

NARRATOR:           GEORGE KIYOMOTO

INTERVIEWER:       RALPH KUMANO

DATE:                 July 10, 2005

RK:    We are in Reedley, California on July 10, 2005. This interview will be part of the Izumi Taniguchi Oral History Project housed in the Special Collections Unit of the Henry Madden Library at California State University at Fresno. My name is Ralph Kumano of the Central California District Council which is part of the Japanese-American Citizen's League. Today, I am interviewing George Yoji Kiyomoto, a Nisei man who is eighty-four years old. First of all, George, where were you born?

GK:    I was born in Reedley, actually just about where the Reedley High School main administration building is, that used to be a home there and some orange orchards and it used to be part of a farm there.

RK:    And what was the date of the birth?

GK:    December 21, 1920.

RK:    Okay and what was your family's line of work at that time?

GK:    I presume farm laborer because we were living right next to the town there and I don't believe he was farming that area—I mean that ranch. We were living with some other Japanese families there so I imagine he was day laborer then.

RK:    How many siblings did you have?

GK:    I had one older brother and one younger brother and I understand that I had an older sister than me who passed away when she was four years old so I really don't know her but then I understand that I had lost an older sister.

RK:    Okay.

GK: And I don't remember knowing my mother. The only thing I know is I was playing outside in the yard when I seen some people carrying her to the car, Model T Ford which was I guess she was either really ill or she had passed away. I don't really know. But that was the last time I seen her.

RK: And did you go to grammar school in Reedley there nearby? Was there a school there?

GK: No, I went to school I guess in the meantime my dad bought this ranch out there on Porter Avenue and that is where I went to school there—I went to school—I just started school and dad says one day, "Hey, don't go to school no more. We're going to go to Japan." So a, and I remember going to, at that time, I think my dad was still a Buddhist and so I know we went to the Buddhist Church in Fresno and then we had gone to the Mausoleum in Fresno and I don't know why we were there for but for a long time when I grew up I thought well that is where my mom was at, you know, but I guess my dad had gone there to pick the ashes up to take to Japan because it wasn't long after that we had taken off for Japan. And I didn't—you know in the meantime when I was young I never knew why we had gone to Japan until later on I started to figure out I guess dad—

RK: That was the reason right.

GK: Yeah, to take the ashes back.

RK: Back.

GK: And so we didn't stay in Japan very long, over half a year or maybe ten months or something like that.

RK: Roughly how old were you?

GK: At that time I was in the first grade and I think I was—

RK: About six probably-six or seven?

GK: I was probably about six years old.

RK: So this is right past the mid twenties there about 1926 then okay.

GK: Uh-huh. And a lot of things I didn't know until later on.

RK: You thought about it?

GK: Growing up and I said oh, you know I didn't—when we went to Japan well dad built a home over there, you know, and about the time that they lay the last part of the roofing or something like that where they have a little big pow wow and when that was over, well dad said, hey told my brother stick around because we're going to go back to America, you know. And I guess my intent, my dad's intention was to leave my younger brother and I had that feeling. I could feel it a little bit when I was young so I kept telling him, hey stick around, don't separate from us.

RK: Right.

GK: The three brothers you know.

RK: Exactly.

GK: And but he fell in love with his—my auntie you know and she was young yet and a very beautiful lady and she babied him and so he stayed with her and I guess that was reason that my dad let my younger brother stick with the auntie because his intention was to leave him there you know so to keep the Kiyomoto name.

RK: Exactly.

GK: So my youngest brother was left in Japan and then we all came back to America again and never did see him. I was always wanting to see my brother come back, you know.

RK: Right.

GK: But I guess it wasn't in the cards.

RK: Now this was probably—you said you didn't stay very long so it was about two or three years there?

GK: No, it was about a year maybe.

RK: Oh only a year?

GK: Yeah.

RK: Okay.

GK: Because when I come back, why I fit right into the first grade again.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: So,

RK: So what school did you go to Porter Ranch there?

GK: Monarch(??) School.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: The building is still standing there and I came back and graduated Monarch(??) School at eight years of schooling there and then I went to Reedley—

RK: High school okay.

GK: High school.

RK: How was that—do you remember anything about the Depression and early thirties going through that?

GK: Well in those days as soon as we'd come home from school, we were made to work, you know and well we did all kinds of things like picking grapes, muscat grapes, stacking the muscat grapes were a lot of times laid on wooden trays.

RK: Wooden trays, right.

GK: Yeah so we'd have to if there looked like it was going to rain we'd have to restack the trays you know and sometimes make to make them dry faster we used to have to put them up on a stilt like so they'd be on a more angle—

RK: Angle, yes.

GK: Yes, and it was picking grapes and picking figs. I was always wondering why the Thompson vineyards was in five acre blocks.

RK: Uh-huh.

GK: And around each block was fig trees.

RK: Fig trees, what was the reason for that?

GK: I was always wondering why there was a reason for that.

RK: Yeah.

GK: Because we had to pick those figs off of the ground and that was a job that, you know, us kids had, you know. So dad remarried and there was some girls that came with the marriage and so I had some step sisters and the step sisters and I and me and my brother, older brother we used to have to pick figs off of the ground until I figured out lately that the reason that each five acre block had fig trees around is that people that built that designed that ranch was that when you drive the horses and cultivating and—

RK: Right.

GK: And do the work well, every so many rounds you rest your horses you know and then there is—

RK: Shade.

GK: Shade trees.

RK: That makes sense.

GK: Shade for the worker and the horses.

RK: Yeah.

GK: You know because every five acre block you know were fig trees.

RK: That makes sense.

GK: Both ends you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And I couldn't figure out why you'd have—we had fig orchards but there were these figs around each block and that was the reason for the fig trees and we used to have to pick figs and we used to smoke, had a smoke house where you'd put these figs on trays and they'd put them or in the boxes and they'd put them in the smoke house and they used to smoke it with sulfur you know, burning sulfur to—

RK: Cure it or something?

GK: Cure it yeah and kill any bugs or worms or whatever it is in it and they had a little pit where or little pit I guess a little place where they'd put the regular sulfur in and light it.

RK: Light it.

GK: And then they'd cover it was a big wooden box, well it looked like a room you know that you set down over the stack of figs or boxes of figs or trays of figs and they would light this sulfur and then overnight it would all burn and it would fume all night.

RK: Yeah. Kind of like a smoke house?

GK: A smoke house, we would sulfur smoke the figs.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And then once we opened it up, why then we'd put the figs on the wooden trays and dry them out you know. And that was when they were able to kill any bugs that was in the figs.

RK: Sure exactly.

GK: But I guess it wasn't too much longer when we grew up, I still remember messing with figs until I was in about seventh or eighth grade anyway and then after that, they decided that they would get rid of some of the figs. And I know in those days there was Model T, Model T Ford tractor and my brother was about four or five years older than I was so and he was the first child and he was built big and tough, you know. When he was going to grammar school, why even the grammar school kids compared to most of the Japanese would be smaller but he would be bigger.

RK: Exactly.

GK: Than the rest of the kids but anyway he did a lot of work for dad you know on the ranch and he actually wanted to be a mechanic. That was all he was interested in was mechanical work, you know. And where we were living there—we lived about a mile—a mile or so from the mountain and along the side of the mountain there used to be a lot of creeks, yeah creeks and in those day you know people when they got an old car that wouldn't run no more, why, they would just dump it out there in the creek bottom you know.

RK: Yeah, okay, yeah.

GK: And there was a lot of and we used to live you know a quarter mile from there along these creeks and when we had time we'd go along this creek bottom and we'd find some good things to bring home you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And my brother was looking for parts to you know for to mechanical work you know and we'd bring parts home and he'd put them together like he'd fix, like on a Model T Ford well he'd put a Model A motor in it.

RK: Right.

GK: And put dual transmission in it, you know.

RK: Oh wow.

GK: (laughing) yeah and he enjoyed mechanical work so that was his main line but then right there was the golf course so we used to go out there and when we had after school if we didn't have anything to do we'd sneak up there and be looking around the creek bottoms you know looking for golf balls.

RK: Golf balls yeah.

GK: And the guys would pay us for golf balls.

RK: That's pretty good. Now how far outside the city of Reedley was this ranch?

GK: About five and a half miles.

RK: Oh to the east?

GK: To the east.

RK: Yeah, where the hills were starting to show okay. Now when you came back from Japan you were saying you came back to the ranch. Your father didn't remarry until how long later?

GK: Oh—

RK: Were you in high school?

GK: No, I was going to grammar school.



RK: Oh okay.

GK: So about—

RK: A few years later?

GK: Yeah, just two, three, four years ago yeah.

RK: So without having a mom you had to do—I guess everyone helped out with the home chores, cooking and everything?

GK: Yeah, my brother was the chief cook.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: And (inaudible) was mostly you know—hasubi, eggplants, and daikon—

RK: A lot of home grown vegetables that you used?

GK: Those plus a lot of hamburger and bologna and that kind of food. In those days there was the Japanese fish man.

RK: Right.

GK: That used to bring fish and meat and then there used to be a butcher too, a Caucasian fellow that would bring bologna and stuff like that, hamburger and in those days they had this water cooler deal so we didn't have no refrigeration then so they had this water cooler and the fish man would bring—know what—if we weren't home he'd know what to leave you know and right on the side of the—we used to have an outdoor bath house you know and in this bath house was two compartments. One was where you cooked, where dad had made a stove out of dirt and cement you know and then there was a place where the pots would go and I guess there was a kerosene stove in there too but anyway, so if you wanted to cook rice well there was a place to cook rice. And then the other half

was with the bath house which had a bath tub and place to wash yourself before you got into the tub.

RK: Right.

GK: And a place to dry yourself and it was partitioned into two.

RK: Wow, that is pretty good.

GK: And so and our duty was you know after school we'd have to start the—

RK: The fire yeah.

GK: For the making the fire for the

RK: Furo.

GK: Yeah for the bath you know and a lot of times you know we'd get interested in playing and forget about that darn fire (laughing), and we'd catch heck from—

RK: Oh yeah, I remember those days too.

GK: (laughing)

RK: We had to do the same. Now since you were so far out of town I guess you didn't do a lot of school activities and things? When you went to school you probably just came home?

GK: Well, when I was about mid through mid the grammar school I think—you know I was the weakling of the family you know. So my dad was always interested in—because I had been in the hospital and stuff like that. The doctor said it was a hopeless situation and I remember dad had gone to see these Chinese herbalists in Fresno.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: And he had seen all kinds of people and he had brought me a lot of things to the hospital to a and he'd tell me on the sly take this and it's supposed to be good for you and so well

I finally made it through but dad was always worried about my health and I was the weakling of the family you know. My youngest brother, he was tough. And my oldest brother was tough and I was in the one in between and of course I used to catch—was the only one that used to catch heck too and but anyway my dad was always interested in me developing, you know. To do exercise and so when I was my middle age and in grammar school well then this Kendo—

RK: Instructor?

GK: Instructor came you know and my dad said, “Hey, you better take Kendo.” And so I started taking Kendo and for some reason I was slim and I guess I—my form was good I guess so they selected me and some of the fellows to show other people how to do it, you know. And the form and so dad was pretty proud of me being able to do Kendo you know. And then the same type of people started this Judo in Reedley, too. And I was taking Judo, too, but one thing was I don’t know maybe I didn’t know how to fall right but I remember going to the bathroom and there was some blood you know when I urinated and so I told my dad and I said, “Hey, there is some blood showing in my urine taking judo.” And so my dad said when you start to fall, why, protect yourself a little more and don’t go down so easy you know. And I said that’s what they want us to learn, how to fall you know. And but I didn’t stay with the Judo too long but I stayed with Kendo quite a few years and then of course then everybody started dropping out and so I had gone through quite a few tournaments, you know, Kendo tournaments but when I started going to high school by then basketball was more interesting than Kendo so.

RK: Right.

GK: I went to taking sports in high school instead and I guess that sort of served the purpose for dad, you know. He wanted me to do a lot of—

RK: Activities.

GK: Activities just to keep my health up so I guess that was his main purpose was for me to make sure to have and he said, “Oh, your color of your eyes are better when you’re going out for sports.” Of course you exercise a lot and take hot showers and you come home you know and so dad used to be happy that I was going out for sports. I had other things in mind too besides sports—

RK: Yeah.

GK: You know going to high school but anyway and I did well too in high school. My grades were good.

RK: And did you join clubs or—

GK: Well really the only club that I joined was the CSF that’s the—

RK: Scholarship foundation.

GK: Organization and I had gone out for sports but—

RK: Football and baseball?

GK: No, it was mostly like track—

RK: Track and basketball?

GK: Basketball yeah.

RK: Wrestling, what about wrestling?

GK: Yes, some wrestling but I was too weak for wrestling so mostly basketball and—

RK: Track?

GK: Track yes. Yeah, the and I was majoring in Ag when I was going to school too, machine shop—

RK: Did they have wood working and things like that?

GK: Wood working and metal shops—

RK: Metal shop?

GK: Metal shop yes. The only thing I didn't take was manual, auto mechanics.

RK: Auto mechanics?

GK: And I should have taken that but I was so engrossed in metal shop and machine shop that later on when I moved to chick sexing—well on my spare time I used to go to this when I was back in Wisconsin why they had this nice metal shop in the high school there and they used to teach anybody that wanted to learn. They called it National Youth Administration, NYA, which sponsored these different classes you know. And so one of my friends when I was living there in Wisconsin why he said he was going to take up blue print reading and so I said I will go learn it with you. And so we went to blue print and from there they said if you want to learn how to do machine shop work why every evening there is a class for that. So we both went to metal shop work.

RK: Oh that's good.

GK: And learned how to do machine shop work. One of our—well our main instructor was—he used to be I don't know if it was Nash but one of the car manufacturers down in the Milwaukee area, he was one of the head machine shop—machinist over there and he—at his age they laid him off and he became our instructor there and he was I think he was a Scotchman and he was from Scotland and he knew how to do machine shop work and he taught us how to do all the things. And how to run the milling machines and different

lathes and everything and do's and don'ts and one of them was he said, he told me to make a certain surface gauge that is what they called it. And it's a metal block you know so thick and certain dimension and on there you make a rod that sticks up and on this rod there is another rod that is attached to it and it's supposed to be made by thumb screws you know.

RK: Right.

GK: And say you wanted to make another metal so thick and well, on this milling machine the surface is flat and you lay this thing there and you put the gauge right onto the metal that you are trying to—

RK: Shape?

GK: Shape you know the thickness of it and then you go to over here and now the machine— the metal that you are working on you use this as a gauge see.

RK: Right.

GK: And it goes over there and that's the thickness you want, you know. And you're supposed to make this gauge that does that and if you make that he says you have used just about all the—

RK: Skills needed?

GK: Yeah skills to make this thing so if you can make that you just about passed the whole unit because

RK: Yeah exactly.

GK: All the different machinery.

RK: Oh yeah.

GK: Because there is round metals—

RK: Right.

GK: And flat metals and so I made one of those and he said yeah, you are eligible to become a machinist you know. So later on when I moved down to Milwaukee before I went into the service, why I said, well there is no use goofing off here. I might as well see if I can get a job so I walked into a machine—machine shop and right away I said I went to NYA school and got a diploma from them and so they hired me you know. (laughing) But working in a machine shop is all together different too.

RK: Right.

GK: And one of the main things is they said—they put me on a lathe and they set it up for me and they set it up so that instead of the chips you know—instead of chipping off or curling a certain way they made it so it would curl up and then it would wrap around the stock that you are cutting see.

RK: Right.

GK: And they wanted to see what I would do and you know the instruction is you never stick anything in that thing whenever—

RK: To break it off?

GK: To break that off because you are supposed to stop the machine and then do it.

RK: Right.

GK: But without even thinking I stuck that thing in there and it was—I stuck a file and the file got caught on the thing and flipped it up.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And the file up and they have the neon lamp you know—

RK: Light?

GK: And the thing flew up and hit this lamp you know and went kapow and everybody in the shop there you know just like somebody shot a gun you know and that lamp went out and I felt about that small you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: You know and they didn't tell me—they didn't tell—the shop foreman didn't say a word and they let me sweat it out you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And I put it back together and I learned a lesson right there.

RK: Yeah, that's how you learn is by experience. I guess they were teaching you to learn by experience.

GK: But I gradually got up and it was on the (inaudible) lathes and working on those things and mass production and putting out airplane motors—motors on the airplane for landing gear.

RK: Right.

GK: Motor it was part of the outside housing and it was—it was a stainless steel and it was a rough, it still had to be cut down to a thousandth of an inch, you know.

RK: Right.

GK: But I—they wanted it a certain size and cut on the outside and then the inside bore.

RK: Right.

GK: And I was doing most of the boring work and they have a gauge that says, go or no go and you stick it in there and if it goes and if it stops and no go well then that's the right size see.

RK: Right.



GK: And of course you know you want to make it pretty accurate so you use the gauge to read you know how many centimeters or the thickness or width of the hole.

RK: Right.

GK: And one guy—somebody did a dirty trick on me and they just spun that gauge around and so many rounds you know and it made it wider than it's supposed to be.

RK: Oh wow.

GK: So I used that but I didn't double check the—

RK: Gauge?

GK: Gauge you know.

RK: Oh.

GK: And the guys—

RK: Tightened it?

GK: Tightened it you know and no, they made it wider so I made some of these—

RK: The holes too big?

GK: Too big see. Now if you make it too big, it's going to be junk.

RK: Oh yeah.

GK: You can't use it.

RK: Exactly it's got to be to specifications yeah.

GK: So, man you know. And then I start to put and checking the thing and gosh darn it's going too far in there you know and I look and darn somebody had turned that thing complete one revolution you know and I set it back and I didn't tell nobody but I said at least it doesn't go so that still means it's within limit you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: So I set it up and but you have guys like that you know.

RK: Yeah, exactly.

GK: They do dirty work for you, you know. Yeah—

RK: Practical jokes or whatever.

GK: Yeah.

RK: Now this was probably in the early forties correct when you were working at the machine shop?

GK: Yes.

RK: Now we're going to back track. After you graduated from high school what did you do?

GK: Oh, see we used to raise chickens.

RK: Okay.

GK: On the ranch and me and my step-sister who was a couple years older than I, we were elected to be the people that fed the chickens, watered the chickens and cleaned the water troughs for the chickens and make sure there was no sickly chickens or something like that.

RK: Right.

GK: And collect the eggs you know and then we collect the eggs and we'd take it down to—at our home we had a basement you know all nice concrete basement and that's where dad kept the eggs, you know.

RK: Oh yeah.

GK: And dad would—would rate the eggs down in the basement and then the fellow that come and buys the eggs they—cases and cases after eggs they would be ship out. So we were in the chicken business too besides the other farming.

RK: Oh okay, yeah.

GK: And where the other farming was a nip and tuck business you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: At least the chicken eggs was a profitable business you know. And the way the egg market goes up and then it goes down like that you know. Well you try to raise the baby chicks so that they come in production just as the price of egg goes up.

RK: Right.

GK: And then they lay their eggs you know and if it drops down, the season is over and you know and so we—every year dad would buy new batches of baby chicks and that was me and my older sister's—step-sister's job to take care of the chickens and feed them and water them and so if the family wanted to go up the river you know some place, well, us two had to stay home.

RK: Right, right.

GK: But in the meantime I was ready to graduate high school now and me and Yamashiro—I don't know if you know Yamashiro out of Parlier?

RK: No.

GK: He was, Mr. Yamashiro was, I guess he was kind of the same part of Japan, you know, Yamaguchi-ken.

RK: Okay.

GK: Yamaguchi.

RK: And they were also on the ranch, living on the ranch?

GK: They lived on a ranch too.

RK: Okay.

GK: And then one of their friends, there were three of us guys that graduated high school about the same time.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: And Pete was in my class, you know, so we decided well and this—I forget—I was—I tried to remember the name. They owned a chicken ranch in Fresno. Chick sexer, do you know a chicken ranch there?

RK: No.

GK: Anyway, they were from the same place that my dad's folks were from in Japan.

RK: Okay, so there were a lot of ties.

GK: So dad knew them, oh Saiki.

RK: Saiki, Ty Saiki?

GK: Ty Saiki yeah and so I think my dad knew Ty Saiki's parents, you know.

RK: Okay.

GK: So he said when I graduated high school, dad said become a chick sexer you know because we were raising chicks and this and that.

RK: Yeah, that would be good.

GK: So then Yamashiro's and then another fellow from Parlier, his son runs—runs a pizza, he makes a pizza.

RK: A restaurant, the four of you—the three of you?

GK: Yeah, the three of us every night, we used to go to chick sexing school.

RK: They had a school somewhere?

GK: There was a night school.

RK: Oh night school?

GK: Every night we'd about two or three hours or whatever it was.

RK: Was it at a community college or something?

GK: No, it was right on—on Saiki's ranch there you know.

RK: On Saiki's?

GK: It would be considered on 10th Street I think. It would be more or less Clovis now.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: It was right on this edge of town.

RK: Edge of town?

GK: There was a lot of Japanese vegetable growers around there you know carrots, and berries and farms around there.

RK: But it was a private school? It wasn't government sponsored or anything?

GK: It was sponsored by the, well Saiki's.

RK: Ran it?

GK: Ran it.

RK: Yeah.

GK: But everything was sponsored through the University of California and—

RK: Oh okay.

GK: And international chick sexing, International Chicks, Baby Chicks Association.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: And in other words all the hatcheries.

RK: Yeah, all the hatcheries.

GK: They sponsored this class and of course Saiki's was the one that—

RK: Right.

GK: Taught us and everything and—

RK: How long was the class for? How many weeks or months?

GK: Oh, it really wasn't that long. It was maybe about three months—

RK: Okay.

GK: Or four months at the most. About three or four months maybe.

RK: Night school, every night or once a—

GK: Every night, every night.

RK: Oh, okay.

GK: I don't know if it was every night but it felt like it was every night.

RK: Were they—

GK: A friend and I, we used to take the country road you know—

RK: All the way over, yeah.

GK: All the way over.

RK: Clovis, that's a good distance yeah.

GK: And I used to sit in the back you know and lay down and sleep after going you know.

The other two guys they would sit up in the front and this Yamashiro's, they were big shots of Parlier so they had a big old Studebaker Commander you know.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: And I remember they bought this air horn—do you remember when guys used to put air horns?

RK: Oh yeah.

GK: On their fenders?

RK: Yeah.

GK: Yeah, well he had two—one set on each side.

RK: Each side of the fender yeah.

GK: On the fender you know

RK: Wow.

GK: And we were going to and taking this country road and just as we went up over the hill, there was a mule.

RK: Oh gees.

GK: I think it was a mule or horse anyway standing right in the middle of the road and it was just getting dark like and I'm laying in the back you know and I've been working during the day so after school anyway. Anyway so we hit this darn thing and man, pow, you know and so I get up you know and old Pete he gets out of the car you know and he looks at his air horn and he's rubbing his air horn and I said hey, it damaged his air horn you know. It damaged his air horn.

RK: What happened to the animal?

GK: Well it walked over about—it was getting a little dark and I think it was a mule and it walked about from here across the street.

RK: Right.

GK: And was leaning against the fence you know and I can still hear the fence wire squeaking and he was leaning against it and all of a sudden—

RK: It fell over?

GK: It fell over and it didn't squeak anymore but I don't know. I don't think we even—

RK: Kept on going?

GK: It was—we was able to go so.

RK: Yeah.

GK: I don't know how we got—if we drove it to—whether we drove it to school or not. I forget, that part I forget now.

RK: Yeah, that's no problem.

GK: But we went to school and all learned chick sexing.

RK: Okay.

GK: And we passed the International Chick Sexing Association a—

RK: Certification?

GK: Not Sexing Association, Chicken Association they sponsored through the University of California.

RK: Right.

GK: Somebody came and checked our you know and all the baby chicks are—they open them up you know to see if they are male or female.

RK: Right.

GK: And that you are all right. And I got the certificate yet it's—I passed 97 ½%.

RK: Wow, that's really good yeah.

GK: So—

RK: What was the cut off? Ninety percent or something?

GK: I don't exactly know. I think we were guaranteeing 95%.

RK: Oh okay. That is pretty good yeah.

GK: So, I don't know what the cut off was. Most of the guys, there was a couple of guys maybe didn't pass.

RK: Right.



GK: But some guys you know—you know accuracy means everything you know?

RK: Sure.

GK: And some guys you know—

RK: They do it too quick?

GK: Yeah, too quick you know and generally speaking if you do a thousand of them well you should be able to guarantee 95%, no problem.

RK: Yeah, exactly.

GK: But you know when you only got a hundred birds you know and you had better you know (laughing) you know you got to get pretty—

RK: Accurate.

GK: Accurate you know because those mistakes could be right in that one box.

RK: That's right. Exactly yeah.

GK: So anyway there was a couple of guys that didn't pass that first time but then they made them take the test over again and they come through and were told take it more easier.

Those that you know some that might show a little like you know a little lump there that is there that might not be a male or could be a female you know. So you've got to give it a once over you know but the guys that are real fast you know.

RK: Yeah, exactly.

GK: Yeah.

RK: They are not paying attention.

GK: Yeah, there is one fellow that he was always fast in chick sexing school and I know he had worked, this was in—this was in Ohio and he had worked way up in the northern part of Ohio and I was working right out of Springfield, Ohio which is about thirty or forty

miles due west of Columbus, Ohio. And I know late in the season, Fred Hirasuna, he was the general secretary of our association and I guess there was some complaints so Fred called me up and he said, “Hey, go to a certain area and check some of those chicks that were sexed over there you know.” And so I had gone and double checked it and it seemed like it was okay but you know sometimes you know you get in too much of a hurry.

RK: Oh yeah.

GK: And you—either that or it could be mislabeling the boxes.

RK: Sure.

GK: And I don’t know. He was pretty, even in school, he was always fast and he was bragging about how fast he was.

RK: Right.

GK: And you know accuracy wasn’t what he was bragging about, it was his speed, you know. So you know he could have messed up, too.

RK: Sure, you want both speed and accuracy. Yeah, you just can’t have one or the other.

GK: Yeah so, but anyway I went to check it out and I couldn’t find any—of course there is always—there is always a lot that you could make mistakes too, you know.

RK: Okay.

GK: And but I guess Fred had—had the hatchman you know get paid for the pairs you know. And but I think he probably the route that he got working up there wasn’t probably too, wasn’t a paying proposition I guess so if you go to a place where you are too busy it’s not too good and if you are too—not busy enough—

RK: Yeah.

GK: So, it's—it's—it's one or the other, sometimes man, you wished you weren't so busy.

You are so darn sleepy—

RK: That's right.

GK: Especially the first year that you are at it. I was working in Ohio then and man I'm tired and I've got to drive to all these places you know and in the afternoon I said, gee I don't think I can make it to Marysville you know from one place to another. The place down in Marysville and so, I said well I don't smoke but they say guys are telling me the best ways to when you sleep in the car just light a cigarette and put it in there and hold it in there and put a rubber band so you don't slip out of there and just go to sleep you know and when that thing get's to you and burns you—

RK: Burn you, you wake up.

GK: You wake up see. So I did that and Jesus, I burned myself and I said I don't know if I want to do that you know. And so—uh—but as you gradually get used to the routine.

RK: It gets easier.

GK: It wasn't so easy you know but at first, man, you know you are missing out on some sleep and you're tired and man, why the heck—how the heck did I get into this kind of business.

RK: Right. Oh yeah. Now at the school in Fresno were there mostly Japanese or was there a mix?

GK: There is all Nisei.

RK: These are all Nisei?

GK: All Nisei.

RK: Okay.

GK: There was a lot of people from around Fresno you know.

RK: Fresno and Fowler yeah.

GK: Vegetable growers you know. Yeah, and there must have been about ten, fifteen, ten, fifteen of us, I guess.

RK: Okay.

GK: But Ty Saiki was head of it and his brother was teaching it you know.

RK: Uh-huh. Okay.

GK: I think his name was Kiki? And his other brothers were sexing chickens, too.

RK: Oh the whole family? Yeah.

GK: The whole family was yeah.

RK: Now you were saying you had a step-sister. Now apparently your father remarried and this was roughly when you were in what grade? You were saying something like in Junior High still?

GK: I was still going to grammar school.

RK: Okay.

GK: Let's see, I was in intermediate—

RK: Intermediate school?

GK: Intermediate classroom.

RK: So did you have any older step-brothers and sisters? Where did they fit in or were there any new additions?

GK: Well the—there was one step-brother—he was a step-brother but he never come with the family.

RK: Oh okay, he was out on his own?

GK: There were all girls so.

RK: How many?

GK: And there was let's see, Grace, Dora, May, Marty, there were four girls.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: And they were all let's see, Grace, Dora, May, two—two were older than me.

RK: Okay.

GK: And two were younger than me I think.

RK: Okay.

GK: It was something like that I think. And we got along good. We had to get along.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And then the girls were you know—they were all good girls anyway.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And let's see. Yeah they when the war—when the war broke out and I was sexing chickens back in Wisconsin then and so in off season, well I, my brother came to work in Wisconsin and he went to Milwaukee, he went to work in Milwaukee.

RK: Now what was he doing your brother?

GK: He was working in a tire factory.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: And there was a bunch of guys from that camp there that came to Wisconsin because several of them came over there and they all landed jobs working in tire factories.

RK: Okay but they—your older brother was in camp but you were not?

GK: Yeah.

RK: When the war broke out?

GK: I was the only one that wasn't.

RK: Oh okay. Where did your parents—where did they go when the war broke out? Did they have to go to Fresno Assembly Center?

GK: No, they were not this side of the freeway so they didn't have to.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: So Reedley was more or less—it was a lot of the people from the other side the coast and everything they all moved into Reedley.

RK: Uh-huh.

GK: Because Reedley was on this side and Reedley community was pretty well established and so they tried to help out a lot of these—

RK: People that moved—people that had to move from the coast?

GK: Yeah, move from the coast over here so after the war there was a lot of them that made their home, livelihood here in Reedley.

RK: Right.

GK: And like Asami's? I don't know if you know the Asami's Garage and he started a garage here in Reedley and he was from—I don't know where he was from but they were all from the coast area. And yeah this is as far as I know Reedley was where the train had taken off for Poston.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: That was the starting point right there. The guys were telling me. I don't know about it.

RK: Right.

GK: And I was thinking well we—

RK: Now did you know that they were going to be moved to camp when you were back east in Wisconsin?

GK: Yes, my brother or sisters used to correspond with me and write, you know.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: And my sisters and them, they were in camp and so they wanted to get out and so I said well come over here.

RK: Yeah.

GK: So I was in Milwaukee and so off season I got a job in Milwaukee and I went through—that is, what I tell my kids, education don't—

RK: Never hurts?

GK: Never hurts and it helps you.

RK: Oh exactly you bet.

GK: So I took this machine shop just, you know, night school.

RK: Right.

GK: So when I went to off season of chick sexing I went to Milwaukee and right away—

RK: You got the job?

GK: Yeah, and job and so my two brothers and my brother went to Milwaukee and of course he had a family, see. He had a wife and kids and so and his friends were in Milwaukee too so they all stayed in an apartment building and they had apartments there and they all used to work at a tire factory you know but a I said “Heck, I ain't going to work in a tire factory.” I'm going to get a better job than that.

RK: Right.

GK: So when off season why I had gone to this school so I applied to the—

RK: Metal shop?

GK: Metal shop you know and manufacturing parts.

RK: Airplanes yeah.

GK: Airplane parts so while they were making all different kinds of subcontracting.

RK: Right. Right.

GK: Parts you know and so they hired me and shucks it was nothing to get a job, the only thing was to hold it, you know and of course they asked me if I'd work at nights you know. And I said well that's all right. Yeah I said you work—I forget what it was. It was six to six or something like that and you get half an hour for lunch and then we still pay you for twelve hour work, you know.

RK: Right.

GK: And actually you don't work twelve hours. I think it was about ten hours that you actually worked and I said, okay. And so I knew the shop foreman. He was—he was—he was a Scotchman I think it was. He was from one of these car manufacturers.

RK: Oh, uh-huh.

GK: And so him and I we got along good and so he'd give us breaks whenever he was getting tired, he was an old man. He was a—he was kind of a big wheel in the car manufacturing business and he got retired you know but he was you know, I guess a lot of manufacturers retire you after you are so old.

RK: So long yeah.

GK: Because you know they can't afford to make any mistakes and so he went to teach, to work as a shop foreman and I got along good with him and we got along good together so I tried to help the guys, the new guys on the job. Why, there are all kinds you know.



There were guys that come to work there that never did any or went to school and shop work and they want a job you know.

RK: Oh yes and someone has to teach them.

GK: So and one of them was a man I used to have to babysit him a little bit because he and his wife got kicked out of the house because he knocked her up you know.

RK: Yeah, oh wow.

GK: And her parents didn't want him around so and he—he was telling me he had problems and what he could do. And so I said well we'll look and see if we can find a little apartment where he can live and so I helped him out a little bit and put her so that she could have a place to stay and didn't have to worry about sleeping out in the streets you know and he was happy and he worked pretty good. He didn't know how to work too much.

RK: Yeah.

GK: But he did the best he can and that's all you can ask.

RK: Exactly yeah. As long as he gives the best effort.

GK: Yeah. So I helped the kids out and I got along good there until I got my papers to show up for draft and—

RK: Now before that the war had already started.

GK: Yeah.

RK: Did you have any—were there any animosity towards you, discrimination or things like that from the people in the community?

GK: No, you know the war had started already—the—oh, I had worked in Ohio you know so in this one of the main hatcheries that I was working for they did a lot of what do you call it? They sell by mail you know?

RK: Oh mail order?

GK: Mail order and so what they did was they were hatching chickens year round.

RK: Oh, okay.

GK: And in order to hatch year round, they had this big buckeye incubator you know and this big and it was a box.

RK: Yeah.

GK: The size of a regular room you know.

RK: Wow huge, very large.

GK: Very large and they had a door and then they had trays in there and anyway this was on the second story I think—I don't think it was the third story. Oh, the—the hatchery was on the third story I think. But it was inside of a—

RK: Big building?

GK: Big building, brick building and it was where they manufactured this hatchery you know wood work.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: So I'd be on the second floor sexing the baby chicks. That is where the baby chicks came. I don't think they were hatched there. They were hatched on the third floor. They came down to the second floor but there I used to meet a lot of the people that were manufacturing the hatchery so the foreman and stuff like that you know and they'd talk

to me and this and that. And so work started to slow down you know when the chick's hatching season started to slow down, you know I got slack you know?

RK: Yeah.

GK: So I was slinging the bull with the shop—one of the shop foremen down below and I said, "Hey, is there any chance of getting a job here, you know?" And he said, "Why?" And I said, "When I get slack, I like to keep working you know. If you've got work why." He said heck you can work for me any time you want so. I got a job there you know and so I was working there, too. And then when I had to sex chickens, well it was sex chicken time.

RK: Right.

GK: And then I'd go—they knew what you know, they had punch cards when you punch in.

RK: Sure when you time out?

GK: So I went to work for them but I—I tell you I got initiated for working for an outfit like that you know. And it's—and I—this shop foreman is about a two hundred fifty, three hundred pounder great big gut, you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: Both jaws sticking out with a shot of tobacco.

RK: Oh wow.

GK: And red—red hair and they used to call him "Red," you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And they'd spit that chew tobacco right by your feet you know.

RK: Exactly yeah.

GK: And—

RK: That takes a lot of getting used to that type of—

GK: Yeah so, of course I took manual training in high school.

RK: Right.

GK: And it's over my brothers—my nephew's place now, my brother passed away so. But I built a corner glass where you put glassware inside.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: It's a—

RK: Dish case type of thing yeah.

GK: I made it in high school when I was a sophomore and they got it over there now and they can't believe that I had made it you know.

RK: Right.

GK: And sophomore in high school and so you know anyway, and so as long as you make up your mind you know.

RK: Yeah, you can do these things.

GK: And so they gave me a job and old Red you know he said, "Well go and help that guy that is ripping, cross-cutting the saw you know timber boards you know one by twelve or whatever it is you know.

RK: Right.

GK: And the way they do is they make it so miserable for you, you know and they work like mad trying to make you work you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And one day Red said “Is it getting to you?” And I said, “No.” I said, “I’ll take whatever they dish out to me.” And so well he put me on this planing machine. It planes the board you know say  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch board and planes it you know and makes it all smooth.

RK: Right.

GK: So they won’t be uneven sides. So they would already be cut to length maybe three feet or four feet long you know and the darn guy instead of getting two, three, four of them at one time and then where you can handle it you know.

RK: Right.

GK: At first he was going and he’d put them you know one and all different ways you know so when they come through well you can’t handle it see.

RK: Exactly yeah.

GK: So I looked at Red you know and I said and I go like this to that guy you know and I go like this you know, he’s loco you know. And Red said, and he just squirts his and I said, and so I was trying to keep up and I said well I know what I’m going to do. I’m going to let them all fall down you know, when they start dropping down see and I just stood there and watched it drop down you know.

RK: Yeah,

GK: And Red can’t bear to see those plane woods drop down because you know one drops down on top of the other it marks them.

RK: Yeah start denting each other.

GK: Denting so Red he gets kind of hey he hollers at the guy he said, “Hey, they are falling on the ground you know.” I said, “Yeah, they are falling on the ground you know.” So, Red tells the guy don’t do that anymore you know. So I picked them up and I picked

them up and go over there and show that guy you see where that wood dropped down on top of the other.

RK: Yeah.

GK: It dropped down and makes a dent you know.

RK: Sure.

GK: I said it's going to be culls now, you can't use it. So, pretty soon I trained those guys and said if you pull that kind of trick on me and (laughing) and so Red and I got along good with Red.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And he knew me from before that I'm working on the baby chicks that they had so.

RK: Right.

GK: So he took care of me.

RK: That's good.

GK: Then I worked there for until oh—I was working there—I had bought a new car and I sexed enough chickens where I made enough money to buy a new car and had cashed stashed away and so I bought a new car.

RK: This was—

GK: This was in —

RK: Forty-three, about forty-three?

GK: Yeah, somewhere around in there. And—

RK: Now were there a lot—

GK: I was working you know more or less all year round now see and I told the hatcher man, hey, you know, are you going to take time off for Christmas you know? And he said no

we hatch all year round you know. I said can I get off for Thanksgiving and Christmas you know for about a month.

RK: No holidays yeah.

GK: He said, well if you guarantee you'll come back, I'll let you go, you know. So I took off just before Thanksgiving I think and I drove my car and I drove all the way back to California.

RK: So were you able to visit your families in the camps?

GK: No, this was still , they were still—they were still in—

RK: In Reedley?

GK: In Reedley.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: Okay, and then my brother was raising lettuce so he was—

RK: So this had to be about forty-two I guess, 1942?

GK: Yeah, somewhere around there.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And we was trimming lettuce you know and somebody packed them in the crates and Mr—a Japanese fellow out of Fresno he used to wear leggings and he was kind of smoked cigars and—

RK: Yeah.

GK: God, I forget his name. And he was kind of a big wheel in Fresno.

RK: Okay.

GK: And that was a Sunday too, December the seventh he was working and it was about ten o'clock and just before lunch time anyway. He come in and he said, I don't know if we

had any Caucasians working for us at that time. We might have had a few Mexican people but anyway I think he said something in Japanese and he said “Haji matta!” You know.

RK: Oh okay, this is forty-one yet. December seventh yeah.

GK: And so oh, and man you know and the first thing I thought about was my job.

RK: Yeah. Exactly.

GK: And so then I called up Saiki’s and what can I do? And then the hatchery man were calling up Saiki’s and wanted to know when I was going to get back.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And couldn’t give a definite answer and so I called up Saiki’s and said, “What can I do?” I can’t get back unless I drive back with my car.

RK: Right.

GK: And I need my car and so Saiki said, “Well get ready to take off as soon as you can you know.” So in the meantime I get ready and everything and then Saiki calls me up and says, “Hey the boss said they didn’t want you there you know because he got a replacement.” Of course Southern Cal Chick Sexing, our competitors were all over in that area too you know. So, they had a guy already there already so they got the job I guess so about that time then the Wisconsin Hatchery Man’s Association, they were looking for chick sexers. So this guy by the name of P.O. Peterson he was an executive secretary of the hatchery man’s in Wisconsin so he wanted Saiki’s to guarantee him so many chick sexers and I forget how many it was about ten or—

RK: Wow, a bunch of them yeah.



GK: A bunch of us chick sexers so okay Fred said “When can you go?” I said you tell me when and I’ll go and so he said, Fred says, “Can you take one of the boys new chick sexers that just learned how to do it with you and give him a free ride?” I said, “Yeah that’s okay as long as he behaves himself.” So there was a Hawaiian boy that just learned. He just came from Hawaii and he learned and I said I’ll be ready in maybe twenty-four hours and I’ll be all ready to go. I think I got ready right away. Well, I had my car and everything.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And so I went up to Fresno and picked him up and this fellow up and we took off you know. You know to this day I forget the guy’s name. I can’t remember his name. He never paid me for gas or nothing.

RK: Oh gee.

GK: He was a free ride.

RK: Which way did you go?

GK: I went—I went on Route 66.

RK: Okay, so you headed south towards Arizona?

GK: Yeah, so we went—well that’s the way I came back so.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: So one time I went Lincoln Highway 33 let’s see now. But this time here I went Route 66 anyway across, we got stopped on the river, across the bridge and we made it no problem.

RK: You went through Arizona and New Mexico and then part of Texas right?

GK: Uh-huh.

RK: And then headed north?

GK: I was running low on gas so I stopped at a service station, bar and everything.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And I filled my gas tank up, the guy filled it up for me and then I went into pay and there was a big bar there you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And I walked in and paid the guy off and the guys working there and that is when they were building the Grand Coule—the Grand Dam—the big dam you know.

RK: Yeah in Washington?

GK: No, not Coulee?

RK: Oh , you mean Boulder Dam?

GK: Boulder Dam yeah.

RK: Okay.

GK: And these guys are well this was a weekend I guess it was. That when I took off because these guys were there.

RK: Oh this must have been near Needle's somewhere.

GK: Yeah.

RK: Right on the Colorado River.

GK: Well I crossed the river.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And then I went before I started going up the hill anyway I stopped at this bar and paid for the gas and the guy says, he told me he says "I got some guys in there but as soon as you pay, as soon as you get the change take off you know." I went in there and the guys

says, “Hey, are you Japanese?” And I said, “Yeah, I’m a Japanese-American.” You know and they started hollering at me and this and that.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And so the guy that owned the place you know he said keep on going, just go, go, go.

RK: Right.

GK: So I get in the car and I take off you know. Then we come to Williams.

RK: Right.

GK: The sheriff is right in the middle of the road of Route 66 and he said, do you have chains? I said no chains and he says well no car goes through without chains and I said how much are chains and I don’t know sixteen dollars or something like that. Well give me a pair you know. So he gave me a pair and he said “By the way, are you Japanese?” And I said, “Yeah, I’m Japanese-American.” He said, “You got ID?” I said, “Yeah I have ID.” So well at that time, you know Fred was pretty sharp too and he got this “Hatchery Man’s World” It’s a book you know about that thick and about that wide and it had the names of all the hatchery mans in the state—different states yeah.

RK: Yeah.

GK: Throughout the United States see. And then in the back he had issues, he had it made so that all the chick sexer’s names on them and all the chick sexers and so my name is on there and he said, yeah it is very important you keep that, you know, so you introduce yourself to any. Well I told him, don’t worry about me because wherever I go I report –

RK: The police station?

GK: Police station and sheriff’s station and so before I get into the first place I stop is at the sheriff station and police station and chief of police, you know.

RK: Right.

GK: So if anybody reports a Japanese is in town the police knows already.

RK: Exactly.

GK: So that's—that's was my procedure and so we stopped—we drove—I drove day and night until we got into Amarillo, Texas. And boy I was pretty corked and my buddy, I didn't know if he knew how to drive or not but I didn't trust him to drive so. So, we stopped in a service station right in Amarillo, Texas and it was this station stuck—this motel stuck out like a sore thumb you had to more or less go around it to go by it you know. So I stopped overnight at this hotel and no problem. We got up the next morning and got in the car and took off.

RK: Okay.

GK: And I was eligible for the draft that day so I said you know on the way through the state of Illinois, I've got to find a place to register, so you know. I don't know—I think they usually gave you so many days to—

RK: To report yeah.

GK: To report register but anyway I said I'll stop at this one place south of Chicago and the county headquarters there and I signed up for my draft and I signed it there and gave my Fresno address and I got into Chippewa—not Chippewa but where the executive secretary of the Wisconsin Hatchery Man's Association is at.

RK: This is in Wisconsin somewhere?

GK: This is in Wisconsin and what is the name of the town now?

RK: Where is it near, Milwaukee? Is it near Milwaukee somewhere?

GK: It's near Milwaukee. Where—where did the Green Bay's play there?

RK: They play in Green Bay, Wisconsin, the Packers?

GK: Yeah. It wasn't Green Bay but anyway.

RK: It's close by anyway.

GK: It was close to Milwaukee and Green Bay, boy I forget the name of the town.

RK: It doesn't matter.

GK: But that's where the executive secretary lives.

RK: Okay.

GK: So he had—he wanted us I don't know a bunch of us chick sexers for the state of Wisconsin.

RK: Right.

GK: And then so a bunch of guys that worked in Minnesota and Illinois and around there they all congregated there because this fellow vouched for us.

RK: Exactly yeah.

GK: He was—we were working for him through him for all these hatcheries and he was a good fellow. And a, in fact we used to go fishing together you know. Anyway but of course this is the first time we got to know him you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: So we all tried to get there and we were waiting for these other guys to show up you know. Pete told us to stick around and make yourself comfortable here and find a rooming house or something and just stick around here until we can get all the guys together. I said okay. So the next day—or the day after Pete Yamashiro and his bunch—

RK: You mentioned him.

GK: Come through and they took the same route but they stopped the next night after we did, see.

RK: Oh wow. That is amazing they took the same route.

GK: Well, everybody took that same route.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: That's—

RK: The standard route back then yeah.

GK: Yeah, route 66

RK: Sixty-six yeah.

GK: And they stopped at this hotel and what happened is after we had left, the manager come in and he said, “Hey, some Jap stopped here overnight didn't they?” And the guy that watched and looked in his book and he said there was some oriental that came through here but there was nothing wrong, they didn't do nothing wrong you know.” Of course it was us you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And the manager calls the sheriff and the chief of police and they call come over there and they look at the book and two japs came through here you know and this and that you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: So they told the night watch, the clerk you know.

RK: Be aware.

GK: Yeah, be aware if any japs come through there to let us know you know.

RK: Oh and they came the next day.

GK: So the next day in the evening you know Pete Yamashiro and a couple of other guys, there was about four of them. Anyway they come in and they stop at that hotel there.

RK: (laughing)

GK: And he said man boy the sirens just blew from all over coming. And they got thrown in jail you know.

RK: Oh man.

GK: So, these guys when they finally got out, they had ID too.

RK: Yeah, exactly.

GK: And so when they met us over there in Wisconsin we were all rendezvousing why they were telling us about it and I started laughing.

RK: That's funny.

GK: I was making fun of them you know and I said, "You know there is that song about deep in the heart of Texas you know." Hey, and so and who was it? Somebody was saying yeah my mom told me not to go, we were going to get in trouble. (laughing)

RK: (laughing)

GK: I said oh heck, this is nothing. You've got to be able to brave something like this.

RK: That's right.

GK: You got to stick your foot forward first.

RK: Right.

GK: And be proud of it. You know so and so I had left—my territory was up in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin and that area then and just below me was Kako Mirasako. I don't know if you know the Mirasako boys?

RK: No.

GK: They're from Fresno. There is Kako and his younger brother Yoshi, and Yoshi is, Kako passed away about four or five years ago now I guess. And his younger brother lives up in Washington. He's teaching Kendo.

RK: Oh.

GK: He was a Kendo fan you know. And so he's up there teaching Kendo and so whenever Kako passed away he came down and I talked to him and that Fresno bunch. It's funny. I don't know whether they are like clans I guess. They are different. I don't know I can't figure out those people in Fresno.

RK: Yeah.

GK: If somebody really passed away why shucks whether they are Buddhists or Christians—

RK: Right.

GK: I go to the guy's funeral you know.

RK: Yeah, everyone goes.

GK: Yeah, but in Fresno it is surprisingly and Kako and his dad was a what do you call it? He used to make suits and stuff like that.

RK: Tailor?

GK: Yeah tailor and he was a tailor and he was a pretty well known tailor there in Fresno and when Kako passed away, boy there was very few people that came to his funeral you know. I don't know if Kako's wife had something to do with it or what.

RK: Right.

GK: But anyway, I went to his funeral and I said boy it's really sad. There is only a handful of people there. And I talked to Yoshi, the one surviving brother and he told me what he



was doing. He was teaching Kendo up in Washington and I guess maybe there, maybe they didn't get along, you know in Fresno. That is why he is up in Washington.

RK: Yeah, could have been.

GK: Yeah, you know there is something.

RK: Could have been something happened.

GK: Family problems or something. Yeah, could be from being in camp you know and they didn't go to camp.

RK: There are all sorts of things.

GK: Yeah, you know all sorts of reasons you know. But anyway.

RK: So you are in Wisconsin and like you said you registered for the service. And so did they call you in finally? And this is about forty-two or forty-three?

GK: Yeah, I forget what year it would be. They called me in the draft and they made me take the step forward in Milwaukee in think it was and then they gave me a delay.

RK: And you are single still at this time?

GK: I'm single and they said you're in the Army now but you are on inactive duty. So—

RK: Oh wow.

GK: They said we'll let you know when we want you and you know.

RK: When yeah?

GK: When, so don't take nothing permanent now so I went back to Milwaukee, Chippewa Falls.

RK: Yeah.

GK: I stayed there until my notice came to report at Fort Sheridan, Illinois and from there I got sent to McCoy, Fort Knox.

RK: Oh Tennessee.

GK: Fort Knox, Kentucky.

RK: Kentucky, yeah that is where it is.

GK: Kentucky and I like a damn fool I took my car with me and when we got days off, we'll get in the car and cruise around and I didn't cruise around until I got a transfer to—I was in the hospital for three weeks. My, I forget my right knee swoll up.

RK: Oh wow, got an infection, huh.

GK: And I went to the medic, sick call and the doctor said you had better report to the hospital and I reported to the hospital and I stayed in the hospital for three weeks and they drained it out and everything and took exercise and in three weeks I come back out. And in the meantime I missed a lot of the training.

RK: Basic training yeah.

GK: Well that basic training that I missed out on was how to drive the tank.

RK: Oh okay, that's important.

GK: And uh—

RK: So you were with the armored division or something?

GK: The armored division and one thing I found out about being at Fort Knox was that non-coms, the cadre was very good to us Nisei.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: And I didn't know why but you know after hours you know we'd all get with the regular training is over with, we'd get cleaned up and we're off now until it's time to hit the sack you know. And some of these non-com's staff sergeants would say, "Hey George, you ought to go down and see something or go to have some drinks or this and that." And a

bunch of us Nisei are hanging together and yeah we'll go. And so he'd take us around and real good to us you know. And you know I was always wondering at that time why all these people were so good to us Nisei you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: But it dawned on me you know sometime later but not too late but then they—the 442<sup>nd</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> Battalion then they went through North Africa then too. They and then they went into Italy. And the tank—the armored boys went through Africa and then they went through Italy too.

RK: Exactly.

GK: So, they must have fought together a little bit or something like that. So, that was the reason why they were so good to us.

RK: Because yeah they probably found out what a good job they were doing in Italy and North Africa.

GK: Right.

RK: So that was good that helped you guys out.

GK: And I was always wondering why they were so good to us.

RK: But later on they came through yeah. So, that was good the Japanese-Americans, you know, with the 442<sup>nd</sup> did what they did. Because they laid the foundation for the later people.

GK: And they took care of us you know the guys took care of us just like we were their buddies you know. And we appreciated that. I couldn't figure it out until quite a few years later and I said yeah you know. Those guys fighting together like that and these guys getting their tanks shot out from under them.

RK: Yeah.

GK: They'd come back and the 442<sup>nd</sup> boys are fighting like that yeah.

RK: Now after Baltimore where did you go?

GK: Well, that's where our counter-intelligence school was.

RK: Oh, okay so you spent quite a long time there?

GK: We spent let's see. Oh it was all a rush course you know. And I'll tell you the first night after one of our courses was how to break into locks and stuff like that and guys were out there trying to pick locks and get into somebody's foot locker and like that. And everything was a rush course. And how to—how to tail people. How to lose a tail.

RK: Right.

GK: How to lose people following you. How to check and see if guys are following you and all that stuff.

RK: Right.

GK: Everything we were taught and then things got a little tougher. Photography, we learned photography and we learned how to write reports. There was a lot of early CIC agents that didn't learn how to write reports so that was a big problem. But—

RK: Now CIC stands for Counter-Intelligence? What's

GK: Right.

RK: What's the other C stand for?

GK: Corps.

RK: Oh Counter Intelligence Corps okay.

GK: Corps. And the—

RK: So they couldn't write reports so how did they learn?

GK: Well you know during the war itself a lot of times you know you are just word by word.

RK: Verbatim, yeah.

GK: You know you just scribble down. I don't know how they did it during combat time.

RK: Oh yeah.

GK: You know how the reports was. I don't believe you reported to your officer.

RK: Exactly yeah.

GK: But when the war was over then they want for instance later on, McArthur wanted to know how come there was a lot of military people banding together. And you know run by some high ranking officer.

RK: Right.

GK: And McArthur had some worries about that and then you know they asked us to find out what was going on. You know it stands to reason that if you knew anything about the Japanese military people why you can kind of put things together.

RK: Right.

GK: Well my reasoning was that—and which was true, most of your military people were from the farms, country, country, country people, you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And not city slickers from the city of Tokyo and stuff like that.

RK: Right.

GK: People that lived out in the—

RK: Rural areas?

GK: Rural area yes and so when the war ended a lot of your generals and you know, officers when they got relieved of their duty, they come back home and they come to the farms.

RK: Farms yeah, they were common people.

GK: They were just another just another farmer, you know.

RK: Yeah exactly.

GK: Dirt farmer and so in order for them to farm you know, they can't farm with what they had they had to buy a hoe or a rack.

RK: Yeah equipment.

GK: Shovel or you know some equipment and seed and that. And in order to raise the funds why you know they had to work together. And so when they had to work together who was going to be the chairman? Well you don't have a buck private that says we're going to go and do this way.

RK: Yeah.

GK: It's a high ranking officer. Naturally he's going to be the chairman you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: Because when he says, hey, be quiet well everybody will be quiet but you know we're going to do this way or let's all decide how to do it and he'll—he'll you know lead the group.

RK: Yeah, exactly.

GK: And generally they will select the highest ranking officer to do it you know. They have respect for the guy and you know he'll—I don't know if he'll pull rank or not but at least he'll get things done.

RK: Right.

GK: So that's the reason why you know a lot of these officers or were head of the group and they were nothing but farm boys and so we had—this one here I had to, somebody else

sent this report in and I don't know how this report was sent in but I had to take—take it over again because headquarters wasn't satisfied with the report you know. And it is very important on these reports that the agent or special agent on the summary sheet you know, on the summary what you thought or what you are thinking.

RK: Exactly, if things are going okay or not.

GK: And what you say, you report that these people are from the rural area, farming country people, okay. And so and so is the chairman and this and that. That is what the guy who sent the report in before and he probably visited a bunch of different groups and the same thing the big shot was the—and well you don't have to write that much you know. And the agents report you know what do you think. The reason that these groups are from—are from the farm and they are farm people and so they are going back into the farming business. And so in order to become farmers they have to have tools and you know seeds and everything and in order to have that they have to work collectively to do it.

RK: Right.

GK: And in order to do so they had to have an organization. And in order to have an organization they had to have a high ranking officer to lead the group because who else is going to lead you know. So the agent's comments is very important on things like that you know. Telling McArthur or whoever is higher up that reads my report understands why it is taking place. It is taking place that way but the reason for it is this—you don't if you call a meeting together and you don't have a buck private lead the group you probably ask a sergeant or an officer to do it you know. And in their case it's the same way. You—in our area it was a very rural area and the people you know when they

selected somebody it was always, you know, somebody that had a little you know ranking position so.

RK: Sure.

GK: And McArthur or headquarters it probably went to the Eighth Army and the Eighth Army went to headquarters and headquarters' company they probably went to the chain of commands and went up.

RK: Right.

GK: But then so, my CO sent me out to check up on that because it come back that hey they want more explanations.

RK: Right.

GK: But I don't know. A lot of we had a lot of special agents that went through school and they took a quick course too, you know, and ours was a little bit more—when I went through the school they went through us a little bit harder I guess because I don't know why. But then I don't know I was able to do my work a little bit better and tried to you know whenever—whenever you meet somebody you always you know. And I like my work because it was real interesting you know. And you get lost you know and I got lost coming out of the hills and coming into the city proper more or less. And you don't know when you are getting out of the city and are still in the mountains.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And I was coming out and then there was like a little village on the mountainside, hillside you know. And I stopped there and I got lost. There was a fork in the road and I didn't know which one to go and so I asked the, got off and stopped the jeep and got off and it was mid-morning and there was a bunch of little pre-schoolers playing out in the yard



you know. And then there was one guy stooping over, not stooping over but squatting down and he was an elderly fellow. I'm, he looked like he might be sixty or seventy years old but maybe he might not have been that old but anyway, I got out of the jeep and walked in there and went to this old fellow and asked him hey, this fork in the road which way is going which way you know? And so he started telling me and then he spoke to me a little bit in English you know. And so I said, "Eigo wa-kari masu, ka?" No he said, yeah you know I said, I asked him where did you learn your Japanese? He said, oh he said he was in America for a while in his youth and I said, oh so you had it kind of rough during the war didn't you? You know I just had to keep my mouth shut you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And so I talked to him you know and I didn't interrogate him and just normal talking and I said what were you doing back in America you know at a young age? He said oh I went to see the world you know and had a good time and I said, oh what were you doing? He said he was Jack London's cabin boy. So I said oh what is your name now and he told me his name and I don't know if I'm still remembering it right but it was a long name. So, every time I used to go to Oakland I used to pay a visit to Jack London Square and see if his name was written somewhere out there but I never could find it. But he said he had it rough you know in Japan during the war. He had to keep his mouth shut you know and didn't let hardly anybody know he was in the United States.

RK: Yeah.

GK: But you learned a lot from those kinds of people.

RK: Now going back to the CIC School. Were you in a special unit where there were Japanese or was it just mixed?

- GK: You know, it was mixed. There was only two of us in our class all the rest were—at the time.
- RK: So Japanese wasn't required, that you spoke Japanese or know it?
- GK: No. There's two Japanese. Me and this fellow from Fresno. His dad owned the restaurant in the produce market.
- RK: Oh wow, that was ironic, that's close.
- GK: He was kind of the head of the Japanese people there, I guess.
- RK: Oh, okay.
- GK: So anyway he got to go to this CIC school but when they—it's a long story. We was getting ready to ship out.
- RK: Now this was after the war, right? '45, they had already signed the peace treaty on the Missouri in Tokyo Harbor?
- GK: I think the war was over already.
- RK: Yeah.
- GK: And a—
- RK: So it's ready for occupation.
- GK: Yeah, because a—see, we got our furlough and we was going back to camp and this guy, what's his name now? I forgot—
- RK: A—don't worry about it.
- GK: Anyway, he says “George, let's sign up?” “What do you mean, sign up?” “Sign up for a year.” I said, a year? Man, if we go overseas, we got to serve at least a year. Yeah, but you sign up for a year and (inaudible) and maybe you'll come home. Oh yeah, that'll be

a good deal. So he talked me into signing up. I says, a, what's the good part of signing up now? He says, well, you become a PFC, you know, we're a buck private right now.

RK: Right.

GK: So get a little extra pay, every little bit counts. And so he talked me into it. So I have a re-enlistment sheet here where we signed up for a year's, guaranteed year's duty, you know, so that made us a buck, a PFC now instead of Buck Private.

RK: Private First Class, yeah.

GK: I said, you know, if we go overseas and they give us all this training, man, you should at least be a PFC with, if all this training means anything. And he says, yeah well, you know how Army is, a lot of times they just send you over just as you are.

RK: Yeah.

GK: So anyway I says, well, it's all right with me, only thing is when I get home my folks will want to know what the heck I'm doing back home again. (laughing) I just got home. For thirty days, given me thirty days furlough.

RK: Furlough, yeah.

GK: So, a, so I signed up. So, a, I says, listen now, a, God, I forgot the guy's name, he's in Fresno.

RK: Yeah.

GK: They say he's all shot up. I mean, he's not all there, no all liquored up because he liked to drink, you know, and so we signed up and, a, I asked him how come you went to Chicago? He says, well my girlfriend was there. Oh. Well, I guess after that, his girlfriend was not true to him and had problems anyway because later on when I came

back and I heard about him, why, he was, he was all shot. You know, he was kind of goo-gooed. Anyway, good thing I didn't know his name. (laughing)

RK: Yeah. (laughing)

GK: Anyway, he showed me the way home, you know, we flew home. And he knew how to do it. We went to Washington D.C., went to the airport there and says, is there any way we could hitchhike to California? And they said, there's a plane leaving, certain time in the evening. I think it was afternoon, anyway you wait, be there promptly and you'll be able to get on it. So sure enough, we got on that.

RK: Now, this is a military transport.

GK: Transport plane, we got on it and a, we have to, you know—oxygen masks there. We sat in the back and we looked and goddamn, some damn general sitting in the front, general all by himself sitting in the front and we're the back, you know. And so, we landed in Hamilton Field, north of Sacramen—not Sacra—San Francisco, North Bay you know. And a, he knew all the routes, so he says well gee, we gotta get a ticket, trolley or train down to San Francisco so we went to San Francisco and he says well, I guess the only place we can stay is at the Y, and he knew quite a bit so I said okay. I followed him and we went to the Y and asked if we could stay and he says yeah, says pick up, a, your newspaper, good thing we had overcoats, you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: We laid down with the overcoats on and laid on top of the newspaper and slept there. The next morning we caught the slow train out of San Francisco to Fresno and a, we got into Fresno and then, a, Fresno to home over here that was the main job, you know so I got off

the train in, on 99 and going like this (thumbing) you know, I got a ride to that place where they used to have the airplane on the roof.

RK: Oh, yeah.

GK: About that area there.

RK: That's near Fowler, then.

GK: Yeah, by Fowler I got unloaded and a, finally, I couldn't get no more rides, you know, coming this way so I called up, you know, and called up home and the kids were all over my, our place, you know, and this fella that was with me in, at, in Japan, he was there before I was and he got his discharge earlier than me and so he was waiting for me, too, you know, in coming home and so they came after me and a, I got in the car and coming home I got car sick (laughing) you know.

RK: Oh.

GK: I was really sick on board ship coming home too, you know, and everytime I laid down and I'd wake up, well I'd walk like I was, had my head chopped off, you know, but ah, they picked me up and I got home and I was glad I came home and a—

RK: So did you, ah, when you were in Japan, did you become a private first class, PFC, did they give you the higher ranking?

GK: No, ah, well, at ah, when we went to Japan, then they, from the replacement depot, they shipped—

RK: By the way, did you fly over or did you take a ship over to Japan?

GK: Took a ship over.

RK: Oh, okay.

GK: And, a, from replacement depot, they sent us to the counter-intelligence headquarters, right across from the Imperial Palace.

RK: Oh, okay.

GK: Right across the moat. This was the old Kinpetai headquarters.

RK: Oh.

GK: And that was the headquarters of the—

RK: Counter-intelligence, huh?

GK: For the military police in Japan, you know. Japanese military police. So they kept there for one, about thirty days, about a month and then, ah, it was all refresher course. What you can do and what you can't do here in Japan. All new regulations, you know, so and a, my people came from southern Honshu, Yamaguchi-ken, you know, next to Hiroshima-ken. So—

RK: Yeah.

GK: So all the people down- Hiroshima-ken people, we had to all go up north, you know, so I went to—

RK: Oh, so you couldn't go where your ancestors were?

GK: Yeah, they want us to—just to—so you don't play favorites, you know.

RK: Yeah, exactly, yeah.

GK: A, but a, just about that time I knew that I had lost my younger brother so I thought good time to get over there and not make contact with these people over there, you know. I could've got into a little, you know, done something I shouldn't have been doing, so I was up there and a, the officer in charge of telling us where to go, says, oh, yeah, that's a good thing, go up north, you're people from down south, yeah. Of course, they said that

according to some of the people that they said that Hiroshima and Yamaguchi-ken were the hot spots, you know, because there were many of the immigrants from there in the United States and they got the most, you know, damage—

RK: Oh, yeah, that's where the atomic bomb was dropped, that's why.

GK: Most damage there, so it was a, kind of a hot spot there, you know, so in another words if a CIC agent didn't watch himself, why, you never know, you know?

RK: Oh, exactly.

GK: (laughing) But anyway, I got shipped up north and then a, and then I didn't know how the condition of my blood relatives in Japan were, so I got to know a—well, you know each agent always tries to develop a, somebody that you could talk to, a Japanese person you could talk to, and a lot of it would be a, you would use as a source of information and you know, and a, so I ran around with, a lot with the head of the chamber of commerce, prefectural chamber of commerce, the kai-cho and fuku-kai-cho—chairman and vice-chairman—and the vice-chairman was name was Sato and he kind of liked me and guess he was trying to get, he wanted me to set—

RK: Oh, set you up. (laughing)

GK: (laughing) He had a daughter, you know. I wouldn't go for that.

RK: Now did you have your own jeep or did the Army give you a driver and a jeep?

GK: No, we drove our own vehicle so that made it good because...

RK: You could go everywhere.

GK: Yeah, we can go—well, what was so good about it was that we don't have to come back and—

RK: Check-in, huh?

GK: Check-in, see.

RK: Wow, that's great!

GK: We never had to check-in, you know so a, usually the guys would check in 10-11 o'clock at night anyway, at least, you know, but a, there was no check-in. Only thing is, you had to have a report, you know, so and a, pretty smart was that we would always have cig—cartons of cigarettes in my, back of the jeep and we'd have our rations, you know, and whenever we were going out of town, we throw in C-rations and K-rations and we'd take off. They bring out the you know—all kind of food for you, you know. Anyway that was our standard procedure that we'd take all that along especially when you don't know when you can come back, you know. And well the first trip that I made was the—as soon as I reached headquarters, Moriokashi Headquarters, went in, the CO introduced me to all the guys and then he said, George tomorrow morning I want you to go to certain, certain place. Okay sir. And he said take Kam—he was a language boy.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: He was not a special agent.

RK: Right.

GK: Of course we called him agent, not special agent, but agent so.

RK: But he could at least interpret then.

GK: Yeah. So it was—I don't know what the CO's object of sending me up there was to see if I knew what I was doing or what? So he sent me up there you know with this fellow from Los Angeles, Kaminichi, you know. And Kam was there pretty early so he was there when probably about the same time as Jim Ishida over here, was there. And Jim was there early too. He was there about three months before I was I guess, something



like that. Anyway Kam was there and I told him, you know where we're supposed to go, don't you? And he said yeah. I said okay. And you are my interpreter now, aren't you? Yeah. So I said I am new to this so I am going to have to learn something from you so he said you know this city you know Moriokashi it's a city, more or less, so every cross place there was a police cubby you know and at that time when I first go there, they were still saying, oh you can see there on the telephone, them telling hey so and so is coming down, and heading south, you know.

RK: So they already knew you guys were coming?

GK: Yeah, yeah but they cut that out a couple weeks after that. I didn't see those anymore. I guess the Japanese government you know well because the second detail that I got put on was to interview all the Diet members running for election for the main government.

RK: Yeah, for the Parliament yeah.

GK: Parliament yeah. So they wanted, there was I don't know fifteen, twenty, twenty-five guys running for office you know and I don't know. I forget what I did whether I divided it up or whether I tried to take care of it myself but I think I hired—I got another fellow, agent—special agent to do it with me.

RK: Yeah.

GK: But anyway the first trip was that this fellow he knew just where to go you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: So this is a fellow out of Los Angeles and he was a language boy so he could speak Japanese good and so he told me hey this part you know—he told me what was happening you know and then he said okay I'll park my jeep here and I'll let the station

manager we got it parked here and it's supposed to be here until we come back, you know.

RK: Right.

GK: So we got on the train and we went all the way up to high country and it was the last stop before we get into the next prefecture you know.

RK: Right.

GK: And prefecture divided in the mountains, the China side or Korea side and Ocean side. We were on the Ocean side so about half way across that thing you know this valley up there and that is where we went to. And—and it was still snow on the ground and there was—we stopped at the main station and they said that he was out so just go up to the place where they have these hot springs, the hotels, the hot spring hotels and just wait there and then the police chief will come up. So we went to this hot spring and we checked in and of course, now we had my buddy you know he showed me how to get the rations, you know and—

RK: Exchanging, yeah.

GK: Exchanging, yeah, for our stay.

RK: Exactly.

GK: And we—they put us up in the upstairs room but this town—this village that we walked from the main headquarters police station there is about, we walked about not quite a half a mile away you know but this place was nothing but hot springs. There was community hot springs you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And that was right across the street from where we were staying, you know. And they were raising hoopy all night long. Men and women and we were on this side and of course, more subdued, you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: It was quiet and my buddy see I'm learning the tricks of the trade yet so he gave them some cigarettes and some ration, you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And that paid for our stay you know. About that time the supper was ready and the police chief comes in you know and I don't know if it was all set up or not you know but the police chief came and the police chief, I had—our reasons for going up was that they said there were some arms up in that area you know and so I asked the guy to ask if there was any caves or reason for arms to be hidden up in this area you know. And of course the police chief didn't think there was any reason to, that way up in the sticks or boondocks to hide anything.

RK: Yeah hide anything.

GK: But then again yes if there was going to be a prolonged drag out war you never can tell.

RK: Sure.

GK: So but I asked him is there any mine up here? And he said no there is no mine up there, you know and so I said we'll check around and see anyway. Then the police chief, he—he said oh, I'm going to treat you guys, so well okay there was sake came out and food came out and I nipped on mine a little bit but I really didn't drink much. And my buddy, you know Kam, he liked the stuff.

RK: Yeah.

GK: So he was kicking away you know. And then the police chief, we were conversing in Japanese and English, you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And then I'd tap my buddy Kam and say hey Kam, you know, the police chief can speak good English and you can't? (laughing) And Kam looked at me kind of funny and he said and so I talked to the police chief in English, you know, and I said, you can speak English huh? And he said yeah. "Do ko de naratta, no?" where did you learn it from?

RK: Yeah.

GK: And he said I used to live—I lived in America for a while you know, and oh, so I said that is good. I said there is no you know no shame in you knowing how to speak English then. So there wasn't that much to talk about except arms and if there were any arms up there so we asked him and he said no. I said if there is, there is somebody that carried it up there and hid it but he doesn't think you know that war would come that far up in the boondocks like in hot springs unless some people as the old families' rundown swords you know that family heirloom and other than that he didn't think there was any you know. So but he asked us to go ahead and take a look if you think there might so I said we'll look a little bit and if we can't see anything, we'll see you at the police station when we leave you know. So we had—he brought out a lot of food for us, you know, and drank, I don't know some sake and of course the police—the police like that of course because he's paying for it but of course, he's drinking it too you know.

RK: Yeah exactly.

GK: And as far as duty goes he has to drink, so yeah. And later on I said hey by the way chief you can speak English pretty good huh? And he said and it is surprisingly how many of those people were here in the United States once up on a time.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And so I don't know whether the chief had set it up for us or our—our CO had set it up for us but anyway there was an understanding probably from our CO prior to this one had set up some thing between the two chiefs you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And because this—this takes you from the valley, you get on a train and you first start getting into the mountains and they just about every other one is a tunnel you know going through the mountain like that.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: And that's the back bone of Japan you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: Then you get on the other side and it's the other way you see.

RK: Yeah on the other side.

GK: So it's right up on that back bone.

RK: Right on the crest yeah.

GK: On the crest that we was at so it's a good thing to send somebody new up there.

RK: Yeah.

GK: But I think I was the only guy that I know that got sent up there unless there was somebody before me.

RK: Before you yeah.

GK: But after me why hell they didn't even send them anywhere.

RK: Yeah.

GK: They were all well there were a lot of Caucasians and Hawaiian bunch and they were no good. I hate to say that but they were mad because they got shipped over there instead of going to Europe.

RK: Oh gees.

GK: Their buddies—their buddies—their older buddies got shipped to Europe.

RK: To Europe?

GK: And because when we first got to Japan and we got off of the train and we were stationed at the replacement depot and we were all waiting to be assigned to go somewhere, you know and we were standing but we are not at attention but we are supposed to look halfway decent.

RK: Right.

GK: And some of these guys there, they are just looked terrible, you know. And I said, "Who are these guys?" Oh they are from Hawaii and they are just mad as hell that they are getting shipped to Japan.

RK: Oh gee.

GK: Instead of going to Europe. Well they have a reason too you know because there were some stationed with us in our outfit and they didn't care to work, you know. There were some that was good.

RK: Yeah.

GK: There were some that worked with us and real consciously worked but there were some guys that just didn't give a darn, just as long as they were there.

RK: Yeah, that was it. Just in body but not in mind, gees.

GK: And you know they were buddying around with some people that were shady type of people you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: But that's part of your duty too, I guess.

RK: So how long were you there total in Japan?

GK: About a year.

RK: About a year?

GK: My, my, see when I reenlisted...

RK: Reenlisted for a year yeah.

GK: For a year's duty.

RK: So that was it.

GK: So Uncle Sam.

RK: They didn't extend it at all?

GK: And they didn't extend it in fact it caught my CO off guard, see. And see, at that time, there were wanting us CIC agents to stay over longer.

RK: Yeah, oh yeah.

GK: And what they were doing if you reenlisted they would make you become an officer, see either second lieutenant or first, mostly second lieutenant.

RK: Right second louie.

GK: So and I had—and when the—and I knew when my time was up you know and by the first of the year, I was going to have to be coming home already, see.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And they were getting pretty close to November and sure enough you know the CO one night said say don't you want to stay over here, you know? Well he didn't talk me into staying you know. He said and I knew what they were doing already with some other guys, you know.

RK: Yeah, they were giving them rank—higher rank if they stayed.

GK: So they were—they were giving them—

RK: Incentives.

GK: Second lieutenant.

RK: Yeah.

GK: You'd become a second lieutenant see. Well for my work it didn't do me any good because I wouldn't be wearing second lieutenant thing because I would be using my counter intelligence rank, you know, which is special agent, see. And special agent will outrank a second lieutenant see.

RK: Yeah.

GK: So.

RK: Well now special agent did you have to wear a special uniform or just regular street clothes?

GK: Regular street uniform.

RK: Oh, okay.

GK: In other words it's a—I wear an officer type of shirt, slacks, jeans if it's hot, summertime, you still wear that khaki, that regular Army khaki.

RK: Right.



GK: But everyday you wear a new pair of trousers and new shirt. But I bought a couple of wool khaki, wool suntan shirts which was a kind of blend and on there; all we wore was a US.

RK: Insignia.

GK: Officer's insignia, see. In other words we were classified as civilians see.

RK: Yeah.

GK: Civilian to another officer.

RK: Even though you are higher ranked huh?

GK: Even if I could be outranked by the officer, he will not call me—he won't "Sir" me but he will call me Mr., you know.

RK: Right.

GK: Mr. and I will not "Sir" him.

RK: Right, that is protocol yeah.

GK: If he were a captain I would call him yes captain. Yes major and that was—that is the procedure we would use.

RK: Right.

GK: We will not use a sir. We will use a rank. And no officer will be, feel bad if you call him a captain if he's a captain.

RK: Right.

GK: You know, yes captain or yes major.

RK: Right.

GK: Lieutenant, you know, so we were instructed not to use sir.

RK: Right.

GK: And then the first thing the officer will say well, what is he now? He's a civilian, he might be a Red Cross, you know.

RK: Right.

GK: Yeah, or could be with the US Government. You know somebody working with the US Government.

RK: Yeah.

GK: What is he now? So then of course you are like—one time, my, you see we had to be indoctrinated in what we can do and what we can't do.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And maybe all this shouldn't be spoken. Maybe I shouldn't tell you this.

RK: Oh why, it should be unclassified by now.

GK: Okay, yeah because I'm—the general disbanded this group.

RK: Yeah.

GK: Okay, what was I going to talk about now?

RK: Probably protocol and procedure.

GK: Procedure yes.

RK: That you had to follow.

GK: Of course.

RK: You carried ID right?

GK: I carried ID. I had a war department badge.

RK: Right.

GK: I'll show you one that looks like it but it's made up one now.

RK: So this is the badge there.

GK: Well it's, actually the badge is a lot smaller than that. It was about half the size of that I think because it used to be encased in a leather deal.

RK: Oh clip?

GK: With a chain that we had—we always used to have it clipped right around our belt and this, our pant loop.

RK: Right.

GK: And put it in your pocket and in other words you didn't—when we went to school, they said if you lose this, that's your life.

RK: Right.

GK: Because they will not issue you another one.

RK: Wow.

GK: And they said now they are making up—I don't know if it's a story but anyway he says, there is one CIC agent during the combat and he had to go to the bathroom, so he didn't have his badge, you know, well protected and he was straddling a slit trench and a plane come flying over, strafing the area.

RK: Oh wow.

GK: So the guy jumped and when he jumped he jumped into the slit trench.

RK: Oh gee.

GK: And the guys—

RK: Badge came off.

GK: Badge came off and he didn't have it secured you know so he had to look in that slit trench for his badge. Now that is what the sergeant told us but you know.

RK: Yeah. That is why you had better have it secured.

GK: That's how important that badge is you know. Well you—you bring out your badge like this to any officer.

RK: That's right.

GK: And—

RK: They know who you are.

GK: They know who you are see. But that's the story they gave us about how important it is. Well of course I had mine chained to my belt—belt buckle and in my pocket and you just pull it out like this. It wasn't as big as this. It was smaller and I remember, about this big, you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And so—but anyway. Now our CO did not go to the Counter Intelligence School. He was a—

RK: Was he regular Army or something?

GK: He was a regular Army infantry.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: Infantry and I don't know how he got attached to the CIC but—

RK: Yeah.

GK: So he had lots to learn.

RK: It seems like.

GK: And then there is lots of people in the headquarters had lots to learn. This fellow from—he was from Islip, New York and he come to us when I was stationed there about half a year already and he came to us and his name was—he was an Irishman, an Irish kid young fellow, nice looking but he was a clerk for the G2 Office Headquarter's Company.

I don't know which outfit but he was with G2 and anyway G2 was Intelligence section see.

RK: Sure.

GK: So whoever sent him to us said that he is a CIC agent now, see.

RK: Right.

GK: Because he was with G2. But no he's a—he's a—he was a corporal typist in the G2 office for whether it was a company or regiment I don't know where but I—that part I didn't ask but he said he was a typist you know. But they sent him over to our outfit and they made him as a special agent.

RK: Wow.

GK: Not special agent but as an agent.

RK: Agent?

GK: So CO didn't know, you know, procedure.

RK: Exactly.

GK: He—he—he's not a special agent or agent you know and going out to do the job.

RK: The job.

GK: So he sent this kid to the—the odd regiment. And the odd regiment is an outfit that has three or four regiments but this one regiment is separated from the regular unit see. And these company, these guys and this regiment of 511<sup>th</sup> Airborne is something like the 442<sup>nd</sup> regiment. I understand that the regiment of the 442<sup>nd</sup> it was not just so many people like a regiment would be.

RK: Right.

GK: But there was some odd people you know, units that was in that, that made it a bigger.

RK: Bigger unit.

GK: Bigger unit yeah, a combat unit.

RK: Exactly.

GK: And this is the way this 511<sup>th</sup> regiment was. It was just something like the 442<sup>nd</sup>.

RK: Yeah.

GK: There were combat people. So I guess this combat unit was a pretty tough outfit so when they invaded Japan this 511th was supposed to have it easy and go up—go up north.

RK: Yeah.

GK: You know from the South you know and enter and go north. Well my understanding is some Japanese girl or lady got mishandled, you know, so the CO got mad and said you guys will now march up north instead of getting on trains.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And so they had to march all the way.

RK: March all the way?

GK: Now where there was you know—like people that was in our area.

RK: Yeah.

GK: I don't know but they were nice looking, you know, six foot two tech sergeants you know and I run across one of them and had a few words for him and I had a few words for them whenever we were coming home. A little different but we liked to dress immaculate just like the rest of them.

RK: Yeah.

GK: So I always used to take my clothes to a certain place. They would wash it.

RK: Press it.

GK: Press it, iron it and starch it or whatever they had to do and just as I walked to the door and was going to slide the door open, Japanese doors slide open like this, I heard this girl scream you know “Iyada, iyada” You know and “Iyada, iyada” And something like that and here this sergeant six foot two and nice and immaculate you know, I had to look up to him you know. And I just looked at him and said, “Sarg, could you wait for me outside?” And so I did my business. I asked her did he lay a hand on you or anything? And she said, no but he wanted to take me out you know. And she said, “Iyada.” So she didn’t want to so I said, okay yeah. And as long as he didn’t mishandle you, you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: So I had my clothes ordered to be cleaned and pressed and so I came out, you know, and the sergeant is waiting for me there. And I said, “Sarg,” I said, “You know what? It ain’t long but you are going to be going home you know and you’ll be dreading that you did that something took place.” I said, “Just think about it you know.” “You are going to be going home in a couple more months.” You know and say that you didn’t— couldn’t go home because you got thrown in the brig for six months or so hard duty yeah. What would that look to you, you know? And he looked at me and he said, “Yeah, you are right.” Well you know you’ve got to—if you have a girlfriend that is willing to go out with you that is fine and dandy but don’t take out somebody that doesn’t want you to be around you know. So, he said, “Thanks sir.” And I said, “Okay, just go in and tell her you’re sorry and just go.” So, he thanked me and I said just be careful you know. Well I’m getting ready to go home now see.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And my order says report back to Tokyo headquarters and go through the procedures you know. And so there was a lot of us going home now and so we had to give up our badges and our credentials and everything and I think I have it somewhere here where I showed where I gave up all my credentials and everything and then I became a sergeant now, see. And so they told us as soon as we lose our credentials and everything, if we're a sergeant, a sergeant, we've got to wear our uniform you know. So I put it on. Now we're all right before our barracks bag and everything—

RK: Yeah.

GK: And we're all ready to waiting for the boat—or ship to come in or whatever I forget where we were waiting some place out there at the replacement depot. And along comes this sergeant that I reprimanded and told him you know that said he's going to be going home pretty soon you know. He come up to me you know and he recognized me.

RK: Yeah.

GK: But I was in a different uniform.

RK: Right.

GK: So, I seen him and I looked at him and I acted like I didn't know him you know.

RK: Right.

GK: And he said, "say, don't I know you?" And I said, "No, I don't know. I don't know you." And he said, "Well, he said weren't you Moriokashi prefecture?" And I said, "No." I was, you know, and I recognized the guy—

RK: Right.

GK: But I had to act like I didn't know him see.

RK: Yeah exactly.



GK: So that's part of my job is you know if you don't want anybody to know who you are.

RK: That's right.

GK: Act stupid see. So I said no, no why did you run across my brother or something? And he said, "Well I must have because he looks just like you." "Well I've got a brother that looks like me, you know." I said, "What happened?" And then he told me the story you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And I started laughing and said well then you're lucky you're going home then? And he said yeah, yeah I'm lucky. Tell your brother that I'm glad he gave me a little lecture you know and I'm getting to go home like I was able to. I said yeah okay. But like I was my brother's brother you know.

RK: Yeah exactly.

GK: And so I said, God that's a good thing she actually told us the minute—the minute you take all your stuff off put your old outfit that you was with so I was with armored—

RK: Division?

GK: Division so I took the armored thing and the sergeant stripes and so that was what it was so and I was in uniform and so the guy looked at me and he said, "Well you look like your brother?" Well, I got a brother that looks like me, you know, a bit and so I asked him how things were and he said everything is okay and I said well just watch yourself you know so I acted stupid.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And got by and—

RK: That worked out pretty good.

GK: That worked out pretty good yeah. Yeah, they show us how to lie a little bit too.

RK: Yeah. So after you came over here you settled back in the Reedley area? This is probably forty-six huh?

GK: Yes.

RK: You were saying they picked you up at the—

GK: Yeah, they picked up in Fowler.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And brought me home and I stayed around home; I think I went back chick sexing one season.

RK: Oh okay, back east again.

GK: Yeah, back east and I didn't like it.

RK: Uh-huh.

GK: This—it—I don't know the service—

RK: Changed you probably.

GK: They changed my attitude a little bit. And so I didn't like that rush, rush, rush working long hours.

RK: Yeah.

GK: So, I—next year I didn't go back to sexing chickens. I stayed home and I got to drive a truck you know. And I drove for my brother for, I don't know, a couple of three years anyway.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: And I had a lot of (laughing) experiences driving truck.

RK: Did he have a truck business?

GK: Yeah, he was—he was hauling for some people and he had his own truck and so—

RK: Oh okay.

GK: So I drove it for him and Jim Ishida, he was driving truck and I was single and it was something different and so I was—well my brother was raising lettuce so he got a truck, a bobtail. We used to load it up and I used to go into San Francisco market.

RK: Yeah Bay Area yeah.

GK: And then I—I learned a lot of ropes that we—that I was learned in CIC you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: So bull those guys over there yeah you never want to let them know how much you got left, you know.

RK: Yeah, exactly.

GK: Because they will dump it for you if you don't watch out.

RK: Yeah.

GK: So keep telling them you got lot's more yet. You've got to do a good job of selling and hold the price up you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: I keep telling them hold the market up price and if not I'll just move over to another house or down the line you know. And oh well. I used to buy used crates and go to market for used crates and my brother built a packing shed out of the—you know when the—the park—not the park but Treasure Island. That Fair World—

RK: World's Fair?

GK: World's Fair yeah. When they dismantled that?

RK: Yeah, Treasure Island?

GK: Yeah, they dismantled a lot of—

RK: I think that was about forty-seven or forty-eight and some where around there. In the late forties.

GK: And they dismantled a lot of that buildings over there and they had a lot of that nice good timber you know. And so I used to—I hauled a lot of that home to my brother's place there and he built a shed out of those timber.

RK: Oh.

GK: Yeah.

RK: Because you're coming in empty on the way back here?

GK: Yeah and sometime I would haul used crates that they had out there and I'd stack and load it up and I'd haul it home you know. And I did that for my brother for about four years I guess then of course in the meantime I met my wife and we—

RK: And where did you meet your wife? Is she from the area too?

GK: Yeah, she was from Dinuba yeah.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: So—

RK: And what was her maiden name?

GK: Nagata.

RK: Nagata? Oh okay.

GK: And so we got—yeah—

RK: So you got married and then—

GK: Well then—

RK: Where did you stay? Did you have an apartment or something?

GK: I bought a—I rented a home right next to my brother's place.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: Small old bungalow and.

RK: Now was he living in the same place out toward Porter? Towards Porter Ranch.

GK: Yeah, on the Porter Ranch yeah. And there was oh about three or four homes down the street there was an old home there that I rented and it was dilapidated and I didn't stay there very long. I stayed there about six months and we found a better place and I moved to this other place and it was a little more room.

RK: Right.

GK: Two bedrooms instead of one and had an extra sunroom and it was just a place to live.

RK: Sure.

GK: It was nothing to be proud of so then I—where did I move to next? (pause, thinking)

RK: Still in the same area you lived?

GK: I don't know. Maybe I might have bought this place—this ranch.

RK: Yeah.

GK: In fact we had an old 1910 cement block home.

RK: Oh that was here?

GK: That was on the other side of this road.

RK: Road oh okay.

GK: And it's all open now.

RK: Yeah.

GK: I think that was it.

RK: So then you started into the farming business?

GK: That's when I started to—

RK: Now on this ranch were there any types of crops or was it just grassland?

GK: It was open. It was open when I got it but we planted some cotton one year.

RK: Oh wow.

GK: And then we went—I was a cotton farmer for quite a few years.

RK: Uh huh, I know they still plant some cotton out here toward highway 180 but yeah this area boy that was—

GK: There is some up there?

RK: Yeah right next to the road.

GK: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah I know those people.

RK: But here I wouldn't think there was cotton here that is amazing.

GK: Well we were late starters.

RK: Yeah, that was later.

GK: But I know those, Byrd's, they call their name. Byrd, there is three brothers I think and I don't know whose got it now.

RK: Yeah.

GK: I was talking to him here not long ago and he was telling me I think he was one of the brothers that separated from the other boys. I think there were three brothers.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: And they were raising cotton and he reverted his all over to alfalfa.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And they were raising cotton up there yet and I think one of those places belongs to my— one of those forty acre I think is belongs to people in Fresno, Japanese people. Do you know any—let's see—

RK: Well even if you don't remember, it doesn't matter.

GK: But anyway.

RK: Friends of yours huh?

GK: Yeah they are kind of related to my—my step-sister you know.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: Step-sisters' relatives.

RK: Relatives yeah.

GK: And—

RK: So there is a connection there?

GK: And they have—they owned quite a bit of property over there on the other side of Fresno.

RK: Yeah.

GK: Vineyards and stuff like that. And they don't want to sell that place because it has some meaning to them. They through relatives of some kind so—

RK: Yeah, yeah, historical probably.

GK: And so they—they—I was talking to one of the brothers up there when I sneaked up that way about two or three months ago and I was talking to him and he said yeah they won't sell that place you know. And I said what do you got on it. He said there is cotton on there and that's—that's their property and they don't want to sell it.

RK: I don't blame them.

GK: And so anyway, it has something to do with some relatives anyway and the relatives are probably in Japan some place but anyway they—they get the rent from this.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: And they send it to their relatives in Japan.

RK: Yeah, and you had cotton here and what did you plant later after cotton?

GK: Well tree fruit.

RK: Okay.

GK: Vineyards and tree fruit.

RK: Vineyards and tree fruit huh?

GK: Then I went all to tree fruit.

RK: Okay.

GK: And I don't know. I wished I sold the place and got out of it and took life easy.

RK: Yeah, farming is always because it's all depending on the weather you know and the environment.

GK: Well one thing is that—

RK: And then the market also.

GK: Well, you know I'm—I'm stupid in certain ways in learning how to make money you know. If I was going to buy a ranch you've got to buy it right close to town you know. Because the city is expanding.

RK: Oh, if you could sell it today now?

GK: Yeah. You know yeah.

RK: Well back in those days I would rather be further away from town. It is much more quiet and away from crime.



GK: But—but.

RK: Right, when the land escalates you want it to be right next to city limits yeah.

GK: Yeah, you know.

RK: Because they are selling the land eighty thousand an acre now in today's market. I have some relatives in the same position in Selma. They are right next to the city limit.

GK: Yeah, yeah. They are just hoping the thing will—

RK: Exactly, the city annexes their land so they can expand.

GK: Yeah and that is the thing. If this was right next to the city but who would want to buy something out in the country like this you know, next to the mountains here.

RK: But it is nicer out here.

GK: But you know.

RK: But you weren't in farming for speculation anyway you were just in it to make farming is still what we consider—

GK: But then I come home from Reilly and I said man I could have bought some property around here you know.

RK: Yeah, exactly that's true.

GK: But it's one of those things.

RK: Yeah. But still it's you know—it's still the good hard work and you are close to the earth.

GK: Yeah.

RK: But it has its ups and downs too. Yeah. And how many kids did you have?

GK: I had three boys and one daughter.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: They are all—

RK: Living elsewhere?

GK: Yeah, they all got their degree.

RK: Okay, so they all graduated from Reedley High School?

GK: High school.

RK: And then went on from there yeah.

GK: One's a dietician, that's my daughter.

RK: Okay.

GK: And the oldest boy is a pharmacist. He went to University of the Pacific.

RK: UOP yeah.

GK: And the second one he is an optometrist. He's in Berkeley and he went to UC Berkeley.

RK: Okay.

GK: And—

RK: And one's a dietician you said. One of the daughters?

GK: Oh she went to Fresno State and then she interned over at Mayo Clinic.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: In Rochester, New York.

RK: Oh.

GK: Rochester, Minnesota.

RK: Minnesota?

GK: Uh-huh and my last boy he went to, Jeff went to, oh Fresno State and he—well he was going to—that's right he was going to the College of the Pacific at Sequoia at Visalia.

RK: Oh, College of Sequoias yeah.

GK: And he was going to be an architect.

RK: Oh okay. So he could transfer to Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.

GK: Well he tried to get into Cal Poly and Cal Poly was full.

RK: Oh yeah they are usually pretty full.

GK: So he went to UOP then.

RK: Okay.

GK: No, COS.

RK: Yeah COS.

GK: And when he was going to graduate COS the architects, head of the architect's association, gave a speech to these people that were thinking about becoming architects.

RK: Right.

GK: And he says they told the guys if you are not a top architect, you are going to be starving you know because there is a lot of architects and you don't need a lot of architects to fill the—

RK: Sure.

GK: Fill you know.

RK: Job market.

GK: If you are not a top architect there can be millions of them but you can still be okay but if you aren't on top.

RK: Not on top you're not going to make it.

GK: You're not going to make it. You are going to be looking for somebody to feed you a little bit. And so he said well, I'm pretty sure I'm not going to be a top architect so he came home from. He was working his way through school too.

RK: Yeah.

GK: At COS so he come home and he said, "Dad, I don't think I'm going to be an architect." And I said, "Well what is the matter?" And he said they said if you are not going to be a top architect, you are going to starve. So he said I'd better decide to change now and about that time I got a call from Cal Poly and they said there is an opening here for architectural school you know. And I thought to myself no wonder there are openings it's because architects are starving now. (laughing) Everybody changed their mind you know. But now whenever they called us from Cal Poly you know architectural school so I told him well go to Fresno State and scout around and talk to different teachers and get information and see what you want to do. So he did and he went a couple weeks and he come home and said "Dad, I'm going to take up business administration and computers." And computers was just starting.

RK: Starting.

GK: And you know.

RK: That's a good field yeah. And he took up computers and business administration and he got tied into Southern California Metropolitan Water Works.

GK: Oh okay.

RK: And he started down the lower echelon you know.

GK: Yeah.

RK: That's what you do and work your way up.

GK: And he liked to do not only his is more or less you know make something he likes to make things.

RK: Design huh?

GK: But he likes to work with his hands.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: So, he got over there at Southern Cal. Edison and at first, he was with the computer things you know and he looked at it and he was working in the cubby holes and they had these bunch of guys working the machines you know and you got your own cubby hole and you look down there and he says, yeah, he looked down the far end and—

RK: Sees all these people working.

GK: Working and way on the end I see guys just like you bald headed and you know Nisei you know.

RK: Right.

GK: And all they are doing is somebody is bringing them paper and they just sign their name and then they are talking about their golf score and all that. And those guys are going to live forever he said. You know so he had an opening—oh his boss went to work the same time he did and his boss was not a computer, what do you call it? But he was kind of an oversee so many people.

RK: Yeah, supervisor.

GK: And so he said he's going to change jobs you know because there is no future in his job so. So, my boy started looking around and he said well they needed some guys to build something there in the plant.

RK: Right.

GK: So he said, that's what he likes to do.

RK: Design things yeah.

GK: So work on this.

RK: That's perfect.

GK: So they started working over there and pretty soon they said hey you are good at that and doing this and that and so hey, they said come on down and work for us. So he went on down and worked for them and he worked in the electrical department.

RK: Yeah.

GK: So, putting things together you know and so that's what he likes so hell. He says hell we'll give you and make you become an electrical engineer.

RK: Yeah.

GK: So he became an electrical engineer you know.

RK: Gees.

GK: And doing the kind of work that he likes so he says a lot of times he has to go early because a lot of things that they fixed they need to hook up or remodel and this and that and so it has to be done when the workers are not there so. He works odd hours and he gets time off whenever he wants to so he's a good job now.

RK: Well good. That is what you want. You want to get into something you like.

GK: Yeah.

RK: If you don't enjoy it then it's not going to be you know a very fun job. Have you ever discussed the war experience with your children or have they ever asked you about it?

GK: Not really no. I—they—they know that I was very strict as far as discipline goes.

RK: Right.

GK: And like my oldest boy he liked to play baseball, football, basketball sports was his forte and—and they took baseball championships and stuff like that and I used to coach the

Sansei the Reedley Sansei and Nisei Sansei baseball team here in the valley and they were champions of the valley here, Nisei League you know.

RK: Right.

GK: And we'd go up and play Florin and we beat Florin you know they used to give us a bad time too but the first year they beat us but then boy after that—

RK: You beat them yeah.

GK: We had some good ball players but after time wore on I got out of it and the team folded up and—

RK: Okay we were talking about your children and some of the traits you passed on and one of them was of course working hard and discipline and sense of responsibility but you were talking about this baseball team and so they were pretty successful.

GK: Oh yes. They took—they used to like to play the coast teams along—

RK: Monterey?

GK: Monterey and uh—

RK: Salinas?

GK: Salinas and those people there you know and they were a tough team down there too. And they used to like to come over here and play because they could get all the free fruit.

RK: Fruit oh yeah.

GK: And then when we'd go we used to take our fruit to them so they used to give us a lot of their stuff that they used to raise down there and bring it up here. We used—we had a good relation there for a while and it kind of died out when the ball team faded out.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And yeah, and yeah my oldest boy was kind of glad that the old man you know he didn't particularly go to school you know and I drug him up to—

RK: UOP?

GK: Yeah UOP and registered him and registered him to a dorm and everything you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And he was the kind of guy that liked to study with his book open and laying on top of the bed you know.

RK: Oh gees.

GK: The book open but that's about it.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And he'd be snoring away you know. And but he says he was glad that I made him go to school at least a certain amount of it rubbed off on him and he's got a good job ever since he graduated you know. He's a pharmacist.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And the company likes him and he works for them and you know once you learn that stuff well I guess it's just like learning anything else.

RK: Right. Well the first step is to be able to learn it.

GK: Yeah.

RK: That's the great thing and a lot of kids don't realize that is why school is so important so you've got to instill that into them.

GK: Yeah because and then my oldest boy you know and he was a good baseball, football quarterback. Baseball he was a pitcher.

RK: Yeah.



GK: And he liked to play ball and they took the championship in the baseball and him and his buddy and this Armenian fellow that lived down the road here that was the catcher and my boy was the pitcher.

RK: And so they were battery mates.

GK: Yeah battery mates and then when they went to grammar school over here about three and a half miles down the road here they would ride the bike down there and they'd ride it all the way into Reedley High School.

RK: Wow.

GK: To the ball field there and practice at night and then they'd ride home. You know so those guys are in good shape.

RK: You bet, that's a good distance.

GK: So all through the grammar school while they were playing Babe Ruth and stuff like that and they did all that so. When they were in high school—

RK: They knew each other.

GK: Yeah and one was the pitcher.

RK: And one was the catcher. Yeah.

GK: And the other fellow was the catcher and they caught each other's ball and they knew what they wanted and they knew each others what they their psychic was.

RK: Yeah exactly.

GK: And they won and they beat I think it was Selma. Selma had a hot shot baseball team but Reedley beat those guys and took the championship so.

RK: Yeah.

GK: So that's what I tell my younger kids. Bob was short and husky but you know he made up his mind he was going to play good and he's got a good job now. He went to the UOP and this is what Bob tells me. He said I was kind of scared that you took me to school like that and you know and he said because I have a hard time studying you know. And but I'm glad that I took him up there and I set him in there and I went with him right to the all the teachers you know and classes to register for the classes you know. And then—

RK: That was good yeah.

GK: And then he said he was glad and he had too. And then his roommate was a Korean fellow that he said, man he was sharp. He'd just read the book and he'd memorize it just like that. He said I couldn't memorize any of that. And then so I told Bob well anything that has to do with pharmacy you stick with it and the teachers and everything you know and he stayed with the pharmacy fraternity you see.

RK: Yeah.

GK: Now Bob's a good football player, quarterback.

RK: Yeah.

GK: Good baseball pitcher. He likes to play basketball. He played basketball when he was going to high school.

RK: Oh yeah, fraternity loves those players. They want the athletes.

GK: Yeah, so they were always winning football games and baseball games. You know and playing other fraternities.

RK: Fraternities yeah.

GK: And they were always winning it so he says yeah the fraternity instructor—what do they call it? Anyway he was the chaperone of the fraternity.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And his teams always winning and beating all the rest of the teams in the school.

RK: Sure, that's pride for them.

GK: Yeah and then he knows that Bob's having a little trouble.

RK: So they will give them tutors and all that.

GK: Yeah and so they helped him out and he was helping the team out.

RK: So it worked out.

GK: So they were all working together. Yeah.

RK: Yeah.

GK: Him and the—

RK: Fraternity.

GK: Advisor—advisor for their fraternity said they were buddy, buddy's you know. And he said well we helped each other out you know and he helped me out by making sure that I get my studies in and get grades up you know.

RK: So it worked out for both of them yeah.

GK: Both yeah.

RK: That was great.

GK: Yeah, later on he told me about that.

RK: Yeah that's what you have to do. It all takes cooperation. Now did any of the boys learn judo or go to Nihong Gako or any of the Japanese cultural things growing up?

GK: I don't—you know I don't think so.

RK: They probably yeah.

GK: I don't think so.

RK: They had all these other activities and they didn't have time.

GK: But I know they went to church, Sunday school but I don't know about Japanese school.

I don't think they did but I did.

RK: Yeah.

GK: I don't think they had gone to Japanese school.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: I'll have to—I'm pretty sure.

RK: Yeah some families they had their kids go to Japanese school and take judo and you know things like that.

GK: No, I don't think any of my boys took up judo.

RK: Okay. Now in 1988 they passed the Civil Liberties Act and they finally were able to do the redress movement and reparations for the Japanese-Americans that were in interned.

How do you feel about that? Was it something that was important to the Japanese or was needed for the American government to apologize?

GK: Well, I think it was a good thing they did you know. The people that put them there weren't the one that was apologizing.

RK: Well that's true.

GK: Yeah, so but so and the people that hated us, I think they still hate us you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: But the people that are fair minded and so it's—it's only fair minded people that you know believe that you know apology is needed and if we got it that's fine and dandy.

RK: Right.

GK: And if a person doesn't feel he needs to apologize well then you know I have nothing against the guy. He must have his own beliefs. But working with the CIC you know you run across all kinds of people, you know.

RK: Oh sure.

GK: And—and oh the thing I forgot to tell you about is you know this airplane trip from New York, I mean from Washington—

RK: To San Francisco?

GK: To San Francisco, Hamilton Field.

RK: The general you said was sitting in front of you?

GK: Do you know who the general was?

RK: No who was he?

GK: He was the general for the paratroopers, uh, god I forgot the name. And I was thinking.

RK: It wasn't Doolittle was it?

GK: No.

RK: No, he was Air Force I think.

GK: No general—

RK: Paratroopers.

GK: God I should know. I have an inkling he got called down for some of that troopers that were misbehaving probably in Japan you know.

RK: Oh okay, so on the way he was going from Washington back to Japan.

GK: Yeah, he was going back by himself. General—boy.

RK: That's all right.

GK: I was telling myself I had better remember that because you might be asking me that.

And sure right boy, it—

RK: I know sometimes it's on the tip of your tongue but that's all right.

GK: Uh.

RK: We know it was an important general. And he was head of the paratroopers so.

GK: Yeah, (inaudible) it is.

RK: Yeah it will come out later, sooner or later.

GK: But then I'm just thinking now he might have not been.

RK: Yeah. You never know exactly.

GK: He could have been called on the carpet or maybe he made an explanation.

RK: Exactly.

GK: Or he was just going you know. Maybe he wasn't there. Maybe he was over here and he's going back you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: But then I thought to myself you know, but then—

RK: That's just interesting to think about him. It could have been this general, yeah. What are you spending your time on now?

GK: My time? Try to make a living I guess.

RK: Okay.

GK: Yeah, I guess my days are numbered now so—

RK: Are you uh—

GK: I'm in pretty good health.

RK: Okay, that's good. That is always good to be.

GK: I see—I see a cardiologist. I had that tube—angioplasty and I don't think the second one was necessary but I think the doctor wanted to because he separated from this group and he started his own group and he wanted to see how much work it is you know to they put it in your groin you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And then the tube goes all the way up and then it goes into your heart and then they either if it's clogged well they open it up and put stints in there to keep it open.

RK: Open exactly. Yeah.

GK: And the first one was they did two of them and they said one was partially blocked and the other was getting blocked.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: So they opened it up. And the—and it looked like it was opened okay so far. And then this cardiologist group—there was five or six doctors you know and it was getting to be too many people in one place you know and in other words you can have only so many—

RK: Specialists?

GK: Uh, you can have a lot of specialist but nurses and aides.

RK: Nurses and aides?

GK: And people that do things for you, you know?

RK: Yeah.

GK: You know like blood tests or this and that and they are running all over each other.

RK: Sure.

GK: So they were getting you know you'd go in there for a ten o'clock appointment and heck you didn't get out of there until evening you know. Because they missed somebody and you know what I mean.

RK: They are stepping over each other.

GK: So, they said well the last guys dropped out so this last guy that went in they wanted him to go somewhere else you know so he went down to this where the first job was done was right there at the St. Agnes Hospital, right as you go to the St. Agnes Hospital like this.

RK: Right.

GK: Right through this corner there is a building there.

RK: Yeah.

GK: Right underground I mean not in the ground but you park underneath.

RK: Right.

GK: And upstairs is where that about at that time there were about five or six doctors you know. Well it's too-

RK: Too congested and crowded?

GK: Yeah, so you go in there and man just like a bunch of ants running around you know.

RK: Now they opened up that huge heart wing anyway so now it should be better.

GK: Yeah probably so. But this guy here this last doctor that was before the heart hospital was established.

RK: Right.

GK: Then he went down to the next block to the west.

RK: Oh okay.

GK: And where Fresno Street is.



RK: At the surgery center, Fresno Surgery Center?

GK: Yeah right there and he's on that—he's on the northwest corner three story building and he's on the third floor and he opened up a place there and he was by himself more or less.

RK: Yeah.

GK: So I don't know. I haven't gone there for quite a while but—

RK: So they all opened up their own business.

GK: With his own business.

RK: Well Fresno is just loaded with all these doctors.

GK: And so he says you know they didn't check the back side of your heart. On the back side it was all the front side so he says it looks like you have difficulty with your back side a little bit so. You don't mind if I—

RK: Check it?

GK: Check it out? And open it up or whatever it needs. So he said—so I said I himmed and hawed a little bit, so he said I'll tell you what he said I'll tell you what I'm doing whenever I do it for you. Well shucks when I woke up the next day well I couldn't remember anything he told me. You know everything—

RK: Right.

GK: You know everything looks different but anyway I came out and I feel okay and he said, yeah, come back in so many days and we'll give you a stress test and see how you react. So, I react all right so, well with that many opening up my heart well I guess I'll live a few years.

RK: Yeah.

GK: But—

RK: So yeah. So you are in fairly good shape though right now?

GK: Well—

RK: Other than for those heart problems well you know, stints they put in.

GK: Well right now I think my kidney problem, you know, is a little bit—

RK: Yeah.

GK: I am having a problem with it could be the prostate or I think, because when I'm riding my tractor you know and a lot of times it leaks you know.

RK: Yeah, the prostate if it enlarges it might cause urination, you know.

GK: Yeah, sometimes and so I noticed that whenever I'm riding my tractor or equipment out in the field.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And I noticed that there is a sort of—

RK: Well that is unusual movement you know. Typically you are not going to have that vibration.

GK: So, I've been going to a urologist. Well I have been ever since I was oh—when I had a kidney stone operation.

RK: Oh yeah, those hurt gees.

GK: I'll tell you.

RK: You don't want a kidney stone.

GK: I had one in when I was overseas but all they did was they gave me some pills you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: To knock—

RK: Break it down.

GK: You don't know what's going on and it must have passed on because in two or three days they said go on home. And they sent me home overseas and I had one here out in the field. I was telling the guy how I wanted the job done picking, was it picking or—

RK: Might have been pruning.

GK: Yeah, and man it started hurting so bad I had to go to the hospital and they said I had a kidney stone and they had to operate so they operated on it and—

RK: It must have been very large or something. It wouldn't pass through.

GK: And first time I've been in the hospital now sleeping.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And I remember I either dreamt that I was doing that and tippy-toed to go from there to the bathroom and come back and I said it hurt like hell. I might have dreamt it—

RK: Yeah.

GK: Or I might have done it in my dream. But anyway I went you know. And I'm sound asleep snoring away you know and that's when Mr. Otoni passed away. He was stationed, I don't know if you know Mr. Otoni or not? Supermarket in Reedley?

RK: Yeah, I know who he is.

GK: And he—had had cancer and he was stayed across the hallway from where I was stationed and I'm out and I heard a nurse say something about here is something for you. And I didn't say nothing. I was sound asleep yet. And all of a sudden you know somebody picked me up you know and set me up straight like this and of course that hurts right here because that is where the kidney stones, they operated right down here where it folds here and so I used all those cuss words that we learned in the service.

RK: Yeah.

GK: Ah dang and it was a cuss word about that long and she dropped me and I'm snoring away yet. And then about a couple hours later I kind of wake up you know and I see these ladies looking—peeking in the door you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And they are afraid to come in the room you know because you know I'm—

RK: You were making all that noise.

GK: Cussing you know and she said, you know what it's time for your breakfast and we can't do nothing for you unless you wash up. And I grunted a little bit and woke up a little bit and I looked at this nurse you know and she looked at me and she knew that I wasn't feeling too good yet. She said well just take it easy a little longer then and I said okay. And I went back and I fell asleep again and I finally woke up by myself and then they came in and they tried to wipe me up you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: And I told her you know the first time that I'm in a hospital and I'm so used to using bad language like that from the service and if she would have told me that she was going to pick me up and do whatever she did. She wouldn't have got that kind but on the spur of the moment something happens to me.

RK: Yeah.

GK: You know and it just automatic. I'm still—I'm still you know you learn how to cuss.

RK: Exactly.

GK: In the service you, there is no shame about cussing you know.

RK: Right, yeah right.

GK: And if things don't go right you know you cuss you know and get it out of yourself. So I told her you know us veterans we hate to cuss but whenever something is just not right that's the first thing you know is God dang it and blankety, blank you know. And I told her I'm sorry I did it but that's the automatic words I use when things don't go right.

RK: Right.

GK: And if she would have told me I'm going to pick you up and it might hurt and this and that but she just picked me up you know and what you haven't cleaned up yet you know and boom picked me up and it hurt.

RK: Oh man.

GK: And so.

RK: Yeah.

GK: But I apologized and everything was okay. Well I know my wife doesn't like me to be cussing like that either. But sometimes.

RK: It happens yeah.

GK: It happens and it does good to the guys you know. I know my boys, my kids they all went through college and everything and they know if things don't just go just right and things you know I might blow off a little bit steam but they know it's for their own good so.

RK: Yeah. What kind of life do you see for your children or grandchildren? Do you think it's going to be much better in the future?

GK: Well I think they won't have to go through what we have gone through.

RK: Yeah, hopefully they won't.

GK: Well the first thing is I noticed that my kids are a lot different than from what I am you know. The youngest one might blow off the handle more but the two younger ones they are very you know they watch their language.

RK: A lot more tolerant.

GK: Tolerant yeah. And my daughter she's tolerant and the youngest one might have my blood in him a little bit.

RK: Yeah.

GK: I think he flies off of the handle a little bit especially when things don't go right you know. It might not be cussing at somebody else but even at himself.

RK: Yeah, yeah, you just got to learn self discipline and control.

GK: But I think sometimes that's better that you are able to do that you know.

RK: Otherwise it'll eat away sometimes inside, if you keep things inside.

GK: Yeah you know.

RK: You've got to let off some steam. As long as you don't hurt someone.

GK: Yeah, that's right.

RK: And then you apologize if it's a verbal type of thing.

GK: Yeah verbal thing.

RK: Yeah, but sometimes you can't help that. But at least you are letting it out and okay I'm sorry.

GK: But if you are stuck using your fists or something like that.

RK: Oh yeah.

GK: But I haven't gotten to that. I don't think I ever had to.

RK: Yeah.

GK: But well I never did have to you know.

RK: Well that's where you learned self control.

GK: Even the—even the you know when I was living in Wisconsin during the war and before I went into the service I used to take a lot you know. And just explained to the fellows what it's all about you know.

RK: Yeah.

GK: But I noticed—

RK: That some people want to push you and push you. You know they don't know when to stop, that's the thing.

GK: And most of the people they understand.

RK: Exactly, they know their limits and there is a limit you've got to know and you've got to stop and you can't push a person too far.

GK: But I do know I got this way after I got out of the service. You know if before this I was in the service for a while and most of the Japanese people had to take a little side glance.

RK: Oh exactly.

GK: And a little lip and somebody would say something about you and you'd just laugh it off.

RK: Right.

GK: Disregard it and if there is any explaining they want you to do then you'd explain it you know. And I explained it to a lot of Caucasian people.

RK: Right.

GK: And was understanding but then after I got out of the service and it got to a place where you know the position that I was at when I was overseas, a little lip didn't you know

somebody would make a little lip and first thing—what did you say? I want to hear you say that again. You know and they won't say it again.

RK: Right.

GK: And that came out after I was in the service and I guess the two extremes. I was the timid soul because don't rock—

RK: Rock the ship yeah.

GK: And then we went to the CIC and boy we didn't take no crap from anybody.

RK: That's right.

GK: And you come back to civilian life.

RK: And now you've got to change.

GK: And you—I noticed that after I went—well that's probably one reason why I quit chick sexing is that you are going to run across more people you know in the streets.

RK: Yeah.

GK: Or you go to a new town.

RK: Exactly. Yeah.

GK: And I run across several young punks or young people or people that should know better and made some remarks and what did you say now? And it wasn't you know—it was a threatening voice that I made to them and you know I thought to myself—gee you know afterwards—why should I get so huffed up you know afterward and something like that. But it got to—it got to me more after I got out of the CIC than because I know that nobody wouldn't talk to me when I was in the CIC.

RK: Yeah.

GK: I'd chew them out you know but—



RK: Well I guess that being a little bit of authority.

GK: Yeah.

RK: It gets you more.

GK: Yeah and then—

RK: Changes the perspective of the way that you are looking at things.

GK: Yes and so I thought well you know the kind of business I was in you know and gradually I toned down but still—

RK: But at least you started to question you know, these things rather than just turn the other cheek. They are more aggressive towards, towards, you know, answering these people.

GK: Yes, as long as they don't insult me.

RK: Exactly.

GK: I'm all ears you know.

RK: That's the whole saying. You just want to be treated like they treat you and you treat them and vice versa. Some people want to push, and push and push and so if no one ever stands up to them, they will keep on doing it. There are some people that it's tough. They have to learn the hard way I guess. But they put themselves in that position you know. It's like a bully you know back in high school where they are always bullying. Why you always wanted to punch the guy but you never had the courage to do it. Now you think back and man I wish I would have punched him you know.

GK: (laughing)

RK: So the guys wouldn't listen but some of these guys never learn you know.

GK: Well you know like in Reedley, you know when I went to high school and got along with those guys, all those guys you know.

RK: Exactly yeah.

GK: But uh—once you get out of high school I guess different characters come along.

RK: Exactly. Well you mature too. Hopefully most people get older and mature but some people never do that unfortunately. If you were to give advice to young people today what would you tell them? What are some of the main principals you've learned from your experience that you'd offer to the young people?

GK: Well education is one.

RK: Very important yes.

GK: Get educated and if you are educated, all the rest I think will follow suit.

RK: Oh of course.

GK: Of course you can be educated to be a bad guy.

RK: Oh that's true.

GK: And if you're educated to be good then you know and that's the main thing education I think anybody now, if you don't have the education, and I have a grandson that I got my fingers crossed right now. He's—he doesn't believe in education.

RK: Oh yeah. That is going to be tough.

GK: Yeah.

RK: Another thing I would think would be hard work because there are people that are educated but they want to make the money the easy way. You know they use that intelligence the wrong way with computer hacking or whatever whereas if they use that education because with hard work you are always going to get something out of it if you push yourself and you know whatever you did is going to get rewarded because you worked for it. And nothing comes free but some people want the easy way out I guess.

GK: Well, yeah it's just about have to work for everything you get I guess.

RK: Yeah.

GK: Well you know us Nisei, most of us had to work all the way through so from the dying days I guess.

RK: Oh yeah.

GK: From the beginning to the end so.

RK: The Nisei they made some good contributions to the future generations because they showed that the future generations of Japanese-Americans could be successful if they followed the hard work and everything they went through, perseverance and being able to overcome some of the drawbacks that happened to them. It was just a matter of overcoming them.

GK: Right.

RK: And succeeding today so on the whole I think Japanese-Americans should be proud of themselves today.

GK: Yeah, I think hard work didn't hurt anybody.

RK: Yeah, exactly.

GK: Yes, because it's the part where the people that don't want to work that is the big problem you know. But if they don't care—if they don't mind working well they will get along.

RK: Exactly.

GK: Yes.

RK: Yes that is one of the keys and I think most Japanese have that instilled.

GK: Yeah.

RK: You know you try to do the best you can.

GK: Yes.

RK: Well we are nearing the end of the interview. Is there anything else you'd like to say?

GK: (laughing) Not really.

RK: If not I'm sure grateful that you spent all this time on this Sunday afternoon sharing your story with us and for future generations because your story like all these Japanese-American that we are interviewing is important information for not only today's generation but for future generations whether they are Japanese-American or any other race. Because it just shows how a group of people have persevered through what happened during WWII being uprooted from their homes and having to undergo something the government did to their own citizens in this country. And today most of them have pulled through this tragedy actually is what a lot of them like to look at it and have become fairly successful. Well I thank you very much George.

GK: Thank you, you are welcome. I was just thinking about my young pup we have here. We just got it from my son a week ago. He's about five weeks old now and you know he's got a bad habit of wanting to just use his teeth a little bit you know.

RK: Oh yeah.

GK: So, if you don't correct him now he might use it all his life you know.

RK: That's right.

GK: For that dog to be chewing things and biting and this and that. So if we can correct him now, which is—

RK: It will make it easier down the way.

GK: It will be easier down the way.

RK: Yeah exactly.

GK: I think it's the same way with human beings. When they are young you got to be a little tough with them once in a while.

RK: Yeah.

GK: Straighten them out and—

RK: They'll be okay.

GK: They'll be okay but if you don't straighten them out the longer you wait I think it gets harder and harder and I think about somebody I have in mind and I don't know. You know I have some fears about him because they were a little too lenient about him when he was small. And—

RK: That's right, once they get older it is harder to.

GK: When you start to get school age it is too late you know and you got to live with what they got used to you know.

RK: Right. Yeah, it's hard to change bad habits you know

GK: Yeah, right and when they are small you can correct it.

RK: Correct it yeah.

GK: Like all the—my kids every one of them wanted to go to college you know and if you get them started that way and get their education. I never had to worry about my kids.

RK: Exactly.

GK: They all got their—they know how to make more money than I do, that I ever dreamed of having.

RK: Exactly and that's what you wish. That your children do much better than you. You know that's what success is about.

GK: So the idea is to get them right tracked and going that way is no problem. Make sure that they are honest and good about what they do.

RK: Sure, I agree with you. Okay, George thank you very much.