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United States
Department of Interior
War Relocation Authority
McGehee, Arkansas

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

of

Ray D. Johnston - Project Director
Rohwer Relocation Center

Period Covering
September 18, 1942 - December 31, 1945

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INTRODUCTION

The old saying that people are naturally afraid of the unknown was quite true in my case when I started to work, on August 18, 1942, as Project Director of the Rohwer Relocation Center. The job of perfecting, in a relatively short time, an organization to furnish the essentials of life, under very abnormal conditions, for an expected ten thousand evacuees, was in itself rather staggering to think of; but the thought of being responsible for the conduct and morale of ten thousand human beings who (it was only reasonable to believe) would feel that they had been grossly mistreated, was the thing that caused me the greatest concern. It developed, however, that the evacuees and I met on at least one common ground—they also were afraid of the unknown. They did not know what a Relocation Center would be like, especially in the "swamps" of Arkansas. Neither did they know what kind of treatment to expect from the administration or the public.

Mr. E. B. Whitaker, who was Regional Director of the Southern Region, had already started recruiting the Rohwer staff when I started to work and had employed several key workers. Since the evacuees were due to start arriving at the Center in slightly over a month, it was necessary that the staff organization be completed in a very short time. The rush of wartime conditions made this unavoidable, but in my opinion a staff of the size and quality desired to operate a relocation center or similar project should be slowly and carefully selected. Most of the personnel other than the school faculty came from other government agencies, both from operating agencies such as the Farm Security Administration and Soil Conservation Service and from other agencies which were being liquidated—such as the Work Projects Administration, Civilian Conservation Corps and National Youth Administration. Salaries were slightly higher than the established peacetime agencies, and this made it possible to attract, in most cases, people who were well qualified for the respective jobs. The personnel chart as established by the Washington WRA office was followed insofar as possible, although under operation it soon developed that several organizational changes were desirable.

The United States Engineers started construction of the Center in July, 1942, and were working frantically to have it completed by the time the evacuees arrived. Warehouses and office buildings were not completed in August, however, so a warehouse with a small amount of office space was rented in McGehee to handle early shipments of WRA property. Staff recruitment continued in the Regional Office at Little Rock.

Early in September it was arranged for me to visit some of the other relocation centers that were in operation and learn first-hand some of the problems and how they were being handled. I spent four days at Minidoka and had planned to visit an assembly center on the West Coast and also spend two or three days at the Gila River Center on my way back. I feel that the things I learned at Minidoka were ample pay for the trip, even though I found out on arrival at the San Francisco office that the first trainload of evacuees was leaving for Rohwer a week sooner than scheduled, so I was unable to visit an assembly center and only stopped between trains at Gila River. I got back to Rohwer one day ahead of the evacuees.

The Center was not nearly ready for occupancy, but one block was completed in time to care for the advance group of 250 volunteer evacuee workers which arrived on ~~en~~ September 17, from the Stockton Assembly Center. Temporary offices and living quarters for part of the personnel were also established in the same block.

The evacuees worked very hard and efficiently at their duties in preparing for the rest of their people, and seemed grateful for the friendly supervision and attitude of the appointed staff members, which apparently was a striking contrast to that of the Assembly Center.

Although the Center still was not ready for occupancy, and despite all requests for delayed movements, the regular movement of evacuees began on September 23, in trainloads of about 500 each, and continued until October 31, 1942, making a Center population of approximately 8,500 at that time. Construction work had to be continued for several weeks after the last train and it was necessary in many cases for the people to occupy unfinished quarters and to use toilet facilities and mess halls in adjoining blocks.

The hasty movement of the evacuees was, in my opinion, entirely unnecessary and caused various complications other than the physical discomfort of the people. The lack of office space, warehouse space and living quarters for appointed personnel caused much inefficiency and confusion during the first few weeks. Construction work was still in progress and serious trouble almost developed between the contractors and evacuees over lumber and tools. There is no doubt that a considerable amount of good lumber was taken by the evacuees to use, in addition to the scrap lumber, in making furniture, shelves, etc., since the barracks were furnished with only cots, mattresses and blankets. This situation would not have developed if construction work had been completed before the people arrived. I also feel that more adequate plans should have been made for essential furniture, possibly by furnishing the evacuees more and better lumber.

Center operation during the first few months was in many respects a process of trial and error. Methods had to be worked out for checking the incoming evacuees against assembly center "train lists," for registering them, for assigning quarters according to family size, and so on, all in a very short time and at any and all hours of the day or night whenever the train might arrive. The methods used for the last trainloads were quite a bit different from the methods used at first. This process of trial and error applied to most all operations.

In spite of these conditions, however, I feel that the staff did a remarkable job of getting the evacuees settled as comfortably as possible and at work in a very short time and with a minimum of friction. I am still amazed also at the calm and cooperative attitude of the vast majority of the evacuees during the center opening period.

Even before the last train arrived, many "growing pains" began to set in. It was necessary, of course, with the advance group, to open a temporary canteen to furnish certain essential merchandise. This grew with the crowd into stores operated by trustees and later into a cooperative association. Schools had to be organized without adequate building space or equipment. An organization of evacuee block managers was perfected as a means of getting instructions and information to and from the people. Shifts had to be made in the duties of certain appointed personnel to meet the actual needs rather than the needs as anticipated in the organizational chart. The organization of recreational facilities was pushed and a policy of work for all who wanted to work was in operation from the start.

Within a few months the evacuees and appointed staff had become accustomed to the new environment and general policies, and things began to settle down into a more or less routine operation of the various services and activities necessary to operate a town of 8,500 people. Food, shelter, medical attention, school and church facilities, fire protection, water, lights, sanitation, transportation, recreation and other related services were being furnished in a rather satisfactory manner.

The divisional and sectional reports set forth in detail how most of the various activities were conducted in this center, and I shall not attempt to summarize or discuss all activities or problems, but it is felt that certain incidents and phases of the program merit additional comment on my part. These comments will deal with (1) Human Relations and (2) Physical Activities and Problems..

HUMAN RELATIONS

Policies and Attitudes

In the early stages of Center operation I became convinced that the attitude and morale of the evacuees would be the most important factor in the successful operation of the Center. It was evident that if the people were disgruntled and did not have a reasonable amount of confidence in the staff, there would be continuous turmoil and the physical operations would be very inefficient, or even bog down at times. Most of the staff was in agreement with this thinking and made an honest effort, especially during the early months, to deal fairly and sympathetically with the evacuees.

It was agreed that the division and section chiefs would handle the physical operations with a minimum of help from me, and that I would assume the major responsibility for building and maintaining morale, largely by devising policies and procedures which would breed confidence. One policy which was in effect throughout the life of the Center, and which I feel was very important, was that any evacuee or group of evacuees could always get a fair and careful hearing of their problems or grievances by the Project Director, and that a decision or opinion was rendered as soon as possible. In controversial matters governed by regulations, these were carefully explained and, insofar as possible, the reasons for the regulations were given.

In the beginning practically all of the evacuees were distrustful of the Government and any of its agencies or employees. This was especially true toward the Army, even though they had respect for its authority. It was naturally a slow and tedious process to convince them that the War Relocation Authority, even though it was a government agency, was sincerely trying to assist them solve their problems by making Center life as adequate as possible and by assisting them to locate new homes and opportunities. Their attitude is not hard to understand, even though the evacuees realized the military precautions involved in evacuation, since the suddenness of being forced to leave their homes had caused much heartache and financial loss. Their background as an unwanted minority group on the West Coast, together with the oriental heritage of a certain amount of distrust of the white man, also served to intensify the lack of confidence in Caucasian employees of the government.

Self-Government

Block Managers -- One of the most important confidence-gaining policies of the War Relocation Authority was that of self-government by the evacuees. One of the first policies of self-government at Rohwer, although not exactly in accordance with WRA regulations,

was that of allowing the evacuees in each block to elect their own block manager. This was done in an effort to instill confidence and create more efficient administrative relations, and was based on the assumption that the evacuee would know and recognize their own leaders better than we would on such short acquaintance. It was not necessary, during the life of the Center, to discharge or refuse to appoint any person selected by the people as block manager.

Internal Security — Another procedure followed during the Center opening stages which I feel played a significant part in the peaceful operation of the Center was that the Internal Security Chief visited the blocks, explained his program and described the kind of men he wanted to use on his evacuee staff. He then invited them to recommend one or more men from their block for consideration as center "policemen" — the term consistently used by the evacuees even though the appointed staff usually referred to such men as Internal Security Officers. The advantages of this method of recruitment were obvious, provided the block people would be honest in their recommendations. The type of men recommended proved satisfactory. However, it must be pointed out that throughout the life of the Center the big majority of the evacuee "police" were reluctant to initiate any action against their people.

Stewards — The Project Mess Steward also gave careful consideration to persons recommended by the block people in the selection of evacuee block stewards, which was accepted by the people as another effort to consider their wishes and judgment in the operation of the Center. The stewards soon organized, however, and became one of the most powerful influences within the Center, finally to the extent of causing friction and disunity in many cases, between the block people and the block mess crew. It was also necessary, in some cases, for me to emphatically reject some of the proposals and "demands" made by the steward's organization.

Community Council — The program of self-government, as provided by WRA regulations, was, in my opinion, reasonably satisfactory at Rohwer. The original plans, which excluded aliens from holding elective offices, would never have proven successful since this discrimination was resented by the citizens as well as the aliens; and since the leadership, mature judgment and ability of the older people was needed to make a balanced form of government.

The Community Council, with its various committees and boards, served not only as a means of conveying the desires and ideas of the people to the Administration in a concise and "screened out" form, but the general idea of self-government tended to add more evacuee confidence in WRA, although many individuals continued to feel that it was merely a gesture and that Council recommendations would not receive much consideration. This gave me an opportunity to add more

proof that we were trying to operate the Center fairly and efficiently, according to prescribed regulations, and the majority of Council recommendations which were reasonable were acted upon favorably. This was especially true during the first year of the Council, when the leadership was of much higher calibre than during the last few months. Another valuable feature of the self-government plan was that it placed responsibility on the people for helping to conduct most phases of Center life.

The weakest part of the self-government structure at Rohwer was the Judicial Commission, and I doubt if such a commission would ever be entirely satisfactory under similar circumstances. The tendency to avoid taking disciplinary action against the other evacuees was even more pronounced than in the case of the individual evacuee "police." With the exception of minor instances, however, the various committees and boards of the Community Council were effective in creating greater efficiency in their respective fields and were valuable in disseminating correct information to the people. The Board of Health was probably the most active and most effective, but the School Board and committees on Food and Fuel, and Labor Relations, were also fairly efficient.

The Labor Relations Committee was used throughout the life of the Center rather than the "Grievance Committee" provided by WRA regulations, and in my opinion it was more satisfactory than the "labor union method" provided in the instructions. The election of a group of people to protect and represent the interests of the various groups of workers would have, in my opinion, stimulated a steady flow of requests and unreasonable demands from the people who felt that they were elected for that purpose. As it was, only relatively few labor disputes and difficulties arose and these were settled in most instances in a manner satisfactory to all parties. Practically all labor trouble involved teen-age boys, and although it was necessary that I rule against the appointed supervisors in one or two instances, it was evident (and agreed to by the labor committee) that the evacuee workers were at fault in most cases. In a few cases it was necessary to suspend the worker, but in most instances the committee assumed the responsibility of correcting the trouble and gave satisfactory results.

REGISTRATION.

General registration, which took place in February and March, 1943, was probably the most trying period the Rohwer Center experienced. This was true for both the appointed personnel and the evacuees. It created more tension among center residents than leave clearance, segregation, scheduled relocation or selective service.

In the first place the whole thing was too sudden. Neither the administrative staff nor the evacuees had enough advance notice or sufficient preliminary explanation. We know now that people of Japanese descent can't be rushed into a program of that nature, under the circumstances that existed at that time, without complications arising. This would probably be true of people of any other race too. One of the evacuees said later that if a series of conferences with Center leaders had been arranged in advance, and if these men had received a full explanation of the program in time to pass the information on to the people, much trouble would have been avoided. In my opinion this would have helped the situation, but there were other complicating factors.

It was not made clear at first that the information acquired by registration would be used in determining loyalty. The evacuees suspected that this would be the case, but they were assured that it was mainly for leave clearance purposes. Possibly they should have realized that leave clearance depended on loyalty but neither we, nor they, knew the information was to be used for segregation determination. As the result of this lack of understanding, many Center residents who were not interested in leaving the Center were not very careful how they answered Question 28. Many qualified their answers, not because of disloyalty, but merely to express their grievance about evacuation and they did not realize that they were jeopardizing their future freedom. When it developed that the registration information was an important factor in segregation, the evacuees felt that their previous suspicions were well-founded and they had even less confidence in us.

It is generally recognized now that the worst error made in conducting registration was permitting it to be connected with the Army volunteering program. Many of the evacuees blamed the Army for evacuation and the manner in which it had been conducted. These felt that there must be some hidden trick in registration since the army was connected with it. The captain in charge of the army team was rather brusque in dealing with Center residents and in answering their questions. The small number of volunteers did not improve his disposition.

At this Center an attempt was made at first to handle registration on a voluntary basis. This plan was tried for three weeks. In spite of conferences with evacuee leaders and nightly meetings in the blocks this was not a success. The number registering in each block depended on the attitude of the leaders in the block. If they registered, a substantial portion of the other block residents did. If they did not, practically none of their neighbors signed up.

Under the voluntary system slightly more than 600 evacuees registered from February 10 to the end of the month. On the last

Saturday in February it was announced to an assembly of block managers that compulsory registration would start the following Monday. They accepted the announcement with no enthusiasm but expressed no opposition. All registration was done in the two school blocks and the entire school staff assisted. Schools were dismissed for the week. By the end of that time only four or five percent of all eligible evacuees had not registered. Most of these were ill, or were repatriates or expatriates. By the end of the following week everyone had signed up. No one refused to do so.

At the time, it may have seemed that the attempt at voluntary registration was only a waste of effort. But as events later developed it appears to have been justified. Because of their confusion, indecision, and suspicion the evacuees needed that extra time to consider the various aspects of the program. It gave them a chance to discuss the whole thing thoroughly and anyone who is acquainted with the habits of the evacuees knows that this takes time. If we had been in their position, we might have needed the extra time, too. The most important thing is that everyone registered and that no organized opposition arose. This materially reduced the number of leave clearance hearings and the number of segregants.

Leave Clearance

Due to negative or questionable answers to the loyalty questions included in the application for leave clearance, which was used in the registration program, a complicated system of determining eligibility to leave a relocation center was developed for all centers. This required individual hearings in a large number of cases.

Except for someone who liked to wield power in an arbitrary manner, the position of a project director was not an enviable one where leave clearance was concerned. His recommendations for granting or denying clearance were not final and were reviewed in the Washington office. However, they were not changed in approximately 95% of our cases. Clearance was recommended on the basis of loyalty, and the individual's loyalty determined whether he was segregated or not. If he was segregated it meant not only that he was confined but it also might mean that he would probably be sent back to Japan. If he was a family man the situation was still more involved, since his wife and children shared his fate in practically all cases. To make the situation still more trying, there was never any certainty about the legality of confining a United States citizen for a disloyal state of mind, when he had not committed any overt act. Of course the Project Director was not the final authority where confinement was concerned, but he was at least a party to it.

The leave clearance hearings at Rohwer were held by two committees. Each of these was composed of three staff members who questioned the evacuees and made the original recommendations. In

practically all cases, I concurred in the findings of the committee, but occasionally the members of a committee would disagree and cases of this kind were usually referred to the other committee for a second hearing before my recommendation was made. As a whole, however, the decisions of the committees were uniform. That is, similar cases received similar recommendations. My recommendations were based almost entirely on those of the hearing committees. The cases that caused the most trouble were those in which the committee members disagreed. These were nearly all borderline cases or there would have been no disagreement in the first place. Even after a second hearing it was difficult to be sure what was the right thing to do. Sometimes I was never sure, but the evacuees were always given the benefit of the doubt. That seemed to be in line with the way justice has always been dispensed in this country.

After segregation was virtually completed, the criterion for denial of leave clearance was changed from disloyalty to whether or not the subject was dangerous to the security of the country. The two things are vastly different and denials of clearance and resulting segregation would have been greatly reduced if this rule had prevailed from the first. Many of the evacuees had stronger attachments to Japan than they had to this country, but only a very few came in the dangerous class. Which is the better policy is a debatable question.

A total of 1,116 hearings were held at this Center. Transcripts of the questions, answers and statements together with recommendations, were made in all cases. This involved a great deal of time, trouble and work for several key staff members, the most capable stenographers and many evacuee interpreters. Girls or women were used as interpreters most of the time and they deserve much credit for the honest and efficient way they did the work.

Care was taken that the hearings didn't become a "witch hunt" and they were conducted in as fair a manner as possible. As a whole, the evacuees were more honest in answering the questions than might be expected and probably the chief value of the hearings lay in the fact that they caused a good many of the evacuees to commit themselves one way or the other in war time. It prevented many of them from sitting on the fence until the war was over and then choosing the winning side. The procedure was very informal and the examinations usually were kept on a friendly basis. At times there was a sharp exchange between the evacuee and the person doing the questioning, but this was not frequent. There was no attempt to follow rules of law. The evacuees could present witnesses in their behalf, but this was seldom done. In only a few cases did they have someone to represent them or speak in their behalf.

As would be expected, the delays and various other complications involved in the leave clearance procedure seriously retarded relocation for several months.

Segregation

The segregation program, or the actual separation of the loyal from the disloyal, might reasonably have been expected to present more problems than anything else undertaken at the project. When the movement was completed, 1,424 people had been transferred to Tule Lake. The task of moving that many people in an orderly fashion is not a small one even when there are no emotional stresses involved. In spite of this, the segregation program was completed at this Center with less friction and trouble than any other operation of a similar size. A great deal of work was involved but the whole thing was conducted in a very satisfactory manner and most of the credit for the orderly movement should go to the evacuees.

Contrary to the way registration was handled, the evacuee leaders were given a great deal of advance information about segregation. They were made to feel that they had been taken into our confidence and that we were not holding out information. It was explained that since segregation was unavoidable, the sensible thing to do was to make it as painless as possible and the best way to accomplish this was for the evacuees to assume a great deal of the responsibility. They agreed to this readily and an evacuee segregation committee was appointed by the Community Council. Committee members were equally divided between segregants and non-segregants. They were kept advised as to policies and procedures and assisted in dividing the segregants into two groups for the first two trains. They also assisted with the processing, packing, preparing for departure, pick-up of baggage, pick-up of people, loading on the trains and the selection of train monitors, car captains and train workers. In fact, they participated in the planning and execution of practically every phase of the program.

One of their most important contributions was in the dissemination of correct information to Center residents. This was an extremely important function since the execution of the whole program depended to a large degree on those concerned being promptly and correctly advised of new developments. The Center paper was used for this purpose, but the people preferred to get their information directly from the Project Director's office and through their own representatives. Nothing pleased the committee more than for them to be called in and given information before it had appeared in the Center paper. It took considerable time, but it was worth the trouble because it made them appear important in the eyes of their neighbors and it also made them feel like they were receiving fair play. It was also an excellent way to stop rumors before they became very harmful.

Segregation certainly demonstrated that if you wished to get a difficult job done in a center, it could be accomplished much easier through the evacuees. If they were shown as much trust and confidence

as possible and given the responsibility, they would contribute a great deal to the success of the effort. Of course the extent to which this policy could be followed would vary with the nature of the task, but I believe the principle is sound.

Public Relations

As a whole, public relations at this Center were satisfactory. With one exception, all local stores accepted evacuee trade and only two serious incidents occurred in the three and a half years. Both of these incidents took place during the first two months of the Center's operation.

At first one influential daily paper attacked us, but its attitude changed entirely in less than a year. The rest of the papers were friendly and the state's leading daily defended us from the beginning. State and local officials were never outright hostile but were either neutral or friendly. The only exception to this was the governor who was in office when the Center was first established.

In spite of these favorable things the evacuees were never accepted at their true worth by the people of the state and the surrounding community. The general public could never quite realize that most of the Center residents were U. S. citizens with the same rights as other citizens. In spite of a favorable press and much explanation by the administrative staff the average man tolerated the Center without understanding its true nature.

When the two Arkansas projects were first proposed there was some opposition from the State administration, and the incumbent governor later insisted that there was a "gentlemen's agreement" that no evacuee would be allowed to settle in the state unless popular demand supported such action. Several times before the state administration changed, a local demand did arise but the state's chief executive did not consider resettlement advisable and no relocation in Arkansas was approved while he was in office. In some respects this was an aid to public relations, because local farmers wanted to hire the evacuees at prevailing farm wages which were much lower than the California rate, and most of the evacuees probably would not have accepted such offers. If this had happened it would have put the Center residents in the position of not working when farm help was badly needed, and this would have been resented.

The next governor was much more friendly in his attitude toward relocation and under his administration there was no official objection to the evacuees remaining in Arkansas. At one time he attempted to obtain an evacuee family to do domestic work for him, but the proper type of family was not available. Late in the life of the project there was some resettlement in Arkansas without objection from state officials or the general public.

When the State Legislature met early in 1943 a law was enacted that prohibited any person of Japanese descent from owning land in Arkansas. Not long afterward the State Attorney General expressed the opinion that the law was unconstitutional. Although this was an unofficial statement, at least it indicated his attitude. The action of the legislature was also criticized by the State's leading paper.

The Sheriff of Desha County and the city law enforcement officers at McGehee were unusually helpful and cooperative in handling matters involving evacuees. They were reasonable and fair in their attitude. This was especially true when it is taken into consideration that they were dependent on public favor for their jobs. Our Chief of Internal Security from June, 1943, until the Center closed, had lived in this county all his life, had served as a peace officer many years and his friendship with local officers was extremely valuable to the project. In our case the employment of local men in the Internal Security Section certainly paid big dividends.

The attitude of the Circuit Judge and the Prosecuting Attorney for this Judicial District was not so satisfactory when the time came to try the case of a local resident who had shot and wounded an evacuee boy on the pretext that he thought the boy was escaping from the Center. Although the shooting was inexcusable, the trial was postponed several times and when the case was finally brought to trial, an attempt was made to get our consent to the dismissal of the charge. It would have been a miscarriage of justice for this to have been done and would have done considerable harm to evacuee morale, so we insisted that the case be tried. Over our objections an "assault with intent to kill" charge was reduced to "assault with a deadly weapon" and a plea of guilty was accepted and a minimum fine was imposed. There is no doubt that public opinion was against a conviction and heavy penalty and consequently we felt that the compromise was not too great a defeat. Our insistence that the case come to trial helped sustain the morale of the evacuees and also put local officials on notice that incidents of this nature would not be ignored by the Project Administration.

For most of the life of the project, relations with local papers were friendly. Only one paper caused any real trouble and that was the Memphis Commercial Appeal. Arkansas' leading daily, The Arkansas Gazette, was fair in its attitude from the first and later became an active friend. Most of the other papers assumed a neutral attitude for a time.

In the summer of 1943 it was decided to invite representatives of leading papers and radio stations in Arkansas and adjacent states to spend a day or two at the Project and see what the Center and the evacuees were really like. The "open house" was a joint undertaking

of the Rohwer and Jerome Projects, but this Center was selected to act as host since it was the first to be established. Reporters from twelve papers, radio stations and press associations accepted the invitation and were given the freedom of the project. No attempt was made to restrict the inquiries of the visitors but if they desired, evacuee guides or appointed personnel were assigned to assist them.

The affair was a success. The attitude of the Memphis paper changed entirely and it became our staunch supporter. The other papers became more friendly and all of them obtained a better understanding of the Center and the evacuees.

In my opinion "Press Day" was certainly well worth while, but even a favorable press cannot change public opinion entirely, especially where strong prejudices are involved. It seems to me that personal contacts with selected evacuees was as effective a way as any to gain the understanding of the public. The more visitors a project has from the outside and the more the evacuees make outside visits, the better off the project will be. The important thing is to bring the two groups together. Of course judgment should be used in selecting the evacuees who are to be involved in the contacts. It was always true, that the Center residents as a whole were judged by the individuals the outside public met.

At our project, press releases were not sent out unless a real news story was involved. At first very few were issued because we had little to talk about that would not create controversial issues. The situation changed considerably when the Nisei were taken into the Army and especially when they began to enter combat. Then we really had something to talk about that was of interest to the general public. Local papers had not been receiving many stories from the project, and they used practically everything that was sent to them when we increased the number of releases. In the long run it seemed to be wise to stress quality rather than quantity in giving information to the papers.

Relocation

The job of assisting and encouraging the evacuees to locate new homes and new opportunities as well as return in some cases to their former homes, involved a maze of physical operations, but in my opinion the success of this program rested largely on personal contact and friendly human relations. Confidence in WRA staff members and confidence in people where they were to relocate were both necessary before the majority of evacuees were willing to leave the security of Center life.

I feel that the relocation program was very much handicapped during the early months of Center operation, even though it might have been unavoidable under the circumstances, due to the slow and clumsy process of securing Washington approval for leave clearance. It also seemed, from the project viewpoint, that the leave clearance procedure following general registration was unnecessarily slow and tedious.

After leave clearance was established (or denied) for all residents I think that the relocation policies and procedures, although well organized and efficient in some respects, were also too restrictive. I believe that the general policy should have been to make it as easy as possible for people to leave the Center and to assure them that if circumstances justified it, they could return. I feel that in the end this would have resulted in faster permanent relocation than did the system of various kinds of leave for certain purposes, with all the restrictive provisions.

The relocation program over the entire period at Rohwer was, in my opinion, rather satisfactory. I was guilty during the first year or so, however, of becoming too involved in Center operations to push relocation as much as I now believe it could have been pushed. During the last few months relocation moved remarkably fast and efficiently. There was a minimum of friction and it was not necessary to remove anyone forcibly, or to even set an arbitrary date for any departure.

PHYSICAL OPERATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Labor

A large part of the difficulties encountered in the normal physical operation of the Center can, in my opinion, be attributed to dissatisfaction about wages on the part of the workers. There was almost unanimous feeling that our wage scale was not only inadequate, but was also unfair. The fact that they received food, shelter, medical attention, school and recreational facilities, in addition to the \$16 or \$19 per month, did not alter their attitude much, since people who did not work received these benefits anyway. The effect of this dissatisfaction was not so pronounced in activities or services which directly affected the welfare of the evacuees and which they felt could not otherwise be provided--medical attention, mess operations, production of certain foods, etc., -- but in operations which they felt were of little direct benefit to themselves or in those that the government could otherwise provide, such as land clearing, building of appointed personnel quarters, clearing right-of-ways for drainage ditches, etc., the attitude was largely that of doing no more work than they were being paid for.

Mess

Feeding the people was probably the biggest job on the Center, but in my opinion it was handled with reasonable efficiency and lack of confusion for such a large operation under abnormal circumstances. The fact that we were able to get most of our food and supplies through the Army Quartermaster rather than on the open market quite likely prevented chaotic conditions. The availability of plenty of labor for both mess hall operations and for the storage and distribution of food tended to avoid certain normal difficulties in mess operations, but I feel that we probably allotted more labor to this operation than was really necessary.

Health

The problem of maintaining health and sanitation was highly important and the results attained at Rohwer were, I feel, remarkable. There were no serious epidemics, and the most amazing feature of the program was the fact that there was not a single case of malaria contracted by the evacuees, in spite of the fact that Rohwer is located in one of the delta counties with a high death rate due to this disease. The United States Public Health Service is due much credit for this accomplishment, since they conducted a mosquito control program in the adjoining vicinity and also cooperated with our staff in the control program within the Center.

The total population during the life of the Center was 11,962, with a total of only 168 deaths during the three and a half years.

This excellent health record is more remarkable when the kind of supervision and administration is considered. There was a continuous change of Chief Medical Officers (eight different men were in charge at various times) whose ability and efficiency varied from very good to very poor. To make this constant change more ridiculous, some of the most efficient ones were deliberately transferred from Rohwer to other Centers by the Washington Medical Officer.

Property

One of the most difficult jobs on the Center was that of Property Procurement and Control. I feel that the prescribed property procedure during the first two years was the most impractical and inefficient phase of Center operation. The more or less panicky method of securing surplus property in the early months resulted in having much unusable and worthless property on hand with the attendant lack of proper records and regard for same. It is easy, of course, to look back and pick out things that didn't work right, and it is also realized that wartime conditions made normal property procedures

out of the question, but I feel that in the operation of projects such as relocation centers a tried and proven system of property control and accountability should be established and maintained throughout the life of the project. I think that the WRA system now in effect is reasonably efficient and satisfactory although I doubt that any system could provide complete property control in a relocation center.

Fuel

Fuel is a potential problem in any community, but ordinarily it soon becomes a routine operation and does not cause many administrative headaches. This was far from true at Rohwer, however, since fuel became the first major physical problem and continued to be a serious problem every winter. The project area adjacent to the Center was practically all wood land and since plenty of labor was available, plans were made to use wood as fuel for all living quarters. In addition to the conservation of coal and transportation facilities, it was originally thought that wood would be the cheapest fuel. We did not realize, however, that the evacuees had absolutely no experience in this kind of work and thus would be highly inefficient. Almost five times as much labor as we had anticipated was necessary to provide fuel for the living quarters. Coal was provided for mess halls and the hospital. Transportation of the wood was also very expensive and at times an almost super-human job, since most of it was cut and hauled in the fall and winter months when the "gumbo" soil was wet and very soft. This was due to another upset of our original plans, since all of the woodcutting labor had to be used during the spring and summer months in farm operations and the clearing of drainage ditch right-of-ways.

Under similar circumstances I would recommend using coal for at least 50 percent of the fuel needs, and under conditions where coal is not scarce and badly needed by war industries, I would recommend using all coal. A cord of wood, which produces 80% as much heat as a ton of coal, cost us approximately 75 percent more than a ton of coal, after allowing liberal credit for land clearing values to the land where the wood was cut.

Cooperative Enterprises.

The cooperative association which was organized by the evacuees to furnish certain essential services to the people, was operated in a rather slipshod manner and was not nearly as efficient as I feel it could have been. Very few of its officials and employees were experienced business men or persons trained in the work they performed. The policy of allowing the evacuees to operate and

control their own association enterprises was strictly adhered to at Rohwer, and in looking back I feel that I probably leaned too far backward in this matter, especially after it became obvious that the association members would not exercise their rights to insist on more efficient management and less politics in the operation of their business.

In view of the much better records (in most respects) of the cooperative associations at other Centers, it seems reasonable to assume that I am quite a bit to blame for the unsatisfactory conditions in our Center, and that on the average a cooperative association should be an efficient and satisfactory means of furnishing essential services in a community such as a relocation center. Under conditions as they existed at Rohwer, however, it is my judgment that stores and services operated by the government on a non-profit basis would have been much more efficient and would have distributed the profits to the patrons in a much fairer manner. I also feel sure that, if the government could do the unprecedented thing of evacuating a whole racial group of people, procedures could have been devised for the businesslike operation of such stores by the government.

Community Services

The fact that our schools received Grade A ratings all through the life of the project is proof that adequate and efficient schools were operated in spite of the fact that the buildings (which were converted barracks) and certain other facilities were not normal equipment. I feel that we were fortunate in having a school staff of the calibre which we had and which, in my opinion, was considerably above the average within the state of Arkansas. Good advantage of these facilities was taken by the evacuees, as indicated by the high enrollment and excellent attendance records shown in the separate school report.

Considerable stress was placed on certain types of community activities, especially in the early days, in an effort to minimize the abnormal phases of Center life. A rather extensive recreational program for adults, as well as children, was promoted with satisfactory results. The evacuees accepted considerable responsibility in this field and although a few individuals were over-ambitious along certain lines, they were in general rather efficient in meeting the recreational, religious and social needs of the community. I feel that this kind of activity is very essential in any community serving dislocated people, but I also feel that unless guarded against, the natural tendency is to overdo the recreational and social phases at the expense of more essential activities.

Construction and Maintenance

The major construction work was performed by the U. S. Engineers but it was necessary to construct a good many facilities with evacuee labor. Even though very few of the evacuee residents of Rohwer were skilled construction workers and much of the work was not directly beneficial to the evacuees, the construction work which we did was of good quality and the cost compared very favorably with work done by the U. S. Engineers.

A sufficient number of workers skilled in the operation of essential utilities were available or could be readily trained, and the maintenance problem soon became a routine matter and caused very few difficulties. Continuous satisfactory service of water, lights, sewage disposal, refrigeration, and so on, could easily become a serious problem in such communities, however, and should be carefully watched.

Early plans for work projects were made before realizing that the evacuees had had no experience whatever in cutting timber and clearing land; and also that so much inefficiency, compared to normal labor, would be encountered due to the low wage scale. Plans were made to clear several thousand acres of woods land on the project area, and in connection with these plans a contract was let for digging several large drainage ditches and laterals. The ditches were completed by the contractor, even though part of them were not absolutely necessary for Center operation under conditions as they later developed. One part of the drainage program was not completed, however, and at present is a matter of controversy.

The Commissioners of the Cypress Creek Drainage District approved our drainage plans, which provided that the water would be emptied into their drainage system. Our plans provided, however, that we would clear out the channel of "Boggy Bayou" from the point where our outlet ditch emptied into it to a point where the channel was open and unobstructed, which was a distance of approximately five miles. For various reasons this clearing work could not be done prior to or during the excavation work. Adequate equipment for doing this work was secured and plans made for doing the work during the summer and fall of 1945. Weather conditions were so abnormal, however, that very little work could be done, with the result that the job is only approximately 35 percent complete.

The drainage district commissioners and the owners of property adjacent to the unfinished work feel that overflow damage may result from the increased flow of water into a clogged channel and although they realize why the work was not completed they still feel (and I agree with them) that the War Relocation Authority or some government

agency has a moral if not legal obligation to complete the work. As this is written, however, no practical solution to the problem has been worked out.

RETROSPECT.

In thinking back over the three and a half years of Center life there are memories of tense situations, especially during the first year before the evacuees and staff members really became acquainted and became reconciled to Center life as a reality. There are also memories of a host of other situations varying from gaiety to heartache. On the whole, however, I have really enjoyed it and am grateful for the opportunity to work in such a program. I know that the experience will be very valuable to me and I hope that I have made a reasonable contribution to the unusual task which was assigned to the War Relocation Authority.

I want to commend very sincerely the staff members here at Rohwer for their efforts and fine cooperation in conducting our program. I feel that a majority of them, especially the key personnel, did an excellent job in performing their respective duties.

I also feel that a great amount of credit is due our National Director, Mr. Dillon S. Myer, for successfully guiding a program which was not only new and untried but which was about as unpopular and had as much opposition as any sizeable venture our government has ever undertaken.

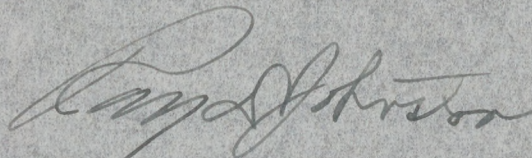
The assistance of various Washington staff members was very valuable and greatly appreciated by myself and the staff. Most of them were very efficient and pleasant to deal with--there were a few, however (which was also true about the Center staff) who were quite the opposite.

My overall reaction to the evacuees is that they were "just folks" like you and me. They had certain habits and customs that are usually considered oriental or peculiar, but practically every race, or even every community, has its own customs and habits that seem peculiar to someone else. I feel that their general standard of moral ethics, their evaluation of the essentials of life and other phases of human relations were pretty much average. The vast majority of older men, women and girls were very pleasant to deal with and in general were efficient at their work. The teen-age boys and some of the younger men varied from downright contemptible to just about an average of the young boys throughout the country.

I was very agreeably surprised throughout the life of the Center at the excellent conduct of practically all evacuees. I do not believe that any other similar-sized segment of our population would have behaved themselves as well under similar circumstances. I feel that a group of average Americans, under similar conditions, would have been continually causing turmoil, strikes, and so on, and that administering such a Center would have been unbearable.

I am attaching to this report a sort of diary, or chronology of Center events, which briefly points out things that happened from day to day in the operation of the Center and in the lives of the evacuees and staff. It calls to mind many memories that are pleasant as well as some that are not.

I wish to give credit and also to express my appreciation to Austin Smith, Jr., Reports Officer, for the preparation of the chronology of events and also for the facts presented in my report dealing with Registration, Leave Clearance, Segregation and Public Relations.



Ray D. Johnston
Project Director

February, 1946

Corrected

CHRONOLOGY ~~of~~ EVENTS

Rohwer Relocation Center

September 17, 1942 - November 30, 1945

- Sept. 17, 1942 First advance group of ²⁵⁰ evacuees arrived. These assisted in preparing for the arrival of the main group.
- Sept. 18, 1942 A school census was started by the education staff.
- Sept. 20, 1942 Mess crews were organized for some of the blocks that were to be filled by the next train of evacuees.
- Sept. 23, 1942 The second group of evacuees arrived. This was the first full trainload of center residents.
- Sept. 24, 1942 A temporary finance office was set up in an unfinished men's dormitory.
- Sept. 25, 1942 An emergency clinic was set up in one of the blocks pending the opening of the hospital.
- Sept. 27, 1942 Part of the appointed personnel moved into two unfinished men's dormitories.
- Sept. 29, 1942 Railroad refrigerator cars were being used to store perishable food.
- Oct. 1, 1942 It. Deeter, commander of ^{the} Military Police company, gave splendid cooperation in assisting in the unloading of evacuee trains.
- Oct. 2, 1942 The hospital opened for limited service.
- Oct. 5, 1942 The Employment Section moved into Administration Building II but had to leave because of additional work by the contractors.
- Oct. 8, 1942 Offices for the Project Director, Transportation, Procurement and Mess, were set up in Administration Building I.

Oct. 10, 1942 The Irish-American husband of a Japanese national started a long series of disturbances involving himself and his evacuee neighbors.

Oct. 12, 1942 The Office Services Section was established in Administration Building I.

Oct. 14, 1942 The evacuees stripped scrap lumber piles for material to be used in making shelves, partitions and furniture.

Oct. 17, 1942 A group of incoming evacuees was forced to move into barracks that had only sub-floors and whose wash house was not completed.

Oct. 20, 1942 The ~~E~~mployment Section was first to establish an office in Administration Building II.

Oct. 22, 1942 Trouble between contractors employees and evacuees arose over the latter taking contractor's lumber to make improvements in their quarters.

Oct. 23, 1942 Center residents were warned about stealing lumber from contractor's lumber yard.

Oct. 24, 1942 Rohwer Outpost, center paper, published it's first issue.

Oct. 25, 1942 Center firemen fought forest fire for $6\frac{1}{2}$ hours before extinguishing it.

Oct. 27, 1942 Six Camp Robinson Nisei soldiers were honored at party by center residents.

Oct. 28, 1942 Two young evacuees were sprinkled with bird shot by contractor's guard while they were attempting to take lumber.

Oct. 29, 1942 First election of block managers was held throughout the center.

Oct. 30, 1942 Center hospital opened a general medical ward, an outpatient clinic and a third section to handle minor cases.

Oct. 31, 1942 Last full train of evacuees arrived. Center population totalled 8,261.

- Nov. 3, 1942 Education staff held a conference with several outside speakers addressing the group.
- Nov. 4, 1942 Sewing room opened for use of center residents every day except Sunday.
- Nov. 7, 1942 Dental clinic opened at hospital with only emergency extraction cases handled.
- Nov. 8, 1942 First student left the center to enter Spring Arbor Junior College at Spring Arbor, Michigan.
- Nov. 9, 1942 School registration was conducted in blocks 31 and 35. School supplies and rice were being sold in canteens.
- Nov. 10, 1942 Center suffered several unofficial blackouts caused, in some cases, by trees being ^{accidentally} felled on power lines.
- Nov. 11, 1942 Thrity-three councilmen elected from one-hundred candidates in first step in the establishment of center self government.
- Nov. 14, 1942 Several volunteers leave for Camp Savage to enter Military Intelligence School.
- Nov. 15, 1942 Office opened in block 42 to take Montgomery Ward orders.
- Nov. 18, 1942 Santa Anita and Stockton clothing issues received by center residents.
- Nov. 19, 1942 First evening classes in adult English held.
- Nov. 21, 1942 Survey of families of internees made to determine if they wished to join relatives in internment camps.
- Nov. 23, 1942 Wall board was delivered to the blocks but residents were required to install it.
- Nov. 25, 1942 Schools were temporarily operating without desks, textbooks and black boards.
- Nov. 28, 1942 Four sewing machines were made available to each block for use of center residents.
- Dec. 2, 1942 ✓ Cutting, hauling and distribution of fire wood presented center's major problem.

- Dec. 5, 1942 Two evacuee leaders were guest speakers at the Monticello Rotary Club.
- Dec. 7, 1942 The Center ~~library~~ library opened in block 19 with 2,124 books.
- Dec. 10, 1942✓ First evacuee left the center, ^{on indefinite leave} to accept ~~indefinite leave~~ for employment in Illinois.
- Rotary and Lions Clubs of Monticello, Arkansas were guests of the center.
- Dec. 16, 1942 Approximately 700 acres of farm land near the center were being prepared for spring planting.
- Dec. 18, 1942 Distribution of heavy mackinaws started with the cost to be deducted from regular clothing allowances when these were paid.
- Dec. 19, 1942 Translators were being sought by the government.
- Dec. 23, 1942 The "Rohwer Hi-Lites", the high school paper, made it's first appearance.
- Dec. 24, 1942 Thousands of gifts donated by outside organizations were sent to the blocks for distribution on Christmas Day.
- Dec. 27, 1942✓ ^{Two or three blocks in the} ~~The~~ lower section of center ^{was} flooded ^{by} ~~with~~ excessive rains. ^{temporarily}
- Dec. 28, 1942 Construction was progressing on three or four apartment buildings for appointed personnel.
- Dec. 30, 1942 Two 100 lb. sacks of special rice were delivered to each block for Japanese New Year's dishes.
- Dec. 31, 1942 The New Year was ushered in by dances, programs and parties.
- Jan. 1, 1943 Traditional Japanese food was served in all the blocks in celebration of New Year's.
- Jan. 2, 1943 A home talent show composed of Japanese plays started a three-day run.
- Jan. 4, 1943 Physical examinations for all school children were scheduled by medical and education staffs.

- Jan. 8, 1943 The first center movies were shown in four different blocks. Admission was five and ten cents. No seats were provided.
- Jan. 9, 1943 It was announced that only those working 15 days in October would be eligible for a clothing allowance for that month.
- Jan. 13, 1943 The Mess Division announced that an efficiency pennant would be awarded to the cleanest and best operated mess hall.
- Jan. 14, 1943 A center wide handicraft exhibit was opened in block 26.
- Jan. 16, 1943 The Co-op announced that a 20 per cent profit had been made on total sales to date.
- Jan. 18, 1943 Material for the construction of wooden bath tubs was ready for delivery. This was provided by special request of Issei.
- Jan. 20, 1943 A timber cutter was killed by a falling tree. This was the center's first fatal accident.
- Jan. 23, 1943 The Spanish ^{Consul} Council from New Orleans arrived and met with center officials and residents.
- Jan. 27, 1943 The shoe department of the Co-op was open in block 42.
- Jan. 28, 1943 The block managers approved the March of Dimes Campaign.
- Jan. 29, 1943 Eleven of sixteen applicants passed FBI tests for work with the Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service.
- Jan. 30, 1943 The Center paper published Secretary of War, Stimson's announcement of the formation of a Nisei ~~Voluntary~~ ^{Volunteer} Combat team.
- Feb. 3, 1943 Contributions to the March of Dimes Campaign amounted to more than \$600.
- Feb. 6, 1943 ✓ The Army team arrived to solicit ~~army~~ army volunteers and explain general registration.
- Feb. 10, 1943 Registration for leave clearance and for voluntarily enlistment was started.

additional

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- Feb. 13, 1943 Shoe sales were suspended pending arrangements for obtaining shoe coupons.
- Feb. 17, 1943 ? Two evacuees leave the center to investigate ^{the} a work offer of a South Dakota Sugar Company.
- Feb. 20, 1943 ? The farm program was underway with onions already planted and plans for other crops ~~were~~ completed.
- Feb. 24, 1943 Trouble with center's water supply continued and residents were warned to drink only boiled water.
- Feb. 25, 1943 ? The Fellowship of Reconciliation sent Dr. Kirby Page, pacifist lecturer, to conduct a series of lectures at the center. Voluntary recruiting program makes slow progress.
- Feb. 27, 1943 The Project Director announced that general registration would become compulsory.
- Feb. 28, 1943 The Chairman of ^{The} ~~International~~ Fellowship of Reconciliation, Rev. John Sayre, addressed a group at the center.
- Mar. 1, 1943 Compulsory registration began in the two school blocks. School ~~was~~ dismissed for a week for registration.
- Mar. 5, 1943 A special representative of the War Department spoke to the block managers on the subject of "Voluntary Enlistment".
- Mar. 6, 1943 The center librarian announced the arrival of many new books.
- Mar. 8, 1943 Thirty-two repatriates arrived from Central Utah ^{To} ~~and will~~ remain here until the Gripsholm sails.
- Mar. 10, 1943 The Chicago Relocation Officer arrived at the center to study ^{methods of} ~~procedure for~~ relocating center residents.
- Mar. 13, 1943 Senator Chandler's investigating committee arrived to study conditions at the center.
- Mar. 14, 1943 Baccalaureate Services ^{was} ~~were~~ held for 53 graduating seniors of the High School.

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Mar. 17, 1943 The 1943 Red Cross Drive was started under the supervision of an evacuee and one of the appointed staff.

Mar. 18, 1943 Plans were made for the organization of a Parent Teachers Association.

Mar. 20, 1943 The President of Henderson State Teacher's College addressed the high school graduating class.

Mar. 22, 1943 A representative of the Committee for Resettlement of Japanese Americans explained to center residents the purpose of the organization.

Mar. 23, 1943 The volunteers for the separate combat team were honored by many parties and were granted special privileges by the center administration, but the date of their departure was not announced.

Mar. 24, 1943 A shoe repair shop was opened in block 42 by the Co-op.

Mar. 27, 1943 After a long delay center ^{the}volunteers were advised that they would probably be inducted about April 10.

Mar. 29, 1943 Registration for the second period of adult education was started. Some of the 23 classes offered were wood carving, pottery, book reviewing, etc.

Mar. 30, 1943 The manager of a large Montana Sugar Company arrived to recruit seasonal workers.

Mar. 31, 1943 "Blocked Nationals" were requested to turn in their Co-op membership certificates for cash refunds because of Federal laws governing enemy alien funds.

Apr. 1, 1943 An Outpost extra announced that the War Relocation Authority would give financial aid to resettlers.

Apr. 3, 1943 ✓ The American Friends Service Committee announced the opening of a hostel in Chicago, Illinois.

Apr. 4, 1943 A kite flying contest, sponsored by the Community Activities Section, was held.

Apr. 7, 1943 The center Red Cross Drive netted a total of \$3,284.53.

- Apr. 9, 1943 A beauty shop was opened by the Co-op in block 42.
- Apr. 10, 1943 Messages to Japan by letter or cablegram were handled by the center Red Cross Chapter.
- Apr. 13, 1943 The Military Intelligence school at Camp Savage will send a team to the center within a short time to enlist interpreters.
- Apr. 14, 1943 The center auditorium is now under construction and will be the largest building at the project.
- Apr. 15, 1943 A group of Hawaiian boys engaged in a gang fight with other residents of their block over serving of food in the mess hall. There had previously been considerable trouble between the two groups.
- Apr. 16, 1943 ~~Sixteen~~ ^{thirteen} Hawaiians were arrested and placed in ^{the} county jail.
- Apr. 17, 1943 General DeWitt's statement that, "A Jap is a Jap", caused much resentment among the evacuees.
- Apr. 18, 1943 Palm Sunday was observed by the Rohwer Federated Christian Church.
- Apr. 19, 1943 A dry goods store was opened in block 42 by the Co-op.
- Apr. 20, 1943 The first regular meeting of the elementary school PTA was held.
- Apr. 21, 1943 A Michigan nursery announced that the work of 17 relocated Nisei was excellent.
- Apr. 22, 1943 The first of a series of panel discussions to acquaint the evacuees with conditions on the outside was held in a block mess hall.
- Apr. 23, 1943 ^{accepted} The Hawaiian boys were released from the county jail ^{and} ~~to take~~ outside employment in Kansas City.
- Apr. 24, 1943 The project's first crop, 18 bushels of radishes, was harvested and distributed to the mess halls.

- Apr. 25, 1943 ✓ The Rohwer high school baseball team ^{played} ~~played~~ the McGehee high school team.
- Apr. 26, 1943 The center Toyland for children 6 to 15 years of age was officially opened.
- Apr. 28, 1943 An evacuee labor committee was formed to assist in the solution of center labor problems.
- Apr. 30, 1943 The first car load of evacuee personal property arrived from Los Angeles.
- May 1, 1943 One hundred girls left for Camp Shelby to be ^{the guests of} Nisei soldiers.
- May 3, 1943 Cub Scouts left on an overnight camping trip.
- May 4, 1943 Registration for NYA Vocational Training was held with 40 boys and 5 girls signing up.
- May 5, 1943 Federal Civil Service examinations were given Nisei.
- May 6, 1943 Center's first reserve officer was called for active service.
- May 7, 1943 "Boy's Day" was celebrated in Japanese fashion.
- May 8, 1943 Amended instructions permitted the Issei to hold elective offices in the community government.
- May 10, 1943 First class in auto mechanics was held with 20 students attending.
- May 12, 1943 Recruiters arrived from ^{Military Intelligence School} ~~MIB~~ at Camp Savage, ^{MINN}.
- May 14, 1943 Reports Division sent out questionnaires to relocatees to obtain information on outside conditions.
- May 15, 1943 Many evacuees were worried because of flood conditions on the Arkansas River.
- May 19, 1943 Four outside speakers participated in the Rohwer Christian Mission.
- May 20, 1943 Music department of the High School gave a program at McGehee High School.

May 22, 1943 The constitution for Center self government was ratified in a special election.

May 23, 1943 The YMCA collected a handicraft exhibit to be sent to St. Louis.

May 24, 1943 At this time 584 residents had relocated and the center population was 7,938.

May 25, 1943 To quiet flood rumors, three evacuee leaders were taken to view ^{the} height of the river levee.

May 26, 1943 Local bus line improved its service from the center to McGehee.

May 29, 1943 Relocates reported outside conditions fairly good.

June 1, 1943 Election of a Councilman ^{for} ~~from~~ each block was held.

June 2, 1943 ✓ Evacuees complained about high Co-op prices.

June 3, 1943 The Community Council and two evacuee doctors continued a heated dispute.

June 4, 1943 Nisei complain because too much fish was being served in the mess halls.

June 6, 1943 The State High School Supervisor inspected the High School.

June 7, 1943 Seasonal workers returned with favorable reports of outside employment.

June 9, 1943 Rumors concerning segregation were numerous.

June 10, 1943 Project raised vegetables were plentiful in the mess halls.

June 12, 1943 Nisei morale was lowered by cancellation of NYA training program.

June 14, 1943 Importance of maintaining malaria control was stressed by the Chief Medical Officer.

June 16, 1943 The long expected typewriters for the High School commercial classes arrived.

- June 18, 1943 The High School received an "A" rating from the State Department of Education.
- June 20, 1943 *one hundred* ~~100~~ Nisei girls visited Camp Shelby.
- June 22, 1943 Center Nisei, Masamori Kojima, was praised in an article in **Time** magazine.
- June 24, 1943 All short wave radios were ordered turned in to Internal Security.
- June 26, 1943 ✓ Co-op report for *May* showed a profit of \$4,761.18 for the month.
- June 28, 1943 Co-op was granted a formal permit to operate in Arkansas.
- June 30, 1943 "Open House" was held for newspapers and radio stations in Arkansas and neighboring states.
- July 2, 1943 Elementary schools received an "A" rating from State Department of Education.
- July 4, 1943 An Independence Day program was presented on High School grounds.
- July 6, 1943 The Spanish Consul from New Orleans arrived and met with Issei representatives.
- July 8, 1943 An entomologist arrived to direct malaria control here and at Jerome.
- July 9, 1943 Schools held open house and entertained 4500 visitors.
- July 11, 1943 Chief Steward *explained* ~~gave~~ to the evacuees ~~an explanation~~ of food costs for the next fiscal year.
- July 14, 1943 Owners of short wave radios were warned of a severe penalty unless such radios ~~were~~ *turned* in.
- July 16, 1943 A 9' x 15' mural painted by two center students was used as a cover design by a national Church magazine.
- July 17, 1943 It was announced that the segregation of the loyal from the disloyal would start in September.

- July 19, 1943 The foundation of the center auditorium was completed.
- July 21, 1943 Tule Lake was announced as the segregation center.
- July 24, 1943 *one Hundred*
~~100~~ girls from the center again visit Camp Shelby.
- July 26, 1943 Resettlement in the Denver area is halted temporarily because of congested conditions.
- July 30, 1943 High School Commencement Exercises were held.
- Aug., 1, 1943 The center farms first watermelons, 1270 in ~~a~~ *number*, were distributed to the mess halls.
- Aug. 3, 1943 Aliens were warned not to leave the center without alien registration cards.
- Aug. 5, 1943 September 21, was set as the tentative date for the first train to Tule Lake.
- Aug. 7, 1943 *two* *one*
~~The~~ congressmen from this district and ~~the~~ one from the Jerome district, visited the center.
- Aug. 9, 1943 Segregation interviews for those answering Question 28 in the negative were ~~been~~ completed.
- Aug. 11, 1943 The PTA sponsored part time employment for young people of the center.
- Aug. 14, 1943 3500 center residents witnessed the first part of a two day "O-Bon" ceremony.
- Aug. 16, 1943 *Ninety Three*
~~92~~ Rohwer Scouts left for a 5 day joint camping trip with the Arkansas City Troop.
- Aug. 19, 1943 The construction of the cold storage plant was completed.
- Aug. 20, 1943 The Rohwer Young Mens Association gave a party in honor of the Tule Lake segregants.
- Aug. 23, 1943 The Project Director corrected erroneous impressions caused by pamphlets on segregation.
- Aug. 25, 1943 *Sixty three*
~~62~~ Gripsholm repatriates were instructed concerning baggage limitations and physical examinations.

- Aug. 27, 1943. Community Activities sponsored a center fair.
- Aug. 29, 1943 *One hundred and seven*
~~107~~ Rohwer and Jerome repatriates left to return to Japan on the Gripsholm. One center resident attempted to send an illegal message to Japan by one of the group.
- Aug. 31, 1943 *One hundred and twenty-five*
~~125~~ center girls went out on a trial cotton picking expedition.
- Sept. 1, 1943 It was announced that practically all Kibei would be required to have a leave clearance hearing.
- Sept. 3, 1943 A WAC recruiter spent the day at the project with no success.
- Sept. 5, 1943 Graduation exercises for 176 sewing and tailoring students were held.
- Sept. 7, 1943 ? There was no room on the Gripsholm for 17 of Rohwer's repatriates and they were returned to the center with 80 others from *various* ~~several~~ centers.
- Sept. 11, 1943 The center Red Cross collected more than 1000 messages to be taken to the Gripsholm by plane from Washington.
- Sept. 14, 1943 First train load of segregants left for Tule Lake with approximately 500 ~~aboard~~ *aboard*.
- Sept. 15, 1943 The center Red Cross spent \$500 to supply baggage and clothing for the returned Gripsholm people, some of whom had lost such property.
- Sept. 18, 1943 The safe arrival of segregants at Tule Lake was announced.
- Sept. 22, 1943 Center residents were invited by the County War Fund organization to participate in the current bond drive.
- Sept. 25, 1943 Block Managers met to discuss the old and difficult problem of wood distribution.
- Sept. 28, 1943 The center population was 6,703.
- Sept. 29, 1943 ✓ Motor Transport and Maintenance Section ^{was} ~~new~~ equipped to do major ~~overhaul~~ jobs after receiving lathes, drills, presses, etc.
overhaul

- Oct. 2, 1943 Margaret Sorenson, acting supervisor of Community Activities Section, left ^{the} Center for Red Cross ~~foreign~~ Service.
- Oct. 4, 1943 Student Relocation transferred from Night School Director to High School Vocational Adviser.
- Oct. 5, 1943 General Delos C. Emmons of the Western Defense Command reiterates that no persons ~~of~~ Japanese ancestry ^{would} ~~will~~ be permitted to return to evacuated areas without expressed approval of the War Department.
- Oct. 7, 1943 Second Tule Lake train leaves with 375 Rohwer and 40 Jerome segragees at 2:00 p.m. Half holiday declared for schools.
- Oct. 8, 1943 Community Council sends 2000 questionnaires to center residents in making relocation survey.
- Oct. 9, 1943 230 students in Adult English Classes receive WRA certificates for 1942 - 1943 period of study. Wilma van Dusseldorp was the main speaker.
- Oct. 10, 1943 Manhunt staged for aged Issei lost while mushroom hunting. He found his way back home about midnight.
- Oct. 11, 1943 Housing Unit outlines procedures for changing apartments to govern rush for housing vacated by the Tule Lake movements.
- Oct. 12, 1943 Eastside Elementary PTA holds its first meeting, with Mrs. Ruth Niiya, President, in charge. Topic for discussion was, Teacher - Parent Relations.
- Oct. 13, 1943 First slaughtering of Center hogs for mess halls.
- Oct. 14, 1943 Lumber distributed to all Blocks for roofs over entrances of latrines and mess halls, - construction to be by block residents.
- Oct. 15, 1943 Lloyd Shingu named Assistant Night School Director.
- Oct. 18, 1943 Presidential order reducing gasoline consumption by government agencies by 40 per cent made effective. Transportation Officer asks that travel requests be made in advance.
- Oct. 19, 1943 Irving B. Comer assumes duty as Evacuee Property Officer, taking over a phase of work formerly handled by Transportation and Supply Officer.

- Oct. 20, 1943 Harvested on Rohwer farms today were the following ~~first~~ crops: 6250 lbs. lettuce, 70 big boxes icicle radishes, 95 big boxes of sweet potatoes, 1575 lbs. spinach, and 2000 lbs. ~~sa-se daikon~~ *daikon*.
- Oct. 23, 1943 Rohwer's first anniversary Enge-Kai, a 3 hour vanity show, held at High School field.
- Oct. 24, 1943 Social Welfare Staff of 30 holds picnic and weiner bake at the Center Campsite tonight.
- Oct. 25, 1943 A Relocation Library opened in High School block with Mabel Rose Jamison, a faculty member, in charge.
- Oct. 26, 1943 Leave Officer states that all those going out on leave must have ~~Identification~~ *Identification* photos made at Rohwer Photo Studio.
- Oct. 27, 1943 Each block donates \$1.00 to fund to beautify Center Cemetery with evergreen shrubs.
- Oct. 28, 1943 Community Services Chief leaves for Kansas City to deliver series of 13 addresses to the 1943 International Institute.
- Oct. 29, 1943 The Christmas Committee begins preparations for a big Center Christmas.
- Nov. 2, 1943 Three new ~~vacue~~ doctors added to Hospital ~~Staff~~.
- Nov. 4, 1943 Ministers of Rohwer Federated Christian Church go to Jerome to take part in the anniversary meetings of the Jerome Christian Church.
- Nov. 6, 1943 The "Pen", a summary of the first year of Center operations and activities was distributed in the blocks .
- Nov. 7, 1943 *Twenty 512*
~~to~~ Nurses' Aides received their caps and certificates of achievement at a "Capping" ceremony in the Hospital Mess at 2:00 p.m. today, upon completion of a course in attendant nursing and 3 months work at the hospital.
- Nov. 9, 1943 Councilmen were elected in all blocks.
- Nov. 11, 1943 A special Armistice Day program was held at the High School Field.
- Nov. 13, 1943 Subsistence allowances for relocating families will be based on family size and need.

- Nov. 16, 1943 The first meeting of the new Community Council was held and Shigemori Tanaki was re-elected Chairman.
- Nov. 20, 1943 The Evacuee Relocation Committee reported its survey showed relocation was retarded by inadequacy of government assistance and lack of proper protection on the outside.
- Nov. 23, 1943 The Westside Elementary PTA held an informal social in Mess Hall 35.
- Nov. 25, 1943 Evacuees enjoyed a Thanksgiving Day dinner of turkey, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie.
- Nov. 28, 1943 The General Manager and the Directors of the Co-op submitted resignations as the result of a Co-op feud.
- Dec. 1, 1943 An apprentice training program for mechanics was started with the cooperation of the garage ~~staff~~ *STAFF*
- Dec. 2, 1943 A WRA Relocation Team arrived to conduct a series of meetings and conferences through December 11th.
- Dec. 4, 1943 YWCA sponsored a bazaar of centermade handicraft.
- Dec. 6, 1943 Three jeeps instead of the original goal of one, were bought through High School bond and stamp sales.
- Dec. 8, 1943 Relocation Team holds daily relocation meetings. "The Way Ahead" and "Go For Broke" were shown.
- Dec. 11, 1943 Lack of interest in relocation meetings was disappointing.
- Dec. 13, 1943 A center coal shortage reduced hot showers to every other night events.
- Dec. 15, 1943 Through the cooperation of McGehee merchants, special bus transportation to McGehee was arranged to aid Christmas shopping by evacuees.
- Dec. 17, 1943 "Lil Dan'l", cartoon history of the Center, appeared. Editor and author was George Akimoto.
- Dec. 19, 1943 Boy Scouts furnished Christmas trees for mess halls, the hospital, churches and schools.
- Dec. 21, 1943 WRA requested a budget of \$48,000,000. for fiscal year 1944 for all operations.

- Dec. 23, 1943 Center's annual Christmas program was presented at the high school.
- Dec. 25, 1943 Three Sunday Schools presented ^{Christmas} programs.
- Dec. 27, 1943 Sunday Schools were cancelled because of influenza.
- Dec. 29, 1943 Two evacuee leaders were selected at a relocation meeting to go to Georgia and investigate Henry Ford's relocation offer.
- Dec. 31, 1943 Apartments were cleaned and feasts were prepared for next day's celebration.
- Jan. 1, 1944 New Year's was celebrated quietly with special food, a football game and a Japanese play.
- Jan. 3, 1944 Gifts that had arrived too late for Christmas were distributed to the children.
- Jan. 5, 1944 Center paper missed an issue because all men and boys were cutting wood.
- Jan. 7, 1944 The Field Director of student relocation came to the center to interview prospective college students.
- Jan. 10, 1944 First Co-op rebates were paid - \$3.12 for every \$100 purchased. An additional \$12.48 was held back for later distribution.
- Jan. 13, 1944 The New York Relocation Officer arrived for a three weeks visit.
- Jan. 15, 1944 ^{Forry} 40 High School graduates received diplomas. This was the third group to graduate in the center.
- Jan. 16, 1944 The Co-op selected a new general manager, an assistant manager, a head buyer and a head cashier.
- Jan. 18, 1944 ^{Evacuee representatives made a favorable} ~~Two evacuees visited Henry Ford's plantation in Georgia to investigate relocation opportunities.~~
- Jan. 19, 1944 ^{Report on Henry Ford's relocation offer,} Center officials announce plans to construct several poultry houses.
- Jan. 20, 1944 ~~The Rohwer USO held an organization meeting with Dr. J. B. Hunter presiding.~~
^{War Department announced reinstatement of Selective Service for Nisei.}

Jan. 22, 1944 ✓ Grace Yamaguchi, adviser of the newly organized Red Cross Home Nursing Course, attended an instructors conference in Little Rock.

Jan. 24, 1944 *Immigration and Naturalization Service Asked*
The War Department announced the reinstitution of Selective Service for Nisei.

Block managers to assist in obtaining current addresses of aliens.

Jan. 26, 1944 Plans for a paralysis fund drive were announced.

Jan. 27, 1944 Plans for the construction of a school workshop building were completed.

Jan. 29, 1944 Two internees arrived from ^{Santa} ~~Sana~~ Fe Internment Camp to join their families at the center.

Feb. 1, 1944 Koh Murai, Japanese agriculturist, will deliver a series of lectures here.

Feb. 3, 1944 Plans to obtain fifty one discarded army vehicles to be divided between Rohwer and Jerome were disclosed.

Feb. 5, 1944 The center schools conducted paralysis, tuberculosis and Jeep campaigns.

Feb. 7, 1944 The Nisei were warned to register for Selective Service on reaching 18.

Feb. 9, 1944 The Rohwer Red Cross aided the center hospital by rolling bandages and making dressings.

Feb. 10, 1944 Two evacuee girls attended a YWCA conference in Little Rock.

Feb. 12, 1944 Cincinnati hostel directors visited the Center.

Feb. 15, 1944 A recruiter from the Stevens Hotel in Chicago, arrived.

Feb. 16, 1944 The Rohwer USO invited a bus load of Nisei soldiers from Camp Shelby to visit the Center.

Feb. 17, 1944 Relocates were urged to have identification photographs made.

Feb 18, 1944 The transfer of the WRA to the Department of Interior was announced.

Feb. 19, 1944 Those reporting for Selective Service examinations were urged to get short term leaves.

- Feb. 21, 1944 The Community Activities Section planned a girls volley ball tournament.
- Feb. 23, 1944 Forty Camp Shelby Nisei were guests of the Center USO.
- Feb. 24, 1944 Fifty nine center residents reported for induction.
- Feb. 26, 1944 The closing of the Jerome center ^{on June 30} was announced.
1
- Feb. 28, 1944 The evacuees were ask to express their wishes concerning the disposition of their property stored in California by the Federal Reserve Bank.
- Mar. 1, 1944 The local Red Cross chapter re-elected all officials at a general meeting.
- Mar. 2, 1944 Additional enrollees for power sewing machine classes were sought.
- Mar. 4, 1944 Thirty-nine Camp Shelby soldiers were entertained over the week end by the USO.
- Mar. 6, 1944 Farm program for 1944 provided for 611 acres planted to vegetables.
- Mar. 8, 1944 Five members of the appointed staff were scheduled to report for ^{selective service} physical examinations.
1
- Mar. 9, 1944 Director Myer contradicted statement of Spanish Consul that Nisei do not have to serve in U. S. Army.
- Mar. 11, 1944 Employment report showed that 3119 center residents were working.
- Mar. 12, 1944 153 center residents relocated during past month (Feb).
- Mar. 15, 1944 It was announced that Nisei girls would be accepted for the U. S. Cadet Nurse Corps.
- Mar. 17, 1944 It was announced that ^{fertilizer} ~~fertilizer~~ and tools would be furnished for block victory gardens.
- Mar. 18, 1944 The procedure for the departure of the ^{first} inductee group on March 28 was outlined.
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Apr. 24, 1944 A strong wind uprooted many trees in the center area.

Apr. 26, 1944 Unvaccinated pets were prohibited within the center.

Apr. 27, 1944 2983 Jerome residents sign up to come to Rohwer when Jerome closes.

Apr. 29, 1944 A Tule Lake Housing official arrived at the center to assign quarters for Rohwer segregates.

May 1, 1944 *Fifty two*
52 center residents pass pre-induction physicals.

May 3, 1944 ✓ *Freight*
Tule Lake freight and baggage to be inspected before train leaves.

May 5, 1944 Relocation offices moved to Block 42.

May 6, 1944 Counseling program for prospective relocatees started.

May 9, 1944 Train load of 498 segregates leave for Tule Lake.

~~May 10, 1944 The Housing Committee prepares for coming of Jerome train.~~

May 12, 1944 *Fifty*
50 evacuees take seasonal leave for agricultural work in Illinois.

May 14, 1944 Relocation office closed part time to catch up with work.

May 16, 1944 *Thirty five*
35 Nisei leave for active service.

May 17, 1944 Rohwer Summer School to start on 19th.

May 19, 1944 USO elected new officials.

May 20, 1944 Project Director thanks evacuees for cooperation during segregation.

May 22, 1944 442nd. Combat Team donates furniture for USO room.

May 24, 1944 154 seniors received their diplomas.

May 26, 1944 Body of aged evacuee found in pool near hospital.

May 28, 1944 Scrap paper drive started by center Scouts.

May 31, 1944 Center clean-up drive announced for June 7th.

June 1, 1944 Project Director announced that Jerome transfers would start arriving June 6th.

June 3, 1944 Center Chapter celebrated 100th anniversary of YMCA.

June 5, 1944 Project Director extends welcome to Jerome transfers.

June 7, 1944 Scrap paper drive nets 5110 lbs. during first week.

June 9, 1944 Short term leave regulations tightened for those under 21.

June 11, 1944 Community Activities will show four education films each week.

June 13, 1944 *Seven hundred* ~~100~~ people were transferred from Jerome during the past week.

June 15, 1944 Army called 27 for active duty. This was third group to be called.

June 17, 1944 First relocatee to Hawaii left the center.

June 19, 1944 Fire Chief warns evacuees to observe fire regulations.

June 21, 1944 Rohwer and Jerome USO groups hold joint meeting.

June 24, 1944 Last group of 309 arrives from Jerome making a total of 2533 transfers.

June 27, 1944 Project Director announced 5th War Bond Drive.

June 30, 1944 Evacuee girls are urged by Relocation Officer to take government jobs in Washington.

July 1, 1944 Rohwer publishes special 8 page 4th of July edition.

July 3, 1944 Shopping passes to McGehee limited to 25 per day.

July 5, 1944 Coronation ball for crowning of Rohwer festival queen held.

July 8, 1944 Eight year old center boy killed by truck.

July 10, 1944 Project Director warns Nisei to comply with draft regulations.

- July 12, 1944 ^{It was} announced that Japanese aliens ^{were} eligible to ~~be~~ ^{be} paid government insurance.
- July 14, 1944 ^{Four thousand} 4000 evacuees view arts and crafts exhibit at auditorium.
- July 16, 1944 Center is visited for first time by Nisei soldier from battle front in Italy.
- July 19, 1944 A telegram from Mr. Myer announced that the Rohwer center would not close soon.
- July 21, 1944 Next of kin received notice of death of Sgt. Zenichi Masuda in Italy.
- July 24, 1944 Food rationing for evacuees was made more liberal by Washington ruling.
- July 27, 1944 Jerome Co-op established a temporary office in Block 39.
- July 30, 1944 Rules on deferment of Nisei over 26 explained.
- Aug. 1, 1944 Center's first major fire occurred in barrack in Block 16.
- Aug. 3, 1944 A day camping program for children was being sponsored by Community Activities.
- Aug. 5, 1944 The Co-op will handle employment of domestics by appointed personnel.
- Aug. 7, 1944 Survey showed that there were 420 soldiers from this center.
- Aug. 9, 1944 ✓ Nutrition classes started by hospital ^{dietitian} ~~dietitian~~.
- Aug. 12, 1944 Evacuee recruiter for Seabrook Farms arrived at the Center.
- Aug. 14, 1944 Outpost carries story of center family that has 5 sons and son-in-law in the army.
- Aug. 16, 1944 ^{Twenty three} 23 vacancies existed in center schools.
- Aug. 19, 1944 Night shorthand classes were organized for evacuee girls.
- Aug. 21, 1944 Center's second fatal traffic accident occurred when child was struck by truck.

Oct. 6, 1944 Music Section of Summer Activities Program presented a recital.

Oct. 10, 1944 WAC recruiter spent the ^{day} at the center but had no success.

Oct. 13, 1944 Evacuee representative of the National YMCA assured center residents that outside sentiment was not unfavorable.

Oct. 16, 1944 Rohwer Sargeant receives battlefield commission.

Oct. 18, 1944 Evacuee investigators of Sioux Depot report on findings.

Oct. 21, 1944 In-service training for evacuee office workers started.

Oct. 25, 1944 A National Field Advisor for the Girl Scouts came to the Center to help local troops.

Oct. 29, 1944 Co-op announced that 35mm. motion pictures would be shown in the auditorium.

Nov. 1, 1944 Sale of evacuee made articles to be held at Co-op canteen.

Nov. 4, 1944 Mrs. Roosevelt greets Rohwer couple in Buffalo, New York.

Nov. 6, 1944 Booklet, "Nisei in Uniform" arrives for distribution and causes much favorable comment.

Nov. 8, 1944 During past week 11 casualty notices received- 3 dead and 8 wounded.

Nov. 11, 1944 Mr. and Mrs. Nikama Tanouye receive letter of condolence from dead son's commanding officer. (Son later posthumously awarded DSC)

Nov. 15, 1944 Last week casualty list included 2 killed, 2 missing, 6 seriously wounded and 2 slightly wounded.

Nov. 18, 1944 The Project Director was invited to graduation exercises of MIS at Fort Snelling, Minnesota.

Nov. 20, 1944 Pvt. Thomas Higa lectures at the Center.

Nov. 22, 1944 Last week's casualties included 3 dead, and 7 wounded.

Nov. 25, 1944 Center constitution amended to permit person not a councilman to be eligible for council chairman.

- Nov. 28, 1944 Last week's casualties included one killed and 3 wounded.
- Nov. 30, 1944 Drive to sell Christmas seals started at the center.
- Dec. 2, 1944 First Issei leaves center under special permit to return to California.
- Dec. 4, 1944 Rohwer casualties now total 16 killed, 3 missing and 26 wounded.
- Dec. 6, 1944 USO held an open house for all servicemen visiting in the center.
- Dec. 9, 1944 A shortage of nurses aides closed one ^a ward in the hospital.
- Dec. 13, 1944 Camp Shelby Nisei and Earl Finch distributed candy for center children.
- Dec. 16, 1944 Second memorial held for 16 servicemen.
- Dec. 18, 1944 Evacuees ask not to come to the hospital unless medical attention really necessary.
- Dec. 19, 1944 Extra edition of Outpost reported that mass exclusion was ended *on Dec. 18.*
- Dec. 20, 1944 Army team arrived at the center to hold interviews in questionable clearance cases.
- Dec. 23, 1944 Mr. E. B. Moulton, Assistant Project Director, was appointed coordinator of information concerning lifting of mass exclusion.
- Dec. 25, 1944 The center's third Christmas was celebrated by parties, Christmas trees and a social at the auditorium.
- Dec. 30, 1944 Relocates were warned to obtain prior approval before visiting the center.
- Jan. 3, 1945 Evacuees were notified that identification cards would be provided upon request for those returning to Calif.
- Jan. 6, 1945 ✓ Two Nisei from the center received a citation for participating in a special ~~reconnaissance~~ *reconnaissance patrol* in Italy.
- Jan. 8, 1945 Report of attack on returnees to California was denied by the Project Director.

warned

- Feb. 19, 1945 ✓ Center residents were ~~worked~~ to prepare for meatless meals.
- Feb. 21, 1945 Casualty list for Rohwer totalled 17, killed, 28 wounded and 3 missing.
- Feb. 24, 1945 Japanese church in Los Angeles was opened as a hostel.
- Feb. 28, 1945 A three day Nisei conference to discuss Nisei problems was announced.
- Mar. 3, 1945 Bill Hosokawa, Sherwood Eddy and James Sugioka take part in Nisei conference.
- Mar. 7, 1945 Rohwer USO celebrated its second anniversary.
- Mar. 11, 1945 Meat supply for Center was assured by arrangement with Army Quartermaster.
- Mar. 14, 1945 Rohwer delegates to Salt Lake City conference make report to center residents.
- Mar. 17, 1945 Four officials of the Chinese government visit the center.
- Mar. 19, 1945 Teen-age canteen opened for Junior and Senior High School students.
- Mar. 21, 1945 The Army Appeal Board arrived to hear cases of those who had appealed exclusion notices.
- Mar. 23, 1945 The McGehee Times issued a special military edition that listed 866 Nisei soldiers from this center.
- Mar. 25, 1945 Negotiations started with the Wilson Plantation, Wilson, Arkansas for the resettlement of evacuees.
- Mar. 28, 1945 Special coach left McGehee with 58 evacuees returning to California.
- Mar. 30, 1945 ✓ Red Cross Drive netted \$3,036.80. ~~Of~~ this amount the appointed personnel contributed \$656.58.
- Apr. 2, 1945 One group that visited Wilson Plantation reported favorably, ~~an other~~ reported unfavorably.

but another

May 21, 1945 Registration of privately owned automobiles within center required by Project Director.

May 25, 1945 Commencement exercises for 102 High School Seniors held.

May 27, 1945 Center hospital faces an acute shortage of nurses aides.

May 30, 1945 Third memorial service held for seven of Center's war dead.

June 2, 1945 Special cars for West Coast scheduled for June 8 and June 15.

June 6, 1945 Distribution of the "Resume", the High School Annual, was started.

June 9, 1945 The DSC was posthumously awarded to T. Sgt. Togo Sugiyama, whose father ^{was} ~~is~~ a center resident.

June 13, 1945 Rumor that center schools will start in the fall still persists among the evacuees.

June 16, 1945 Nisei inductees will no longer enter the Reserve Corps before going into active service.

June 20, 1945 Announcement of closing of Poston Camps 2 and 3 and the Canal unit at Gila ^{causes} ~~causes~~ little comment among evacuees. *caused*

June 23, 1945 Monument erected in the cemetery in honor of the Center's war dead, was dedicated.

June 27, 1945 Project Director called evacuee leaders together for conference on center closing problems.

June 30, 1945 The Chief Medical Officer announced that only emergency cases would be accepted at the hospital.

July 2, 1945 Scheduled departure in July of five special cars was announced.

July 4, 1945 The Outpost to be published on weekly basis because of shortage of workers.

July 7, 1945 Closing of five ^{more} mess halls in the near future was announced.

- July 10, 1945 Rohwer's last art exhibit was scheduled for July 21.
- July 14, 1945 Special edition of Outpost announced Rohwer's closing date as not later than December 15, 1945.
- July 17, 1945 USO makes special request for volunteer workers for the week-end.
- July 20, 1945 Outpost extra announced a special west bound train for July 26.
- July 23, 1945 ✓ Daughter of center resident ^{wins} with scholastic honors at Brigham Young University.
- July 26, 1945 First special train left for West Coast with 417 passengers.
- July 28, 1945 Project Director announced that success with first special train made chances for an August train good.
- Aug. 1, 1945 Administrative notice no. 285 published in full in relocation bulletin. ^{have} gives procedure for handling relocation of welfare cases.
- Aug. 3, 1945 Center ^{Library} and Co-op announced closing plans.
- Aug. 7, 1945 Evacuee education committee attempts to organize a temporary school.
- Aug. 11, 1945 Second special train announced for August 17th.
- Aug. 14, 1945 Peace celebration program was presented in auditorium before a small audience.
- Aug. 17, 1945 Second special train left with 386 passengers.
- Aug. 18, 1945 Center population was down to 3,443.
- Aug. 21, 1945 Four more mess halls closed making a total of 15 that ^{had} ~~have~~ suspended operations.
- Aug. 24, 1945 Record number of 101 people requested terminal leave during the day.
- Aug. 25, 1945 ✓ Military Police ^{withdrawn} ~~with drawn~~ from gate.
- Aug. 28, 1945 37 people registered for employment at Seabrook Farms.

Sept. 1, 1945 Center population was down to 3,263

Sept. 4, 1945 Survey to determine departure dates and destinations was completed. ~~47~~ families gave no departure dates.
Only Seven teen

Sept. 7, 1945 Third special train left for the West Coast with 497 passengers.

Sept. 11, 1945 Evacuee chairman of Resettlement Commission left center to investigate relocation possibilities *in the East.*

Sept. 14, 1945 Relocation hits slump. Evacuees probably waiting to see if Granada really closes.

Sept. 17, 1945 Slow approval of Welfare cases on the outside retards relocation.

Sept. 21, 1945 Clearance was received for return of three families to Hawaii.

Sept. 24, 1945 Only 13 mess halls were in operation.

Sept. 27, 1945 Strong California trend in relocation continues. Little interest in East and Middle West.

Sept. 30, 1945 Fourth special train leaves for west coast. Its departure was postponed from the 28th.

Oct. 2, 1945 Scheduling committee organized with Assistant Project Director E. B. Moulton as Chairman. *Committee was to set departure dates for evacuees if necessary.*

Oct. 5, 1945 Two special west bound coaches scheduled for October 18th.

Oct. 8, 1945 Chairman of scheduling Committee explained the program to the Community Council.

Oct. 11, 1945 Announcement of scheduling procedure caused little comment among the evacuees.

Oct. 13, 1945 Spot check showed 75 per cent of center residents wished to return to California.

Oct. 15, 1945 Scheduling Committee met to select first cases for departure under the program.

Oct. 18, 1945 Evacuees advised that temporary housing would be provided on West Coast.

- Oct. 22, 1945 Councilmen given list of persons in their blocks who ~~are~~ *were* on schedule list and were requested to keep them advised of procedure.
- Oct. 23, 1945 Special coach left for Chicago with 59 passengers.
- Oct. 25, 1945 Only 6 families of first scheduled group of 450 individuals have not ask for terminal leave.
- Oct. 27, 1945 Chairman of Relocation Commission develops plans to resettle group in the East.
- Oct. 30, 1945 535 people had processed their papers for departure on the train of November 9th. This was the first scheduled group.
- Nov. 2, 1945 Center population was down to 1,790. Plans were completed to have all ~~these~~ ^{evacuees} out of the Center by November 30th.
- Nov. 6, 1945 Special coach to Chicago carried 78 passengers.
- Nov. 9, 1945 First scheduled train left for the West Coast with 560 passengers.
- Nov. 12, 1945 Plans for special coaches for week of November 19th were abandoned because so many people had advanced their departure dates.
- Nov. 14, 1945 112 evacuees left by special coach for the North and East.
- Nov. 15, 1945 Termination notices for 29 appointed personnel were sent out.
- Nov. 16, 1945 Special train to West Coast carried 450 evacuees.
- Nov. 20, 1945 41 evacuees ~~have~~ signed contracts to farm in south-east Missouri and will leave November 29th.
- Nov. 24, 1945 All but three or four cases have been processed for departure. All but one have good reason for delay.
- Nov. 27, 1945 All residents were processed for departure and it had not been necessary to send out any notices setting specific departure dates.
- Nov. 30, 1945 The last special train left at 4:43p.m. with 360 passengers. The last group of evacuees, five in number left the center at 6:00 p.m. One of these went to Denver and four to the East or Middle West.

United States
Department of Interior
War Relocation Authority
McGehee, Arkansas

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

OF

James F. Rains - Assistant Project Director
Operations Division

Period Covering
July 9, 1942 - December 31, 1945

ROHWER RELOCATION CENTER

PERSONAL NARRATIVE REPORT

James F. Rains
Assistant Project Director

This report is intended to reflect some of the experiences and observations made while serving in various capacities in this center from July 9, 1942, until December 31, 1945. The entire contents will have reference to activities for which I was responsible in whole or in part.

General responsibilities of the writer are indicated as follows under appointments and position titles:

On July 9, 1942, was transferred from Community Manager for the Farm Security Administration to the War Relocation Authority as Chief of the Division of Agriculture and Industry. On December 1, 1942, was appointed Assistant Project Director. On July 1, 1943, was delegated the specific responsibility as Chief of the Division of Operations as one of three Assistant Project Directors and served in that capacity until December 31, 1945. On March 15, 1945, was delegated the additional responsibility as Acting Administrative Officer in charge of the Administrative Management Division.

The date of my appointment with the War Relocation Authority was more than two months before the first evacuees were to come to the center. In fact, it was the same week that construction of the project was started. My time during these months was devoted largely to receiving property, securing warehouse space, and in personnel work attempting to secure a staff of appointed employees by the time the center was to be inhabited.

In the beginning everyone was very optimistic regarding the things that could be accomplished, and the supplies, materials and equipment which would be needed. A large amount of World War I Army clothing was on the surplus list. It was decided that this clothing would be a great deal of value on the project. A request was made for a large quantity and about eight car loads were shipped in. It finally developed that very little of this was used and it later had to be declared surplus to our needs. The Washington office sent a representative over several Southern and Midwestern states to secure surplus property from the NYA which was then liquidating. It developed that to secure needed property that the representative had to take an entire warehouse or lot. As a result, several car loads of property were shipped in which served only to take up warehouse space and later had to be declared surplus and shipped out. It is true that a large amount of equipment received from this source was of value to the project.

In the beginning the selection of personnel followed closely the prescribed job description, training, and experience as outlined in the personnel chart. This somewhat slowed up the appointment of personnel because it was not possible in all cases to secure persons with all of the qualities required. It later developed that the Civil Service Commission made certain concessions regarding previous salaries, training and experience. This made it possible to secure competent employees who might not otherwise qualify. Several key employees were transferred from the WPA, FSA, SCS and CCC, each of which were reducing their force at that time.

Several weeks prior to the opening of the center, government property began to come in by rail. This included mess equipment, hospital equipment, beds and bedding, and other equipment and supplies needed at the beginning of the project. A warehouse was rented at McGehee to store some of the property. The mistake was made in not securing enough warehouse space. The policy was made at that time to not rent a warehouse where the rental seemed out of line. This proved to be a costly mistake because some demurrage was charged due to not having warehouse space available.

The greatest problem at that time was in securing common labor. It was during the crop season and was very difficult to hire any farm labor. As soon as appointed, each physically able staff member was used in handling physical property. These, with the few colored laborers available, managed to keep the freight unloaded with the minimum of demurrage after warehouses were completed on the project.

The first train load of evacuees arrived in the center on September 17, 1942, and most all were received by the end of October. At that time it appeared that it would be impossible to have the construction completed to where blocks could be occupied on the prescribed date. The contractors concentrated on one block to take care of the first train load. By the time the next train arrived the additional blocks were barely ready. That condition followed throughout the remainder of the construction with the contractors being only a few minutes ahead of actual occupancy of the barrack buildings. In many cases the laundries, bathrooms, and mess halls were not completed when the blocks were occupied. This caused some difficulty in that the block residents were somewhat discontented until they settled down. Some of the trains were unloaded at night, the block grounds were muddy, and there were no walks and few lights. In general, the center was occupied at least two weeks before it should have been according to the construction schedule.

From the beginning it was planned that all evacuee barrack buildings would be heated with wood cut from the project area by evacuee labor. An effort was made to contract the cutting of 100 cords of wood to start the center on. A deal was finally made with some colored farmers to cut this wood at \$5 per cord. They cut 60 cords and found that they were losing money, so were released from their contract. When the 60 cords were delivered to the blocks each family received about two arm loads. This was an indication of the enormous amount of wood which would be needed to supply the center. Since it was soon to be winter weather, plans were immediately made for organizing wood cutting crews. At first, the only people which could be recruited were boys and young men, all of whom were physically able, but few of whom were dependable. Later, as the center population realized the great need for wood to be cut, a large number of people were recruited. At one time 700 were engaged in this work. It developed that very few of these people had ever used an axe or a saw in cutting wood. In spite of all efforts to teach them the proper use of these tools, we were never successful in getting all of them to cut down trees with a saw.

It was in the wood cutting crews where the first trouble was experienced with time keeping. Crews were organized consisting of not more than 20 persons under the supervision of one foreman. The foreman was to keep the time of his crew and give it to the time keeper who checked the crews twice each day. It developed that the time keeper and the foreman were reluctant to report absences. This problem continued throughout the life of the project to a certain extent. However, in many sections time keepers were conscientious and tried to keep time correctly.

Approximately half of the center residents came from the San Joaquin Valley and had been in the Stockton Assembly Center. The other half came from the Los Angeles area and had been in the Santa Anita Assembly Center. From the beginning there was a great deal of jealousy between these groups. It happened that residents of most blocks were either from one or the other Assembly Center and not mixed. This built up a feeling of block isolationism which was difficult to break down.

In the division of the wood cut the blocks supplying the greatest number of employees felt that they should have the most wood. Under the system of uniform distribution to all blocks it was found that sufficient wood for the center was not being cut. Every person felt that he would get the same amount of wood regardless of whether he worked or not. The plan was then adopted of cutting and hauling on a block basis. The residents of the blocks then made a special effort to recruit wood cutters knowing

that all the wood they cut would go in their block. Production immediately increased from 400 to 600%. Many crews worked voluntarily Saturdays and Sundays cutting wood. It took more than a year to break down the sentiment of block isolation. In all cases the most efficient work by the evacuees was on a job where they personally received some benefit.

When the Agriculture Section was organized in January 1943 it was decided that the center residents should have a hand in picking the evacuee personnel. A democratic procedure was used where each block selected representatives at center-wide meetings. Personnel was selected and the agriculture program formulated at such meetings. It was possible to see that the right men were put in key positions but at the same time let the residents feel that they made all selections. This policy was followed throughout the entire program. The evacuees appreciated being given responsibility and in most cases were easy to keep on the right track.

In setting up the staff, equal representation was given to farmers from the Stockton area and the Los Angeles area. The greater part of the Stockton area residents were rural people while the majority of the Los Angeles area residents were urban. In any job requiring physical labor the Stockton group far surpassed the Los Angeles group. The Stockton group felt that the Los Angeles farmers were not as capable as their own men and in general this proved true.

In all work very few appointed supervisors were used. All labor crews were supervised by evacuees. In general, the work was laid out by the staff member with the unit foreman. From there it was carried on by the foreman with occasional checks by the staff member. This proved very satisfactory and more work was accomplished than if an appointed staff member stayed with the crew at all times.

The original plan involved the clearing of wood land and putting it into vegetable crops for center use and for sale. It was originally estimated that 2000 people could be used in farming operations. Since the new land would contain many stumps it was planned to use mules to cultivate the crops. Sixty head of mules were purchased for farming operations and for hauling wood. This proved to be a mistake because only two evacuees were found who would admit having ever worked mules and very few of them consented to learn. As a result, a great deal of time was wasted in hauling wood and very few were ever used on the farm. This caused a shift from using new ground for vegetables to leasing old ground with a more suitable soil. The evacuees wanted to use trucks and tractors in hauling wood. This finally proved more satisfactory and more economical.

My first impression of Japanese labor was good but was not altogether correct. The first train load of evacuees was unloaded late at night. A crew of Negro laborers who were not very efficient took the baggage out of baggage cars and loaded on trucks not to be unloaded until the following morning. Soon after breakfast a request was made for volunteers to assist in unloading the baggage. Some men immediately got in trucks, skillfully backed them into the proper place, and with others immediately started unloading the baggage. The plan was to put each person's baggage in a separate pile so that they might claim it. This proved too slow for them so they began throwing it off calling names out. In a very few minutes all baggage had disappeared and everybody was satisfied. This demonstration of efficient work caused immediate dismissal of all colored labor. There were times later when we wished that colored laborers were available. That again was a case of work which was of immediate benefit to the persons involved.

At the beginning of the project one chief concern was to give employment to everyone who wanted a job. This resulted in having too many people working on certain jobs. In some cases a crew would make it appear that more people were needed in order that other evacuees might be employed. This was the beginning of inefficient labor and developed the attitude that larger numbers were needed. For instance, log saws were purchased for cutting wood. These machines would cut a log rather rapidly and were to be operated by two men. It was never possible to get this job done with less than six or eight evacuees as each man had to be a specialist--one to start the machine, one to hold the wedge, one to drive the wedge, etc. The philosophy of the evacuees was against the use of the term laborer. Any title such as swamper, worker, operator, etc., was to be preferred. In many cases a more dignified title increased a worker's efficiency.

In general, it proved desirable to give a great deal of supervisory responsibility to evacuee foremen. The most noticeable exception was in the motor pool involving truck drivers. Most all residents available for driving trucks were boys and a few young men. In general, they were not dependable and the evacuee supervisors could not control them. It was later found necessary to have an appointed dispatcher who had immediate supervision of all truck drivers. Many of these boys were somewhat radical in their views and felt that they should have personal use of automotive equipment even when appointed personnel did not have.

When the garage was first opened several qualified mechanics were available for work. A system of training apprentices was also put into effect. The appointed shop foreman was responsible for developing this training program which proved valuable throughout

the life of the center. He gave personal attention to training boys who later became finished mechanics. He also developed a feeling of responsibility for tools and equipment. Thus he expected and received a good day's work from most of his employees. Many of these boys relocated after a year's work in the garage and secured positions as mechanics. This was the most outstanding example of on-the-job training.

In the original project justification it was planned that evacuee labor would be used in clearing right of way for all drainage ditches and for clearing out existing drainage canals. A contract for excavating of main ditches was laid in June 1943. An effort was made to get everyone possible clearing the right of way ahead of the contractor who was to excavate with drag lines. Approximately 150 men started on this work in July. It was soon found that they could not come near keeping ahead of the machine. It was necessary to put in working condition all available tractors with bull dozer attachments. Finally the number of laborers available became so few that center labor for clearing right of way was not depended upon to any extent.

In construction, another point of view of the evacuees was illustrated. They had a tendency to loaf on the job in constructing personnel apartments, while on school buildings and other construction for the evacuees themselves, they made excellent progress. In making boxes and crates for people repatriating to Japan or going to Tule Lake they worked many hours overtime. They had a feeling of resentment in any case where the appointed staff members enjoyed conditions or privileges which they did not have. The policy of the administration was to keep the contrast as small as possible. The appointed staff members made some complaints because certain conditions were not made more pleasant. However, this policy was one of the most important in winning the confidence of the evacuees and contributed to the peace and harmony of the center.

The jobs which required the least amount of supervision by staff members and which it was originally felt would give the most trouble was maintenance and utility operation. There again was an illustration of something where the evacuees benefited directly. The evacuee maintenance supervisor organized and supervised water pumpers, sewage pumpers and refrigeration mechanics. Although the number of workers might have been excessive, they provided round-the-clock service with a minimum of complaints. No appointed staff member except the section head was ever involved in the supervision of these operations.

All evacuees had a feeling of disrespect for the Negro race. They were very careful to insist that they were very superior to the Negro in every way. One illustration was brought out in the case of plumbers. It had not been possible to get evacuees to work as plumbers on the personnel apartments. Two Negro plumbers were brought in to do this work. Immediately the evacuee crew started to work and, although they were not experienced plumbers, managed to make an excellent showing as compared to the Negro plumbers.

In March 1943, a program was inaugurated in WRA whereby each center resident was required to execute a questionnaire, or as was generally spoken of "to register". This program was projected on a volunteer basis but at the same time it was expected that every resident would register. A series of educational meetings were held in the various blocks prior to the date of filling out questionnaires. It was explained that the information obtained through the questionnaires would be used in determining whether or not the registrant would be eligible for leave clearance. Many people at that time were wanting to leave the center and were anxious to do anything that would grant them leave clearance. On the other hand a large number had no desire to leave the center at that time and were more or less suspicious of the program. One factor that increased their suspicion was the fact that an Army team was present to process applications of those men wishing to enter the Armed services. It proved to be a mistake that the two programs were carried on simultaneously. The personality of the Commander of the Army Team also added to their confusion.

The questionnaire which was different for aliens, citizen women and citizen men had to do with such personal information as family members, personal history, occupation, activities, travel, dual citizenship, etc. In addition there were two questions, No. 27 and No. 28, for citizens which asked pointedly whether or not the registrant would be willing to serve in the Armed Forces of the United States and whether or not they would deny having any allegiance to the Japanese emperor and government. These two questions proved to be the center of a great deal of contention and misunderstanding during the following months.

This registration being only a few months after coming to the center, most of the residents were suspicious of all government activities. It developed, however, that every center resident filled out a questionnaire. This was accomplished through the use of every possible means which would give the resident proper information and build up his confidence in the program.

Following the registration each questionnaire was analyzed

with regard to the information contained. In each case where the answers to question 27 and 28 were not in the affirmative the person was denied leave clearance. When people were notified that they had been denied leave clearance, many of them immediately wanted to secure leave clearance where before they had not seemed interested. A program was then started whereby each registrant who had been denied leave clearance could have a hearing before certain members of the appointed staff. The purpose of these hearings was to try and determine the sincerity with which the questions were answered and to get a true picture of the registrant's feeling, loyalty, allegiance, etc. The report of the leave clearance committee was sent to a Review Board in Washington. The recommendations were usually upheld and in most cases determined whether the person would be given leave clearance or whether they would be segregated and sent to Tule Lake.

Soon after the first hearings everyone in the center who was involved knew in general what questions would be asked and what their answers should be to assist in getting leave clearance. It developed, however, that in the majority of cases the person would express his true feeling. If he felt that he was loyal to the United States, had no feeling of allegiance to the Japanese government, was willing to serve in the U. S. Army, and was willing to go on record making such statements, in most cases it was recommended that he be given leave clearance. One characteristic that followed throughout all of the hearings was that if a person actually felt any loyalty or allegiance for the Japanese government they usually went on record making such statements. At that time most of such people felt that Japan would win the war. They felt that if they went on record making any statement which would in any way reflect on their loyalty to the Japanese government that they would suffer severe punishment when the Japanese army took over the United States and had access to all records. This fear of possible punishment simplified the leave clearance procedure because it kept the most of them from misrepresenting their true feeling in order to get leave clearance.

Most of those who were denied leave clearance were eventually sent to Tule Lake. In many cases this divided families and separated relatives. However, it had a good effect upon the morale in the center and public relations on the outside. Publicity that disloyal people were being interned created a good impression with the people stressing that the center was not an internment center and that it would eventually be composed only of people who were eligible to relocate. On the other hand there was a tendency for the residents to want to demand more respect and consideration after all of the supposedly disloyal ones were removed.

When the center was first inhabited, each block elected one of their residents to serve as Block Manager which would be their representative in contacting the Project Director and other staff members. In the beginning, each Block Manager was somewhat contentious in wanting to see how much he could get for his particular block. After a few weeks it was possible to gain the confidence of these people and convince them that the residents would get a square deal and that their requests would be recognized only as far as regulations and policies would permit. This group was composed of some of the outstanding leaders in the center and developed into a most helpful organization. They served as the medium for getting and disseminating information to and from the administrative staff. It was only through regular contacts with this group that many of the programs were projected successfully. This was especially true in wood cutting where every effort possible had to be made to get enough wood to heat the center. They were very helpful in recruiting labor for certain specific jobs. In any cases where they were consulted and their suggestions considered with regard to a program, they were very appreciative and tried hard to make it succeed.

Later on a Community Council was organized which was the governing body of the evacuees in the center. Many of the leading Block Managers were elected to the Council and were replaced by persons of less ability. During the last several months, the Community Council was the body which had the most weight and influence and it rendered the greatest service. At the same time the Block Managers lost prestige and were less helpful. There was some feeling among the residents that the Block Managers were working for the Project Director and were not representing the people.

The general peace and harmony which prevailed throughout the life of the project can be attributed largely to the administration gaining the confidence of the center residents through the Block Managers and Community Council.

By the summer of 1944 the sectional jealousy or feeling between people from Stockton and Santa Anita had been largely eliminated. When 2500 evacuees were moved here from Jerome in June, 1944, there was a tendency for a similar feeling to exist between the group originally at Rohwer and the Jerome group. This was particularly true with regard to employment in key positions. This was largely eliminated within a few months due largely to the fact that the people from Jerome were housed throughout the center and were not put together in specific blocks. Had this been followed when the center first opened, the Stockton-Santa Anita rivalry probably would not have existed.

One of the greatest mistakes with regard to property was made when the Jerome center was closed. It was the tendency for each section head at Rohwer to request from Jerome items and quantities in excess of their needs. It was also the tendency of the Jerome staff to want to transfer property to Rohwer because it would not have to be crated and could be hauled direct by trucks. The result was that warehouses were congested with what proved to be surplus supplies and equipment.

Immediately after December 17, 1944, when the closing date for the center was announced, it was planned that we immediately declare surplus everything not needed for the operation of the center in 1945. Many declarations were made in January, 1945, and in each succeeding month. This proved to be very helpful; first, because it avoided a big rush in the last part of the year, and also it enabled the disposal agency to move a lot of property out of the warehouses, therefore supplying more space for final declarations.

During the last few months of relocation there was divided opinion as to whether or not conditions should be made undesirable for center residents in order that they would become disgusted and leave, or whether they should continue to be desirable. The later procedure was followed and it was felt that it was very important in causing the center to close out ahead of time with a minimum of confusion and complaint.

All facilities possible were furnished up to the last. Residents understood why mess halls had to be closed and were very cooperative. All other facilities were maintained and no one was required to move just because the population of his block became low. It is felt that the majority of the people left the center in a good frame of mind which will go a long way toward creating a good feeling toward the way in which evacuation and relocation were handled.

The five weeks following the departure of the last evacuees were devoted to final closing operations. This included the following operations: (a) picking up and warehousing Government property, (b) declaring property surplus, (c) preparing personal final reports, (d) assisting with and checking various section reports, (e) disposition of and reassigning personnel, (f) cleaning up barrack buildings, and (g) cleaning grounds and disposal of rubbish.

My experience as an employee of the War Relocation Authority has been very pleasant. The Administrative staff was a capable and cooperative group. The varied experiences, situations and conditions made work here very interesting. I cannot say, however, that I would welcome another 3½ years of such work.