The “Hood River Incident”

Gaining Understanding Through Analyzing Primary Source Documents

Lesson Plan & Student Materials
Grade Levels: 9-12
The "Hood River Incident" Lesson Plans | Grades 9-12
Japanese American Museum of Oregon | jamo.org

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elissa@jamo.org
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The “Hood River Incident” - Gaining Understanding Through Analyzing Primary Source Documents

Grade Levels: 9-12

Length of Lesson: Two 90-minute class periods

Educator Background Information:
This lesson pivots around a single moment - In November of 1944, American Legion Post 22 in Hood River, Oregon voted to remove the names of 16 Nisei (second-generation Japanese Americans) soldiers from the public Honor Roll billboard listing all the service members from Hood River County. This decision came after decades of escalating anti-Japanese racism and legislation in Hood River (and nationwide) and was followed by further organized attempts to exclude and limit the rights of Japanese Americans upon returning home. You can read more about the Hood River Incident here.

Linda Tamura is Professor Emerita of Education, Willamette University in Salem, Oregon. She is a Sansei (third generation Japanese American) and daughter of a World War II veteran. She grew up on an orchard in Hood River, Oregon, has written two books (Nisei Soldiers Break Their Silence and Hood River Issei), and co-curated the exhibition What If Heroes Were Not Welcome Home? which uses first-hand accounts, photos, letters, and historical documents to show how wartime events brought national notoriety to the small community of Hood River. The video towards the end of the lesson is a presentation Linda gave about the history of Japanese Americans in Hood River.

NOTE: This lesson should not be students’ first exposure to Japanese American history. Before teaching this lesson, ensure students have at least a broad understanding of the major events in the history of the Japanese American community. Here are some resources that may be helpful:
   a. Densho: Introduction to WWII Incarceration
   b. Facing History & Ourselves: Bearing Witness to Japanese American Incarceration
   c. Betrayed Film Educational Resources
   d. National Veterans Network Educational Resources
   e. BrainPop: Japanese American Incarceration
Lesson Objectives:

● Students will analyze primary source documents including newspaper articles, letters, editorials, advertisements, and notices.

● Students will analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information to construct an account of historical events connected to the Japanese American experience in Hood River, Oregon pre- and post WWII.

● Students will make inferences about the short and long term effects of these events and evaluate the outcomes.

Materials:

● Timeline Cards

● Primary Source Documents

● Graphic Organizers

● Optional: Closing Handout

● Tape

● Markers/Pens/Pencils

● Post-it Notes or Note Paper

● Computer & Projector (for watching video)

Relevant Vocabulary:

● **Nikkei** (nee-kay) - People of Japanese descent who live outside of Japan.

● **Issei** (ee-say) - First generation. The generation of Japanese who emigrated to the United States.


● **Alien** - A foreigner, especially one who is not a naturalized citizen of the country where they live.

● **100th Infantry Battalion** - A segregated Japanese American unit formed in Hawaii prior to the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

● **442nd Regimental Combat Team** - A segregated unit of Japanese American soldiers in WWII who served predominantly in Europe. They remain the most highly decorated unit for its size in all of US military history.
• **Military Intelligence Service** - A US military unit in WWII responsible for translating and interpreting documents, interrogating prisoners, and communicating with civilians. Nisei who could speak Japanese were stationed in the Pacific during WWII.

• **American Legion** - an organization of US wartime veterans. It was started in 1919 to support WWI veterans and has posts all across the country. They became (and remain) a politically influential non-profit organization, lobbying on behalf of service members and veterans.

**Preparation Beforehand:**
1. Plan effective groupings - partners/triads for your class.
2. Print primary sources, ensuring sufficient copies for the number of groups in your class. **Note:** Some pages are intentionally left blank in the PDF - This is so you can print them double-sided.
   a. **Trigger Warning:** Students will encounter the racial slur “Japs” in some of the primary sources. Educators should review the history of this term and how it was widely used in the media to spread anti-Japanese sentiment.
3. Familiarize yourself with each of the primary sources so that you will be able to support students in engaging with them deeply and meaningfully.
4. Print sufficient copies of the Primary Source Analysis graphic organizer - one per group.
5. Print timeline and cut apart, including blank cards.
6. If skipping Setting the Stage Activity, tape up the timeline on the board for students to reference.
7. Print sufficient copies of the Closing Handout if you plan to use it - one per student.

**Optional** Setting the Stage Activity Directions:
This activity can serve as a quick review of dates and events that you have already covered in class.

1. Hand each student one event from the timeline and have all the timeline dates spread out on a table in your room.
2. Have each student find the date that corresponds with their event and stand in chronological order. Collaboration encouraged!
3. Once all events and dates have been matched up correctly, tape the finished timeline to the board/wall so students can refer to it throughout the lesson.
Main Lesson Directions:

1. After familiarizing students with the timeline, let them know that they will be working to analyze a primary source document from a moment within this timeframe. They won’t have much context about it beforehand, so they will need to look closely at the details to understand it as much as possible.

2. Give students a heads up about the content of the lesson - “From the learning you’ve done in class and even just by looking at the timeline today, you can tell that there was escalating anti-Japanese racism in the years leading up to WWII, which continued during the war, and after the war ended. Some of the documents we will analyze today contain words and ideas that you may find upsetting. The inclusion of these documents is to give insight into the realities of the Japanese American experience at the time. Take care of yourselves as needed.”

3. Give students some time to do a gallery walk of all of the documents. Place the documents around the room and have students rotate through and examine each one briefly, writing their thoughts or questions on post-it notes or on poster paper as they go.

4. After a brief introductory examination of all the documents, introduce the graphic organizer and how to use it. Students will need to read the document carefully and record what they observe and interpret about their assigned document.

5. Group students into pairs or triads, hand out one primary source document and one graphic organizer to each team, and start the work time.

6. Once the work time is up, have each group create a timeline marker for their event that tells the date, their one sentence summary, and why they think it was written.

7. Facilitate a whole group share out of each primary source document. Have each group place their event on the timeline as they share.

8. Facilitate a class discussion about the documents. Questions you might pose to your students include:
   ○ How are all of these documents connected to each other?
   ○ What story do these documents tell?
   ○ What might the short & long term effects of these events have been?
   ○ How do these documents add to your understanding of this time period?
   ○ How are the concepts of recognition and justice connected?

9. Add to the context that students have constructed by learning more about the “Hood River Incident” and its lasting legacy in the community.
Option 1: Watch this presentation from Linda Tamura (start at the 5:36 mark and end around the 41:35 mark): [https://youtu.be/xPbL_x4yXqE?t=335](https://youtu.be/xPbL_x4yXqE?t=335)

Option 2: Pass out and have students read the Closing Handout which will reveal the full story and the effects upon the community.

10. Assessment - Give students time to reflect on their learning with a written response:

- Based upon what we have covered over the course of this lesson, please share your insights about the following prompts, giving evidence to support your claims:
  
  i. How do laws affect a community? How do the actions of individuals or organizations affect a community?
  
  ii. How can people take action to challenge discriminatory laws or decisions?
  
  iii. How are the concepts of recognition and justice connected?
  
  iv. What is our duty to address past and present wrongs?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>EVENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 26, 1790</td>
<td>The Naturalization Act of 1790 states, “any alien, being a free white person who shall have resided within the limits and under the jurisdiction of the United States for a term of two years, may be admitted to become a citizen thereof.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>First Japanese immigrants (Issei) settle in Oregon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 6, 1882</td>
<td>The Chinese Exclusion Act is signed into law, ending Chinese immigration for the next 60 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 27, 1894</td>
<td>A U.S. district court rules that Japanese immigrants cannot become citizens because they are not &quot;a free white person&quot; as the Naturalization Act of 1790 requires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 14, 1905</td>
<td>The Asiatic Exclusion League was formed in San Francisco. In attendance are labor leaders and European immigrants, marking the first organized effort of the anti-Japanese movement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 15, 1907</td>
<td>The Gentleman’s Agreement is signed, ending the migration of Japanese laborers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>Oregon passes its first Alien Land Law, prohibiting non-citizens from owning or leasing land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Congress passes the Immigration Act of 1924, essentially ending all immigration from Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 7, 1941</td>
<td>Japan bombs U.S. ships and planes at the Pearl Harbor military base in Hawaii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 8, 1941</td>
<td>The U.S. declares war on the Empire of Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 5, 1942</td>
<td>All Japanese American selective service registrants are reclassified as 4-C Enemy Aliens and prohibited from serving in the US military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 19, 1942</td>
<td>President Roosevelt signs Executive Order 9066, authorizing forced removal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1, 1942</td>
<td>16 “Assembly Centers” are opened to detain Japanese Americans until the more permanent incarceration camps are completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1942</td>
<td>The first of 108 Civilian Exclusion Orders go into effect, giving Japanese Americans one week to prepare for removal. A curfew order goes into effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 28, 1942</td>
<td>Minoru Yasui surrenders himself for arrest in Portland to test the constitutionality of the curfew order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1942</td>
<td>Japanese Americans begin to be transferred to permanent WRA incarceration facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 16, 1942</td>
<td>University of Washington student Gordon Hirabayashi turns himself in to the authorities refusing to submit to the imprisonment on Constitutional grounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1943</td>
<td>The government issues a “Loyalty Questionnaire” to all adult incarcerees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1, 1943</td>
<td>The War Department announces the formation of a segregated unit of Japanese American soldiers, and calls for volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1, 1943</td>
<td>10,000 Japanese American men volunteer for the armed services from Hawaii. 1,200 volunteer out of the camps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1, 1944</td>
<td>The War Department imposes the draft on Japanese American men, including those incarcerated in the camps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 7, 1945</td>
<td>Germany surrenders, ending the war in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 6, 1945</td>
<td>The U.S. drops the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Three days later, a second bomb is dropped on Nagasaki. Japan surrenders on August 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 1945</td>
<td>The incarceration camps begin to close. Japanese Americans are given $25 and a train ticket to the city of their choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1, 1952</td>
<td>McCarran-Walter Act becomes law. Among other effects, this bill allows Japanese immigrants to become naturalized U.S. citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1, 1980</td>
<td>The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians is established calling to investigate the constitutionality of Executive Order 9066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1, 1983</td>
<td>After hearing over 750 testimonies, the CWRIC issues a report stating that the forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans had been the result of “wartime hysteria, racial prejudice, and a failure of political leadership”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-1988</td>
<td>The wartime convictions of Gordon Hirabayashi, Minoru Yasui, and Fred Korematsu (the three men who protested the curfew and/or incarceration orders) are vacated on the basis of newly discovered evidence that the U.S. military lied to the Supreme Court in the original proceedings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>August 10, 1988</strong></td>
<td>President Ronald Reagan signs HR 442 into law. It acknowledges that the incarceration of more than 110,000 individuals of Japanese descent was unjust, and offers an apology and reparation payments of $20,000 to each person incarcerated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BLANK CARDS BELOW</strong></td>
<td><strong>FOR STUDENT USE</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Primary Source Documents Analysis Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title/Caption:</td>
<td>Why did the author write this document?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location/Date:</td>
<td>Write down a quote from the document that supports your answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is the author?</td>
<td>What was happening at the time in history this document was created?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select <strong>three</strong> significant words or phrases from the document:</td>
<td>What more do you want to know about? What questions do you have?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What biases or stereotypes do you see in the document?</td>
<td>What might the short or long term effects of this document have been?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a one-sentence summary of the document:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Primary Source Documents in Chronological Order

1. Reverend Isaac Inouye, Issei Pledge, Jan. 8, 1942, Courtesy of the Oregon Historical Society
6. 1st Sgt. Johnny Wakamatsu letter, Jan. 6, 1945
8. Kenneth A. Bateman letter, Feb. 1945
12. Resolution No: 001-2022, Hood River Post 22, Oct. 5, 2022

Note: Some pages are intentionally left blank in the PDF - This is so you can print them double-sided.
January 3, 1942

The Honorable Charles A. Sprague
Governor, State of Oregon
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, Oregon

Dear Sir:

Please accept our sincere appreciation for the tolerance shown us during these difficult days with the following resolution drawn by Japanese resident nationals in Hood River county, Oregon.

Very truly yours,

Rev. Isaac Inouye

P.S. Just I have learned that two more boys selectees off for U.S. Army these few days to be inducted in the U.S. armed forces, so there are 16 boys in the army!

Isaac Inouye
OUR PLEDGE

WE, the permanent Japanese resident nationals
in this county of Hood River, do express to you and through
you to the federal, state and local officials, and to the
American people at large, our heartfelt and sincere
gratitude for the generous treatment accorded us by our
courteous American friends. We are grateful for the many
kindnesses and sympathies expressed to us.

Most of the alien Japanese residents are devoted
to this great Democratic America though we are not eligible
for citizenship. We love this country so much that we
wish to live here permanently, obeying American laws,
policies, and administration always and especially during
the present situation; and to cooperate whole heartedly,
endeavoring to prove our destinies common with that of the
American public.

The local Japanese natives have signed with the
local civilian defense committee to volunteer for whatever
purposes called upon. Fourteen of our American born boys
of Japanese ancestry have answered the call to duty with
the United States army. We hope there will be further
opportunities to prove our mettle as good, law abiding na-
tionals, maintaining the good will of our American neighbors.

May we pledge our loyalty to the Stars and Stripes
just as do our children who are patriotic American citi-
zens, with our prayer for a more peaceful kingdom on earth,
which is the divine bequest of the American people for
future generations.

Very respectfully yours,

This pledge is signed under oath, the violation of which shall result in breach of friendly relations in the community.

Signed this 8th of January, 1942.

[Signatures]

[Names]
O. Watanabe, Mrs. R. Watanabe, S. Endow
Nobue Hiranuma, H. Nakagawa, Tai Endow
K. Tamura, Mrs. M. Tamura, R. Tanimoto
Mrs. T. Tanimoto, K. Shitara, Mrs. Shitara
G. Yamazaki, Mrs. Hori, Mrs. Y. Yamazaki
R. Fujimoto, Mrs. R. Fujimoto
Censuring Hood River Post

HAMMOND, Dec. 7.—To the Editor—The Hood River post of the American Legion recently voted to expunge from its honor roll the names of 18 Americans of Japanese ancestry from the Hood River area who are now fighting for their and our country with the Allied armies in Italy. This action is a satire upon the principles and ideals the Legion is supposed to stand for. Why not expunge also all Americans of German or Italian ancestry? If the Legion, as we service men have heard, wants the veterans of this war to join its organization, let it be careful how it discriminates against any racial minority, particularly with such an outrageous action as this of the Hood River post. Nominations should now be in order for a motion to expunge from the American Legion the members of Hood River post for their demonstration of total lack of comprehension of what constitutes tolerance and fair play. If the Legion through its national organization does not do something about this Hood River outfit, it can expect little support from returning veterans of this war.

W. H. Johnson, Clarence F. Buchholz,
Members of U. S. Coast Guard.
Statement to Returning JAPANESE

Under the War Department’s recent ruling you will soon be permitted to return to this county.

FOR YOUR OWN BEST INTERESTS, WE URGE YOU NOT TO RETURN.

Certain incidents have already occurred that indicate the temper of the citizens of this county.

Public records show that there are about 25 or 30 families, out of some 600 Japanese, who have not already sold their property in Hood River County. We strongly urge these to dispose of their holdings.

If you desire assistance from this Post in disposing of your land, we pledge ourselves to see that you get a square deal.

If you do return, we also pledge that, to the best of our ability, we will uphold law and order, and will countenance no violence.

In this program we ask the support of the citizens of this County.

HOOD RIVER POST NO. 22.
American Legion,
Department of Oregon.
1254 No. Cedar St,
Glendale, T. Cal., Jan. 3/1945.

American Legion,
Hood River, Oregon.

Gentlemen,

Thank goodness you are on to the little sly brown devilish hypocrites. It took us 300 years to take this country away from the Indians. But the brown devils will take it away from us in fifty years by infiltration unless the constitution is amended to deport every one of them.

Read Life magazine Dec 19th page 42 if you want to know more what a Jap is.

Nobody wants them on this continent except large land owners who are backed by------ who and a few idle rich who want them for servants.

They are pagan savages. They were the original isolationists and only introduced to the modern world because they sought tortured and murdered shipwrecked mariners.

They ought to be shoved back where they originated and their railroads removed thus reducing them to a 5th rate power and agrarian nation.

If we want to change the constitution whose damn business is it. They changed it in sixty days to put beer back on the market. Why not do it again to head off this heinous menace.

With kindest regards,

yours truly,

N.K. SMITH
this as a move by these Legionnaires to get good land cheap.

Our chief problem, is how the Japanese can return to their homes peacefully, whether or not the Japanese are now ready to risk their lives, and if the Japanese members kill or disturb them the Army will not hesitate to declare martial law there and jail the trouble makers. In November, I met the Japanese families who had been permitted to return, one to a village near Bonneville Dam and the other across the river.

At present Hood River is in first place as the chief opponent of the Army policy and will receive first attention. We do not want riots, but we do want fair and just treatment for our people. On January 10, here at San Francisco a very important conference will be held by all concerned with these matters before that date I would like to hear from you as to the attitude of the church and school people and other organizations, also as to their comparative strength.

"Hoping that 1945 may be the year of Victory in Europe, the Orient and Hood River".

From One Whose Name Was Removed.

To the Editor: I am glad to have received the Hood River News as regularly as it has been possible. The last one I read was the one that had been passed on to me by Glenn Sutherland, whom I met on this island a few months ago. We appreciate the consideration that may. go into providing our confused ego with the news we cherish the most from day to day.

It was to my greatest surprise, over the past week, to read an article which to me was the most cruel gesture that an American Legion post can display. I have been fortunate enough to have joined the services in 1941 and have been one of the sixteen names unbelievably obliterated from the Legion honor roll in Hood River. Having had the privilege of being reared and educated here, it is with unlimited pride that I call Hood River my home town, as do hundreds of others who have been called away to serve our country.

In a September issue of the News I read with satisfaction that I had been given a place on that honor roll. Now I would like to have a clearer explanation of why these names were removed from the honor roll by the Legion. To me, it meant more than just an inscription on a board—I regarded it as only one of the ideals this democracy stands for, and for which we are striving. Hoping that I have made my opinion clear, yours truly, Sgt. T. Asal, on an island near New Guinea.

When used properly, chains can prolong the life of vital heavy-duty, automobile tires, while careless use of chains will damage tires as much as ice and snow, the Ninth Service Command ordnance officer warns.

Chicago Sun in Hood River News, Jan. 5, 1945
France
6 Jan 45

American Legion Post
Kootenai, Idaho

Sir,

Yes, I believe my name as well as my brother's and friends have been removed from the so-called roll of honor.

Remember, we did not volunteer unless we thought that as Americans it was our duty. Many have died believing in Liberty, equality, and the premise of Democracy. Many more are caged in various hospitals here in France, England, and Germany.

Yours truly,

[Signature]
and back then in the States.
Your actions and policies are not American, they do not give me the treatment of loyal American soldiers.
Really it is too bad that the hero Red Legion men must follow such un-American ideals. I regret that I was raised and educated in such an unimpartial community with such narrow-minded so-called Americans.

Respectfully yours,

Lt. J. Henry McCombs
2324 Base Comber A
American Legion Post
Hood River, Oregon

Sirs:

Yes, I believe my name as well as my brothers & friends have been removed from the so-called roll of honor.

Remember, we did not volunteer unless we thought that as Americans it was our duty. Many have died believing in Liberty, equality & the pursuit of Happiness. Many more are crippled in various hospitals here in France, England, and back there in the states.

Your actions and policies are not American, they do not give us the treatment of loyal American Soldiers.

Really it is too bad that the Hood River Legion Post must follow such UnAmerican Ideals. I regret that I was raised and educated in such an unjust community with such narrow-minded so-called Americans.

Disgustedly yours,

1st Sgt Johnny Y Wakamatsu
2320 Eng, Combat Co.

France
6 Jan 45
Open Home To Nisei Soldiers

Joe and June Eaton Haviland this week announced that their country home, one and one-half miles west of Hood River on the Columbia river highway, will, from now on, be open to any Japanese-American soldier, home on furlough.

In making the announcement, Mr. and Mrs. Haviland state that friendship, good food, a warm bed and peaceful atmosphere will be made available to any of these Nisei soldiers home on furlough, as a return for their loyalty to our country in serving in the army. They want these boys to realize that they have friends who appreciate their service to their and our country.

The home will be open at any time and it will be unnecessary to telephone before coming, they state.
This is an Editorial clipped from the Milwaukee Journal of February 19, 1945. I hope that you have received enough of the same sort of comment and clippings to make you aware of the fact that it is your duty to publicly "eat crow" and see to it that this injustice is rectified posthumously. This man deserves his place on your honor roll. Your shame at having deserted American democracy deserves whatever humiliation a readjustment of your honor roll would cause. There are fifteen others to whom it is not too late to apologize.

No Gold Star at Hood River

There will be no gold star on the honor roll at Hood River, Ore., for Frank T. Hachiya. Frank was an American of Japanese ancestry. His was one of the 16 names which the Hood River American Legion post caused to be removed from the honor roll, because the local legionnaires were not American enough to tolerate other Americans whose ancestors happened to come from across the western instead of the eastern seas.

Frank Hachiya wasn't "good enough" for Hood River, but he was a good enough American soldier to volunteer Dec. 30 on Leyte for a dangerous mission to scout enemy positions. He was a good enough American so that most of the men in his regiment volunteered to give him blood transfusions trying to save his life after a Jap sniper's bullet went through his abdomen and liver.

Frank died Jan. 3 in far away Leyte fighting for his, and our, country—for the whole nation, including Hood River, which won't have his name on its honor roll. That's why there'll be no gold star for Frank in this Oregon town, where hate and prejudice are held in higher esteem than a man who gives his life for his country.

From a believer in democracy's ability to correct its own errors,

Sincerely,

Kenneth A. Bateman

Feb. 1945
Japs Are Not Wanted in Hood River

You Japs, listed on this page, have been told by some that you would be welcome back in Hood River. This is not true, and this is the best time you will ever have to dispose of your property.

The patients below, were circulated in different districts of the county and represent a cross-section of the sentiment. If you look over the list you will probably find neighbors whom you would not think might appear on a list that is not for themselves. You will find it interesting to see these people. If you do not list their name this week, keep watching until you find them. You may be a little surprised to find out how many there are.

This seems to be a local problem. However, and there are many more in the valley. I have been told that there are only a few people in the valley who are against the idea. I have been told that the idea is not as popular as in the United States. Our farms and the farms of our neighbors are full of farm families. Can any good American farmer or his wife be willing to lose their farm?

Opposite is a map showing the "Rats," property, totally surrounded by Japs. (Sections 22 and 23, Nw 1/4 1st, Range 61 East, Willamette Meridian 1911-2017.)

This is the "SQUEEZE METHOD" I observed while County Clerk.

A recent critical report that some of the Japs were willing to take the job as the Supreme Court refused to hear the case of the Japs. The Supreme Court decision was based on the fact that the Japs are not being allowed to work on farms. This is a major advantage for the farmers who want to sell their farms.

I wish they would allow us to live and work in this country. We are not a threat to you. We are not a threat to the farmers. We are not a threat to the country. We are not a threat to the government. We are not a threat to the people. We are not a threat to the land. We are not a threat to the industry. We are not a threat to the economy. We are not a threat to the future of this country. We are not a threat to the future of this country. We are not a threat to the future of this country. We are not a threat to the future of this country. We are not a threat to the future of this country.

Geo. Sheppard
A. L. Padfield
Geo. P. Cay
Marietta Poerte
Ed Moore
W. B. Rawson
Metoe Goe
O. J. Martin
Lee Allen
Frank E. Gerking
William H. Walker
Herbert Pernell
Harry E. Burgess
Arvo Anderson
Ralph C. Casonby
Carl D. Newman
C. H. Hicken
Oscar Mauren
Olen W. Allen
Thomas Kasten
N. H. Crainhe
K. W. Green

J. R. Down
Verna Tumnka
John Rezar
W. L. Pownall
E. Clark
Lucia Clark
Alvin Coppard
J. W. May
Zilsa J. Kiser
Lulu May Miller
J. E. Smith
Dave Kidder
Floyd Smith
Geo. Baurer
E. B. Hegg
Geo. Blum
Ray Brehm
W. J. Dodd
J. H. Bailey
M. B. Stadler
Gertrude Gravis
Margaret Allright

Mabel Williams
Gertrude Bloom
Mrs. Carroll Mann
Lovisa Huddles
Abigail D. Tress
Mrs. Lena Pog
N. N. Maye
Della Z. Allen
Isaie Deos
Albert Pinedo
E. E. Buckley
L. C. Drake
Lissie Cameron
Geo. Baurer
Rex Blum
H. W. Gibson
F. E. Cline
H. E. Slade
Donald D. McCann
Richard A. Borden
Gertrude Gravis
L. R. Henry

Isabel Gilbertson
Ethel Burton
M. J. Fales Jr.
Harold Brown
M. C. Pence
Geoge M. Smith
E. G. Wilks
W. O. Smith
W. O. Burgess
Gertrude O. Weigert
Herman E. Weyg
Emile H. G. Dill
E. S. Nichols
D. F. Handley
Sidney M. Borden
Elmer M. Bloedoe
Oswald Williams

H. E. Wright
E. F. Tennyson
Frank Clemmons
B. Clemmons
G. R. Thor
J. M. Thompson
Barnie Bowerman
Mrs. Gerald L. Lyons
T. K. Watson
M. N. Miller
Deer Marlin
Minnie Peterson
John Given
Wally Wells
Ed Bramble
Ira E. Johnson
E. S. Nichols
Vic Burgess
Porter W. Norton

Following is a list of Japs who either owned or controlled land in Hood River county prior to Pearl Harbor, showing number of acres controlled in each farm. Next week we will try and place a check mark in front of each name sold since Pearl Harbor. Our ultimate aim will be to get a check in front of each and every name.

Geo. Kimoto
H. Kazuo
F. S. Koshi
Sue Tsukasa
E. Suzuki
R. Kato
Harry Nakamura
H. Nakamura
O. F. Hoshino
H. H. Nakamura
W. Koyama
Mrs. M. Nakama
Mrs. M. Nakama
M. Noji
M. Noji
Sato
K. Norimatsu
T. Hirata
S. Sato
Mrs. Masato Nakama
K. Inagaki
T. Y. Hata
S. Aoki
Masumi Asai
H. A. Tsubota
T. T. Akiyama
T. S. Akiyama
U. S. Akiyama
George Akiyama
Kaku Akiyama
T. Suehara
T. Suehara
T. Suehara
T. Suehara
Sho Endo
C. Fukui
N. Namada
Kensuke Tsukamatsu
T. Hirata
T. Masui
Tom Inukai
M. Inukai
James Inouye
F. Ito
I. Inukai
Katsuo Inukai
K. Kaizawa
Harley Y. Inukai
N. Kaikawa
N. Koizumi
Yoshio Kawakami
M. Kawakami
G. Taniyasu
R. Tomori
R. Watanabe
James Watanabe
M. Takahashi
Mas. Takashima
S. Sumoto
K. Shinawa
K. Shido
I found it much more difficult than I had thought to list all the Japs who own or controlled property prior to Pearl Harbor, and then check off the properties they had disposed of. It developed that in some cases the name of the property was in the name of a milne and all others, including assistance from our Government, was transmitted in the name of an elder. I am told that in one case a deed was made to a child. I am also told that these names were misspelled last week, Karl Yamamoto and Yoko Omori as we do not want them to become two adding their names or to the list. A friend was good enough to total the number of acres which might also interest some. Maybe next week I can begin to get check marks in front of some of the names. I will appreciate your help.

I had also hoped to have a complete home-to-home canvass with the people being canvassed in Pico Grove District, but the snow and slippery side roads made it impracticable. The petitions turned in contained some names of people who do not live in Pico Grove, but for most of them are from Pico Grove. These are the people in my neighborhood. They are the people that first led me to believe the sentiment in Hood River was back of the American Legion. I am profoundly grateful to them for helping me to show certain groups and individuals, when they stated that the Japs were the people of Hood River, that the fact that about thirty misguided men could create an impression that Hood River County is shamefully un-American and make prejudiced, that they did not have a true picture of the sentiment of Hood River. That they might not have realized the point that whenever the Japs and their friends force the war impression and that above all, were giving the Japs an impression that they would only be welcome back when a sufficient number of Japs would be removed, if not impossible, to operate in Hood River again.

At the regular meeting of Hood River Post, this week, they expressed themselves as satisfied that a majority of the people of Hood River are and have been, one hundred percent with them. Therefore, I am going to concentrate on our ultimate aim to get and keep every Jap out of Hood River.

The war news has all been good this week except the report of treatment received by our boys who were taken prisoners and when we remember that men who have been quoted as saying, "Once a Jap, always a Jap", we feel justified in advising the Japs, if any who are in the list, to sell their land. Perhaps some day it will help us to protect the property sold with the proper name on the list.

—KENT SHOEMAKER

FORMER OWNER

Toshio Akimoto

OWNED

Yoshihiko Akimoto

AT

Tomio Kamematsu

Hirata & Yasso

Tobis & Yamada

Hishihara & Yoshi

K. Tanami

Edo Ikawa

L. R. Inoue

T. K. Higashi

M. Tanizaki

Y. Morii

H. Nakaizumi

K. Ueda

K. K. Tanaka

R. & Y. Otsuka

R. & Y. Ueda

T. Ogawa Ed.

Kamematsu, Tomio

Kamematsu, Tami

NEW OWNER

Adolph E. Ewing

William & Willa

Sandoz

David R. & Violet C.

Cooper

Raymond & Bertha

County property re-

sold to Sherman Bell

Edna & Edma Akama

John & Irene Womack

Fay & Mary Dinsmore

Fay & Mary Dinsmore

M. T. Forest & Mrs.

State Land Board Re-

sold to Sherman Bell

Carl C. Upson

Constitution of Sale

Billie P. Allgrove

Walters H. & Margaret

R. J. Shida

P. J. Stadelman et al

Mats A. Shida

R. K. Shida

P. J. Stadelman et al

N. Shida

M. Shida

Nakarno, Tomio

Kamematsu, Tami

L. B. P. Ryall

S. Menomenee

R. Shida

R. Shida

G. L. Takagi

Geo. Takagi

Masani Asai

E. Tawara

Pakiko Tsuchida

Yoshikawa Tatsubu

Y. & K. Yabe

W. Y. Yamauchi

Hinako Yoshii

S. Takemoto

S. Karihena

Sho. Itto

S. Tamura

K. Nishimura

James Wishart

W. A. Hayes

W. K. Lages

V. N. Stewart

Elizabeth D. Walters

Betty Crenshaw

R. C. C. Jenkins

Dan Burton

M. L. Whiteman

Frank C. Keen

E. L. Metzger

Ida M. Keal

W. Fred-Nord

E. B. Koch

M. N. Namba

M. T. Namba

Masani Asai

Masani Asai

H. S. Minomoto

T. A. Akimoto

T. A. Akimoto

T. A. Akimoto

T. A. Akimoto

S. Akazi

Masa Asai

R. Akazi

H. S. Minomoto

T. A. Akimoto

T. A. Akimoto

T. A. Akimoto

Masa Asai

R. Akazi

H. S. Minomoto

T. A. Akimoto

T. A. Akimoto

T. A. Akimoto

S. Akazi

Masa Asai
Veteran and Barber

To the Editor: While getting a haircut recently in a Hood River main street barber shop I witnessed an incident involving a veteran. An army staff sergeant entered and sat down to await his turn in the chair. The soldier wore nine decorations on his battle jacket—among them the bronze star and the silver star.

Less than a minute passed when the manager or owner of the shop stepped to the sergeant and said, "Are you a Jap?" The soldier replied, "What do you mean, a Jap? I'm an American." Whereupon the barber ordered him to leave. Quickly the sergeant complied. The owner or manager remarked as to how quickly he had acted in getting the boy out, then added, "I should have cut the—s throat."

Other talk followed. It took a great deal of effort to control my anger.

Must I return to my own community for a visit after four years in the army and witness such unjustified prejudices and insults to a small group of some of the nation's best fighting men—men whose courage, devotion to duty, and battle performance has won the respect and thanks of millions of service people?

Does encountering this sort of discrimination and intolerance upon returning home cause the sergeant to pause with a thought as to why he fought in the world's most terrible war?

Fortunately, here and throughout the land only very small groups of "patriotic citizens" have failed to learn a lesson from the greatest of military and economic struggles.

They have not yet grown up—or perhaps millions of returning veterans will help them.

SHELDON E. LAURENCE
Capt. A. C., Parkdale, Or.

Demand—"Made in U. S. A."

To the Editor: The undersigned and thousands of other storekeepers recently received a 181-word, $2.85, night letter telegram from Mr. S. Ralph Lazrus, 200 Hudson street, New York city. This gentleman signs himself, "President American Watch Assemblers' Association." As this outfit assembles Swiss watches, only the use of the word American should be a criminal offense.

Mr. Lazrus requested me "to petition Oregon's congressional delegation, and the state secretary Byrnes, to prevent the United States government reducing the number of Swiss watches now being imported."

In thoroughbred Chaucerian lingo I refused. Reasons for refusal follow: T. Albert Potter, president Elgin National Watch company, Elgin, Ill., wrote me:

"For ¾ years the American watch industry has been the only source of supply for the highly critical time pieces, and timing mechanisms without which we and our allies could not have won the war." And Walter W. Cenerazzo, president

Oregonian, Dec. 23, 1945
RESOLUTION NO: 001-2022

TITLE: Repeal November 1944 Post 22 Resolutions and all past Discriminatory Actions of Post 22 towards the Hood River Nisei Veterans of World War II and their Families in the Hood River Valley

WHEREAS, the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion in part states: to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism, to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars, and to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is committed to the ideals of “freedom, equality and justice” and dismantling injustices in our past; and

WHEREAS, fifty-seven Nisei (second-generation Japanese Americans) from the Mid-Columbia (Columbia River region north of Mt. Hood) and a total of 120 from the state of Oregon served in our country’s Armed Forces during World War II and in the post-war Occupation of Japan, even as their family members were incarcerated on American soil due to President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s signing of Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942; and

WHEREAS, Hood River Post 22 on November 4, 1944 passed a resolution to prevent the sale or lease of property to those of Japanese origin and to appraise and purchase all land they currently owned; and

WHEREAS, Hood River Post 22 also in November 1944 passed a resolution to black out the names of sixteen local Nikkei soldiers from an honor roll of 1,600 local Armed Forces members on the Hood River County Courthouse; and

WHEREAS, Hood River Post 22 on November 29, 1944, did black out these sixteen names from the Hood River County Honor Roll: George Akiyama, Masaaki Asai, Taro Asai, Noboru Hamada, Kenjiro Hayakawa, Shige Shigenobu Imai, Fred Mitsuo Kinoshita, George Kinoshita, Sagie Nishioka, Mamoru Noji, Henry K. Norimatsu, Katsumi Sato, Harry Osamu Takagi, Eichi Wakamatsu, Johnny Y. Wakamatsu, and Bill Shyuichi Yamaki; and

WHEREAS, Hood River Post 22’s actions brought national notoriety to the valley; and due to national backlash, the names were restored thirteen weeks later on April 9, 1945; and

WHEREAS, during the war, Hood River Post 22 led the way for local citizens to discourage Nisei veterans and their families from returning to their homes and farms; and
WHEREAS, in 2011 our nation’s Nisei soldiers were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal and in 2015 the French Legion d’Honneur award, the highest award the French Government could bestow on members of the American Armed Forces; and in June 2021 the United States Postal Service released a Forever Stamp to pay tribute to Nisei soldiers; and

WHEREAS, Hood River Post 22 and Hood River citizens have since recognized Nisei World War II veterans in an “acknowledgement of wrongs” by dedicating local landmarks: a memorial brick “in honor of all Nisei veterans” at Overlook Memorial Park on Veterans’ Day 2001 and a marble monument inscribed with names of all Japanese American veterans at Idlewilde Cemetery on Memorial Day 2011; and

WHEREAS, designating S.R. 35 as the Oregon Nisei Veterans WWII Memorial Highway at long last pays tribute to Nisei veterans not only in the Columbia Gorge area but all 120 Nisei who served from the State of Oregon; and

WHEREAS, “to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations” is a tenet of the American Legion Preamble to the Constitution; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, Hood River Post 22 recognizes the time leading up to and surrounding WWII was a dark era, and troubling times for our community and nation, however Hood River Post 22 acknowledges that actions of Hood River Post 22 during this time were wrong, discriminatory, and even racist towards our Nisei Veterans and our Japanese neighbors; and be it further

RESOLVED, Hood River Post 22, of District 5, The American Legion, Department of Oregon in its regular meeting assembled in Hood River, Oregon, on October 5, 2022, hereby rescinds all previous resolutions that discriminated against or suggested such discrimination to our Nisei Veterans, their families, and other people of Japanese descent; and be it further

RESOLVED, Hood River Post 22 publicly apologizes to our remaining Nisei Veterans, their families and descendants; and, be it

FINALLY RESOLVED, that this Resolution and the Oregon Nisei Veterans World War II Memorial Highway will be permanent reminders that discrimination of our brothers and sisters of Japanese descent was and is not tolerable, and that Hood River Post 22 will strive to lead our community to honor and respect all our Nation’s people, regardless of race or color.

Carl L. Casey, Commander  Post 22
Dennis Leonard, Vice Commander  Post 22

Prepared by Carl Casey 10-5-22
During World War II, the rural community of Hood River, Oregon, held a national reputation for its strong support of the war effort. The 11,500 residents repeatedly raised a surprising amount of money through buying war bonds and hundreds attended rallies in front of the county courthouse.

The local American Legion post installed an honor roll memorial in downtown; large billboards with the names of more than 1,600 residents from Hood River County who were serving their country. On the evening of November 29, 1944, Legion Post No. 22 removed the names of sixteen Japanese American soldiers from the billboards. The American Legion stated that it was because these young men were dual citizens of Japan and the United States, which they were not. They were solely US citizens. The veterans’ group also protested Nisei serving in the armed forces and proposed an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would deny citizenship to all Americans of Japanese descent (Nikkei).

As part of its campaign to deter Japanese Americans from returning after the war, Legionnaire Kent Shoemaker wrote a series of paid, full-page public notices that appeared in local newspapers from January through March 1945. With titles such as, “So Sorry Please, Japs are Not Wanted in Hood River,” these ads included lists of Japanese landowners and how much land they owned, with the goal that white people would purchase their properties. Five of the six ads
included the names of more than a combined 1,800 locals, under a statement that they were "one hundred percent" behind "efforts to keep the Japs from returning to this county."

Responses
Newspapers, organizations, and citizens from across the country, along with people serving in the military abroad responded quickly to Hood River’s honor roll incident. The vast majority of the responses were opposed to the Legion's actions. Headlines denounced the decision and letter writers questioned whether names of GIs with German and Italian names had been removed, and even threatened not to eat Hood River apples again. Of the more than 300 servicemen who wrote letters to the Hood River News, all but one criticized the action. Three local servicemen even independently requested that their names be removed from the honor roll unless the Nisei names were replaced.

Others favored the Legion's action. Some newspapers spread fear about Japanese Americans buying up all the land on the West Coast and plotting to out-populate white people. Anti-Japanese organizations offered support. An Oregon state senator exhorted, "Get your heart in America and the Japs out!" Letter writers sent messages of encouragement to the Legion, often filled with hateful stereotypes and slurs. Of the almost 400 letters that Post 22 received, only one-third favored their action. But eight other Legion posts decided to remove Nisei names from their honor rolls too.
Seven weeks later, on April 9, 1945, the names of fifteen of the sixteen Nisei were repainted on the billboards. (One of the Nisei had been dishonorably discharged, which would not be voided until 1983) Still, The American Legion stated that even though the names were replaced, their opinion remained the same.

Aftermath
Hood River mayor Joe Meyer discouraged Nikkei from returning home after the war, claiming, "Ninety percent are against the Japs." The community attracted national attention as a "plague spot" where prejudice ran high. Rumors spread that locals would deter returning Nikkei at the train depot, and some predicted violence. Fears increased as Nikkei saw names of neighbors and friends in newspaper notices discouraging their return.

Once home, veterans and their families could not buy food, furniture, gasoline, or farm equipment at most local stores and were often forced to drive twenty miles away to make purchases. A downtown barber denied a haircut to decorated war veteran George Akiyama, threatening to cut his throat. An army adjutant general took action by pressuring merchants to sell goods to Nikkei or face martial law as a consequence. A small group of about fifty citizens, forming the League for Liberty and Justice, offered to shop and drive produce trucks for returning Nikkei families. In all, only forty percent of prewar Nikkei residents returned to Hood River, compared to almost seventy percent in the state at large.

Legacy
With Hood River’s increased cultural and ethnic diversity, the involvement of Japanese Americans as...
active community participants and leaders, and the passage of time, efforts to memorialize the past and pay tribute to Nisei veterans have finally taken place. In 2001, two Nisei veterans served as grand marshals of the annual Fourth of July parade. That fall on Veterans Day, Post 22 dedicated a brick at the downtown Overlook Memorial Park “in honor of all Nisei veterans.” In 2007, more than five hundred attended a Day of Remembrance to “break the silence” of the past. On Memorial Day in 2011, the community unveiled a marble monument with engraved names of the sixteen Nisei veterans as well as all Nikkei who had served in the armed forces. In August of 2022, a 41-mile scenic highway from the Columbia River to Mt. Hood was dedicated as the Oregon Nisei Veterans World War II Memorial Highway. And on November 11, 2022, More than 75 years after the “Hood River Incident”, the American Legion Post 22 held a ceremony in which they repealed the 1944 resolution that led to the removal of 16 Nisei names from the county’s honor roll board and apologized to the Nisei veterans and their families.

Text adapted from Linda Tamura’s article “Hood River incident,” Densho Encyclopedia
https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Hood%20River%20Incident
Oregon Department of Education Social Science & Ethnic Studies Standards

HS.65 * Identify and explain strategies of survivance, resistance and societal change by individuals and traditionally marginalized groups confronting discrimination, genocide, and other forms of violence, based on race, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and gender.

HS.66 * Identify and analyze the nature of structural and systemic oppression on LGBTQ, people experiencing disability, ethnic and religious groups, as well as other traditionally marginalized groups, and their role in the pursuit of justice and equality in Oregon, the United States, and the world.

HS.67 Evaluate historical sources for perspective, limitations, accuracy, and historical context.

HS.74 Analyze an event, issue, problem, or phenomenon, critiquing and evaluating characteristics, influences, causes, and both short- and long-term effects.