



**ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
INTERVIEW ABSTRACT**

CONSULTANT: Dr. Ira G. Clark

DATE OF BIRTH: January 23, 1909 GENDER: Male

DATE(S) OF INTERVIEW: January 21, 2000

LOCATION OF INTERVIEW: Mesilla Park, New Mexico

INTERVIEWER: Jane O'Cain

SOURCE OF INTERVIEW: NMF&RHM OTHER _____

TRANSCRIBED: Yes: May 24, 2000

NUMBER OF TAPES: Two

ABTRACTOR: O'Cain

DATE ABSTRATED: June 2, 2000

QUALITY OF RECORDING (SPECIFY): Good

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE: Detailing the consultant's role as state assistant supervisor of the Emergency Farm Labor Program during World War II.

DATE RANGE: 1943 -1945

TAPES ONE AND TWO:

Consultant was employed by the Emergency Farm Labor Program in New Mexico. His primary responsibilities vis-à-vis the prisoners of war (POWs), who were imprisoned in New Mexico and employed as agricultural laborers, was to ensure that the Articles of the Geneva Convention, concerning the treatment and care of prisoners, was strictly followed.

He also was responsible for setting the wage rate the POWs were paid in various areas of the state. He depended on the farmers or others in the local area to provide him with the prevailing wage rate. He states that he told those supplying him with the information that any falsification of the facts was punishable by a stint in "Leavenworth."

Another aspect of his responsibilities included trying to dissuade farmers from producing crops that were non-essential to the war effort. Again, he was not empowered to tell them they couldn't plant certain "luxury" crops, in the case of New Mexico, peanuts and broomcorn. However, the farmers were told that they could not get assistance from any federal program, if they continued to plant non-essential crops.

The consultant believes that the POWs wanted to work, and that the program was well administered.