

Francis Tanimura

By Lewis Schofield and Colin Sikora

Francis Louise Tanimura was born on August 3, 1924.^{[1][3]} She was the youngest of five, with two brothers: Minori Tanimura and Jadoshi Tanimura, and two sisters: Chyoko Tanimura and Tohiko Tanimura.^[3] They lived in Burton and were fruit farmers.^[4] They lived with their father, Kenzo Tanimura, their mother is unknown.^[1] Sometime between 1930 and 1940 her sisters both left.^{[2][3]}

On May 16th, 1942 they were removed from the island by a special curtained ferry and landed in Seattle.^[5] From there, they were put into curtained trains and were not told where they were going.^[6] The trains ended up at the Tulare Assembly Center in the Southern San Joaquin Valley, and from there, they were taken to the Gila River Internment Camp, located in Arizona.^{[7][8]}

The Gila River Internment Camp consisted of two separate camps, Canal and Butte, located 3.5 miles apart. They are located in an arid valley that spanned 16,500 acres. Francis arrived in the middle of the summer heat, with temperatures often reaching over 100° F. Each camp was divided into a system of blocks. It had a self-governing structure with a council consisting of representatives from each block. Each block had its own council for specific issues relating to that block, but these councils did not have formal relations with the administration. It's unknown exactly when Francis left the camp, but Butte Camp was closed September 28, 1945, Canal Camp was closed November 10, and the Gila River Camp completely shut down on November 16.^{[6][9]}

After the camp she got married to Satori Mori, and moved to Los Angeles. She then divorced him there in 1979, but still kept the last name of Mori.^[10]

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