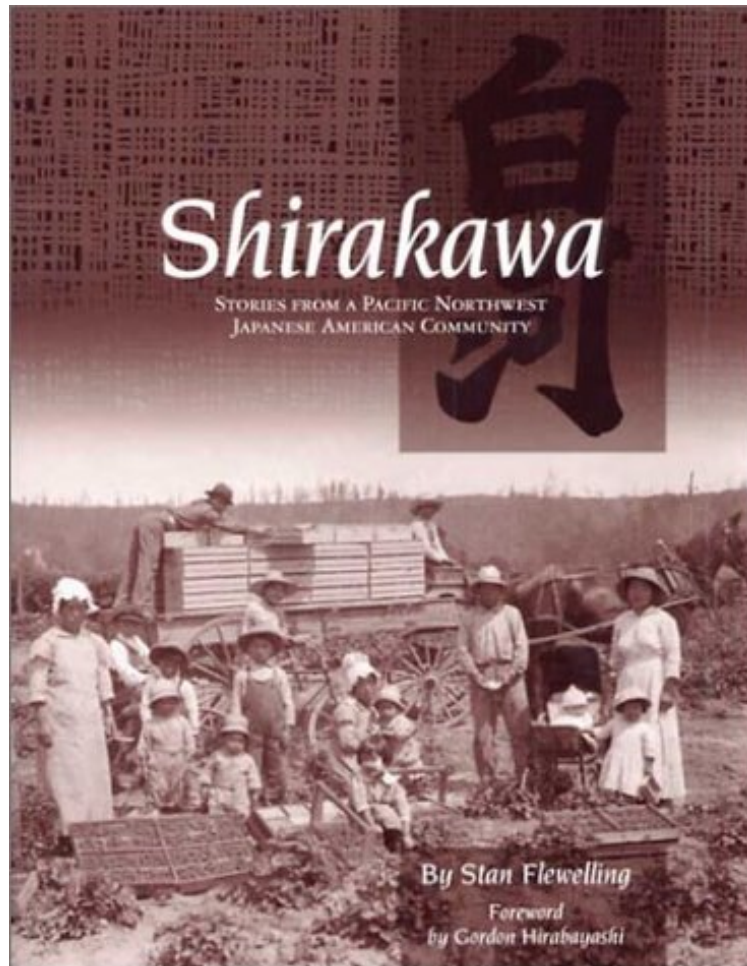


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Shirakawa: Stories from a Pacific Northwest Japanese American Community

Stan Flewelling

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Stan Flewelling : Shirakawa: Stories from a Pacific Northwest Japanese American Community before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Shirakawa: Stories from a Pacific Northwest Japanese American Community:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. BUY THIS BOOKBy CraigIf you like history...if you like old photos that aid in bringing a story to life...if you like well-written sentences (unlike mine), then you will like this book. Shirakawa documents the lives of a Japanese American community in the Pacific northwest of the United States. This is not the first time I have read a book written or edited by Stan Flewelling. This writer is one who is unknown to the vast reading public, and that, truly, is a shame. As with his other works, Flewelling's Shirakawa has been thoroughly researched and thoughtfully written. If you have not read a book written by Flewelling, may I suggest that you start

with Shirakawa. You will be delighted that you found this author and his book Shirakawa.

The White River Valley is part of a fertile crescent between Seattle and Tacoma, Washington, the largest metropolitan region in the Pacific Northwest. As the cities grew, the Valley was their breadbasket. Japanese migrants called the area Shirakawa, an exact translation of the English 'White River'. They first arrived in the late 19th century and worked as itinerants, but some Japanese workers leased farms in the Valley and settled in. They brought wives from the old country and encouraged countless other fortune-seekers to follow. By the 1920s, the Japanese were the majority ethnic group in the Valley farm belt and over half of all Japanese farms in Washington State were in the White River Valley. Part community history, part anthology, "Shirakawa" details how the first-generation Issei overcame waves of organized opposition to forge a viable, cohesive community. It is the story of their efforts to develop job opportunities, family support systems, cultural outlets, community organizations, and centers for worship and education. Above all, it tells how they paved the way for their American-born children, the Nisei, and descendant generations to succeed as citizens and bring honor to their heritage. Out of this environment came leaders like Tom Iseri, chairman of the Japanese American Citizens League, Pacific Northwest District, and Gordon Hirabayashi, famed resister of the wartime incarceration of Japanese Americans. More than forty Nisei who grew up in the White River Valley were interviewed for the book, and their voices resound in its pages. Just as "Shirakawa" chronicles the growth of a community, it also examines its swift demise after Pearl Harbor. The government swept Issei leaders out of the community and into detention camps. "Shirakawa" follows their fate, using rare documents from the National Archives to try to understand the unwarranted allegations of subversion against them.

About the Author Stan Flewelling is the author of *Farmlands: The Story of Thomas, Washington*.