

Peggy & James

Peggy

The first work I had after the Depression was at a shell-loading plant in Viola, Kentucky. It was between Paducah and Mayfield. They were large shells: anti-aircraft, incendiaries, and tracers. We painted red on the tips of the tracers. My mother, my sister, and myself worked there. Each of us worked a different shift because we had little ones at home. We made a fabulous sum of thirty-two dollars a week. To us it was just an absolute miracle. Before, that, we made nothing.

You won't believe how incredibly ignorant I was, I knew vaguely that a war had started, but had no idea what it meant... .

I believe the war was the beginning of my seeing things. You just can't stay uninvolved and not knowing when such a momentous thing is happening. It's just little things that start happening and you put one piece with another. Suddenly, a puzzle begins to take shape.

Peggy Terry, World War II worker

1. What did Peggy Terry do during World War II?
2. What did the job entail? Who else worked with her?
3. How much money did she earn? How did she feel about this amount?
4. Was Peggy Terry's situation unique?
5. What effect did the war have on women in the United States generally?

James

We were the second family to go into Tanforan and were assigned to this little room. Our bedroom was a horse stall with doors that were split where the horses would stick their heads out.... That was our bedroom. My mother, dad, sister and grandmother lived in the outer edge of this little area. When we were assigned to this area, I sat down with tears in my eyes because, here I am an American citizen being held a prisoner in my own native land.

I forget how many months we spent in Tanforan before we moved on to Topaz. We were the first group to go to Topaz and we traveled by train and every time we pulled into a railroad station, the blinds had to be drawn; no one wanted to look out anyway because they were scared; there were armed guards and everything.... Topaz was located on a dry lake bed of the former Lake Seiver, full of alkaline dust ... one mile square with every guard tower 100 yards with a sentry up there with his machine gun. Our barracks, since we were the first group, were incomplete; there were no partitions in the toilets and no toilet seats; the food was so-so, but anyway, we set up camp for the other groups that were coming up... .

James Kajiwara, Japanese American Internee

1. What was the name of the TWO internment camps James Kajiwara went to?
2. Describe the journey to the second camp.
3. What was the climate like at the camp?
4. What were the living conditions in the camp?
5. Why was James Kajiwara put in an internment camp?