documents. This document may be furnished to the U.S. Consulate if your brother is having a difficult time to have his passport issued.

The total sum is \$300.00 each, and all checks and



Money Orders should be made payable to WAYNE M. COLLINS and mailed to this office.

We shall thank you to furnish us with a reply on this matter at your most earliest conveniences.

Very truly yours,

T. Nakamura



Letter to J &  
Bal. of to J. not  
admitted.

---

Attorney bill for  
for balance due

---

Done for Ted.



WAYNE M. COLLINS  
Attorney At Law  
Mills Tower, 220 Bush Street  
SAN FRANCISCO 4, CALIFORNIA  
GARfield 1-5827

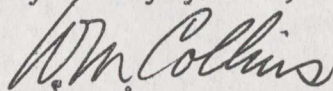
October 3, 1960

Mrs. Mary Matsuoka Davidson  
c/o Rt. 44, Box 519  
Mitlar Lane  
New Brunswick, New Jersey

Dear Mrs. Davidson:

Quite some time ago you received from me your individual certified copy of the "Final Judgment" of the Court that cancelled your wartime renunciation of citizenship and that declared you to be a U. S. citizen. However, you have not yet paid the balance of \$300.00 due on your account. If it presses you too much to pay this balance in a lump sum, you can let me know and arrangements can be made for you to pay by installments. I am enclosing a stamped envelope for your reply.

Very truly yours,



Enc.



WAYNE M. COLLINS  
Attorney at Law  
Mills Tower, 220 Bush Street  
San Francisco 4, California  
GARfield 1-5827

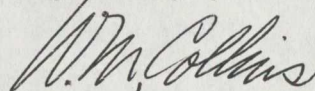
July 6, 1960

Mr. Shigeru Matsuoka  
18689 E. Manning Ave.  
Reedley, Calif.

Dear Mr. Matsuoka:

I would thank you to let me know the present address of Mary Matsuoka, now Mrs. Wm. A. Davidson, and also the full name of her husband, ~~if she is married~~, so that final papers concerning her citizenship status may be transmitted to her. Please use the enclosed card and self-addressed envelope for your reply to me.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "W. M. Collins".



WAYNE M. COLLINS  
Attorney at Law  
Mills Tower, 220 Bush Street  
San Francisco 4, California  
GARfield 1-5827

October 13, 1960

Mr. Shigeru Matsuoka  
18689 E. Manning Ave.  
Reedley, Calif.

Dear Mr. Matsuoka:

I would thank you to let me know the present address  
of your sister, Mrs. Mary Matsuoka Davidson  
and also the full name of her husband, ~~if she is married,~~  
so that final papers concerning her citizenship status  
may be transmitted to her. Please use the enclosed card  
and self-addressed envelope for your reply to me.

Very truly yours,

*W. M. Collins*