

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

**Roy Sumida**

Roy Sumida was born in Visalia in 1923, so he was 18 when his family was transported to a relocation/concentration camp in Poston, AZ. Roy's father had established the H Sumida store, a general merchandise store, in Visalia's Chinatown, at the corner of Center and Bridge Street. In 1942, they sold this business to a "liquidator" from Los Angeles. Other property that they owned was managed by the Bank of America.

Roy told us that soldiers guarded them on the trains with guns wrapped up in blankets. He said there were machine gun nests with guns pointing into the camps. Roy was in the third of three sections for eight months. He said the government set up a clearinghouse that would find jobs or schools further east for people who did not want to stay in these internment camps. Most of the young people who took advantage of this moved east and never returned to California. Roy wrote that he'd like to go to a pharmacy school. In 1943, he went to Idaho State University in Pocatello, Idaho, graduating in 1945. He went to Los Angeles and took his state board test. Roy tells a fascinating story about how he obtained his first position as a pharmacist there. After 10 years, Roy returned to Visalia and opened his own store, Roy's Drug Store, at 310 E. Center Avenue. In this interview, Roy talks about Yamasaki, the architect who designed the Twin Towers in New York City. Roy said his parents became citizens of this country in 1955 when the Exclusion Act of 1926 was repealed by Congress. Roy said the Federal Government apologized in 1988 and gave each internment person \$20,000.

27 pages. Catherine Doe, Transcriber.