

IMANO HATAKEDA

MRS. YAKUMO: Today is February 26, 1980. I, Kazuko Yakumo, am privileged to interview Imano Hatakeda at 35262 Road 164, Visalia, California, 93277.

What is your name and when were you born?

MRS. HATAKEDA: My name is Hatakeda, Imano.

MRS. YAKUMO: And where were you born?

MRS. HATAKEDA: I was born in Japan, Hiroshima-ken, Aki-gun, Fuchumura. It is now a city.

MRS. YAKUMO: When were you born?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Meiji 36 (1903), January 2.

MRS. YAKUMO: Oh, it was when they were celebrating New Year. When did you come to America?

MRS. HATAKEDA: By American calendar, it was April 30, 1920. Memorial Day that I reached San Francisco.

MRS. YAKUMO: Did you come by yourself?

MRS. HATAKEDA: No, I came with my husband.

MRS. YAKUMO: Oh, you married and came.

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes, married in Japan.

MRS. YAKUMO: Did you two have any goal or some reason for coming to America?

MRS. HATAKEDA: My husband was farming. I came as a housewife. He had been farming in America before he came after me (in Japan), and there we married.

MRS. YAKUMO: What did your husband do?

MRS. HATAKEDA: He had a lemon ranch. He owned his property. Before the Alien Land Law was passed, Isseis were able to buy land.

MRS. YAKUMO: Was it here?

MRS. HATAKEDA: No, it was at Ivanhoe.

MRS. YAKUMO: How long had your husband been in America?

MRS. HATAKEDA: How long it was I cannot remember. It was many years.

MRS. YAKUMO: Were your husband's parents here with him?

MRS. HATAKEDA: No.

MRS. YAKUMO: Did he develop the lemon ranch by himself?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes.

MRS. YAKUMO: Where in Ivanhoe was this ranch?

MRS. HATAKEDA: At that time, this place was called Klink which was renamed Ivanhoe later. The present address is 32702 Road 172, Ivanhoe, California, 93235.

MRS. YAKUMO: When was Klink renamed? Was it after the war?

MRS. HATAKEDA: No, it was before the war. I think the name was changed soon after I arrived here. I think about two or three years later.

MRS. YAKUMO: It must have been before 1925 since you came in 1920. You have been here since then?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes, I have never left this area.

MRS. YAKUMO: Was the area around here called Klink also?

MRS. HATAKEDA: I cannot remember if this particular place was called Klink or not. The original place (the Road 172 address) at the foot of the hill (west of Venice Hill in general) was called Klink.

MRS. YAKUMO: When did you move to this place?

MRS. HATAKEDA: About 1934.

MRS. YAKUMO: Then, this is the place where you lived the longest?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes.

MRS. YAKUMO: Going to the first. How did you meet your husband? Was your marriage by omiai (by introduction) or by acquaintance?

MRS. HATAKEDA: It was by baishaku (introduction by go-between).

MRS. YAKUMO: Was it in Hiroshima?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes.

MRS. YAKUMO: Was your husband from Hiroshima?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes.

MRS. YAKUMO: Have you been back to Japan many times?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Two times.

MRS. YAKUMO: Was it to visit?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes, and to pay tribute to the ancestors' graves. Both of my parents are gone now.

MRS. YAKUMO: I would like to ask you about your family, children. How many children do you have?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Five. One has passed away.

MRS. YAKUMO: How did she die? Was it by illness?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes.

MRS. YAKUMO: Then, you have four children. May I ask you about their ages and who they married? Will it be all right to ask?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes. Our oldest is Jun. This coming June he will be 59. I am not sure. Sumiye-san is his wife. They have two sons. Next is Shigeru. He is either 57 or 58. He has one son. His wife is Sadako. However, I have an older daughter. She lives in Pasadena.

MRS. YAKUMO: Is she older than Jun?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes. She is older than Jun. About one year older-- about 60 years old.

MRS. YAKUMO: Is her husband a Japanese?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes, he is a gardener and semi-retired.

MRS. YAKUMO: Do they have any children?

MRS. HATAKEDA: They have three.

MRS. YAKUMO: Your fourth child is Reiko-san.

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes, she is in Pasadena, and she is a nurse.

MRS. YAKUMO: Is she the youngest child?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes.

MRS. YAKUMO: How different in age is she from the third child?

MRS. HATAKEDA: About 13 years.

MRS. YAKUMO: As a Japanese, have you experienced any racial discrimination since you came to America?

MRS. HATAKEDA: No, nothing.

MRS. YAKUMO: Even before and after the war?

MRS. HATAKEDA: No.

MRS. YAKUMO: During the war, you did go to the relocation center?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes.

MRS. YAKUMO: Where was this relocation center located?

MRS. HATAKEDA: It was in Poston, Arizona.

MRS. YAKUMO: Since you came to America, has your lifestyle changed?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Not much.

MRS. YAKUMO: Has there been any changes as to the way you produce oranges and other citruses on your farm?

MRS. HATAKEDA: There are changes in the way the oranges are produced, but not anything special in the way of Japanese lifestyle.

MRS. YAKUMO: With what organization are you affiliated?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Right now, I am a member of the Buddhist Church and Buddhist Women's Association.

MRS. YAKUMO: Are you in any cultural club such as flower arranging, et cetera?

MRS. HATAKEDA: No.

MRS. YAKUMO: In your ways of living, do you still continue any of the Japanese traditions, such as New Year, wedding, and funeral? Do you follow the ways of your old country?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes.

MRS. YAKUMO: In your daily living, do you follow the tradition that the present Japanese do not follow?

MRS. HATAKEDA: There is not much, but the thing that I enjoyed so much was that we used to take our children to the mountains. On Saturdays and Sundays, there was no place to go. In Invanhoe, there were many Japanese families. We would make picnic lunch, get together with other families, and go to Sequoia National Park. That is the happiest memory that I have. My children were still going to grammar school. We all would take picnic lunch.

There is a large cement bridge near Three Rivers. At this place, people who were tired would take a nap, those who liked fishing would fish. That was the most happiest time of my life.

MRS. YAKUMO: That was on the weekend?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes. In those days there were no movies in town and not many things to do. Going to Fresno was far. That going out together with other families were the happiest times.

MR. YAKUMO: Is there any other memorable events that happened after the war? Something that was outstanding, something that was very important that occurred and should be left or told as history, or about anyone who has passed away? As time passes, events are forgotten.

MRS. HATAKEDA: I can't think of any.

MR. YAKUMO: Is there anything of importance that happened to your husband? Did he pass away due to illness?

MR. HATAKEDA: Yes. He was in good health until we went into the relocation center. From then on his heart weakened. He couldn't go to

the mess hall to eat. I cooked in our small one room to feed him.

MRS. YAKUMO: You couldn't give him much care.

MRS. HATAKEDA: No, there was not much I could do for him. After we left the center he passed away.

MRS. YAKUMO: He was too young to die.

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes, now he would be considered young.

MRS. YAKUMO: Is there any other memories that you would like to be recorded for history; particularly to the sanseis, yonseis, and goseis?

MRS. HATAKEDA: No.

MRS. YAKUMO: At the present time there are Japanese newspapers. Were there any Japanese newspapers then?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes, there was. There was the Nichibei.

MRS. YAKUMO: Was it the one that is published in San Francisco? Was it called the Nichibei Mainichi?

MRS. HATAKEDA: No, Nichibei Shinbun.

MRS. YAKUMO: You had close contact with your Japanese neighbors. You went picnicking with them?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes. Now, it is inconvenient if one cannot drive a car, but in those days I would walk to visit my neighbors taking my children in a buggy. It was really a carefree time.

MRS. YAKUMO: It was like Japan, wasn't it? All the neighbors were close by.

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes.

MRS. YAKUMO: There must have been many children to play with.

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes, there were large number that went to school. They would all walk down the road. From here to Ivanhoe it is three miles. They walked to school.

MRS. YAKUMO: In Japan, in rural area, students still walk to school. It is not developed. They do not have bus service.

MRS. HATAKEDA: There was a Japanese school in Visalia. They had bus service.

MRS. YAKUMO: Was it at the Visalia Buddhist Church? Was it the weekend school?

MRS. HATAKEDA: Yes, it was on Saturdays and Sundays. The bus would pick up the children. As the children grew up, they learned to drive car. They carpooled and would rotate in taking the car with friends.

MRS. YAKUMO: There are some things that need to be added which were not

mentioned in the interview. The place called Lemon Ranch was the original site on which the Hatakedas settled. Presently it is 32702 Road 172, Visalia, California. At an earlier time it was called Pea Ranch because the main product was peas. Mr. and Mrs. Hatakeda first raised green peas, and it was called bush peas in those days. Later, staking with poles were introduced. The bush peas were tied to the poles with twines. The place where the ranch was located was quite warm. Although the surrounding farms got frosted, the Lemon Ranch was not affected by the frost. They had very good pea production. Since then, many Japanese families came to Ivanhoe area to produce peas. There were as many as 60 families here at that time. After the war, when the Japanese families were released from the relocation center, only the families who still owned the property came back to their homes. There were five families. All the other relocated to other sections of the United States.

MRS. HATAKEDA: The ship I came to America was the last one to bring the picture brides. It was called Korea Maru. The trip took two weeks to reach San Francisco. During the trip, I became acquainted with two other brides. One was going to Calexico. The other to Los Angeles. While aboard the ship, they had asked my husband to call out the names of their new husbands when the ship reached San Francisco. There were many people waiting. When my husband called out the name, the groom (with photo in his hand) was very close by. Before I could give my blessing, or exchange words, the blushing groom grabbed his picture bride's elbow and hustled her off without saying good-bye. I was with my husband, so I did not have any worry. (For the new bride and groom, it must have been an anxious, nervous feeling.)

From there we were put on a small boat. It took about 25 to 30 minutes to reach Angel Island. For three days, we were questioned and given physical examinations. During that time I met a lady who said, "It will be one year this month since I came from Japan. My husband has not come after me. I will be going home to Japan." She was working as a kitchen helper. I felt very sorry for her. When the three days were up, I finally went back to San Francisco. The new immigrants went to the various Japanese-owned hotel. At that time, the hotels were selling women's clothing. The women bought clothes whether it fitted or not. Also the shoes were ill-fitting. As my husband had brought my clothes from America, I wore American clothes when I left Japan. In the hustle-bustle of the hotel, all the shipmates left without a word. After staying in San Francisco for three days, I came to a place called Klink which is about 10 miles northeast of Visalia. At that time, in San Francisco there was Nagoya-ryokan, Yemoto-ryokan, Bocho-ryokan, Aki Hotel, et cetera. These were the first stopping places for all the picture brides.

When I came to America, Coolidge was the president. In 1922, the Alien Land Law was passed. It forbade the alien (particularly Oriental), from owning land. At that time most of the children who had citizenship were underage. People who had citizenship were very few. Many of the people who farmed sent their produce to market in San Francisco using their name as producer of the products. This was against the law as the Alien Land Law forbade Japanese aliens from leasing land or owning land. This implied that the Japanese could not farm as an owner, but only as farm laborer. My husband was arrested in regards to this law. On October 23, 1926, around 3 o'clock in the afternoon, Friday, two deputies came with a pistol and took my husband away. He was in jail for three days. When he left, I told my husband to go and not worry about home. I did

not wish him to fret about us. I was not frightened for him since he had not committed any criminal act.

Soon after he left, I spoke to Mr. Pritchard, who owned a grocery and a post office in Ivanhoe about my husband being arrested. He told me not to worry that he will take care of the matter. I was very happy for his kind words. The following Monday with Mr. Pritchard's aid, my husband came home.

The following year in 1927, in February, there was a hearing. The defense attorney was Mr. Tom Okawara of Fresno. The interpreter was the executive secretary of Japanese Association Mr. Saikichi Shirazawa. Mr. Pritchard and another executive of Bank of Italy aided at the trial. The result of the trial was a fine of 25 cents and to refrain from farming for one year. He got off lightly. Klink was a place which discriminated against Japanese. But, with these kind friends who helped my husband in the hearing, I appreciate them very much.

In that year around June, we were advised to move to a place where we would not be noticed. We, the family of five, moved to Paloma district which is about five miles northeast of Ivanhoe. At that time it was a lonely desolate place with no electricity. The well would dry up when one bucketful of water was pumped. Being youthful and young, I did not feel the inconvenience.

As I think back of those days, it is a wonder that I lived through the hardship. In this area of Niseis, Sanseis, and Yonseis, such happening is diminishing.

MRS. YAKUMO: Thank you for this interview.