

# CA World War II Homefront

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## **OH2788a**

**Narrator:** Cramer, Esther (1927- )  
**Interviewer:** Chris Keife  
**Title:** "Farming in Southern California during World War II"  
**Date:** April 23, 1999  
**Language:** English  
**Location:** La Habra, CA  
**Project:** Local History  
**Status:** summary notes, 4 pages  
**Dates:** 1890s-1950s

An oral history with Esther Ridgway Cramer (1927- ), a lifelong resident of La Habra and well-known local historian. After giving a little family background, she discusses early agriculture in the La Habra area, including citrus, avocados, and walnuts. She describes life on a citrus ranch, and the changing ways of managing the groves. She talks about changes in the population of La Habra during the 1930s and '40s, and the impact of World War II on the local area, such as rationing. Included in the file is a copy of a research paper written by Chris Keife in 1999 – "Food For the Masses: Farmers in Southern California During World War II" – which includes excerpts from this interview.

## **OH 5260**

An Oral History with Auburn Buell

**Narrator:** Auburn Buell  
**Interviewer:** Yury Ajanel  
**Date:** 04/14/1999  
**Location:**  
**Language:** English  
**Project:** California World War II Home Front

**Format(s):** Cassette  
**Transcript:** No  
**Other:**

## **Abstract:**

An oral history with Auburn Buell, collected for the California World War II Home Front project by California State University, Fullerton. The purpose of this interview is to gather information regarding Buell's personal and military experiences during World War II. Specifically, this

interview covers Buell's early years in Monterey County, California during the late 1930s, his working experiences while growing up with his two brothers and two sisters, his high school experiences, his community's views on World War II; describes his memories of Japanese internment camp propaganda, his memories of life while in boot camp, the other men's views on being drafted, and his state of mind before going into a war zone; talks about the public's feelings towards the soldiers during World War II; his experiences overseas while taking part in the Invasion of Normandy in France in 1944; explains the most impacting experience he had during 1945 when he helped to free internees at internment camps in Europe, his feelings while leaving the war in 1945, and his welcoming back into the United States in September of 1945; he also describes the medals and awards he received when he arrived back in the United States.

**Bulk Dates:** 1930-1950.

## **OH 5261**

An Oral History with Thelma Billman

Narrator: Thelma Billman

Interviewer: Yury Ajanel

Date: 05/11/1999

Location: Lake Forest, California

Language: English

Project: California World War II Home Front

Format(s): Cassette

Transcript: No

Other:

## **Abstract:**

An oral history with Thelma Billman, collected for the California World War II Home Front Oral History Project at California State University, Fullerton. The purpose of the interview was to gather information regarding Billman's experiences while she was living on the west coast during the 1940s. Specifically, this interview covers her experiences during the depression; her childhood in Modoc County until high school, the changes she endured when she moved to San Diego in the early 1920s, the differences between small town and big city life; she comments on her experiences during the depression, rationing, the black market, war propaganda and women in the workforce; her memory of the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, how men were drafted; her feelings on the sexual revolution in the 1960s, night life, drinking, and sex; she briefly discusses Japanese internment camps, the consequences of World War II, and diseases like tuberculosis that affected her family during the 1930s and 1940s; she briefly comments on sexually transmitted diseases and juvenile delinquency; her experiences after World War II, how enlisted men were seen, the growth of economic prosperity, medical services, and how life was lived

once the war was over; briefly talks about Adolf Hitler and a trip she took to Germany; comments on how women were viewed in the workforce during the 1940s and 1950s, the various fields women entered, and women's rights.

**Bulk Dates:** 1920-1960.

## **OH 5262**

An Oral History with Frank G. Casserly

Narrator: Frank G. Casserly

Interviewer: Yury Ajanel

Date: 04/23/1999

Location: Long Beach Veterans Affairs Hospital

Language: English

Project: California World War II Home Front

Format(s): Cassette

Transcript: No

Other:

### **Abstract:**

An oral history with Frank G. Casserly, a U.S. Marine Colonel from south Laguna Beach, California. This interview was conducted as part of the California World War II Home Front Oral History project for California State University, Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather information about his experiences in the military during World War II and the post-war culture in California. Specifically this interview covers Casserly's life before and during the war; briefly comments on his birthplace in El Paso, Texas, his military upbringing, and his family's military background; his memories of the Great Depression during the 1930s, the prices of gasoline and food in 1934, and the little impact it had on his family; discusses his move to Laguna Beach in 1937 and the differences between Texas and Orange County; his enlistment into the Marine Corps., the surge of patriotism in military morale, and his community's reaction to the beginning of World War II; his recollection of events that happened in Europe that led to war, propaganda regarding U.S. intervention; talks in detail about his community's reactions on the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the consequences the attack had on his military career and community; his boot camp experience, his fellow soldier's feelings towards the war, and his time spent on the weekends with his fellow marines, and night life; explains his experiences while traveling through Europe, the details of his rank; he talks about his marriage of 57 years to his wife, sex prior to the beginning of the war, the censoring of movies by Hollywood press, alcohol and drug use; how women were seen by society during the 1940s, the baby boom, and the consequences from World War II; summary of his military career and his experiences as a mediator during the Korean War.

**Bulk Dates:** 1930-1960.

**OH 5263.1**

An Oral History with Richard L. Montano

Narrator: Richard L. Montano  
Interviewer: Yury Ajanel  
Date: 04/22/1999  
Location: Long Beach Veterans Affair Hospital  
Language: English  
Project: California World War II Home Front

Format(s): Cassette  
Transcript: No  
Other:

**Abstract:**

An oral history with Richard Montano, a retired United States Army Veteran and Truck Driver. This interview was conducted for the California World War II Home Front project at Cal State Fullerton's Center for Oral and Public History. This interview captures Montano's life from the early 1930s until the late 1960s. Specifically, Montano recalls his childhood in the Boyle Heights area of East Los Angeles; his enlistment into the Army in 1955, his marriage to his wife for thirty-three years, and his three children; his early military experiences in Georgia and Korea from 1955 to 1958; comments briefly on gang life and drug usage in his East Los Angeles, how people in his community viewed drug users; his memories of rationing, violence, and fights in his neighborhood, his family's personal economic stability during the 1940s; he explains his family's military history, his uncle's experiences while fighting in World War II, and the difference between those who were drafted and those who volunteered for the military during the 1940s; the culture of the Army and issues pertaining to alcoholism, how society viewed enlisted men and his community's views about premarital sex and sexism; comments on sexually transmitted diseases during the 1950s, delinquency among youth in the late 1950s, and his high school experiences.

**Bulk Dates:** 1930-1970.

**OH 5263.2**

An Oral History with Richard L. Montano

Narrator: Richard L. Montano  
Interviewer: Yury Ajanel  
Date: 04/23/1999  
Location: Long Beach Veterans Affair Hospital  
Language: English  
Project: California World War II Home front

Format(s):     Cassette  
Transcript:    No  
Other:

**Abstract:**

An oral history with Richard Montano, a retired United States Army Veteran and Truck Driver. This interview was conducted for the California World War II Home Front project at Cal State Fullerton's Center for Oral and Public History. This interview captures Montano's life in the 1950s. Specifically, Montano describes his return to the United States after his involvement in Korea, recollection of his family and friend's reactions on his return from Korea, the changes that occurred when was gone; his feelings on adapting to civilian life, the changes he experienced when he returned, and his self-reflection of maturity that he remembered when returning home; he recounts his struggles with diabetes and other health issues as he grew older.

**Bulk Dates:** 1950-1999.

**OH 5268**

An Oral History with Veronica Bloomfield  
Narrator:       Veronica Bloomfield  
Interviewer:    Jiumara Menezes  
Date:           04/09/1999  
Location:       Artesia, California  
Language:       English  
Project:         California WWII Home Front

Format(s):     Cassette  
Transcript:    No  
Other:

**Abstract:**

An oral history with Veronica Bloomfield, a long time resident of Artesia, California. This interview was conducted as part of the California World War II Home Front Oral History Project for California State University, Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather information regarding life on the west coast during World War II. Specifically, this interview details her family's background, her parent's occupations, what brought her family to Artesia, their migration to the United States in the late 1920s, her parents ethnic background; she describes her family's community involvement, the activities that occurred in Artesia, and a description of her siblings; her memories of war, her description of people's feelings after the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the civil defense measures taken by the country, and mock drills with "dress rehearsals"; comments on her community's feelings of patriotism and the armed forces, her thoughts on women's work in the war industries.

**Bulk Dates:** 1920-1950.

**OH 5269**

An Oral History with Grace Borsma

Narrator: Grace Borsma

Interviewer: Jiumara Menezes

Date: 05/04/1999

Location: Artesia, California

Language: English

Project: California WWII Home Front

Format(s): Cassette

Transcript: No

Other:

**Abstract:**

An oral history with Grace Borsma, a long time resident of Artesia, California. This interview was conducted for the California World War II Home Front Oral History Project for California State University, Fullerton. The purpose of this interview was to gather information about Borsma's experiences while living on the west coast during World War II. Specifically, this interview covers Borsma's family background, her migration to the United States in 1933 as a new bride, her marriage to her husband in February of 1933, and her family that had already settled in Artesia; details the Japanese American family neighbors who went to the internment camps during World War II, how they rented the land to grow vegetables; she comments on the Holland community, the aid they provided to Jews who fled Germany; her feelings before and during the war, how life changed for her family and herself after the war ended; her trips back to Holland after the war, how Holland changed when she went back; speaks of the interaction between the Dutch and German communities; her family that settled in Artesia.

**Bulk Dates:** 1930-1950.