

**Years of Valor, Years of Hope:
Tulare County, 1941 – 1946
Oral History Collection
by the Tulare County Library, 2004**

Sam Katano

Sam Katano's family settled in Tulare County in 1925. In 1927, his father became the owner of a laundry business in Visalia. He talked about the Japanese community in this area, about the Buddhist temple, about the Japanese School, about his family burning everything they had that linked them to Japan just after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

He said the authorities picked up three people, the head of the Japanese Association, the head of the Japanese Kendo Club and a man who had a farm in Venice Hills and refused to honor the curfew. He said the good thing about the relocation camps was the fact that his mother did not have to work any longer. This was true for the poorer people who were relocated. Now they had a place to stay and food to eat.

He talks about the people who moved further East instead of going to the camps, about going back to Poston to see his parents after being drafted when he was on the East Coast, and finding the camp empty. He talks about the prejudice against Japanese Americans when they returned in 1946. One effect of the war was the disappearing of the Japantown on the east side of Visalia. At the end of the interview you will find drawings and descriptions of the Poston Internment Camp.

42 pages. Interviewer: Catherine Doe.