



ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
INTERVIEW ABSTRACT

CONSULTANT: Jacqueline Ethel Wood Williams

DATE OF BIRTH: September 24, 1936 GENDER: Female

DATE(S) OF INTERVIEW: November 8, 2000

LOCATION OF INTERVIEW: Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum, Las Cruces, New Mexico

INTERVIEWER: Marcie Palmer

SOURCE OF INTERVIEW: NMF&RHM OTHER _____

TRANSCRIBED: Yes: November 27, 2000

NUMBER OF TAPES: One

ABTRACTOR: Marcie Palmer

DATE ABSTRATED: December 12, 2000

QUALITY OF RECORDING (SPECIFY): Good

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE: Childhood remembrances of World War II prisoner of war camp on Melendres Street, Las Cruces.

DATE RANGE: 1943 - 1946

ABSTRACT (IMPORTANT TOPICS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE):

TAPE ONE, SIDE A:

Mrs. Williams remembers her father taking her to the World War II prisoner of war camp on Melendres Street to watch the German prisoners do chores like mowing grass. No photographs could be taken; there were signs forbidding it. Mrs. Williams remembers everything being green at the camp: uniforms, buildings, grass, and huge weeping willows.

The consultant remembers her father being “irate” about the good care the prisoners of war received in this country while many U.S. soldiers, according to the daily news, were being mistreated in prison camps overseas. She also said her father felt the POWs held in this country were being treated better than the U.S. citizens. He felt while he was working hard, was on ration stamps, and was often in need of tires, shoes and gas, the POWs “seemed to be livin’ the life of luxury.”

Other Las Cruces residents also would park at the prison camp and watch the POWs while they went about their business. Mrs. Williams wondered if visits to the camp instilled a “love of World War II [history]” she has had all her life.

She said she was not sad, but glad, to see the Germans imprisoned, and believes that attitude probably reflected her father’s ideas.

Mrs. Williams also saw the German prisoners working at the Tharp farm on Valley Drive. She was in about the second and third grades at the time.

TAPE ONE, SIDE B: Blank