Descriptive Summary
Title: Sylvester (Owen M.) Tule Lake Photograph Collection
Dates: 1942-1943
Collection Number: Consult repository.
Creator: Sylvester, Owen M.
Extent: 1 box.25 linear feet
Repository: California State University, Dominguez Hills Archives and Special Collections
Abstract: This collection contains one box of photographic images taken by Captain Owen M. Sylvester while at Tule Lake Segregation Center during a military occupation as a member of the 772 Military Police Battalion in 1943. Materials include: 32 black-and-white photographs.
Language: Collection material is in English
Access
There are no access restrictions on this collection.
Publication Rights
All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the Director of Archives and Special Collections. Permission for publication is given on behalf of Special Collections as the owner of the physical materials and not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained.
Preferred Citation
[Title of item], Owen M. Sylvester Tule Lake Collection, Courtesy of the Department of Archives and Special Collections. University Library. California State University, Dominguez Hills
Acquisition Information
Library acquisition
Biography
Captain Owen M. Sylvester (1895-unknown) began his military career as a private in Company A, 161st Infantry Regiment of the Washington National Guard, serving in the Mexican Border War from 1915-1917. In 1918, Sylvester transferred to the 2nd Infantry Division and served in the Army of Occupation in France until 1919. Following World War I, Sylvester was promoted to the rank of Captain and commanded the 2nd Battalion, 148th Field Artillery in the Washington National Guard from 1941-1942. Following his training at the Los Angeles Police Academy in 1942, Sylvester was appointed to the 772nd Military Police Battalion as Commander of Company C, where his battalion was assigned to the Boeing bomber plant in Renton Washington from 1942-1943, Tule Lake Segregation Center in 1943, and Fort Washington in 1944. At the end of World War II, Sylvester became a company commander and Provost Marshal at the Naval Air Station in Pasco, Washington. After the War, Sylvester went to Greece as part of the European Recovery Program (ERP) to assist in the rehabilitation of western and southern European economies.
Tule Lake History
On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 which gave the military the authority to exclude any citizen who posed a threat to national security. As a result, approximately 120,000 Japanese-Americans living on the West Coast were removed and incarcerated in concentration camps. The Tule Lake Incarceration Center was the largest of the ten concentration camps with approximately 18,000 prisoners, and was located close to the California-Oregon border near the town of Newell, California and 10 miles south of the town of Tulelake. On February 8, 1943, the War Department and War Relocation Authority (WRA) distributed a questionnaire in order to assess the loyalty of those housed in concentration camps. The questionnaire was difficult and complex, which led to uncertainty and confusion. Failure to complete the questionnaire, as well as questions answered in an unsatisfactory manner caused a great number of incarceratedes to be deemed “disloyal” and sent to Tule Lake Segregation Center- the designated location “disloyal” incarceratedes.
In October 1943, following an agricultural truck accident that resulted in one incarceree death and also left five injured, incarcerees- upset by the events that had transpired, demanded improvement of safety and better compensation for work-related injuries. This ultimately resulted in a workers strike, and a negotiating committee- Daihyo Sha Kai was formed so that they could meet with the center's Director, Raymond Best to outline their grievances and attempt to resolve issues. The response from administration was to fire workers and bring in strikebreakers- “loyal” inmates who were willing to work. Due to growing tension within the camp, Best and WRA National Director Dillion Myer met with the Daihyo Sha Kai on November 1, 1943, but there was no resolution. On November 4th, after noticing large crowds of incarcerees gathering around administrative buildings, Best responded by calling in the Army. When incarcerees attempted to go to work the following day, they were met with vehicles armed with machine guns and tear gas was dispersed. On November 14th 1943, Best declared martial law and Tule Lake became an armed camp with a curfew for incarcerees and barrack-to-barrack searches. Over 200 incarcerees including members of the Daihyo Sha Kai were apprehended and detained in a makeshift stockade. The stockade was isolated from the rest of the center and was surrounded by fences and four guard towers within a 250 by 350 foot area. The arrests continued until over 350 incarcerees were imprisoned in the stockade. In early January 1944, Tule Lake incarcerees voted to end the protest and on January 15, 1944 Best lifted martial law, ending military control of Tule Lake.

Scope and Content
The Owen M. Sylvester Tule Lake Photograph Collection (1942-1943) contains 32 black-and-white photographs taken by Sylvester at Tule Lake. The majority of the photographs were taken inside the Tule Lake Segregation Center in Newell, California in November 1943 and feature scenes containing housing quarters, the stockade area, the interior of army vehicles, imprisoned Japanese-Americans, members of the 772nd Military Police Battalion, and soldiers with guns. Also included are photographs depicting scenery from directly outside of the camp, Sylvester’s battalion, soldiers in route to Tule Lake, and soldier stations in the hills adjacent to the Tule Lake Segregation Center. A few photographs were taken in 1942 mostly in Oregon and document the Battalion before they traveled to Tule Lake, and also include some of the names of the members of the Battalion. Photographs contain captions possibly written by Sylvester.

Arrangement
Arranged in 1 box.

Subjects
Concentration camps--United States
Japanese Americans--Pacific States--History--20th century
Japanese Americans
Japanese Americans—California
Tule Lake Relocation Center (Calif.)--1940-1950
Japanese Americans -- Evacuation and relocation, 1942-1945
World War, 1939-1945 – California
Martial law--United States.

Geographic Areas
Newell(Calif.)
Tulelake (Calif.)

Related Material
This collection is part of the California State University Japanese American Digitization Project. For related materials please consult: http://csujad.com
1 Box Owen M. Sylvester Tule Lake Photograph Collection

Physical Description: .25 linear ft, 1 box

Scope and Content Note

The Owen M. Sylvester Tule Lake Photograph Collection (1942-1943, undated) contains 32 black-and-white photographs taken by Sylvester at Tule Lake. The majority of the photographs were taken inside the Tule Lake Segregation Center in Newell, California in November 1943 and feature scenes containing housing quarters, the stockade area, the interior of army vehicles, imprisoned Japanese-Americans, members of the 772nd Military Police Battalion, and soldiers with guns. Also included are photographs depicting scenery from directly outside of the camp, Sylvester’s battalion, soldiers in route to Tule Lake, and soldier stations in the hills adjacent to the Tule Lake Segregation Center. A few photographs were taken in 1942 mostly in Oregon and document the Battalion before they traveled to Tule Lake, and also include some of the names of the members of the Battalion. Photographs contain captions possibly written by Sylvester.

Photograph 1 Caption on back of photograph reads, “Jap girl fleeing when about to snap picture. Took [some] anyway. Other girl got out of sight in time”

Note
For full record see:
http://cdm16855.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16855coll4/id/7053

Photograph 2 Caption on back of photograph reads, “Major ______ + social worker during disturbance in Jap area. ___2 armed E.M.E. _____standing by for possible difficulty”

Note
For full record see:
http://cdm16855.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16855coll4/id/7054

Photograph 3 Caption on back of photograph reads, “Evacuating loyal Japs (500 ___ of 16,000) whose lives were in danger. They were originally brought in when disloyal refused to harvest crop at Tulelake Nov. 43”

Note
For full record see:
http://cdm16855.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16855coll4/id/7055

Photograph 4 Caption on back of photograph reads, “H.J.W. Manning 30 caliber gun on mounted car (armored) patrolling Jap streets during disturbance during Nov 43 at Tulelake Calif Capt. ______ sitting in background”

Note
For full record see:

Photograph 5 Caption on back of photograph reads, “View from hill tops and surrounding Tulelake Camp in Calif. (43)”

Note
For full record see:
http://cdm16855.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16855coll4/id/7057

Photograph 6 Caption on back of photograph reads, “Jap inmates [sifting] to collect stones to make necklaces. Tulelake Calif (Nov 43)”

Note
For full record see:

Consult repository.
Photograph 7 Caption on back of photograph reads, “Cross erected by Christian Japs at highest peak in Nov 43 E camp in foreground”
Note
For full record see:
http://cdm16855.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16855coll4/id/7026

Photograph 8 Caption on back of photograph reads, “Inscription at top of highest peak by Japs during Christian gathering in Aug 43. Japs inscription is only date of gathering”
Note
For full record see:
http://cdm16855.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16855coll4/id/7023

Photograph 9 Caption on back of photograph reads, “Another inscription by Japs at peak overlooking camp Tulelake made by Christian Japs stationed there”
Note
For full record see:
http://cdm16855.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16855coll4/id/7028

Photograph 10 Caption on back of photograph reads, “Japs walking on their streets during disturbance. Nov 43. Tulelake Calif”
Note
For full record see:

Photograph 11 Caption on back of photograph reads, “All the Japs that quickly gathered as soon as family difficulty took place. They were quickly dispersed”
Note
For full record:

Photograph 12 Caption on back of photograph reads, “H.J.W. lying in cave of highest peak overlooking Camp Tulelake glancing [through] glasses pointed toward Jap camp”
Note
For full record see:
http://cdm16855.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16855coll4/id/7030

Photograph 13 Caption on back of photograph reads, “H.J.W. viewing surrounding area [with] field glasses overlooking Tulelake Jap internment camp in California”
Note
For full record see:
http://cdm16855.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16855coll4/id/7031

Photograph 14 Caption on front of photograph reads, “Jap Trouble- Tulelake”
Note
For full record:

Photograph 15 Caption on back of photograph reads, “Cruising along streets of Camp Tulelake during Jap disturbance in Nov. 43”
Note
For full record see:
Photograph 16 Caption on back of photograph reads, “Japs just about to enter stockade under guard”

Note
For full record see:

Photograph 17 Caption on back of photograph reads, “Disloyal Japs who were [cuffed] up when they first refused to answer inquires of [army] questioning. Leaving [them back] to stockade under guard”

Note
For full record see:
http://cdm16855.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16855coll4/id/7033

Photograph 18 Caption on back of photograph reads, “Tulelake Calif. E.M.E.___ gun guarding Jap (disloyal) who threatened loyal family (his) ___ they left him”

Note
For full record see:

Photograph 19 Caption on front of photograph reads, “Jap quarters- Tullelake”

Note
For full record see:
http://cdm16855.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16855coll4/id/7036

Photograph 20 Caption on front of photograph reads, “On way to Tullelake Nov. 43”

Note
For full record see:

Photograph 21 Caption on front of photograph reads, “On way to Tullelake Nov 43”

Note
For full record see:

Photograph 22 Caption on front of photograph reads, “Parked for Lunch Nov 43”

Note
For full record see:
http://cdm16855.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16855coll4/id/7039

Photograph 23 Caption on front of photograph reads, “Tullelake”

Note
For full record see:

Photograph 24 Caption on front of photograph reads, “Town Patrol”

Note
For full record see:
http://cdm16855.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16855coll4/id/7044

Photograph 25 No inscription

Note
For full record see:
http://cdm16855.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16855coll4/id/7045
Photograph 26 **Caption on front of photograph reads, “11/15/42 Crescent Lake Oregon Conklin”**

Note
For full record see:
http://cdm16855.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16855coll4/id/7046

Photograph 27 **Caption on back of photograph reads, “Rogers Beeson Ford”**

Note
For full record see:

Photograph 28 **Caption on front of photograph reads, “Sontag”**

Note
For full record see:

Photograph 29 **Caption on front of photograph reads, “Beer Bust – Nov 43”**

Note
For full record see:
http://cdm16855.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16855coll4/id/7048

Photograph 30 **Caption on front of photograph reads, “January 1943” Caption on back of photograph reads, “Sgt. Mallman 2/1/43”**

Note
For full record see:

Photograph 31 **Caption on back of photograph reads, “Cpt. Seitz 2/1/43”**

Note
For full record see:
http://cdm16855.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16855coll4/id/7051

Photograph 32 **Caption on front of photograph reads, “Cover the Doorway” Caption on back of photograph reads, “Pte Babbs 2/1/43”**

Note
For full record see: