

Thursday, October 4, 1984

Edwin C. Bearss
Chief Historian
National Park Service
United States Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Bearss,

Thank you for your recent letter regarding consideration of my comments related to the Tulelake Segregation Center at Newell, California as they pertain to the deliberations of the National Park System Advisory Board.

I am well aware of the fact that the National Park System Advisory Board would have to first designate an area as a National Historic Landmark before the area could be considered for National Historic Site status.

It is my understanding that only one of the ten internment camps will be designated a National Historic Landmark as part of the "War in the Pacific" theme being developed by the National Park Service. My concern comes from a feeling that the Manzanar site might be selected for the wrong reason(s).

I realize that the National Park Service hired Edwin Thompson to make a site recommendation and that if the Advisory Board passes on this recommendation, it will most certainly be accepted by Secretary Clark.

It is beyond my comprehension to understand how Thompson could recommend the Manzanar site in light of my comments to Congressman Panetta in a letter dated August 14, 1984. Despite his integrity as a respected author and historian, I do not feel that he is the "authority" in this matter.

I have fully researched the Tulelake site and with the help of Stan Turner, a high school social studies teacher from Eugene, Oregon, have been made aware of the significant similarities and differences between the Tulelake and Manzanar sites. Stan Turner is presently completing doctoral work on the history of man in the Tule Lake Basin.

In addition to Stan and myself, a seasonal interpreter at Lava Beds National Monument, Anna Maria Coletti, has invested a great deal of her time and energy in researching the plight of Japanese-Americans during World War II. She is probably the only interpreter in the National Park Service to present evening programs dealing with life in the internment camps; her presentations embody this delicate area of human feelings in such a way that the impact is most dynamic and extremely emotional.

During the summer of 1984, Anna and I devoted a great deal of special assignment time in continuing the research into the history of the internment camps, under the enthusiastic guidance of Gary Hathaway, Chief of Interpretation at Lava Beds National Monument. Our work was enhanced by the efforts of Stan Turner

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who acted as historian regarding all ten camps, with special interest in the Tulelake camp.

As a result of the continuing research into the history of the internment camps by the staff at Lava Beds National Monument, the monument now boasts the most complete history of the incarceration of Japanese-Americans during World War II through nearly one-thousand individual pages of literature, reference books, and several hundred photographs and slides, not to mention an ever-growing collection of artifacts in the monument museum.

As you can see, my interest in the recommendations of the National Park Service Advisory Board is more than that of a casual nature. To further understand my involvement, I have taken the liberty of including a copy of my original proposal that was sent to Director Dickenson, earlier this year.

In conclusion, my greatest fear is that a particular site has been recommended for reasons which may have been influenced by a book and subsequent motion picture or some political or geographical consideration. I can only hope that the Advisory Board will truly consider the evidence in support of my case for the Tulelake site to be designated a National Historic Landmark, as witnessed through my photographs and documentation, including what is mentioned in this letter.

Sincerely yours,

Harry Gamble

Harry Gamble
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cc: National JACL Headquarters
(in addition to photographs
and documentation)
Pacific Citizen (JACL newspaper)