

The Butler Banner

Newsletter of the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies

Volume 13, Number 1

Winter 2011

Butler Center Events

Legacies & Lunch

March 2, 2011 Noon - 1 p.m.

Justice Robert L. Brown will discuss his recently released book *Defining Moments: Historic Decisions by Arkansas Governors from McMath through Huckabee*.

April 6, 2011 Noon - 1 p.m.

Sarah and Emma Bailin—documentarians, high school students, and twin sisters—will discuss the importance of Arkansas history and its preservation through the film medium. They will also present a short screening of two of their documentaries.

May 4, 2011 Noon - 1 p.m.

Justice Bob Wilson will appear as part of our Arkansas Autobiographies series.

Art News

Book Arts 2011, an eclectic exhibition of handmade books and journals created by Arkansas artists, and **Norwood Creech: Selected Works from the Northeastern Arkansas Delta**. Opening reception for both exhibitions will be held during 2nd Friday Art Night Friday, March 11, 2011, 5 to 8 p.m.



Visit www.butlercenter.org for more information

Butler Center Receives Rohwer Art



Rohwer, 1943 by Sazuko Inhouye. Watercolor on paper, 15" x 19".

Rosalie Gould of McGehee has donated her remarkable collection of artwork and other materials from the World War II-era Japanese American relocation camp at Rohwer to the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, a department of the Central Arkansas Library System. There were a number of such camps around the country, most in the western U.S. Two were in Arkansas, at Jerome and Rohwer. The collection includes several hundred paintings and other works of art produced

by U.S. citizens of Japanese descent who were confined during World War II.

Appraiser Jennifer Carman describes the materials Gould has given the Butler Center as “unique among internment collections” and cites experts who say that it contains artwork and documents that are “truly unmatched among objects in public collections.” The collection also includes a large amount of material documenting day-to-day life in the camp, which had its own school system,

police department, and mayor. Internees worked with an art teacher at the high school in the camp, Mabel “Jamie” Jamison Vogel. Many of them let her keep much of the art they created. Over the years since the war, Gould became a champion of preserving the camp—which was dismantled after the war and essentially vanished—and its story, and she and Vogel became close friends. Gould was named in Vogel’s will as the recipient of the entire collection, which includes hundreds of documents and

Cont. on page 2

Lincoln Papers Donated to Butler Center

Senator Blanche Lincoln recently donated her extensive senatorial papers to the Butler Center. This exciting new addition to our collection provides a record of Lincoln’s service in the U.S. Senate. The collection consists of approximately 400 boxes of documents and artifacts, including numerous electronic records.

David Stricklin, head of the Butler Center, commented on this notable donation, “We’re very pleased that Senator Lincoln

has chosen to make these papers available to the public through the Butler Center in the Arkansas Studies Institute. This record of her career in the Senate is both a great body of insight into recent Arkansas history and a wonderful addition to our extraordinary collection of materials on Arkansas political history.”

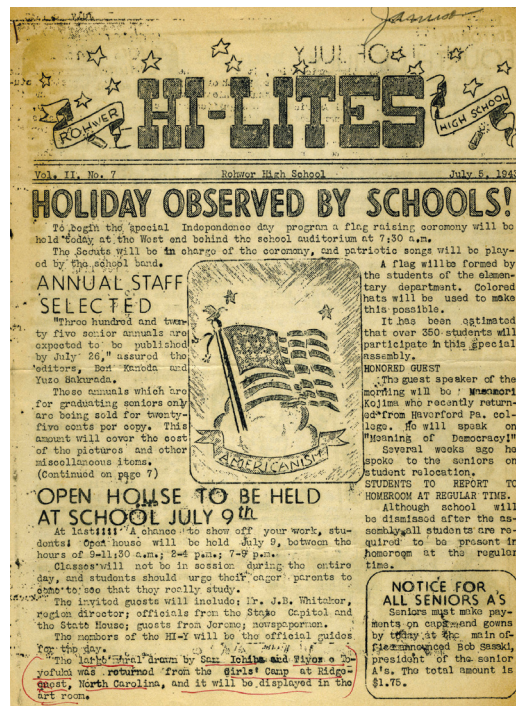
Blanche Lincoln was born Blanche Meyers Lambert in Helena, Arkansas, in 1960. After graduating from Helena Central High School, she briefly attended the University of Arkansas

Cont. on page 2

Cont. from Rohwer Art, p.1
 photographs dealing with the schools, the “town” government, and many of the people who lived in the camp. A particularly important feature of the collection is a set of 185 handwritten autobiographies of internees dating from 1942. The collection is also noteworthy because the camp sent several hundred men to Europe as part of the U.S. Army’s noted 442nd Regimental Combat Team, which is said by many authorities to have been the most highly decorated American combat unit of World War II. Camp newsletters and other documents attest to the pride internees at Rohwer took in the service these men offered their country.

According to appraiser Jennifer Carman, the art is evidence of the emotional costs of the internees being what amounted to civilian prisoners of war in their own country. “For incarcerated Japanese Americans,” she said, “the creation of these works was less about learning skills such as watercolor, but rather became a means of coping and survival, and of expressing the psychological and emotional experience of confinement.”

David Stricklin, head of the Butler Center, said, “This collection really contains



Rohwer school newsletter

two stories. The first is the extraordinary testament it makes to the perseverance of American citizens in the face of a truly unfortunate wartime situation. It is also the story of Mrs. Gould’s determination to help preserve the history of the camp, her friendship with Mrs. Vogel, her deci-

sion to keep the collection together in the many years since Mrs. Vogel’s death, and the relationships she has formed with people all over the world who are interested in the collection. These include people who lived at the camp, their kids, art historians, and other scholars. We are deeply honored that she has chosen to place the documents and the art with us and look forward to sharing them with the people of Arkansas and many others.”

Gould has been visited over the years by representatives of numerous universities, including the University of Tokyo—in addition to staff members from the Smithsonian Institution, the Japanese American National Museum, and various auction houses—to examine the materials.

“She could have sold the collection piece by piece for a considerable amount of money, but she wanted to keep it together as a tribute to the people who experienced life in the camp at Rohwer and created the art and to Jamie Vogel. She also wanted to make it available to the public, in Arkansas,” said Stricklin.

Cont. from Lincoln Papers, p.1
 before transferring to Randolph-Macon Woman’s College (now called Randolph College) in Virginia. After receiving her bachelor’s degree in 1982, Lincoln served as staff assistant to Arkansas’s First District congressman, William Alexander, until 1984. She then worked as a lobbyist before returning to Arkansas in 1992 to challenge Alexander for his congressional seat. Lincoln won this election and served in the U.S. House of Representatives through 1997, when she did not seek reelection due to the impending birth of her twin sons.

When Senator Dale Bumpers announced his retirement, Lincoln ran for his seat and made history on November 3, 1998, when she became the youngest woman ever elected to the U.S. Senate, at the age of 38. During her notable congressional career, Lincoln served as chairman of the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee—the first Arkansan and first woman to do so. In 2001, Lincoln was appointed to the Senate Finance Committee and through that

position became the first woman Democratic senator to lead a subcommittee, as chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security, Pensions and Family Policy. She also served on the Committee on En-

ergy and National Resources, the Special Committee on Aging, the Select Committee on Ethics, and the Social Security Task Force. Lincoln served in the U.S. Senate until January 2011.



CALS staff members moving Lincoln collection.

A Word from the Center

David Stricklin, Head of the Butler Center



I paid tribute in the last issue of the *Banner* to our fantastic Butler Center staff. Let me give you a little overview of what they did last year.

We added five major collections: the Rosalie Gould/World War II Rohwer Japanese American Relocation Camp and the Blanche Lincoln U.S. Senate papers (both described on page 1 of this *Banner*), Tom Harding's remarkable collection of pinhole photography, the papers of the Episcopal Diocese of Arkansas,

Our programs attracted more than 7,000 people. Almost 500 groups used our meeting rooms in the Arkansas Studies Institute (ASI), bringing in more than 9,000 people. More than 160,000 visited the ASI all told.

and a vast amount of material from the Arkansas Forestry Commission, including about 25,000 photographs. We acquired 87 new collections total last year. More than 1,200 of our collections were used by researchers. And we completed processing on 28 collections, including the Carolyn LeMaster Arkansas Jewish History Collection and the Leroy Donald Farkleberry Follies Collection, and

processed 13,000 photographs.

Our programs attracted more than 7,000 people. Almost 500 groups used our meeting rooms in the Arkansas Studies Institute (ASI), bringing in more than 9,000 people. More than 160,000 visited the ASI all told. Almost 800 Arkansas teachers attended training events we held around the state.

We sent out 1,291 free books to Arkansas public high schools in the 2009–10 school year through our Books for Arkansas Students' Education (BASE) program—4,300 books to date, worth about \$64,000. We sold the most Arkansas art in the ASI Retail Gallery ever in one month (December), just under \$26,000, with a total of more than \$97,000 for the year. Our share of these sales helps us fund other parts of our activities.

We published seven new volumes through our Butler Center Books division, including a new history of the Arkansas Governor's Mansion by John P. Gill, and sold nearly 6,000 of the books we've published.

Our web resources, not including the Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture (EOA), received almost 910,000 page views. Our free lesson plans received about 417,500 page views by teachers and students. The EOA had another amazing year, receiving more than 2.5 million individual visits, averaging about 7,000 visits per day. The EOA had 7.7 million page views and 35 million hits. That makes 6.376 million visitors since the launch in May 2006. EOA visitors have come from 188 countries.

I'm very proud of the people who made these great things happen last year. Come see us in the ASI and say hi to these dedicated servants of Arkansas and its history! ■

Latest Butler Center Collections Processed

James B. Young Civil War Letters
J.H. Tucker Civil War Letters
William S. Brooks Civil War Collection
Dick Ransom Civil War Collection
David E. Ballard Civil War Letters
Ledger book, record of persons and articles employed for transportation by the U.S. Army quartermaster, Little Rock, Arkansas



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**BUTLER CENTER
FOR ARKANSAS STUDIES**

Volume 13, Number 1

The ASI
Galleries
Art & Gifts Galore

www.arstudies.org
www.butlercenter.org/art

**401 President
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Little Rock's
River Market
District**



Finding Family Facts

*A free monthly
genealogy course*

**Second Monday
of each month.**

**All classes - 3:30 to 5 p.m.
Arkansas Studies Institute,
401 President Clinton Ave.
Room 204**

The Butler Center now offers a free beginners' genealogy class taught by Rhonda Stewart, the Butler Center's local history and genealogy expert. Participants will learn how to use online databases and city directories, as well as how to archive family documents. Jump-start your genealogy research with this fun and creative way to learn about the past.

Butler Center Creates Fellowship in Memory of Mahlon A. Martin

The Butler Center has created a new fellowship in memory of Mahlon A. Martin, former Little Rock city manager, state finance director, and Rockefeller Foundation executive director. The Mahlon Martin Fellowship will support research and programming on public policy in Arkansas and will be funded through gifts in memory of Mahlon Martin, along with endowments.

Betsey Wright has been chosen as the first Mahlon Martin Fellow. Wright spent thirteen years working for then-Governor Bill Clinton as his chief of staff, campaign manager, and deputy chairman of his 1992 campaign for president. Wright and Martin worked closely during her time as chief of staff to Gov. Clinton while Martin was director of the Department of Finance and Administration. Wright said, "Mahlon Martin had the

most extraordinary managerial and people skills of anyone I have ever worked with. I constantly sought his guidance, and I learned a lot about policy and government from him."

In the 1970s, Wright founded and served as executive director of the National Women's Education Fund, a Washington-based organization that promoted women's political participation and trained women candidates across the country. She also served as a fellow at the Institute of Politics at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and as a lobbyist in Washington DC.

Butler Center head David Stricklin said, "Betsey Wright's insights into Mahlon Martin's contributions to public service in Arkansas make her an ideal person to help create events and research initiatives that honor his memory." ■

flash

... Butler Center Events in the Spotlight

David Stricklin talks to Governor Jim Guy Tucker at the press conference for the release of *Open House: The Arkansas Governor's Mansion and Its Place in History*.



Trey Berry speaks at Legacies & Lunch as part of *Lincoln: The Constitution and the Civil War* exhibition hosted by CALS.



Rhonda Stewart, the Butler Center's genealogy and local history specialist, talks to the attendees at the first beginners' genealogy workshop, *Finding Family Facts*.

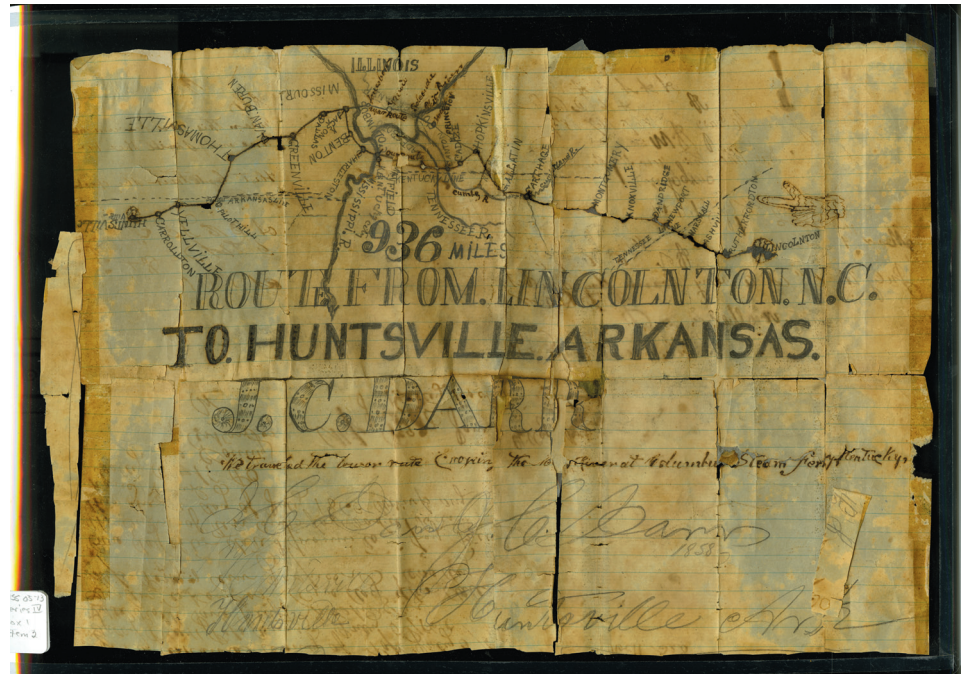


New Collection Documents Overstreet Family

The Overstreet Family Collection contains documents, photographs, scrapbooks, and photograph albums belonging to the ancestors of Linda Overstreet, a longtime professor of English at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Her ancestors included the families of John C. Darr and James A. Gillette of the Arkansas towns of Atkins and Plummerville, and Carl Overstreet and George Smith, also of Plummerville.

Accumulated by J. C. Overstreet Jr., his wife Helen Darr Gillette Overstreet, and their daughter Linda, the collection contains materials from each of Helen's family lines, as well as from the Overstreet family. Leila Smith Overstreet, her daughter-in-law Helen, and her granddaughter Linda were chiefly responsible for preserving the family history.

John C. Darr, Helen's paternal grandfather, came with his family from North Carolina to Arkansas in 1855. Darr went on to become a founder of and prominent merchant in Atkins. Some years after the family migrated to Arkansas, Darr drew a map showing the route they had traveled. The original



Map of the Darr family's journey from Lincoln, North Carolina, to Huntsville, Arkansas, hand drawn by J. C. Darr. The trip was made in 1855; the map was drawn circa 1870.

of that hand-drawn map is included in this collection.

Helen's father James A. Gillette and his family moved to Arkansas from St. Charles, Missouri; Gillette was later a well-known attorney in Atkins. In 1937, Helen married J. C. Overstreet Jr., the son of Carl Overstreet and Leila Smith Overstreet, whose families were pioneers in Plummerville. Overstreet's work brought the family to Little Rock in the mid-1940s, and their daughter Linda attended high school and college in the capital city.

The women in the Gillette and Darr families, including Helen and Linda, were active in the Daughters of the American Revolution. Genealogical material supporting their applications, as well as applications for membership in the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC), are among the documents in this collection.

Other items of interest include a minutes and attendance book from the John C. Darr Chapter of the UDC and J. C. Overstreet's World War II draft registration cards. Also of interest is a booklet, *A Confed-*

erate Catechism: The War of 1861-1865, published in 1930.

The largest portion of the collection contains photographs dating from the early 1870s until the 1970s. These include family portraits, photographs taken on hikes and other outings throughout western Arkansas and eastern Oklahoma, and street scenes in Atkins. Several photographs were taken in 1902 when Leila Smith Overstreet attended Ouachita College, now Ouachita Baptist University, in Arkadelphia. Others show Helen and her sister Jewette when they traveled to Tucson, Arizona, in about 1930.

It is obvious that members of the Overstreet, Darr, and Gillette families appreciated history, especially their own family stories. The commitment especially of the women of the family to preserving that history can now be honored as this unique collection is made available to researchers in the Research Room of the Arkansas Studies Institute.

For more information about the Overstreet Family Collection, contact Brian Robertson, Butler Center manuscripts coordinator, at 320-5723 (brian@cals.org), or Shirley Schuette, archival assistant, at 320-5723 (sjschuette@cals.org.)



Bess Parker, Leila Smith (Overstreet), Ethel Hyatt, and Ida Gammil sitting on steps of dormitory, at Ouachita College (now Ouachita Baptist University), Arkadelphia, 1901.



THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ARKANSAS HISTORY & CULTURE

WANTED: AUTHORS AND MEDIA

We need entries, photographs, documents, videos, maps, and audio clips to help make the *Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture* the most complete resource on Arkansas history.

Entries Needing Media (photographs, etc.):

Underground Hospital
Quitman Male and Female College
Kings River
Ivan Denton
Roller Derby
St. Joseph's Mercy Health Center
Basil Baker
Sloan-Hendrix Academy
Caddo River Lumber Company
Bobby James Hutton
William Erwin Halbrook
Narrows Dam
Fayetteville Shale
Fulbright Industries
Douglas A. Blackmon
Dimension Stone Mining
David Auburn
Pernella Anderson
Massard Prairie
David Levering Lewis
Nicholas Bartlett Pearce
Frances Lillian Blaisdell
George Washington Scott
Sylvanus Blackburn
Hanger Hill Historic District

Rodeo of the Ozarks
John Garrett Whiteside
Confederate Battle Flags
John Pruitt
John Edward Murray

If you have pictures or other media, please
contact Mike Keckhaver at mkeckhaver@encyclopediaofarkansas.net

Entries Needing Authors:

Arkansas Sovereignty Commission
Barbara Scott
New Age Movements
Amusement Parks
Arkansas Activities Association
Arkansas Olympians
Dinosaur World
Abortion
Stuttgart College
American Legion, Department of Arkansas

If you would like to write one of these entries,
please contact Guy Lancaster at
glancaster@encyclopediaofarkansas.net

An Education on Arkansas: The Academy Awards

Did you know that these Arkansans have won or been nominated for the coveted Academy Award?

- **Arthur Hunnicutt** - Nominated for Best Supporting Actor, *The Big Sky*, 1952
- **James Bridges** - Nominated for Best Adapted Screenplay, *The Paper Chase*, 1973, and *The China Syndrome*, 1979

• **Mary Steenburgen** - Won Best Supporting Actress, *Melvin and Howard*, 1980

• **Melinda Dillon** - Nominated for Best Supporting Actress, *Absence of Malice*, 1982

• **Tess Harper** - Nominated for Best Supporting Actress, *Crimes of the Heart*, 1986

• **Billy Bob Thornton** - Nominat-

ed for Best Actor, *Sling Blade*, 1996; Won Best Adapted Screenplay, *Sling Blade*, 1996

• **Lisa Blount** - Won Best Live Action Short Film, *The Accountant*, 2001

Check out the "Arkansas and the Academy Awards" display in the main entrance foyer of Arkansas Studies Institute for more information. ■



Delta Lawyer's Wartime Adventures

On a fine day in June 1846, Alexander Corbin (A. C.) Pickett (1821?–1883), a young Alabama lawyer, set off for the battlefields of the U.S.-Mexican War with a rifle in one hand and a pencil in the other, documenting the experience for posterity. It proved a formative experience for a man who later settled in Arkansas, formed the Confederate regiment known as the Jackson Guards during the Civil War, and worked as an attorney in the Delta.

His story soon will be available in the new book *A. C. Pickett's Private Journal of the U.S.-Mexican War*, edited by Jo Blatti, an independent historian based in Little Rock, and published by Butler Center Books. This work offers a thorough, meticulous transcription of the journal, with editorial notes as needed. The book also includes a biographical essay about Pickett, an overview of the war itself showing the involvement of Pickett's regiment, and a timeline of the U.S.-Mexican War.

Pickett's U.S.-Mexican War journal covers seven months—from June 1846 to mid-January 1847. In it, the young sergeant records his impressions of camp life among Company G, 1st Alabama Volunteers—sand dunes, dysentery, frolics, the dreariness of prolonged inaction punctuated by the excitement of field pa-

trols and the harshness of military discipline—and his own efforts representing soldiers in courts martial on several occasions. Sea voyages, tropical landscapes, and tumultuous “northers” inspire language in line with novels and autograph books of the time.

After the U.S.-Mexican War, Pickett returned to Alabama for a time to practice law in Sumter County. As their parents had before them, Pickett and a brother, physician William Henry Pickett, went west, following the next generation of treaty and bounty lands that opened to settlement; that path led to Arkansas.

A. C. Pickett practiced law in the White River towns of Jacksonport and Augusta and fought for the Confederacy during the Civil War. A lifelong bachelor, Pickett was thereafter identified with north Arkansas Democratic politics, newspaper publishing, and Episcopal Church activities in ad-

dition to his legal work.

Editor Jo Blatti's recent activities include serving as project director for *If a Stranger Sojourns Among Thee*, an oral history series documenting Hispanic migration to northern Arkansas, and curating the exhibit

Harry Miller's Vision of Arkansas, 1900–1910

for Crystal Bridges

Museum of American Art. Publi-

cations include

Women's History

in Minnesota, Past

Meets Present,

and *Landscape of*

Hope and Despair

(co-authored with

Sandra Menefee

Taylor and Linda

Gammell). Blatti

serves on the board of

the Arkansas Women's

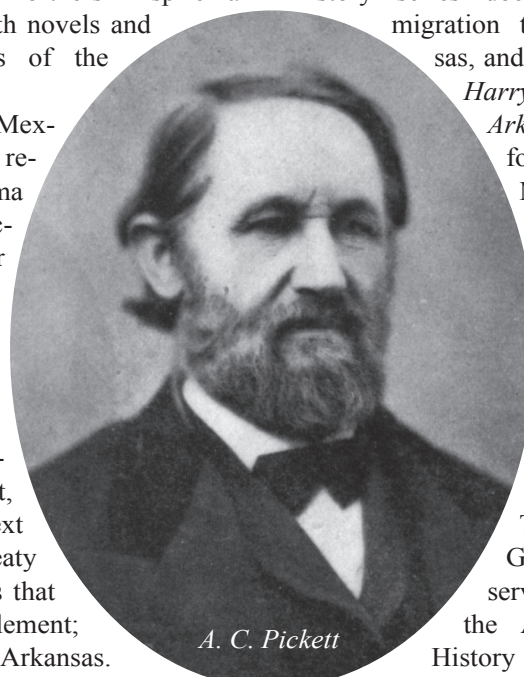
History Institute and is the

exhibit review editor of *The*

Public Historian, the journal of the Na-

tional Council on Public History.

A. C. Pickett's Private Journal of the U.S.-Mexican War will be published in April 2011. Visit www.butlercenter.org/publications for information on how to order.



A. C. Pickett

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Images from Our Collection

The Rohwer Relocation Center in Desha County was one of two World War II-era incarceration camps built in the state to house Japanese Americans from the West Coast, the other being the Jerome Relocation Center (Chicot and Drew counties). The Rohwer cemetery, the only part of the camp that remains, is now a National Historic Landmark. The two camps housed some 16,000 Japanese Americans from September 18, 1942, to November 30, 1945; Rohwer was one of the last of ten such camps nationwide to close. The Japanese American population, of which sixty-four percent were American citizens, had been forcibly relocated under the doctrine of "military necessity" and incarcerated in California and various states west of the Mississippi River.



Use this as a caption and the text below as a description: Rohwer Relocation Center 1st grade class with teacher Thelma Keith, 1942.