The Willard Schmidt collection documents some of the administrative duties of Willard Schmidt, the Chief of Internal Security for the War Relocation Authority and the Tule Lake Internment/Segregation Camp. This collection contains administrative records and photos pertaining to the Tule Lake Internment/Segregation center.

Access
The collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation
Willard E. Schmidt Papers, MSS-2007-09-01, San José State University Library Special Collections and Archives.

Processing History
Collection processed and encoded by Russell Rader in 2007.

Organizational History
Willard Schmidt was the National Chief of Internal Security for the War Relocation Authority. In February of 1944 he was assigned to the Tule Lake Internment Center to act as its Chief of Internal Security and to assist in its transformation from an internment center into a segregation camp. Following executive 9066, the War Relocation Authority constructed 11 internment centers between 1942 and 1946 in order to segregate and house approximately 110,000 Japanese-American men, women and children. In 1943 the War Relocation Authority and Selective Service produced a two question "loyalty questionnaire" for Japanese internees to fill out. The questionnaire identified who might be considered appropriate for the armed services or repatriation outside the centers, and who might be considered a possible threat to national security. The questions proved confusing and those who answered "no" to both were removed from their respective internment centers and sent to the Tule Lake high-security segregation camp.

Internal security for the internment centers was maintained by a special police force composed largely of able-bodied evacuee residents and headed by a non-evacuee chief as well as a few non-evacuee assistants. Larger issues of misdemeanors and other similar offenses were ordinarily handled by the Project Director or by a judicial commission made up of evacuee residents. Tule Lake segregation center housed over 18,000 internees between 1942 and 1946. In addition to a heavily fortified perimeter Tule Lake was further isolated by the inclusion of a full battalion of soldiers accompanied by tanks. Tule Lake experienced a turbulent history including strikes, protests and an declaration of martial law which lasted from November 14th, 1943 until October 15, 1943. During martial law, over 350 dissidents were sent to the stockade and 1,200 internees were sent to Department of Justice internment camps.

Related Material

Scope and Content of Collection
This collection documents many aspects of Willard Schmidt's duties as the Chief of Internal Security for the Tule Lake Internment/Segregation Camp from 1943-1945. It contains "release from stockade" requests, Advisory and Co-coordinating committee meeting minutes, various memoranda and reports, photos of internees and officers, as well as copies of internment camp newspapers.

Arrangement
This collection is arranged into two series: Series I. Administrative Papers 1942-1945; Series II. Center Newspapers 1942-1944.
Subjects and Indexing Terms
Japanese Americans -- Evacuation and relocation, 1942-1945
World War, 1939-1945 -- Concentration camps -- Tulelake (Calif.)
Tule Lake Relocation Center
United States -- War Relocation Authority
Schmidt, Willard

Administrative Papers Series I: 1942-1945
Series Scope and Content Summary
The contents of this series contains “release from stockade” requests filed by internees, community leaders and family members; Advisory and Co-coordinating committee meeting minutes relating to the aftermath of the Tule Lake protests; various memoranda and reports; and photos of internees and officers. Of note are the cultural analysis reports published by the Community Analysis Section in Folder 3.

Arrangement
This series is arranged by format.

- box 1, Folder 1 Correspondence: Advisory Committee 1944 February-1944 April
- box 1, Folder 2 Correspondence: Departmental 1943-1944
- box 1, Folder 3 Correspondence: Internee Requests 1943-1944 (bulk 1944)
- box 1, Folder 4 Correspondence: Personal 1944 May 9, 1944 April 17
- box 1, Folder 5 Meeting Minutes 1944 January 10-1944 April 15
- box 1, Folder 6 Center Employment Forms 1943
- box 1, Folder 7 Newspaper Clippings 1943
- box 1, Folder 8 Notes circa 1944
- box 1, Folder 9 Reports: Incident and Officer 1943-1944
- box 1, Folder 10 Reports: Community Analysis Section 1944
- box 1, Folder 11 Photos circa 1942-1945
- box 1, Folder 12 Transfer Orders 1944 January 29
- box 1, Folder 13 Travel Papers 1943

Center Newspapers 1942-1944

Scope and Contents
This series contains copies of the Manzanar Free Press (vol.29 - 53) and two copies of The Newell Star from June 1942.

- Box 2, Folder 1 The Newell Star 1944 June
- Box 2, Folder 2 Manzanar Free Press 1942 September-1942 November