

TSURU NAITO

MRS. IWASAKI: Today is May 19, 1980. I, Ann Iwasaki, am privileged to be in the home of Mrs. Tsuru Naito at 6850 Alta Avenue in Reedley, California, 93654.

Before we get into the interview proper, I would like to have you give us your full name, place and date of birth, and your place of longest residence.

MRS. NAITO: My name is Tsuru Naito. I was born April 16, 1896 in Misasamachi, Asagun, Hiroshima. My place of longest residence is Reedley.

MRS. IWASAKI: When did you come to America?

MRS. NAITO: I came in February 1917 to Dinuba, California. We came because my sister and brother-in-law were already living in Dinuba.

MRS. IWASAKI: How long were you in Dinuba?

MRS. NAITO: We lived in Dinuba for 25 years and in Reedley for 32 years.

MRS. IWASAKI: Did you come to Reedley with your husband?

MRS. NAITO: Yes. I was married in Japan in a baishaku (go-between) marriage.

MRS. IWASAKI: Have you ever returned to Japan?

MRS. NAITO: No, I have not.

MRS. IWASAKI: How many children did you have?

MRS. NAITO: I have three sons and five daughters. They are all married except one daughter. I have 22 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

MRS. IWASAKI: Are they all married to Japanese?

MRS. NAITO: Yes.

MRS. IWASAKI: Where do all your children live?

MRS. NAITO: Our oldest son lives in Reedley. The second son in Oakland, the third in San Francisco. The oldest and third daughters live in Reedley. The second one in Los Angeles and the fifth daughter lives in San Francisco and the fourth daughter in Fresno. They are all employed.

MRS. IWASAKI: In which camp were you interned during the war?

MRS. NAITO: We were in Poston Relocation Camp, Camp III. We went to Utah for about a year after we left camp.

MRS. IWASAKI: What kind of work did you do?

MRS. NAITO: We were in agricultural work.

MRS. IWASAKI: Did you encounter racial discrimination?

MRS. NAITO: Not especially.

MRS. IWASAKI: Do you belong to any organizations in your community?

MRS. NAITO: I belong to the Reedley Women's Organization.

MRS. IWASAKI: What are your hobbies?

MRS. NAITO: I have no hobbies.

MRS. IWASAKI: Do you still observe some Japanese customs?

MRS. NAITO: We observe weddings and funerals in the traditional Japanese way.

MRS. IWASAKI: How did you celebrate your 60th birthday?

MRS. NAITO: The 60th birthday is called Kanreki, the 70th is the Koki. Eighty-eight is Beiju Iwai or celebration. The children have observed two of the three birthday celebrations for me.

MRS. IWASAKI: Have you traveled?

MRS. NAITO: No, because I become very car sick. But we do go visit our children in Los Angeles and San Francisco on occasions.

MRS. IWASAKI: Do you do any knitting or other handcrafts?

MRS. NAITO: Yes, off and on.

MRS. IWASAKI: What changes have you seen over the years?

MRS. NAITO: There has been quite a change. I feel that my later years have been so much better. When I first came to this country I had to use a wood stove to cook on and had to pump water by hand, and to launder on the scrub board. Now we have a washing machine and other conveniences. To cook and wash for eight people was a big chore.

MRS. IWASAKI: Your hard work paid off in your children's success!

MRS. NAITO: All the children are doing well and are good to me.

MRS. IWASAKI: How many of your grandchildren are married?

MRS. NAITO: Five of them are married, and the sixth will be married soon.

MRS. IWASAKI: Is there anything you would like to add to this interview?

MRS. NAITO: My happiness is having healthy and such wonderful children, and the saddest was to have been so very sick. It has been nine years since my husband passed away, and I am lonesome, but I have my children to keep me company.

MRS. IWASAKI: It is good to have good health. I wish you much happiness.

MRS. NAITO: Thank you.