

Guide to the United States War Relocation Authority. Poston, Arizona Relocation Center Collection

MS 803



compiled by Kathy Umbricht Straka

June 1977

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 803

CREATOR: United States. War Relocation Authority

TITLE: United States War Relocation Authority. Poston, Arizona Relocation Center collection

DATES: 1942-1945

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 6 linear feet

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: Scrapbooks, record books, and memorabilia chiefly relating to the educational and library activities at the Poston Relocation Center, an American concentration camp. Nine scrapbooks made and bound by the students cover topics of academic study as well as their memoirs documenting their accounts of being incarcerated. A printed yearbook is also included.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0803>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0803>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Nathan Van Patten. Transferred from the War Collection, 1944.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

The Poston High School Junior Red Cross Out of the Desert scrapbook in box 4 is available via digital surrogate, and the original scrapbook is restricted due to fragility. Patrons must use the digital surrogate instead of the original scrapbook.

Conditions Governing Use

Copyright status for collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

Preferred Citation

United States War Relocation Authority. Poston, Arizona Relocation Center Collection (MS 803). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Processing Information

This finding aid was revised in 2020 to address outdated or harmful descriptive language. During that revision, description was changed in the summary and scope and contents note for the collection. References to Japanese-American "relocation," and "relocation center" during World War II were removed and replaced with community recommended and currently accepted terminology in 2020, such as "incarcerated" and "American concentration camp." Previous versions of this finding aid may be available. Please contact Manuscripts and Archives for details. If you have questions or comments about these revisions, please contact Manuscripts and Archives or the Archival and Manuscript Description Committee. For more information on reparative archival description at Yale, see [Yale's Statement on Harmful Language in Archival Description](#).

Biographical / Historical

Poston Relocation Center was a War Relocation Authority (WRA) American concentration camp located in Yuma County (now La Paz County) in southwestern Arizona. The camp was established in 1942, and was the largest geographically of the ten American concentration camps operated by the WRA. Poston was built on the Colorado River Indian Reservation, despite the objections of the Tribal Council. Many of the incarcerated placed at Poston were sent directly there, as opposed to being filtered through a temporary detention center first. Poston's incarcerated came largely from farming areas in Central and Southern California, with a combined peak population of 17,000 people. Incarcarees carried out most of the labor required to keep the camp running, including growing a wide variety of crops in addition to raising chickens and hogs. Japanese American workers were instrumental in making the area more livable by clearing, preparing, and irrigating the land. The camp was closed in 1945 following the end of World War II.

Scope and Contents

Scrapbooks, record books, and memorabilia chiefly relating to the educational and library activities at the Poston Relocation Center, an American concentration camp. Nine scrapbooks made and bound by the students cover topics of academic study as well as their memoirs documenting their accounts of being incarcerated. A printed yearbook is also included.

Collection Contents

| | | |
|-------------|---|--------------------|
| b. 1, f. 1 | Christmas cards, hand illustrated | undated |
| b. 1, f. 2 | James Miyasaki, watercolor drawing | undated |
| b. 1, f. 3 | "How to Relocate through a Hostel," mimeographed English | undated |
| b. 1, f. 3 | List of collection contents, typescript | undated |
| b. 1, f. 4 | Junior Red Cross Council, Poston High School, photograph | undated |
| b. 1, f. 5 | Poston library materials | undated |
| | Scrapbooks | |
| b. 1, f. 6 | Sophomore class, Poston High School Primitive Time, scrapbook, handwritten and illustrated | undated |
| b. 1, f. 7 | Prehistoric Times, scrapbook, handwritten | undated |
| b. 1, f. 8 | Roman History and Medieval History, handwritten | undated |
| b. 1, f. 9 | European People in a Period of Revolution, typescript, hand illustrated | undated |
| b. 1, f. 10 | European People of Modern Time, handwritten and illustrated | undated |
| b. 1, f. 11 | People of the World Since 1878, handwritten, teachers' work sheet laid in | undated |
| b. 1, f. 12 | Poston Summer Demonstration Class, Causes of the War, typescript | 1943 September 3 |
| | Yearbook | |
| b. 1, f. 13 | <i>Campus Echoes</i> , Parker Valley High School, Poston, Arizona, yearbook English | 1945 |
| | Record books | |
| | The Novel Hut (Poston Libraries) | |
| b. 1, f. 14 | Adult membership cards | 1942-1945 |
| b. 1, f. 15 | Juvenile membership cards | 1942-1945 |
| b. 1, f. 16 | Unidentified junior membership book | undated |
| b. 1, b. 17 | Unidentified mimeographed book, in Japanese; contains list of Relocation Center leaders | 1944 July 1 |
| | Scrapbooks | |
| b. 2 | Sophomore class, Poston High School, "The American Way of Life," typescript, hand illustrated | 1943 February-June |
| b. 2 | Poston's Japanese library sign | circa 1942-1945 |
| b. 2 | Junior Red Cross, handwritten and illustrated | circa 1944 |

- b. 4 Poston High School Junior Red Cross, Out of the Desert, History and Set-up of Poston, mimeographed, hand illustrated 1943 February-June
[\[Google Drive\] ms_0803_s01_b004](#)
- Scrapbook compiled by Poston High School Junior Red Cross and mailed to another Junior Red Cross chapter outside of Poston as a gesture of friendship.
- The Poston High School Junior Red Cross Out of the Desert scrapbook is available via digital surrogate, and the original scrapbook is restricted due to fragility. Patrons must use the digital surrogate instead of the original scrapbook.
- A copy of this material is available in digital form from Manuscripts and Archives and [online](#).
-
- f. 3 Oversized maps, artwork, and signs
English
-

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Emigration and immigration
Japanese Americans -- Forced removal and internment, 1942-1945
Japanese -- United States
World War, 1939-1945 -- United States

Corporate Body

United States. War Relocation Authority