

I am a Nisei, born in 1922 at TERMINAL ISLAND, CALIFORNIA, a part of LOS ANGELES Harbor; a family of 2 boys and 2 girls. My father came to the West Coast before the turn of the century, 1895 as an immigrant hoping to become a permanent citizen. He helped lay the ties and rails of the Santa Fe Railways all the way from SACRAMENTO to BAKERSFIELD area. My mother was a "picture bride" from the same tiny fishing village as my father's, TAHARA, WAKAYAMA Prefecture, JAPAN. Although my parents never had an education beyond the 6th Grade, my father knew the importance of knowledge. He was always boasting to us that he was able to read and write our English language before he ever set foot on our land. Although it was a prerequisite to have \$50.00 before landing, he had only \$49.00, but being able to speak for himself the immigration officer allowed him to pass. All others with less than \$50.00 were turned back. His Japanese-English dictionaries were still on my bookshelves when the evacuation started, but unfortunately I had to dump it during our hasty "exile" from TERMINAL ISLAND. I still cannot forget the day a Marine Corporal came knocking on our door, pointing an Automatic 45 (which wasn't necessary) and saying, "You people of Japanese Ancestry have 48 hours to get off this island". My father's family ran a small freight shipping business to TOKYO-YOKOHAMA area, but their business failed when my grandfather died, my father was 6 months old. My widowed grandmother who also had 2 sons and 2 daughters could not support them so the 2 boys decided to immigrate to AMERICA and make a better living for themselves. My uncle immigrated 10 years prior to my father. This village of TAHARA has a sub-division called SABE. While working for Santa Fe Railways, about 200 of this villagers were among this railroad gang, majority being from TAHARA and a few from SABE. A foreman was showing one of my father's villagers how to drive in the spikes. Upon finishing his demonstration, he asked, "You

sabe?", not being able to fully understand English nor Spanish, my father's friend replied, "No! me TAHARA". This accidental pun made my father laugh so much he repeatedly told it to us whenever we asked about the "old days". He was mighty proud that he was selected to clean the Presidential Car during an election stop at that time. I used to wonder why he kept a gold \$5.00 piece on his watch fob, this was one of the coins he earned for 11 back-breaking hours of work for \$1.00 a day. They got paid only in gold coins in those days. He saw several cowboys holding up a payroll train while working on this railroad. Samurai Era was over when he was a child, but he remembered seeing 2 renegade Samurai with swords being chased by "modern" police of that time. I wonder if any Isseis could lay claim to seeing an end of 2 Eras like he did. After quitting the railroad, he tried strawberry farming, running a boarding house, houseboy-handyman for a bank President in SAN DIEGO and he finally settled down on TERMINAL ISLAND. He was a Captain of a fishing vessel with a 12-14 men crew when he retired. Not being eligible for the Social Security payments, he decided to return to his native village in 1938. Being able to speak our language as well as his own, he always wanted to become a citizen, but he saw no hope of becoming one so one of his final statements to me was, "Your country's in big trouble if they keep up this discrimination business".

My father's one and only advise was, "Start your own enterprise and be your own boss". I never heeded my father's good advise so to this day I'm still working for someone else.

*Jim Hara*

- 1938 - During my first year in high school, my parents retired and suddenly decided to go back to JAPAN. And like a damn fool I dropped out of school to tag along with them. To me it was a hellish 10 months of misery. I couldn't speak or read their language and there was a shortage of food in general due to the heavy export of foodstuff to their invading troops in CHINA and MANCHURIA. The Principal of the local grammar school made fun of us Niseis since we wouldn't conform to their way of thinking. I resolved never to come back to such a militaristic state; specially when the Secret Police picked me up for couple hours of interrogation right before I boarded a ship at KOBE, JAPAN.
- 1939 - I felt like kissing the ground upon landing at WILMINGTON, CALIFORNIA. I re-entered SAN PEDRO High; that 10 months of folly set me back a year in school.
- 1941 - The morning of Sunday, December 7th, I was listening to the radio while still in bed when suddenly I heard the noise of bombs exploding and the newscaster shouting that this is the real thing, I knew right away that we were already in a shooting war. My first thought was about my high school classmates who dropped out during that year to join the Navy. I felt sick in the stomach when I read the list of dead published in the Life magazine. My SAN PEDRO High School classmates were among them. I continued going to school until we got the evacuation notice, but it sure was a trying time since some of the teachers just didn't care to have us in their classes.
- 1942- All TERMINAL ISLANDERS moved off the island. Where to, I don't know; but we moved to SAN PEDRO for a few days and ended up in BOYLE HEIGHTS, LOS ANGELES in a hostel run by the American Friends Committee. We will never forget the assistance and kindness shown us by their members such as Ms. Esther Rhoades, Mr. & Mrs.

Herbert Nicholson, David Thurston Griggs and many others. The BOYLE HEIGHTS group was evacuated to POSTON, ARIZONA in May with a spiel from an Army Officer stating that a Company of Military Police will accompany us to guard us from outside harm. Upon reaching our train stop, PARKER, ARIZONA, I set foot on my first American desert. While viewing this wonderful panoramic sight, I unknowingly walked toward the opposite direction from the crowd till I walked into the muzzle of a Tommy Gun in my stomach. The M.P. waved me to go toward the other direction. It suddenly dawned upon me that we were going into a concentration camp, being treated as a Prisoner of War. However, this shabby treatment never made me waiver from my resolve which I made while I was in KOBE, JAPAN. Upon entering camp, Poston Relocation Center, we were forced to sign a card once we put our thumb print upon it. I tried to read the content when my brother got angry for holding up the line. My predecessor was refusing to sign so they told him that he could not enter this camp. I saw him the next day in the very same Block I was assigned to so I asked him about the content. He told me that I signed a card stating that we won't hold the U.S. government responsible for illegal detention during the war. To this day, I still wonder. Although my detention in camp was for a mere 7 months, being a finicky eater, I lost 15-20 pounds. I just couldn't stand food that I have never eaten before, such as Catfish, hominy, rutabaga, liver, etc. All I can say is that my life in camp was nightmarish. I know the Jews in GERMANY had it rougher, but ours were no picnic either. The gall of our government was to call it a "Relocation Camp". The monthly wages in camp was \$19.00 for Professionals, \$16.00 for Semi-Skilled and \$12.00 for General Laborer. I applied for

an Electrician's job, but they had no such category so I volunteered to try out as a hospital orderly. A Caucasian Male Nurse taught me the first few weeks, but he eventually left so I was left with his duties too. Due to shortage of qualified personnel, I started to prepare patients for the operating table and subsequently got to witness scores of surgeries. I worked in the General Ward, Isolation and Maternity. During late Summer of '42, rumors of Army Recruiters were coming to look for volunteers for Military Intelligence School. Eventually, Sgts. Jerry Shibata (Formerly from Frisco Bay area) and Paul Uno (Formerly from Seattle) showed up so I went to sign up. I heard about 60 signed up, but only 8 showed on the day they came to ask us to enlist. The reason for this small turnout from America's largest concentration camp was that the entire POSTON Camp #1 was on strike. The camp was so huge, it was divided into 3 sections, 2 miles apart. I hitch-hiked to Camp #2 one morning, but due to the intense desert heat (anywhere from 125 to 135 degrees F.) in the afternoon, I couldn't walk back. The strike demand was for better pay, food and some sort of a clothing allowance, I believe. But, I don't think they ever got it. I volunteered for Camp SAVAGE, MINNESOTA on this very day and left that night with 7 others. Volunteers were James Sasano, Yumiji Higashi, Juichi Nick Nishi, Tom Tsuyuki, Roy Takai, Sam Rokutani, Pat Nagano and myself.

Staff Sergeant Min Hara RA 18184273  
20 November 42 to 4 January 47

20 Nov 42: Volunteered at Post Relocation Center, Arizona for U.S. Army  
(Colorado River Indian Reservation)

Military Intelligence School at Camp Savage, Minnesota.

Experienced 135 plus degree heat in the barren desert of Arizona, then a record breaking minus 42 degree bitter cold Winter in the "Land of 10,000 Lakes", Minnesota. Only 8 of us enlisted from America's largest concentration camp due to strike action at that time. We went through 26 weeks of intensified course while trying to learn to read and write the Japanese language.

Jul-Aug 43: Shipped down to Camp Shelby, Mississippi for accelerated Basic Training Course. We got temporarily attached to 442nd Regimental Combat Team as Company S. Although there are no Company S in the whole U.S. Army, Captain Crowley the new C.O. gave us this designation to indicate SAVAGE. One of the best Captains I have met during my 4 years of Service. I hoped he lived through the war to see better times.

Aug 43: Returned to Fort Snelling, Minnesota temporarily till more new barracks were constructed at Camp Savage. Held daily translation practice till the day of departure for oversea assignment. Language Teams of 10 men each was formed. Our Team was headed by a veteran of the Attu-Kiska Campaigns, Aleutian Islands, Alaska. Staff Sergeant George T. Hayashida participated in the annihilation of the 2,000 men Attu Garrison. He saw the remains of the Base C.O. Colonel Yamasaki on the battlefield. He interrogated some of the first Radar Technicians (civilians) captured there. His mother or a girl friend sent him a chocolate cake while he was stationed here, caught up with him at Cape Sansapor, Dutch New Guinea. The cake was hard as a concrete block.

Our Table of Organization when we departed for oversea duty.

Team Leader:	S/Sgt.	George T. Hayashida
Translator :	T/4	Soshiro Baba
"	T/4	Kiyoshi Fujimura
"	T/4	Minoru Hara
"	T/4	Tom Matsumura
"	T/4	Hiroshi Onishi
Interpreter	T/5	Shizuo Kunihiro
"	T/5	George Nakamura
"	T/5	Theodore Takano
"	T/5	Nobuo Yamashita

Jan 44: Departed with two other Teams from the Camp Savage Railroad Station on a cold Winter night for Oakland, California. Scores of G.I. friends and Instructors came to see us off. Got stationed on Angel Island (Next to Alcatraz Island) in San Francisco Bay. Made it very inconvenient for us to visit San Francisco on weekends. No place to visit on this bleak island so we volunteered for K.P. duty since the chow was so delicious.

5 Feb 44: Departed Oakland unescorted for unknown destination on a brand new 10,000 ton "Liberty Ship" named Ada Rehan. Zigzagged through the mine fields outside the Golden Gate Bridge. I got seasick when we were still within sight of land, while laying down on the bare deck with no barriers, the huge land swells started to rock our ship, Tom Matsumura came running over admonishing me, "Min, you're going to fall off so I'll tie this rope around your waist". And how I wished that I could so I can swim for shore. We continued zigzagging all the way to the South Pacific. After 2 days out, we saw an overloaded oil tanker, deck awash, with fighter planes tied down on her deck. But no other ships were to be seen for the next 28 days! To my buddies, this voyage must have been an experience of boredom, but to me, it was 31 days of agony. Me an ex-fisherman's son getting seasick till we sighted land, the south-western tip of British New Guinea. As we

neared the combat zone in the South Pacific, our Merchant Marine Captain asked us to take day and night watches for enemy submarines and aircrafts. Not a gripe was heard from any of the 22 G.I. "passengers". The reason for this request was that he was torpedoed 2 days out of Brisbane, Australia on his previous maiden voyage. As we approached Coral Sea, we suddenly hit a terrible storm which lasted for 2 whole days. The Captain told us that we've been drifting back all during this time in spite of the engine churning full speed ahead. The swells were so big it towered over the superstructure of our ship. The ship rode on some of these swells and the propeller was grinding in free air. Imagine! our all metal ship was creaking and bouncing like a ball. A few of the sailors on board had a similar experience while they were up in the Aleutian waters and you can imagine how we felt when they said that their ship cracked in half. Probably this was the only time I did not feel my seasickness. When the calm returned, the night watch was a pleasure being able to see the Southern Cross and millions of other stars due to the clear pollution free atmosphere. It seemed as though you can see 4-5 times more stars here than in the Northern Hemisphere. I believe this was the most enjoyable part of our 31 days voyage.

8 Mar 44: Arrived in Milne Bay, British New Guinea (now called, Papua). We had a submarine scare right before entering this bay, but found it to be a tree trunk floating vertically like a periscope. I saw a Black Marlin larger than any I have ever seen in any record book of fishing or in a museum, following the garbage we were dumping from the fantail of our ship. Islands off shores looked more beautiful than any Hollywood movies I have ever seen, but found it to be hell after we landed.

Slimy mud up to our knees, hot and humid and plenty of mosquitoes. After visiting the Base Hospital, found out more of our troops were falling victim to malaria and dengue fever than from enemy bullets. Not only out of curiosity, but being typical American souvenir hungry G.I.s, we went to see a battleground where the Australian Forces had fought off a Japanese landing in the previous year. The wreckage of Japanese wooden landing crafts were jutting out from the sandy beach all over the area, the stench of human deads were still there, as we dug in the sand for souvenirs. I was appalled at the sight of seeing thousands of cocconut palm trunks, half a mile deep, 2-3 miles wide, lopped off at the height of 7-8 feet by naval gun fire. It looked as if a giant scythe went through the whole beachhead.

After taking Atabrine tablets for a month, all the G.I.s' complexion started to turn yellow. G.I.s coming down with malaria were usually the ones that avoided taking these bitter pills nor were using their mosquito nettings which was issued to all the troops. They started to put the Atabrine tablets into the bread which made it come out yellow. What a nasty tasting bread! We took all these precautions, but some of us still came down with fever of some sort.

After several weeks of waiting, we finally got attached to the 6th Infantry Division as the 169th Language Detachment, G-2 Section (Intelligence). The troops were mostly from the mid-West and quite a number of Minnesotans. We formed a 2 men team and went to each of our 3 Regiments while 4 men stayed with the Division Headquarters. The Division consisted of 1st Infantry, 20th Infantry and the 63rd Infantry Regiments and other supporting units. We gave orientation lectures to

each and every one of our units, on how to identify enemy documents, about the enemy we were going to face and what our objective will be once we got into combat.

May 44: We sailed north-westerly several hundred miles to re-enforce an independent regiment commanded by Brigadier General Edwin D. Patrick (Later to command our 6th Infantry Division) at Maffin Bay, Wakde-Sarmi Sector, Dutch New Guinea (Now called, Irian). We had a wonderful reunion with couple of Savage grads, T/Sgt. Terry Mizutari and Harry Fukuhara. I still can't forget the delicious lunch Harry gave us in the middle of the jungle, rice with cans of beef, captured, of course. And to this day, I feel bad for our bad manners, leaving all those mess kits for Harry to wash. I interrogated my first of many hundreds of Prisoner of War, remnants of the Japanese 10th Air Force from Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea. Most of them were on the verge of starvation since they were all skin and bones. We made them nigiri meshi (rice balls) and told them to go easy since they haven't eaten for over a month, but some just didn't listen. I saw one of them gulp down 3 rice balls (bigger than our baseball) in a few minutes and I heard he died the following morning. I remember making a bath tub out of a 50 gallon drum so we could clean up one of the P.O.W. His physical condition was in such a poor state, from malnutrition and skin infections, wash cloth could not be used since his skin peeled off and blood poured out. Fortunately for the prisoner, our Field Hospital received their first supply of Penicillin so I believe he survived.

T/4 Sosh Baba and Hiroshi Onishi landed here with the 1st Infantry Regiment prior to our arrival so we did not see them for several days. I heard that General Patrick's Regiment

was almost about to be pushed back into the sea when the 1st Infantry landed. Our Division Command Post moved up to a forward Sector a few days later when the Japanese Forces started to lob artillery shells so we had to immediately evacuate to a safer ground. Battle of Lone Tree Hill commenced when T/4 Tom Matsumura and T/5 Ted Takano went forward to join the 20th Infantry Regiment. Enemy opposition was so intense, taking prisoners was out of the question. Besides they fought till the last man. Tom and Ted were more busy dodging enemy artillery and mortar barrages than getting a chance to interrogate prisoners. They took shelter under an ambulance when the mortar barrages began and they told me that they bounced like a ping pong balls. Good thing they had their steel helmet on. T/5 Shiz Kunihiro and I got assigned to the 63rd Infantry Regiment. We moved into the Sector adjacent to the 20th Infantry since they advanced a few thousand yards. Heard later from Tom that we dugged in exactly where they got clobbered a few days before. We were fortunate in not receiving any more barrages, but the enemy left plenty of Kesshitai (Suicide Squads) so we were constantly on the lookout for sniper fire. Every helmet I picked up and examined had a bullet hole right by the temple. Shiz and I were kept busy interrogating the trickle of prisoners that finally started to come in. Mind you, not voluntarily, they were shell shocked or badly wounded. We worked till sunset so Shiz and I were the last to dig our fox holes. I spent the longest night of my life here. Our fox holes were about 5 yards from the shoreline, water started to seep in from the sea when the tide came up, tropical rain came down in torrent, had to keep our rifle and ammo above water so I held it on top of my helmet all night. We couldn't afford to stick our heads up for fear of

a sniper putting a bullet between our eyes. We had to jiggle our helmets on top of our rifle barrels before standing up in the mornings. Took us over a month to over-run Hill 225 for this Battle of Lone Tree Hill. Due to this stiff opposition we hardly took any prisoners. In most cases, the enemy was annihilated or pushed inland while we occupied the shoreline area anywhere from a 1/4 to 1/2 mile deep. Our backs were to the sea so all units had a front line, even our Division Headquarters. We were all recalled to Division C.P. where S/Sgt. George Hayashida headed his Team of T/4 Kiyo Fujimura, T/5 George Nakamura and T/5 Nob Yamashita. We experienced constant harrassment from enemy infiltrators and snipers all along the front. One day, three ATIS men showed up from Brisbane, Australia, Sgts. J. Tanikawa (Veteran of WWI), Hugh Tsuneishi and another fellow (Can't remember his name). They were eventually assigned to an outfit on Biak or Noemfor Island. I interrogated a prisoner captured by our Paratroopers when they surprised the whole Noemfor Garrison sound asleep. Prisoner had a big gash on his stomach so I asked him for an explanation and this was his statement. "We heard of the rapid advance of the American Forces along the New Guinea coast so we held a flag burning ceremony (Regimental Color) a month before so it would not fall into enemy hands. Our forces were resigned to their fate, to fight to the death. The sounds of gunfire awaken me when I realized that our garrison was under attack. I immediately ran into my pillbox and started to fire my machine gun. However, your forces advanced right in front of my machine gun slot and commenced shooting their flame throwers so I immediately closed my steel door (Machine gun slot). The slimy flame came seeping in, our oxygen was being

exhausted so I tried committing hara kiri, but it was so painful, I stopped and decided to come out with my hands up." The prisoner's ears were singed and his stomach wound was superficial. But like many prisoners, he asked, "Am I the first Japanese prisoner?". While accompanying a prisoner back to our "rear lines", we saw all the tanks, half tracks, tank destroyers and other armored vehicles parked on the sandy beachhead which was useless in jungle warfare. The prisoner seeing all this said, "I'm positive we can win every battle if we had just half your equipment." And I said to myself, "I'm sure they can". We were fighting a decimated Regiment (22<sup>3rd</sup> Infantry) with a whole Division. Must have been a helpless feeling for the Japanese infantrymen to fight a modern warfare with a bolt action rifle used in the Russo-Japanese War while we carried semi-automatic rifles. As we (Shiz Kunihiro and I) were returning from the front, we saw over a dozen trucks loaded down with our deads heading for our cemetery further down the coast. A G.I. came by and said, "I think I saw one of your boys (meaning Nisei) among them". Of course, our immediate thought was, "It can't be!". Upon reaching Division C.P., to our sorrow, we found it to be true. Heard a sniper got into our C.P. area, T/Sgt. Terry Mizutari was about to return fire when he got hit on the chest and staggered back into the arms of Kiyo Fujimura. Must have been an awful shock to Kiyo, seeing one of our comrades die in his arms. Captured documents started to roll in when we over-ran some enemy C.P.s 4-5 miles up the coast. I was interrogating a prisoner when the documents were unloaded by my feet and swarms of G.I.s milled around the pile so I asked

everyone to move back and give us some space to work. However, one G.I. didn't move back so I yelled at him, "Get your ass back!" or something to that effect. He said, "Okay! okay!" and I looked up to see my Commanding General Charles E. Hurdis smiling at me. The prisoner later asked me who I was yelling at because he noticed the 2 stars on his lapel. I told him that he was my C.G. and was he shocked. He said he would have been shot if he spoke like that even to his Sergeant. Losing Terry Mizutari the previous night, all of us were a bit shaken and jittery. T/4 Tom Matsumura and myself were to share a pyramidal tent that night, so fortunately for me, we decided to lay our rifles and bayonets in the far corner of the tent. Tropical heat was so unbearable we both slept on canvas cot with only our shorts on. Nature called during the night so I quietly crawled out hoping not to awaken Tom. Suddenly as I was about to crawl into my cot, I felt a body hit me with full force on my back and he started choking me with all his might. I immediately realized that the naked body was Tom's, but he was choking me so hard, I just could not call out. I kept on slapping his thigh till he finally released his hold realizing that it was me. "Min, is that you? Min, is that you?, Tom, Tom, it's me!". We mutually shivered while we chain smoked till sunrise. Our first words in the morning was, "Boy! good thing we left our arms in the far corner". In late August, the 31st Infantry Division landed and took over our whole Sector. Then we started on our preparation for our next landing.

Sep 44: We sailed for our next beachhead on LSTs. Aerial photography showed no enemy troop concentrations so the few escorting destroyers did not have to bombard the beaches. Our landing

at Cape Sansapor, Dutch New Guinea was unopposed. We landed too far south of our objective so we had to walk about 2 more miles north-westerly. We saw some trees loaded down with black objects so I fired into it, turned out to be giant fruit bats with 5-6 feet wing span. Hundreds flew up, but this was the first and last sight I was to see of these huge bats. Not having any fresh fruits or vegetables for several month, Tom and I immediately went into the jungle in search of it. We ran across plenty of banana and papaya plants, but none of the fruits were large enough to eat. We swam in a water hole right next to the ocean not knowing the dangers of strange water, heard they shot a huge ocean going crocodile in this water hole the very next day. Later, prisoners told us of seeing their comrades devoured by crocodiles while they were swimming across some river. We picked a spot in a clearing which looked like a former Japanese outpost since they had a small grass hut with a garden along side of it. We found some lime trees loaded down with fruits and what a treat! Limeade for the next couple of days. The trees were picked clean by the 3rd day, even the one inch diameter ones were gone. All the G.I.s that went wading into the jungle that day caught near fatal fever. Luckily, Tom and I were spared and we felt no ill effects. The garden was full of egg plants and konnyaku bulbs (vegetable) left drying all over the ground. Since we were all sick and tired of C-ration and dehydrated food, all the G.I.s were eagerly searching for something fresh. I told a few of our troops to try some of those Japanese "spuds" (konnyaku dama) while I explained to my Nisei teammates of its bitterness. This bulb is highly acidic so it must have been like biting into a green persimmon, we all had a good laugh when we saw

all the G.I.s make nasty faces after taking a bite. Prisoners from the remnants of the 10th Japanese Air Division, totally destroyed on the ground at Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea started to come in by the hundreds. Taiwan and Korean Labor Force prisoners came in willingly, but the die-hard Japanese had to be captured with the force of arms. We were kept busy for several weeks, interrogating and processing. The Labor Forces were being used by the Japanese Army to construct their airfields throughout the Southwest Pacific. A prisoner seeing our landing strip made in a little over 2 days, using bull dozers, steel landing mats, etc. said, "It would have taken us over half a year since we only had picks and shovels". Due to the life or death situation, cannibalism was practiced by the Japanese troops during their 500 mile trek through the dense jungles. Whenever a large group of prisoners came in, I was able to pick each and every Japanese that practiced cannibalism by just looking at their eyes. Their fierce looking eyes reminded me of a hungry Bengal Tiger. Upon interrogation, their only comment was, "Its a matter of survival". I asked several of their combat veterans if it's true that all dying soldiers shouted, "Tenno heika banzai!" (Long live the Emperor!) and their snickering answer was, Maybe one soldier in 10,000. Another interjected, 1 in 20,000 is too high! They said all they ever heard was the word, "Oka San" (mother) on their dying lips. Most of them being veterans of North China Campaigns were apologetic for being captured, but like any human, some didn't give a damn. In fact, one didn't even care if he never got to see his wife and kid. We started to experience nightly air raids by 2-3 enemy bombers at exactly 8:00 P.M. I always wondered why they never bothered to change

their time. Anti-Aircraft Battery (claiming they were veterans of Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands) came to our assistance with their new radar controlled guns, but they couldn't knock one plane out of the sky. Meanwhile, our bomber and fighter strips got plastered. Our Division C.P. was hit one night and several of our comrades died in their sleep. George Hayashida, George Nakamura and I spent 2 days digging a bomb shelter, laying logs on top and sand bagging the roof and sides. However, when the bombs came down, I was sleeping right next to the entrance, but I couldn't get my whole body into our shelter since it was jammed pack with my 9 other teammates. The other 7 neglected to dig their own. We counted over 100 shrapnel holes in our roof of our pyramidal tent the next morning. Surprisingly, none of us got hit. Especially me with my butt sticking up in the air. All I got for my trouble was "strawberries" all over my legs, hitting the logs as I tried to dive for cover. Since we lived through these bombings, I would like to insert couple of humorous stories. During our search for souvenirs, Nob Yamashita came up with 40-50 Japanese records and a wind-up victrola. While we were under one of these bombing attacks, Kiyo Fujimura plays, "Rabaru Kokutai" (Rabaul Air Force) and some of the G.I.s in other bomb shelters started to shout out, "Cut out that crap!", And laughingly, we were commenting, if they only understood the words, they're probably come and throw a grenade in here.

Our Issei parents knowing that they'll never have the chance to become a U.S. citizen constantly dreamt of their homeland. Any Japanese government request or appeal for monetary assistance was gladly met. The appeal during the Manchurian Incident was for cigarette "tin foil" for construction of parts

for their Aikokuki (airplane). My folks used to make me get up early every weekend to go pick up empty cigarette packs. Then we had to dip it in a wash tub and peel off the foil and roll it up into a ball. Took me over 2 years to make a 10 pound ball. A dozen years later, their beloved Aikokuki is laying their eggs every night over my head. I don't know how my parents would have felt if I was to get killed like this, but I sure felt like kicking myself in the butt.

Oct 44: George Hayashida and I flew down to 6th Army Headquarters, then situated at Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea. We were met by 7-8 Japanese Zero fighters and what a scare, but they turned out to be our flyboys who fixed it up for their joy ride by painting our insignias upon them. We landed on a former Japanese fighter-bomber strip near Lake Sentani. Mountain piles of Zero fighters and Betty Bombers were bull dozed to one end of the airfield. We met a team of first Savage grads attached to our Air Force, crating captured planes to be shipped stateside instead of doing intelligence work. Guess the Air Force didn't know how to make better use of them. We ferried across Humboldt Bay to the 6th Army Headquarters and met several Savage grads who we haven't seen since we parted at Camp Savage, Minnesota. Sgts. Pat Tsuneo Harada, Wm. Toriumi, Harry Akune, Peter Nakahara and few others were here. Peter Nakahara and I had a nice long chat since we both went to the same High School and had lots of mutual friends. 6th Army's G-2 Colonel understanding the value of Savage grads immediately gave us a promotion in grade with a new Table of Organization.

Promoted to:      T/Sgt. G. Hayashida  
                          S/Sgt. K. Fujimura

S/Sgt.	M. Hara
"	H. Onishi
T/3	S. Baba
"	T. Matsumura
Sgt.	G. Nakamura
T/4	S. Kunihiro
"	T. Takano
"	N. Yamashita

Pat Harada and Harry Akune took George Hayashida and me that afternoon to their P.O.W. stockade across the bay. Over 600 prisoners were interned here and we've noticed that quite a few were the ones we sent down from the front. Some came forward to thank us for the humane treatment we afforded them when they first came into our lines. The prisoners were feasting on their native dishes since our forces captured their entire food dump intact. Pat took us to see the food dump, cases of canned goods, row after row, stacked 5-6 feet high. He claimed there were enough food there to feed them for over 10 years. George and I were supposed to fly back to Cape Sansapor that afternoon so Pat had the stockade cook make us a huge box of sushi. We went to the airfield hoping to take off immediately, but to our dismay there was no flight to our area that day. Consequently, we had to return back to 6th Army Headquarters. All the Savage grads here helped us dispose of the box of sushi before it spoiled in the tropical heat. Our teammates at Cape Sansapor was greatly disappointed when we told them what happened. Visited 2nd Lt. Kim Hatashita (my hometown) attached to a Signal Corp outfit nearby Lake Sentani. Their listening post was situated on top of a hill so we had to hike up a steep dirt road for couple of miles. Humidity being so high, we were drenching wet from our perspiration when Kim gave us a bottle of icy cold beer. Was it a treat! Kim was one of the few Niseis that escaped ATIS (Allied Translator & Interpreter Service)

and got a job best suited for him. He said his superior officers were formerly his students when he taught Morse Code at Fort Ord, California. We returned to Cape Sansapor after spending 2 days in the Hollandia area.

Oct 44: Several of us Niseis got the chance to go on a patrol on our Navy's PT Boats based at Amsterdam Island. We went deep into enemy held waters, northwestern tip of New Guinea, but to our disappointment, we did not get to see any action. Maybe we were lucky cause we heard one of our PT Boats got chased all over the ocean by some Zero Fighters the very next day. The other off-shore island was called Middleburg where we had our B-24 Liberator Bombers. Adjacent to our Headquarters area, on the mainland, were mostly B-25 Mitchell Medium Bombers, P-38 Lightning Fighters and a few P-51 Mustang Fighters. Met Lt. McGuire here when he had only 2 Japanese Zeroes to his credit. (McGuire Air Force Base in New Jersey is named in memory of him.) I heard he had over 30 enemy planes to his credit before he himself got shot down somewhere over the Philippines. During combat, I was never discriminated by our infantrymen or officers due to my ancestry, but of all people, my own Language Officer. While we were discussing the injustice of our government interning us in a concentration camp, he made this stupid remark, "Min, you should be glad you had this chance to fight for my country." Naturally, I saw RED and told him in no uncertain term what a White Trash of an officer he was and how unfortunate that we had to have a guy like him in command.

25 Dec 44: We spent our Christmas Eve on board a troop transport. I remember the Christmas Dinner of Turkey, 3 inch sliver of FRESH Celery, ice cream and other trimmings. Comments made

by the G.I.s, "They're fattening us for the kill!". We all knew that we were heading for the Philippines since we were briefed with detailed maps and topographic models of our next landing sight. About a dozen Navy Destroyers came off-shore to escort us to the Philippines and they, not the Guadalcanal veterans, shot down the first and only enemy bomber on our final night in New Guinea. All the G.I.s were running up to top side, but we never shot one down during our 8 month here so I didn't believe it. By the time I got out to top deck, all I saw was airplane gas burning on the surface of the sea. Sailed the next morning, December 29th, toward our next destination. Our convoy increased in size as we neared the Philippines, ships from horizon to horizon, over 100,000 G.I.s were slated to participate in this landing.

9 Jan 45: As the dawn light was brightening the sky, I saw my first massive naval bombardment at close range and was amazed to see our warships (Battleships, Cruisers, Destroyers, etc.) move side-ways each time they laid down a salvo from all their guns. The whole Gulf was full of floating brass shells which reminded me of a timberland cut down with nothing but tree stumps. Landing on Lingayen Gulf, Luzon, Philippines was accomplished with hardly any opposition. I saw a few Japanese aircrafts trying to bomb our ships without any success. Being unable to accomplish their mission, they started to crash-dive (Kamikazes) on our ships. Due to some SNAFU by our high command, our fighter air cover did not show up in time. Thousands of anti-aircraft fire turned the morning dawn into night by smoke cover. Our over-due fighters arrived, but we had to tell them to get away before some of our ack acks took care of them. We landed 2-3 miles west of our assigned beach, ground was pockmarked

with holes large enough for a house to fall in from our naval bombardments. We hiked eastward to our assigned area and established our new C.P. Within the hour, I interrogated my first prisoner dressed in a civilian white shirt and his khaki pants. The prisoner was wounded with bullet holes clean through his thigh, arm and shoulder. I was called back to Army Headquarters as a witness for a General Court Martial a month later in the trial of this prisoner. The court sentenced him to be hanged as a spy. I interrogated my 2nd prisoner the next day, an Air Force pilot (from Kyoto area) at Santa Barbara, Pangasinan Province. He claimed our ack ack fire was so intense that he could not get down low enough for an accurate bomb run. I asked him how it looked from the air, "It's just like bucking a fired up steel wall!". Consequently, he tried to crash-dive on our ship, but he was shot down in his attempt. None of the Japanese prisoners ever knew we were Japanese Americans, nor did I tell them, but this prisoner said, "I'm positive you're from the Kansai area". My parents came from Wakayama, a part of Kansai (Central Japan). Found very few observant prisoner like this pilot. I spoke to several survivors of the Bataan Death March rescued by our 6th Ranger Battalion from the Japanese Prison Camp at Cabanatuan. They claimed the brutal guards were mostly from Taiwan (Formosa). They were the Takasagos (Taiwan aborigines). Our Division tangled with the only Japanese Armored Division on the Luzon Plains. Steel Force - 2nd Armored Division (Tetsu Butai - Dai Ni Shenshya Shidan). I participated in a bayonet charge at Munoz, Feb. '45, my mission was to try talking a Japanese Colonel into surrendering. But to no avail since they all fought to their death.

Another humorous incident:

As we were advancing with fixed bayonets through this small country town of Munoz, I noticed that the farmers had their corn stalks stacked up in a pyramid shape like our founding fathers in the New England states. Japanese soldiers were behind every stalk waiting for us to engage them in hand to hand combat. Due to our abundance of ammo, we shot them instead of engaging them in such dangerous maneuvers. A G.I. along side me shot a charging Japanese soldier and he started to go down clutching his stomach, our G.I. immediately dropped his M-1 rifle and drew his knife from his belt and rushed up to him, I thought he was going to stab him, but no, he grabbed the collar of the wounded and commenced to cut off his rank insignia. Our Infantry Colonel's shouting, "No! boys, no! it's too dangerous", but this G.I. was still nonchalantly cutting away as I passed him by. Taking a human life is no laughing matter, but this incident amused me. I was wondering to myself, how souvenir hungry can a guy get! Risking his life for a mere souvenir.

T/4 Shiz Kunihiro and I got assigned to the 1st Infantry Regiment situated at San Narciso-San Marcellino Sector, Zambales Province. We stopped by at Bataan Peninsula, walked into the hills and saw a portion of our trenches and found ammo and hand grenades in front of their positions just as they left it when they were told to surrender by Lt. General Jonathan <sup>Wainwright</sup> in 1942. Later on, I asked a Japanese Infantryman who initially landed on Bataan why they fought so fanatically. He said, "You might say that now, but you should have seen your forces, They too fought bravely and fanatically when we cut-off Bataan in 1941-1942". I participated in 3 reconnaissance patrol.

While bringing back a -

prisoner through a remote village, the Filipino natives started to throw baseball size rocks at the prisoner sitting alongside me in a Jeep, yelling. "Kora dorobo! (Hey! you crook!)". I too was in danger of being hit so I emptied a few rounds over their heads and you should have seen them scatter. The prisoner had tears in his eyes saying, "I'm quite sure the intitial invasion forces must have treated these people terribly". I was more amazed that they spoke in Japanese!

Due to constant interrogations, we found out the survivors of the Japanese super battleship, Musashi was running loose in the jungles of Zambales Province. My motive in volunteering for these patrols was to capture a high ranking officer in the Japanese Army or Navy. To this date I never interrogated an officer beyond the rank of 1st Lieutenant. A prisoner came in one day stating that he saw about 50 Navy personnel all layed up with dysentery in the jungle. Maybe a capture of an Admiral might be possible so our Regimental C.O. gave me the okay to accompany our patrol. It was possible to take a jeep into the jungle so 3 of us plus the prisoner headed out ahead of our accompanying troops on the truck. After going inland about 5-6 miles, we ran into a Japanese patrol, 15-20 of them, armed to their teeth, I didn't have time to call out to them to surrender and they lowered their rifles to engage us in a fire fight. We immediately opened up with a few rounds and I told my prisoner (hastily, of course) if you want to get back to Japan alive, don't you leave the jeep and I pursued the scattering enemy patrol. To my surprise, the prisoner was calmly sitting in our jeep when I returned from the skirmish. Due to our superior automatic weapons, it saved my life, but this was my closest shave from death. As I was firing ahead at the

scattering patrol, I sensed someone was behind me so I hit the ground, rolled over and saw a Japanese soldier about 20 yards away with his rifle trained right toward my back. Saw my whole life flash by in a split second. I emptied 3-4 rounds into him before he could drive his bolt forward.

1st Infantry Headquarters moved to Bacolor, Pampanga Province from San Narciso, Zambales Province. I saw scores of grave markers, victim of the Bataan Death March along side the highway as we came into Bacolor. My most interesting interrogation of the war happened here when 7-8 Naval Officer from the battleship, Musashi came in as prisoners. The Senior Officer, Commander Yoshioka was carrying the Navy Log with him which contained the battle accounts of Pearl Harbor, Midway, etc. MacArthur Headquarters (now at Manila) sent words asking us to forward the Log as soon as possible. I did not get a chance to thoroughly examine it, but what I read was very interesting.

- Commander Yoshioka was the only Japanese prisoner who asked me for permission if he could speak. Upon giving him an okay, he said, "I am positive that you are a Nisei". Out of hundreds of P.O.W.s that I interrogated, he was the only one who knew we were Niseis. I asked him how he came to that conclusion, he said he read an article about the 442nd R.C.T. fighting in Italy in a newspaper that came from Switzerland through the Red Cross. He figured we (Niseis) might be stationed in Australia, but he was surprised to see us in this combat zone. He had been to our east and west coast in one of their Training Ship Cruise (Renshu Kantai) in 1936.

We returned to Division C.P. in the foothills of the Sierra Madre Range right outside of Marakina (outskirt of Quezon City). The enemy set up a defense positions called the Shimbu Line

with their usual Infantry plus a newly formed Rocket Battalion. Fighting was so fierce hardly any prisoners came in for us to interrogate. In fact, some companies were offering bounty for bringing in prisoners. During the lull of this battle, we were able to take turns going into Manila for sightseeing. Met scores of ATIS men up from Brisbane, Australia and Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea, who were now stationed at the Manila Race Track. After cracking the enemy forces of the Shimbu Line, our whole 6th Infantry Division moved up to Northern Luzon to participate in the encirclement of General Tomoyuki Yamashita's Forces. I was back with the 1st Infantry Regiment up in Nueva Vizcaya Province when I received my order to return to Division C.P. Usually we said our goodbyes to all our teammates, knowing the ferocity of battle up front, but my replacement, Sgt. George Nakamura left that day without a word. One hour later, I got a call from 1st Infantry C.P. saying that George just got killed by a sniper. Our first thought, can't be, because he did not come around to say goodbye to any of us, but once again to our regret it was true. War came to an end, but the Japanese Forces under Yamashita's Command did not surrender so S/Sgt. Kiyo Fujimura lead a patrol into enemy held territory to negotiate their unconditional surrender. But, before they could reach any Japanese Command Post, they ran into a 30 men Japanese patrol, Kiyo boldly approached them and informed them of the cessation of hostilities while his men watched from a distance. However, due to lack of radio communication with Japan, they were skeptical and unconvinced so Kiyo returned and told his men that he'll have to bring them over so he can convince them thoroughly. His patrol would not trust the Japanese coming in fully armed so he went back again, did some fast talking and got them to come in

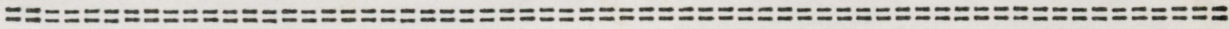
without their weapons. Kiyo said that he finally convinced them when he threatened to wire Japan and bring one of their Princes. For bringing this mission to a successful conclusion, S/Sgt. Kiyoshi Fujimura was awarded the Silver Star.

General Yamashita and his men came in to surrender a few days later to our adjacent unit about a 1000 yards away, but I personally did not see him. I thought surely he would commit hara kiri (disembowelment).

Our whole Division moved out of the Cordillera Mountains, to the China Sea coast, San Fernando, La Union Province and prepared for the Occupation of Japan. How we griped upon learning that our 6th Infantry Division was to occupy Tsuruga, Fukui Province, Japan. All our Niseis claimed the Tokaido Line (railway) was too far away for convenient travel.

10 Oct 45: Surprise of surprises, next day our order changed to Inchon (Jinsen), Korea. The Korean people did not welcome us G.I.s with open arms like the Filipinos, claiming that we came to occupy their land after booting out their former oppressors, the Japanese. Our 169th Language Detachment was disbanded at Chonju, Zenra Hokudo, Korea. Kiyo Fujimura and I re-enlisted for another year in the Regular Army to serve in the Army of Occupation, ATIS, GHQ, Tokyo. We visited our parents during our 3 month "Bonus" furlough offered by MacArthur Headquarters to all G.I.s volunteering for the Army of Occupation. Kiyo going to Iwakuni, Yamaguchi Prefecture and I went to Tahara, Wakayama Prefecture. We served mostly at ATIS, but we had temporary duty under Lt. Colonel Paul F. Rusch translating the new Japanese Constitution, personal diaries of Prince Fumimaro Konoye, Saionji, General Hideki Tojo and other "war criminals" of that time. Don't know how Kiyo made out

on his accrued time when he got discharged, but I received 2 days when I got my discharge at Fort Dix, New Jersey. I left the Service with a sour taste in my mouth for their blundering "bureaucracy". Two days of furlough after 35 month of overseas duty!



6th Infantry Division  
Casualties

1,174 ..... Dead  
3,876 ..... Wounded  
9 ..... Missing



Enemy Losses

23,000+ ..... Dead  
1,700 ..... Captured

