

AS I RECALL

By Frank Shigeo Kubo

On October 25, 1910, I was born in Auburn, Washington, U.S.A. My parents' names are Jutaro Kubo, father, and Masae Kubo, mother. I am their first son and am registered at the Washington State Bureau of Vital Statistics under the full name of Frank Kubo. I am also recorded as the primogeniture of my father in his family register with permanent domicile at 535 Takaban, Shunjo-mura (currently known as Ibuki-cho) Sakata-gun, Shiga-ken, Japan under the name of Shigeo Kubo. 521-03

My parents were engaged in strawberry farming in Auburn, but when I became two years old, we all moved to Algona, just southwest of Auburn. My two sisters were both born in Algona. Toshiko was born on March 3, 1913, and Hisaye on September 8, 1915. I attended Algona Elementary School for a little more than a month before my mother took us three children and left for Japan in October, 1916. Four of us boarded the steamship Mexico-maru at Seattle and arrived at Yokohama. From there we proceeded to our parents' hometown of Takaban. After making arrangements with her mother to bring us three children up, my mother returned to Algona to join her husband.

Our grandmother lived with her daughter, Toshio. They both took good care of us. Our grandmother had a son, Sukezo, who was away in Hikone where he was employed by Marusho Uyeno Shoyu Brewing Company. He came home to see his mother often and was very kind to us three. Our aunt Toshio looked after us until she left to marry. In April, 1917 I enrolled in Shunjo Elementary School.

Our parents moved from Algona to Seattle to manage a hotel in the vicinity of 6th Avenue South and South King Street. There in March 29, 1919, Tadasu, my younger brother, was born. In 1920, our parents left Seattle to return to Japan with Tadasu.

Our father's house at 535 Takaban was then occupied by his brother, Sukehachi and his family. My father, therefore, built a new house for Uncle Sukehachi to move in. When my father's house was vacated we three children left our grandmother's and joined our parents. Our father then left for Seattle alone to work for about one year. On July 13, 1923, our sister, Tomeko, was born. During my school years, I was chosen either class monitor or assistant monitor. When I was in the sixth grade, there was an assembly of school representatives at our Shiga Prefectural Government Office in the City of Otsu, Shiga Prefecture. Accompanied by our school principal, Mr. Ibuki, I attended the assembly for our Shunjo Elementary School. When I finished my compulsory education of six years in March, 1923, I was a valedictorian at the commencement exercise representing 47 graduates of our class. Some of our classmates, both male and female, were going through some preparatory studies to take entrance examinations for the secondary school (middle school). Before my graduation from the elementary school, Mr. Nishiaki, a teacher in charge of our class, came to see if my father would let me join the preparatory class. My father thanked him for his kind concern, but declined his assistance, stating that I being the primogeniture, must follow the family tradition of farming. I yielded to my father's wish. At that time our Shunjo Elementary School did not provide higher primary courses. With my father's permission, I enrolled in a class at Kashiwabara Elementary School in the neighboring village in April, 1923. I rode my bicycle to the school. The higher primary courses were three year courses. The first and second year courses were established at Shunjo Elementary School in September, 1923. Therefore, I transferred to Shunjo School. The assembly for the second school term was held on September 1, 1923, and the school was out for the day. We were taking some time in the school building, and suddenly, the building started to tremble from the east end of the building. Mr. Nishiaki shouted "earthquake" and we all ran out of the building. When it subsided, we all went back into the

building only to run out of it again because of the aftershock. The extra issues of newspaper stated that Kanto District which includes the city of Tokyo was hard hit by the earthquake. It was my first experience of an earthquake. In March 1925, 27 of us completed two years of higher primary courses at Shunjo School. With my father's permission I went back to Kashiwabara School to finish the third and final course.

In March, 1925, my brother, Tadasu was adopted by Shinnosuke and Chie Ishii of Onoki. Chie was my father's younger sister. I used to drop in to see Tadasu on my way home from Kashiwabara School. He was all by himself as the Ishiis were out on the farm. I felt sorry for him.

In March 31, 1926, Tomoo, my second younger brother, was born.

In March, 1926, I finished the third year course of higher primary courses. After my graduation, I helped my parents on the farm. Besides farming, my father was an agricultural inspector of rice during harvest time in the fall. I remember him coming home late in the evening, sometimes all wet from the rain, pushing his bicycle home, and other times in good humor with sake in his stomach. My mother was busy taking care of him, preparing a hot bath and getting fresh clothing, etc. Every night after freshening up from bathing, he sat before our family's Buddha and recited a sutra "Shoshinge". When we were doing our school work he called us to join him. We sat behind him and chanted "Shoshinge". He was also a solicitor of an insurance firm "Taisho Life". Politically, he was busy as a district manager of Takaban and a member of village assembly of Shunjo. Socially he used to help affairs of a Buddhist Temple "Shoenji", and acted as a baishakunin, go-between, for many marriages. My mother was kept very busy due to many callers.

My father was very fond of sake, as he would buy sake by barrels. As soon as he returned home after a day's work on the farm, he would drink up two ricebowls full of sake. Later he did decrease it to one bowlful. He always mentioned that the time when he no longer could enjoy his drink would be his time to go. He used to pack a lunch for me when I went on school field trips. In the



case of overnight trips to Ise or Nara, he gave me extra spending money with which I brought home some souvenirs.

When he received a letter from my uncle, Sukesaku Kubo of Seattle, suggesting my returning to Seattle, he immediately decided to let me go back to the stateside to earn and save money for our family. He took me to Hikone to visit with Mr. Shotaro Ohashi who operated "Hinodeyu", a Japanese style bath house, in Seattle to find out about the job situation there. Just then, there was Mr. Yoshizo Ogura, an acquaintance of his, who was about to return to Seattle. My father got permission from him to let me accompany him on his return trip. My father placed an order for a new suit for me and gave me \$18.00 with which I purchased some spare clothing and gifts to take with me. I packed them in a wicker trunk.

In May 1927, Mr. Ogura and I boarded Arabia-maru at Yokohama for Seattle. On June 6, 1927, Uncle Sukesaku came to pick me up and took me to his "New Home Hotel" near 8th Avenue South and South Charles Street which he was managing. Since it was already summer all the schools were closed for summer vacation. My uncle, therefore, took me to Nishimura Employment Office to apply for an Alaskan salmon cannery job. At the end of June, I left for Petersburg, Alaska, and there I worked two months with other school kids although I could not speak a word of English. For this work I was paid \$120.00. After returning to my uncle's I sent \$100.00 to my father.

One day my uncle drove me out to Auburn, my birthplace. He took "East Highway" into Auburn. As he reached the city limit he took a left turn and there stood an old house. According to him, that was where I was born. He also drove to the place where my sisters, Toshiko and Hisaye, were born.

I was told by my father that I should seek a job at Furuya Company, a wholesale and retail firm of food and general merchandise, as soon as I arrived in Seattle to earn and save money for the Kubo\* family in Japan. I intended to obey his order. Uncle Sukesaku felt differently and suggested that I should learn English before seeking employment. He must have felt rather

awkward to introduce me to Mr. Furuya. He asked his friend, Mr. Ryuzo Nunobe to take me to the Furuya Co. for a job interview. I was interviewed and selected for employment by Mr. Masajuro Furuya. Immediately I packed up and moved out of the "New Home Hotel" and moved into the dormitory for Furuya employees.

I was assigned a room with a double bed and bunked with Mr. Yutaka Kanemoto. We commuted to the store on foot. Every morning before the store opened an assembly of the entire staff was held. Mr. Furuya made a several minute long speech on daily strength "hibino chikara" of the Christian teachings. We had to attend a Christian Church belonging to Caucasians. At the beginning my working area was in the basement of the store. Sometimes I was detailed to the printing shop. Then I was transferred to the shipping department where I learned how to pack. After I learned how to drive an automobile I was assigned to the city delivery department. We worked ten hours a day, six days a week. When we were busy we had to work even after our supper which was usually much lighter than the normal dinner and allowed shorter time. Then I became an outside salesman covering the downtown area. I solicited each and every Japanese resident regularly and made deliveries because shopping was rather difficult for most of them as many housewives had a handful of growing children and just a few of them owned their own automobile.

On October 21, 1929, My brother, Mitsuo, was born in Takaban.

When I reached the conscription age in 1930, I received a letter from my father in Takaban ordering me to return to Japan for the conscription test. In April 1930 I sailed on S.S. President Jackson from Seattle. A military officer interviewing those of us subjected to conscription examinations informed me that I was classified "1-B" as a result of the physical test. When he asked me of my future plan, my answer was that I was returning to Seattle to resume my work. His comment was that either serving in the military in Japan or working in America is the same for your country, Japan. He wished me to do my best.

I helped my parents until I left for Seattle via M.S.Hie-maru in September, 1930. I returned to the Furuya Co. to resume the outside salesman work.

My starting wages at the Furuya was \$30.00 per month with room and board. I was able to send my father money twice a year for awhile. To learn English, I enrolled in evening classes held at Central School and kept up the study for a little more than two years. I had to give it up because the work load became progressively heavier and it extended into overtime.

In the fall of 1931, Taiheiyo Shogyo Ginko (Pacific Commercial Bank) and Toyo Ginko (Oriental Bank), both managed by Mr. Masajiro Furuya, declared bankruptcies due to the nationwide depression. I sensed that my future with the Furuya Company was getting quite bleak. Just then, I learned that Mr. Kakubei Tsuji, an employee of Tsutakawa & Co., Inc. was going to resign from the firm to return to Japan in the spring of 1932. The Tsutakawa Co., Inc. in Seattle was a distributor of imported goods from Japan and exporter of U.S. lumber and was managed by two brothers, Jin and Jyoji Tsutakawa. Their office was located in the Central Building and managed by Mr. Jin Tsutakawa while Mr. Jyoji Tsutakawa was out of their office most of the time. Hoping to be selected as a replacement for Mr. Tsuji, I went to see Mr. Jin Tsutakawa and fortunately was hired immediately. I, therefore, resigned from the Furuya Company and moved out of the dormitory. Again I had to impose on Uncle Sukesaku for my shelter. This time he was managing "Alaskan Hotel" at 2005-1/2 2nd Avenue from which I started to commute to the Tsutakawa Co. Their store was located at 807 Maynard Avenue South and engaged in both wholesale and retail of imported foods and general merchandise. The office in the Central Building was merged into this store's office later. I was assigned outside sales to support their existing customers in neighboring cities to maintain their stocks for resales and also several sawmills, scattered near Seattle, with mess facilities to serve their Japanese workers. I would leave our store on scheduled runs driving a company truck laden with items to be delivered to specific\* customers and some popular items to be peddled off. The length of time required to complete these runs varied. Depending



upon the number of customers to be contacted and the distance to be covered, I was able to return to our store on the same day I started out, on the following day, or on the third day.

As I became used to this work, I realized the volume of my sales was very low because our customers became very thrifty due to this nationwide depression. To improve my sales record, I decided to canvas some of the farmers in Kent and Auburn along my regular routes. In Auburn I came upon several Japanese families who remembered my parents when they were farming in Auburn. Among them were Mr. and Mrs. Tokiryo who immediately identified who I was. They mentioned that I was the honored guest for whom a big community celebration was held in Auburn as I was the very first male baby born in the Japanese community though there were three baby girls ahead of me. It certainly touched my heart.

It was the Prohibition Era but some farmers brew sake secretly for their own consumption, especially for occasions like New Years and such. One of my customers offered me a cup of sake to start off the New Year properly. The sake served turned out to be vinegar. The lady of the house mistook vinegar for sake as their colors are identical.

Farmers were not excluded from the nationwide depression. Demands for their farm products were very weak and monetary returns for their products were low. Hourly wages at that time were 25 cents per hour and work was very scarce. We all worked ten hours a day but since I was on outside sales category it was almost impossible to finish, my day's work in ten hours. Among the sawmill workers were many bachelors who trusted me to take care of their personal and private matters such as making deposits of one's money at a bank in Seattle of his choice or purchasing an international money order to send to his family in Japan. Among farmers there were many big families with many offsprings of growing up ages. Some families consumed more than two 100 pound sacks of rice a month. They all worked hard and long hours starting even before sunrise and quitting way after sunset.

Both of my sisters, Toshiko and Hisaye, were born in the U.S. but their births were registered with the state's Bureau of Vital Statistics. In 1933 I consulted Mr. Thomas Masuda, an attorney, to have their birth registered to establish their U.S. citizenship legally. He instructed me to obtain two witnesses to certify their birth. Through Mr. Chiyokichi Natsuhara of Auburn, I was able to receive an affidavit each from Mr. W. T. Bekue and Mr. Charles Biggs. Thus, my sisters' birth records were properly filed with state's Bureau of Vital Statistics.

On February 10, 1934, Toshiko was married to Ichiro Teramura and moved to Pyongyang, Korea where they managed a komamonoya, a store that carries various daily necessities of life something similar to our drug store but without prescription drugs.

In April, 1935, Hisaye returned to America and she too had to impose on Uncle Sukesaku for awhile and attend school. Later she found live-in housework for a Caucasian family and continued her schooling.

In 1936, the Tsutakawa & Co., Inc. moved their office to 1239 South Jackson Street and the store to the next door at 1305 South Jackson Street and called it Pacific Market. It was the largest food store of this kind being operated by Japanese. While I was working for the Tsutakawa & Co., Inc. I kept on sending money two or three times a year to my father in Japan. I defrayed expenses needed for Hisaye's return to America also.

On February 9, 1938, I was engaged to marry Kimiko Hikida through Mr. and Mrs. Heijiro Edamura and Mr. and Mrs. Yokichi Yasui as our go-betweens. Our engagement party was held at Gyokkoken, a Chinese restaurant. Kimiko was born on September 21, 1911 in Seattle, the first child of Toyojiro and Fusa Hikida. The Hikida family's permanent domicile in Japan was Mitsuya, Isoda-mura, Inukami-gun (currently called Mitsuya-cho, Hikone-shi), Shigaken.

On June 13, 1938, a simple wedding ceremony was conducted at Hikida's residence at 1007-1/2 South Weller Street. It was officiated by Reverend Ichikawa of Seattle Buddhist Temple and attended by Mr. Hideo Mori, the bestman, and Miss Mieko Hotta,



the maid of honor, relatives and close friends. The reception was held at Gyokkoken with about 200 guests invited. Mr. Tokuyoshi Kawasaki was the master of ceremony for this occasion. We left for our honeymoon the following morning to Canada. Since Uncle Sukesaku let us use his car we drove to Anacortes and then ferried to Vancouver Island. On the island, we toured Victoria, then drove northward sightseeing on the way to Nanaimo. There we got on a ferry to Vancouver. In Vancouver we looked up the Fukunaga family, a distant relative of the Kubo family, and took in more sights and points of interest. On the fourth day we returned to our new home in Wellington Apartment at 1902 South Jackson Street.

Several days after returning from our honeymoon, Kimiko started to complain about her physical condition. After the medical examination, her doctor diagnosed her as having contracted tuberculosis of the lung and instructed us that she be hospitalized immediately. With the help of her brother, Torazo, we were able to put her in Firland Sanitarium. Tuberculosis of the lung was highly contagious, but today medical treatments for this has improved to the point that sanitariums no longer exist. What we fear most now is cancer for which there seems to be no cure yet. Because of the drastic changes in our married life, I moved out of our apartment and returned to live with Uncle Sukesaku at the Alaskan Hotel at 2005-1/2 2nd Avenue.

Around May 1938, I received a letter from Japan informing me of my father's illness. When I heard that he was in critical condition in July, I wanted to leave immediately for Japan to see him while he was still alive. As I was debating what steps to take I received the dreaded telegram of the report of his death. He passed away on July 23, 1938 at the age of 67. Immediately I had a memorial service held for him at our Buddhist Temple in Seattle. On August 5, 1938, I boarded S.S. Empress of Russia for Japan to pay homage to my father's grave. Air transportation was not yet established then. The 49th day memorial services for my father was solemnly conducted by Reverend Miki of Shoenji with 5 reverends representing Enkoji, Shinrakuji, Hokoji, and Shoenji-Shinkyō. For the services, Toshiko and child/children came from Korea. Before returning to her home in Korea, she and her

children went to visit with her in-laws, the Teramuras. I tagged along with her to the Teramuras and stayed there for several days.

The home office of the Tsutakawa & Co., Inc., was in Kobe and managed by Mr. Shozo Tsutakawa. My father and Mr. Shozo Tsutakawa became acquainted while they were in Seattle, as they used to meet at the Japanese American Commission Co. at 2nd Avenue South and South Main Street. My father visited Mr. Shozo Tsutakawa at his residence in Naruo, Japan in May 1937. Before I left for Seattle, I, too, visited with Mr. Shozo Tsutakawa, and during my stay at his Naruo residence he took me to his office in Kobe to give me an orientation tour of his office and to explain the functions of his office in relation to our Seattle office. When his eldest son, Takeo, went on his business tours to Osaka and to the Tokyo area I went with him to observe and learn how and with whom business was conducted.

After paying visits to my relatives and friends in Takaban area I went back to Tokyo. I returned to Seattle on October 9, 1938 via the M.S. Heian-maru and resumed my outside sales routine.

After one year and several months of sanitarium life, Kimiko recovered from tuberculosis and was discharged from Firland Sanitarium. She recuperated for awhile at the Hikida's. Then we first moved to Kenyon Apartment at 905 Spruce Street and several months later to Eleanor Apartment at 117 18th Avenue. Before our marriage Kimiko had to drop out of her high school to support her family as it was a big family with ten children including her. She had to turn in her entire earnings except a small amount for her pocket money.

When Toshiko was expecting her child, her sister, Tomeko, went to Pyongyang to help her with the housework and the store. During that time Tomeko suddenly fell ill and passed away on January 7, 1940 at the age of 17 in Korea. Upon receipt of this news I had a memorial service held for her at out Seattle Buddhist Temple on February 8, 1940.

On June 16, 1940, Hisaye was married to Masato Morikawa through Mr. Jyoji Tsutakawa and Mr. Ichimatsu Kihara as their baishakun-in, respectively. The wedding ceremony was held at the Seattle Buddhist Temple and officiated by Reverend Ichikawa.

On November 23, 1941, our daughter was born at Virginia Mason Hospital. We named her Frances with a middle name Motoko which my mother in Japan suggested.

Soon after my returning to Seattle in 1927, Uncle Sukesaku started to take me to Seattle Bukkyokai (Buddhist Temple) whenever there were services such as the birthday services for Sakya, etc.

Seattle Bukkyokai was initially established by the Issei (first generation Japanese) by forming Ijikai (a group to sustain) to which I became a member in 1932. As niseis, the off-springs of Isseis, grew up, Ijikai formed and sponsored a young Buddhist group called the "Lotus". I also joined this group. The Lotus put on a show every year at Nippon Kan Hall to lighten Ijikai's load as much as possible. I participated in a play or two and was often selected to be a treasurer of special finance committees of Lotus. Each Bukkyokai in the Pacific Northwest took turns holding the Young Buddhists Conference every year. One such conference was held at Tacoma Bukkyokai in 1934. They held oratorical contests in English and Japanese. Frank Yoshitake and Ruth Hamada in English and I in Japanese represented Seattle Young Buddhists. The result of the contest was the first place tie between Yakima group and us, the Lotus group. So we kept the trophy for the first half of the year and then handed it over to the Yakima group. Meanwhile I was chosen to be a member on the board of trustees of Ijikai. I had to attend conferences now and then. I had to call on members at their homes to collect special donations and membership dues. As members of the Lotus outgrew their age bracket and reached marriageable age, their attendance to Bukkyokai dropped off. It was difficult for them to join Ijikai due to the generation gap between Issei and Nisei. After much research (including consultations with Reverend Ichikawa and several inquiries made to several other Bukkyokai as far away as southern California, we



decided to form a new group with Nisei members to coordinate with Ijikai in their functions like Tacoma Bukkyokai's Koseikai. Thus, in 1938, our "Shoyukai" was born. We built a new temple at 1427 South Main Street and moved into the new building in 1941.

I was classified in "B" category by the Selective Services which was enacted in 1940. On December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor was attacked by Japan. I destroyed many books and photographs related to Japan. Our financial status was rather bleak as the result of a string of incidents such as our wedding, Kimiko's illness, my trip to Japan to pay homage to my father's grave and the birth of Frances. Executive Order 9066 of February 19, 1942 forced us to get ready to evacuate in the near future. We got busy sorting our belongings into what to take with us (limited to only that which we could carry), what to discard, and what to store.

Until our wedding, Kimiko was an employee at Frederick & Nelson of Seattle. Her friend and co-worker of a long time, Mrs. Dorothy Hong, offered to store our belongings with her brother, Eugene Luke of Seattle. Thanks to her, our storing portion was taken care of. Dorothy now lives in San Francisco.

On May 10, 1942, we were bussed to Puyallup Assembly Center, and then in August, 1942, we were moved to Minidoka War Relocation Center in southern Idaho via train. Our living quarter was in Block 13 and when a canteen was established in Block 14 I applied for a job. I was given a position as the manager of the canteen with \$19.00 per month pay with board and room. A general worker's pay was \$16.00 per month then. The Hikidas moved to Spokane from Seattle voluntarily. We, therefore, left Minidoka WRA Center on May 19, 1943 to join the Hikidas in Spokane. Through Torazo, I got a job at Great Northern Railway Station. My jobs were to load and unload postal matters and to refill drinking water as trains pulled in. Being the war time, arrivals of trains were so frequent and irregular that I was kept very busy and suffered from lack of sleep. I was paid 64 cents an hour and time and a half for overtime. In April, 1944, I went to Moses Lake and worked for Mr. Yoshinaka on his farm until November of the same year. As soon as I returned to my family in

Spokane, I resumed my work at the Great Northern Railway. I was so intent on earning money to support my family that long hours of work or types of work did not bother me at all. Of course, I was younger and healthier then.

When the war ended in August, 1945 and subsequently the ban on evacuees was lifted we went to Seattle in September, 1946 in search of a building with income possibility as we all wanted to return to Seattle. Finally we decided to invest in an apartment with six units at the cost of \$10,500.00. The conditions of sales were \$3,000.00 down payment, \$60.00 monthly installments and the title to be transferred on December 1, 1946. We packed our belongings and moved back to Seattle at the beginning of November, 1946. Since the apartment we purchased had no vacant unit for us to move into and the Hikidas were already in Seattle, we had to impose on them for our shelter. In April, 1947, we moved into 1014 East Terrace Street and our address has not changed ever since. The monthly rental income derived from this investment at that time was \$125.00.

This apartment did not require a full-time caretaker and so I began searching for an outside employment again. I chanced to meet Mr. Fujimatsu Moriguchi, an acquaintance for a long time. I was invited to his wedding in 1932 as we used to live in close proximity and also his wife, Sadako, being the second daughter of Mr. Shozo Tsutakawa. He asked me if I was interested in working for him as he was going to open a store in December 1, 1946. I accepted his offer. He was originally from Ehime-ken, Japan, and operated "Uwajimaya" in Tacoma from 1928. The store was a distributor of kamaboko which he manufactured and other food stuff before the evacuation.

Before the war broke out I served as a member of the building committee, the executive committee, and board of directors in our Seattle Bukkyokai. After returning to Seattle, I served as a member of the committee for the settlement of debts because meeting our obligations to our creditors was interrupted by the evacuation.

When the postal services between and the U.S. were re-established, I learned through letters from my mother and Mitsuo that I had lost two brothers and a sister since December 7, 1941. I had a memorial service held for each of them at Buddhist Church as soon as their death became known.

Tomoo died accidentally during his swimming exercises on August 10, 1943 at the age of 17. He was a student at Otsu Normal School then. Because the year 1947 fell on the thirty-third anniversary of our maternal grandmother Yao's death and when Tomoo's death became known to me the memorial services for both of them was held on January 28, 1947. Tadasu Ishii was killed in action in the Philippines on July 20, 1945 at the age of 27. His memorial service was held on September 28, 1947.

Toshiko Teramura had to abandon their store when her husband, Ichiro Teramura, was drafted into the Imperial Japanese Army. She returned to Takaban with her four children. The trip from Pyongyang to Takaban took her more than a month and it must have such an ordeal that she passed away on August 9, 1947 at the age of 34 due to severe malnutrition and extreme fatigue. Her memorial service was held on December 4, 1947.

I cannot fathom my mother's grief over losing four out of seven children she nurtured. She had only three children left for her, Mitsuo in Takaban and Hisaye and me far away in America.

When the war was over, Mitsuo was a midshipman at the Naval Academy. As the Academy was disbanded, he enrolled and graduated from Hikone Chugakko (Middle School), then became an elementary school teacher after finishing Otsu Normal School.

I made packages of food stuff and clothing and mailed them to my mother and friends in Japan as often as I could to reduce their shortage of food and clothing during the postwar period. When my mother informed me that her house was in need of repairs, I mailed her money orders which amounted to about \$2,000.00. The repair was to be done by Uncle Sukehachi who was a carpenter by trade.



Our apartment was three years older than I, and it too required repairs. Fortunately Kazuo Kubo, a cousin of mine, came to do repairing, painting and wallpapering for me. Thus, I learned how to do all this upkeeping of the building through helping him. In June 1958, we made the final installment payment on this apartment.

As I had dual citizenships, I filed for annulment of my Japanese citizenship in 1947. Thus, Mitsuo became the head of the Kubo family in Takaban.

I resigned from Uwajimaya in October 1950 due to disagreements in business operations. I ventured into hotel management in January, 1951, by investing \$10,250.00 on Curtis Hotel at 106-1/2 1st Avenue South. The down payment of this deal was \$3,000.00, but I had to borrow some money from a bank, Hikidas, and other friends to meet this requirement. I managed the Curtis Hotel until June 1952 with Uncle Sukesaku's help. This venture of mine turned out quite profitable as business conditions during the period of my management was favorable and I was able to sell this hotel business at the same price as I had to invest.

Kimiko's father, Toyojiro Hikida, passed away on May 7, 1951 at the age of 74. His funeral was conducted at our Buddhist Church on May 10, 1951.

In July, 1952 I returned to the Uwajimaya as requested by Mr. Moriguchi. He was so busy manufacturing kamaboko that he could not take care of his store. Demands on his kamaboko became very heavy. Especially one labeled "Shochikubai" was very popular for banquets of celebration. There were three large size kamabokos with three different designs, "Sho" (pine), "Chiku" (bamboo), and "Bai" (plum), packed in a gift box. In one of our business discussions the idea of importing merchandise directly from Japan came up. We decided to try it and contacted Mr. Jyoji Tsutakawa who was repatriated to Japan in 1942, for his assistance and participation in this undertaking.

Because a good custom broker is a requirement for an importing business, I went to B. R. Anderson & Co. which was the broker for

the Tsutakawa & Co., Inc. during the pre-war days, to see if they could be the one for us. There I met Mr. Charles Sheriff whom I have known since my Tsutakawa days. Later Mr. Sheriff transferred himself to George Bush & Co. which became the broker for Uwajimaya. We started to import just a few items with limited quantities for a time being. Mr. Moriguchi left all the matters of purchasing and bookkeeping to me as his children were still of school age at that time and could not be of any help to his business. When shortage of funds occurred, he used to borrow money from his friends and in some occasions from me. There were times he would repay with post-dated checks after reaching agreement with his creditors. But his creditors would not always remember the agreement and would deposit the check at his bank. When the bank notified us of "Not Sufficient Fund" situation I would consult with Mr. Moriguchi to clear such predicaments by depositing my own fund whenever I could. I personally did some lending and borrowing money in my life. It creates troubles without no end unless parties involved maintain communication constantly. On December 24, 1953 Mitsuo married Sumiko, a younger sister of Mr. Sakuzo Konishi.

Kimiko started to work for Skyway Luggage Co. in 1953 and then moved to Nordstrom Shoe Store in 1955. After a full 19 years of employment Nordstrom's she retired in 1975.

In 1956 my wife and I with Frances and her friend, Kinu Oiye, enjoyed a trip to California. We drove and took in sights of Crater Lake, Lake Tahoe, Sacramento, Fresno, Yosemite National Park, Los Angeles, Disneyland, San Diego, Tijuana, Mexico, San Jose, Palo Alto and San Francisco. In Monterey, Hisaye and Masato showed us the town of Monterey and its vicinity. In San Jose, Yasuko Nomi's family took us around the city of San Jose. Yasuko is a daughter of Uncle Sukesaku. Dorothy Hong, a good friend of Kimiko from pre-war days, ushered us in and around the city of San Francisco. We visited with other friends along the way and returned to Seattle after a wonderful tour of 19 days.

Reverend Ichikawa was our resident minister since pre-war days, and was going to retire due to his failing eyesight. So in 1959

our Buddhist Church organized a Japan tour with Rev. and Mrs. Ichikawa as our guests and Mr. Sotaro Kawabe as the tour leader. This group was divided into two groups due to the mode of transportation. The first group of 37 people including Rev. and Mrs. Ichikawa and Mr. and Mrs. S. Kawabe departed Seattle on March 11, 1959 on board Hikawa-maru. The second group of 18 members of which I was an acting tour leader left Sea-Tac International Airport for Honolulu on March 30, 1959 via Northwest Air Line. At Honolulu we transferred to Japan Air Line and arrived at Haneda Airport on April 2, 1959. This was my first trip to Japan after the war and at Haneda I was met by a big welcoming party made up of my mother, Mitsuo and the rest of my family with Kiyono Nagata, Kimiye Tanaka, Jyukichi Kubo, Kichisaburo Kubo, Kiyoko Hikida and Chieko Hikida.

Our tour group's hotel accommodation was at Hotel Morita-kan where my group arrived before Mr. Kawabe's group did and I was kept very busy meeting with representatives of Japan Travel Bureau and Japan Air Line and a news reporter, Mr. Kazuo Ito whom I met for the first time. Being a tour leader and arriving ahead of Mr. Kawabe I was pressed regarding business matters by these representatives. My mother and Mitsuo and Jyukichi Kubo came to the Morita-kan but I could not find sufficient time to talk with them. Mr. Kawabe's group joined us at the Morita-kan shortly and I had to attend a meeting held in Mr. Kawabe's room to discuss our tour plans. With my mother and Mitsuo, I went to see Isamu Hikida, a brother-in-law, that night. 42 of us joined land tours which started on April 3 from Tokyo, then onto Kamakura, Hakone, Atami, Nagoya, Ise, Koyasan, Osaka, Takarazuka, Nara, Otsu, Lake Biwa, and ended at Kyoto. During this tour I shared a room with Mr. Ihei Tainaka. When we were at Hotel Asahi-kan in Futamigaura, Ise on April 9, I watched Crown Prince Akihito's wedding shown on television. After our breakfast at Hiiragiya Ryokan Hotel in Kyoto on April 17, 1959, our tour group was disbanded. Finally I was able to return to Takaban to pay homage to our ancestors' graves. As suggested by my mother, I sat in front of our family altar and recited a Buddhist scripture "Shoshinge" with the rest of my family sitting behind me. When it was over, my mother commented that my recital was rather



short, and I mentioned to her that in America we omit "Gowasan" Buddhist hymns.

On April 23, Isamu Hikida invited me to Hotel (Inn) Hakkei-tei in Hikone. I stayed overnight at the Inn and the following morning I left to pay a visit to the Mayor of Hikone, Mr. Naoyoshi Ii. Unfortunately he was out of his office, but his wife, Madam Ayako Ii, kindly gave me a guided tour of Hikone Castle. On May 7, 1959, I went to see Masato's mother in Hiroshima-ken and had a nice chat with her. Then I extended my trip to Miyajima to visit Itsukushima Shrine. After returning to Takaban, Hisaki Matoba, an old classmate of mine, took the trouble of coming to see me. We had much to reminisce. I circulated myself visiting relatives and friends in and around Takaban. To carry out business transactions for Uwajimaya, I went to the offices of Pacific Trading Co., Ltd. (Taiheiyo Boeki K.K.) and Sanyo Trading Co., Ltd. (Sanyo Boeki K.K.) both which had offices in Osaka and Tokyo, Nishikawa Teizaburo Firm of Kyoto, Kato Masaya Firm of Seto. Before my departure for Seattle, I stayed with Kiyoko Hikida, Isamu's wife in Tokyo for several days making it a base of operations to canvas firms such Taiheiyo and Sanyo. I did not join the Bukkyokai group on their trip. I left Haneda Airport on May 27, 1959 boarding Northwest Air Line via Anchorage. The plane was already on its way to Seattle from Anchorage when trouble was detected. The plane had to return to Anchorage. Early the following the morning Pacific Northern Airline picked us up and arrived safely at Sea-Tac International Airport on May 28, 1959. Although this trip was quite hectic being it was my first trip to Japan since the war it certainly was filled with many fond memories.

From June 27 to July 8, 1960, we enjoyed another trip to California again touring Monterey, San Jose, San Francisco, Crater Lake, and other sights. Our party was made up of Kimiko, Frances, Uncle Sukesaku and me. Again we had nice visits with Hisaye, Yasuko, and Dorothy Hong. Driving was done by Frances and me.

In 1962 we purchased a cemetery plot in Sunset Hill Memorial Park of Bellevue.

In June 1963 our daughter, Frances Motoko, was graduated from the University of Washington.

To carry out special projects such as the O'Bon Festival or a new building, special finance committees were organized. I was a member of such committees and special treasurer for annual events such as the Bazaar and the O'Bon Festival many times. When a project to construct a Memorial Hall was adopted by Shoyu-kai I became a member of the special finance committee and I was the special treasurer. It was a far bigger undertaking, requiring a huge fund, than that of any annual event and surpassed only by constructions of a Temple proper and Meeting Hall. Through the fullest support of friends and members of our Seattle Buddhist Betsuin, the Memorial Hall was completed in the spring of 1965. This project was quite unique from a financial point of view because funds donated for the project were more than the cost of this project. I was the church auditor for a longtime. I am still active in our Temple's affairs since I am a member of a Board of Directors. In the past I was called upon to act as a master of ceremony at various events including funerals.

I was an auditor of our Buddhist Church for many years and once a Japanese language secretary for one term. Since Shoyu-kai resumed its operations in 1947, I served three terms as a treasurer and one term as a president. As charter members of Shoyu-kai got older a generation gap started to surface within Shoyu-kai. Thus the senior group resigned and formed "Goji-kai", an organization for themselves. I served one term as president.

From August 7 through 13, 1967, Kimiko and I enjoyed a 7 day tour by auto of Montana, Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton National Park, Ogden and Salt Lake City both of Utah, and Ontario, Oregon. We feel one will never get tired of Yellowstone.

From July 9 through 11, 1968, I drove, accompanied by Kimiko, through Wenatchee, Ohme Garden, Lake Chelan, Penticton, Okanagan Lake, Kelowna, Kamloop, Frazer River and Vancouver, B.C. It was a short but nice trip.