

Kitaro and Saju Yoshida
Home to Misumi, Kumamoto

Prologue

In 2004, almost 70 years had passed since Grandpa Tadashi Yoshida had visited his relatives in Kumamoto, Japan. Here he was again, and could hardly believe that he again stood on his native soil with his son. In 1937, he and his father, Kitaro, had made the long voyage by ship to meet their relatives in their beautiful homestead by the Japan Sea. It was the first time, Tadashi met his grandparents and uncles, and on this trip, he realized how important it was to his father that they renew and strengthen their ties to their homeland.

Kitaro did not know at that time that Tadashi had eloped and married my mother, Nancy Teruko Nagai in Los Angeles in that same year. The Yoshidas, hoping to strengthen ties with their family in Kumamoto, had arranged his marriage with a lovely young woman, whose family had come from the same village, and who also had come to Hawaii. But Dad had fallen in love with Nancy, and they had planned a new life together in California. Kitaro had taken Tadashi back to Misumi to meet the Yoshida family and to remind him of his heritage and the importance of family.

Tadashi reminisced about that long ago trip when he and his cousins had gone fishing and swimming in the ocean, and the young men had gotten together and had sake drinking parties with great camaraderie and affection. Tadashi was only 27 years old at that time, and in the intervening years, he had made a home in Wahiawa, Oahu, and had brought up four children with Nancy.

So now in 2004, Randy and Dad had gone to Misumi to pay their respects to the relatives who had lived through World War II and then had lost touch. Intending to simply visit the graves if such could be found and to leave flowers, Dad had asked the taxi driver in Misumi whether he might know of the Yoshida family. Yoshida is a very common Japanese name, like Smith or Wong, I often tell people who ask, but the taxi driver knew at once where to take my Dad and brother.

He drove to a home in a large compound with houses around what was once a rice field. Misumi lies near the very blue and bountiful Japan Sea, and fish and sea life abound. It is famous as the former residence of Lafcadio Hearn, the American man of letters, as well as for the martyred Christian Japanese hero, Amakusa Shiro. The early Jesuit priests from Portugal first set foot in the area in the early 1600s and converted vast numbers of Japanese from Misumi. Shusaku Endo, the Japanese writer of contemporary novels, also lived and wrote of the martyrs who were killed for their belief.

On this day in 2004, my Dad and Randy alighted from the taxi and saw a woman sweeping the front porch at this home in Misumi. When she learned why they had come, she dropped her broom, and in great excitement, told my father that she was actually his cousin, Reiko Yoshida. She was a child when he had visited in

1937 and in the intervening years, she had married a man who had been willing to take the Yoshida name as there had been no male heirs. She invited them in for tea, and in the short time they had together, she told him that she had five children, all daughters except for a son, Teramitsu, who with his wife, Akemi, tended their cattle ranch high above in the hills overlooking the sea.

She took them to the family cemetery which was just a few hundred feet away from the home in the hills. After they had prayed and offered incense and manju, my father and brother left, promising Reiko they would return again some other day. Reiko had been so happy and amazed at their meeting again after so many decades, and made my Dad promise he would return. Thus, began again a wonderful meeting of the Yoshida family, once very prominent in the days of the Samurai, and now again prosperous from cattle ranching. When one considers what a brief moment in history 50 years since the War had been, it was a miracle that the Yoshidas had not only survived the war, but had become millionaires.

Kitaro and Saju (Ishimoto) Yoshida Arrival in Hawaii during the Reign of Emperor Meiji (1888)

During the reign of the Emperor Sachinomiya (at birth) or Mutsuhito (b. 1852) and posthumously known as Meiji Tenno, hundreds of Japanese citizens sailed from Japanese ports to seek their fortune in America and Canada. They were the harbingers of hope for the Japanese emperor who realized that the only way for Japan to be honored and acknowledged in world affairs as a major power was for Japan and its citizens to become enlightened in Western affairs and education. American and European imperialism had superior force against such a small nation such as Japan, and Meiji sought to bring Japan to world acknowledgment. Because of his wisdom, in his lifetime, Emperor Meiji saw Japan transformed into not only a world power but also a member of the community of nations.

Further, in March of 1881, King David Kalakaua of Hawaii had come to pay his respects to the Emperor and had been received with great ceremony and courtesy. Emperor Meiji had even walked together with him and had shaken his hand, the first time he had ever done so. King Kalakaua had been so taken with his great reception by the Emperor that he had hoped to arrange a marriage between Prince Sadamaru and Princess Kaiulani, the beautiful Hawaiian princess who had been educated in England and heir to the throne, binding a tie between Hawaii and the Asian power. Although it was never to be, this friendship remained in Meiji's memory, and he later sent his people to Hawaii in trust.

In 1884, the Japanese government permitted Hawaiian sugar planters to recruit contract laborers to Hawaii. In order to finance Meiji's program of industrialization and modernization of Japan, the Meiji government had required farmers to pay an annual fixed tax on land. The farmers faced such financial hardship that over 300,000 lost their lands because of their inability to pay the land

taxes. In the southwestern prefectures of Kumamoto, Hiroshima and Yamaguchi, farmers were in an especially dire situation. According to Ron Takaki (Strangers from a Different Shore), "the people in Yamaguchi had to eat meals of rice husks and buckwheat chaff ground into powder with dregs of bean curd mixed with leaves and grass."

The future in Japan seemed bleak for these financially distressed farmers, and thousands of them were seized by an emigration *netsu* (fever) to migrate to the Hawaiian Islands. They saw themselves as *dekaseginin*-laborers working temporarily in a foreign country. Their goal was to work hard in order to "return home in glory" after three years and use their savings to buy land or regain land lost to debtors.

Kitaro Yoshida was not the eldest son of his family, but the fifth son so he was not in line to inherit the land in Misumi. He married Saju Ishimoto, who was also from the same village, and distantly related. Together, they hoped to become *dekaseginin* and return to Japan someday with enough money to buy land and to rear their family there.

**History of the Yoshida Family written in 1972
by Tadao Sakamoto, who is the Yoshida historian and
the son of Kakuji Yoshida, the second son of Tozaburo and
Son Yoshida.**

**CHAPTER I
Buzaemon Yoshida**

The ancestors of the Yoshida families, it is said, were refugees of the Heike (Taira) family.

Approximately, 790 years ago, in the era of the fourth year of Bunji (1185) during the battle of Ichinotami (a battle between the Genji and the Heike), the Heike family was completely defeated and many of the (remnants) refugees sought life and safety in the Kyushu area. Some settled in Gokansho, around Kumamoto city, and many took up residence in the Amakusa area.

Buzaemon Yoshida was one of the refugees, who dwelled in a ravine at the foot of a mountain. This location is now called Kanayagi Shimoura-cho, Honto-shi, Amakusa-gun, (Kumamoto-ken). These refugees engaged in various trades, living in seclusion, hoping for the resurrection of the Heike clan. Moreover, the dream of resurrection of the Heike clan was passed down by word of mouth for generations. Although their occupations varied in establishing their livelihood, presumably, the pride of the samurai was kept through the generations of several centuries.

Even at this present time, there is a local area named Busayama (Buzaemon-yama) in the town of Shimoura-cho. In the cemetery, where the Buzaemon Yoshida families were buried, there were many graves with monuments and stone figures scattered around for many generations. In later years, the graves were established as a tomb of the Yoshida family, and a monument was erected by a relative named Sugawara.

The armor (yoroi) which is kept at the main house of Sakamoto at present, was acquired by an ancestor of the Yoshida family during the Shohei era. According to the inscription on the armor dated 6th year of Shohei, June 1st (June 1, 1351), it is 660 years old. Perhaps, it was acquired by someone in the fifth generation.

I will relate to you later why the Yoroi is stored in the Sakamoto house.

For generations, they settled in Shimoura and engaged in stone quarrying and stone cutting as their occupation. Especially, Tozaburo's father (two generations ago) was extremely talented in stone sculpture. There are many masterpieces of stone monuments and lanterns sculptured by him and are still seen here and there. There is a tale (legend) remaining that he presented flowers of daffodils sculptured from stone to the Emperor Meiji when the Emperor traveled to Amakusa and surprised the people.

Tozaburo was the third son, and he studied the technique from his father and made stone mason(ry) his occupation. When the Bunsei era (1818-1829) land reclamation progressed in Yatchiro, and in order to gather stone materials needed for reclamation, he moved to Katashima, Tobase Island along with the Katashima seashore facing Shiranui-no-hi Sea. He developed a large scale stone quarry and transported rocks to the reclamation site across the Bay. After completing the Bunsei Reclamation, he remained in this area, engaging mainly in stone quarrying and worked in construction in Ichinoto and established his domicile in Katashima.

At the end of the Tokugawa Government period (about 1550-1869), a new land reclamation project was planned in Katashima, and Tozaburo was in charge of constructing the Katashima levee and completed it in the first year of Meiji (1868).

Tozaburo's son, Mantaro, also succeeded in the family trade and became a stone mason. Many of his works remain in the Ichinoto-Oyano area in Amakusa and in the Misumi district. During the construction of the Misumi Harbor (designed by Dr. Mondoru), which was a super harbor building project at that time, Mantaro, as a stone technician, participated in the project with his brother, Kakuji.

Mantaro did not have any sons. He had his daughter, Ume, betrothed to Genta (second son of Sakujiro Kimura), and he was to succeed the Yoshida family. However, the young Genta sailed to America and was successfully employed by a railroad company and settled down in America. Consequently, he could not succeed in the family business.

After the death of Mantaro, his brother, Kakuji, who was adopted by the Sakamoto family, took over the Yoshida family affairs. He was engaged in stone work until the end of the Great East Asian War (World War II).

The Yoshida house was commonly known as the "Naka-no-ie." (middle house) and was situated near "Toyanda" on the east side of the Katashima settlement. The house was old, but the guest room was made in the village headman's style and the small corridor was on the side of the main alcove. The sliding shoji doors were decorated with beautiful art works. The family altar room was next to the alcove. A large antique altar was situated here with an extremely good sounding gong. Besides these, there were splendid three-tiered sets of fish dishes with mountain and water designs and sake bottles. But nothing remains there now.

Mantaro's second wife, Toso, and their daughter, Miyuki, were living in the "Naka-no-ie," but at the end of the Taisho Era (1912-1925), Toso died, and Miyuki married Yoichi Yamaguchi and the house stood vacant since then.

From the early days, Genta intended to rebuild the house. He built a house on the present location in Kirito, and at that time it was of supreme quality. Thus, he endeavored in the rebirth of the Yoshida House.

Genta sought a blood relative of the Yoshida clan as successor. He had Reiko, a granddaughter of Tomesaku, betrothed to Teruo, the third son of Kikuji Kimura, adopted him, and had them succeed the Mantaro Yoshida House which generated to the present family

CHAPTER II

Buzaemon's Armor (yoroi)

The household of Buzaemon Yoshida, as I mentioned earlier, were descendants of the Taira Clan, who fled to Shimoura in Amakusa. He had strong influential power in the locale, and the armors and swords were handed down for generations. However, Tozaburo's older brother, Usaro Yoshida, led a fast life and sold not only the family treasures, but house and lot, mountain forest, rice paddies and fields, which were handed down from the ancestors. He lived secretly in Mizumata-Yude area, but before long, he became ill and died. Upon receiving notice, Tozaburo took his second son, Kakuji (who was later adopted by the Sakamoto Family) and went to Ude.

There was nothing left but a corpse of a man and one article- a suit of armor- handed down from the ancestors. Tozaburo, facing Kakuji, who at the time was 15 years old said: "If you would carry this armor home, I will give it to you." So Kakuji carried this box of armor, weighing approximately 50 pounds, over three ri (4 ½ miles) of mountainous road to Mizumata Harbor and brought it home to Tobase in a boat. Later, when he was adopted into the Sakamoto Family, he took it with him with great care. Thus, it came to be stored in the Sakamoto house.

The armor is antiquated, but it is complete with covering for the hands and leggings. It is a beautiful armor with braids of black threads. There is an inscription under the hand covering, which reads: "Seihei-era, 6 years (1351) June 1st." According to an expert, there is no doubt, it is of the late Kamakura period, judging from the style of construction.

The fact that the above armor belonged to an ancestor of the Yoshida family, proves that Buzaemon was a refugee of the Taira Clan.

CHAPTER III

Tozaburo Yoshida and Kakuji (Yoshida) Sakamoto

Tozaburo Yoshida was a very sincere and obliging person. He served as a headman of the Katashima District and the residents were friendly and good to him.

On one occasion, a dead body of a woman floated to the seashore by the Tobase Lighthouse. At first, the body floated to the shore across the waters of Iwajima, but the local people did not want to be involved, and they pushed it out into the current, and it floated toward Tobase. Tozaburo, who was headman at that time, immediately reported it to the police and waited for police action. However,

the police did not come out right away. Consequently, the district had to continue surveillance into the night. Tozaburo, having other business to conduct, commanded his second son, Kakuji, to watch over the dead body that night.

Kakuji was a 19 year old young man at the prime of youth. In those days, there were many foxes in the Tobase area, and they would come to devour the body. As this happened in the summer and because of the foul odor of the dead body, Kakuji, while pinching his nose and waving a torch, made of tiny bamboo and a large bamboo for a handle, approached the corpse. When he was near the corpse, someone put their hands on both of Kakuji's shoulders and shouted. Being alone at the seashore far from habitation and moreover, with an unknown dead person nearby, he became frantic, and holding the bamboo torch upside down, he beat this person repeatedly. When he came to himself, he realized this man had come from Iwamura on the other side of the shore and had come to play a prank on him. The man was bruised all over his body, but since it was his idea of a prank, the case was settled without any problem.

Kakuji, due to the fearful experience of that night, developed a malaria- like fever and was very much troubled with delusions of dead people coming down the mountains.

The police were not able to identify the dead woman or where she had come from. Tozaburo buried the body in the hill near the lighthouse. Since Kakuji was involved in the case, he erected a monument on the grave of the unknown and kindly honored it. Even today, you will see a stone mound going to the lighthouse from Toyanda (Katashima).

This is the story my father (Kakuji) told me when he was still living.

POSTSCRIPT

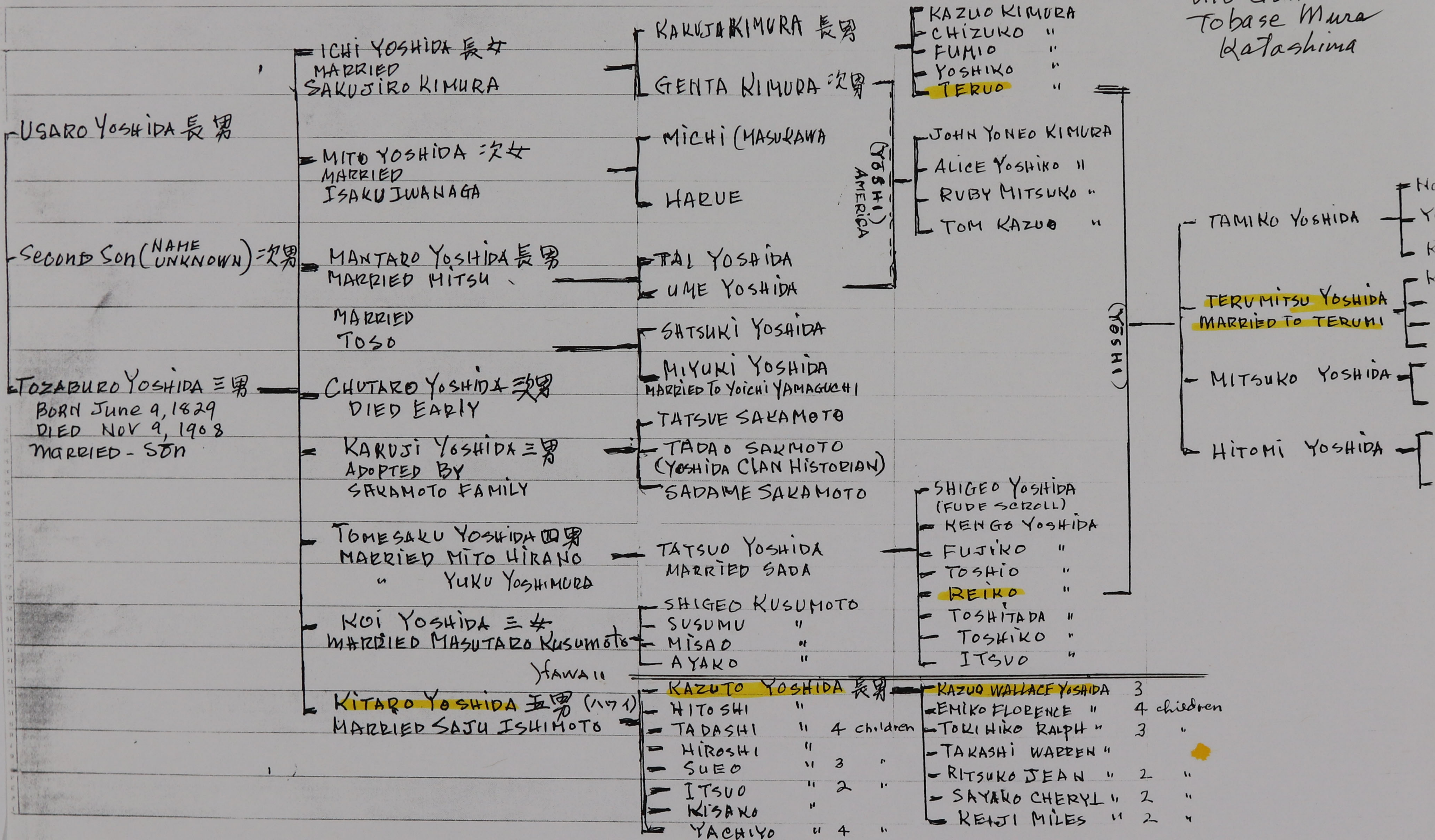
I am sure, there are many, many more interesting things about the Yoshida Family. What I wrote here is what I heard from my father, Kakuji, from time to time. My father was a person with a strong retentive memory. He remembered things well and told them to me when I was young. This is no more than just a part. In the future, I would like to leave in writing as much as I can recollect.

Signed:
Tadao Sakamoto

Jan 1998

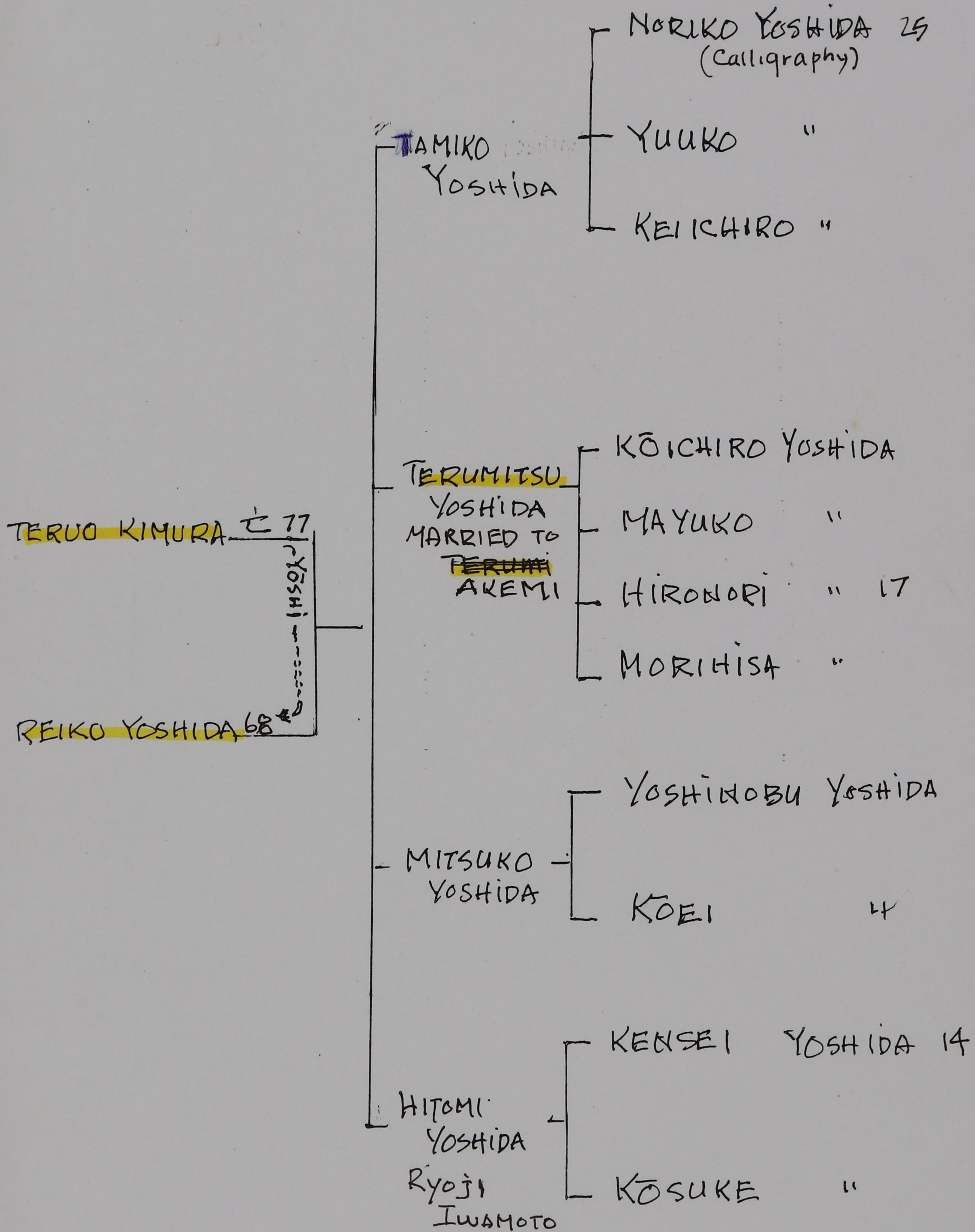
Geneology of Recent Generations of The Yoshida Family

Kumamoto Ken
Uto Gun
Tobase Mura
Katashima



PRESENT YOSHIDA Family LINE IN Japan 本家
Kumamoto

MAR. 1998



**TWO GENERATIONS OF YOSHIDA MEN
AUGUST 1937
MISUMI, KUMAMOTO, JAPAN**



**KITARO YOSHIDA (5TH SON), TADASHI FRANCIS (MY FATHER)
KAKUJI YOSHIDA (3RD SON), TOMESAKU YOSHIDA (4TH SON)**

Saju and Kitaro Yoshida

Kitaro Yoshida, the fifth son of Tozaburo and Son Yoshida, came from the coast of Misumi near Kumamoto city, a beautiful village on the island of Kyushu on the Japan Sea. He was born on February 2, 1874 and learned to farm at an early age and grew to love Misumi, which was made famous by the early Christian martyr, Amakusa Shiro, whose story is told today by Shusako Endo in the novel, Silence, which was made into a movie by Martin Scorsese. Lafcadio Hearn, the American writer, also lived in Misumi and wrote his Japanese tales on the shores of that beautiful sea where he had a small house that is there today.

Misumi retains a rural flavor and enjoys the fresh seafood from the beautiful pristine waters of the Japan Sea, where fishermen still harvest vast amounts of maguro, unagi, tako, crab, lobsters and other delicacies. In 1898, Kitaro sailed for Hawaii and arrived in Honolulu the same year that Keitaro Nagai, my mother's father, arrived though they did not know each other. Kitaro was a skilled carpenter and eventually earned a living building railroad ties and irrigation troughs for the plantation. Misumi is a beautiful place: the ocean is blue and the currents are strong. The only way to get to Kumamoto is by ship or rail so Misumi is protected and seems as it must have always been when Kitaro sailed for Hawaii.

In 1902, after working in Hawaii for four years, he sent for his neighbor and friend from Misumi, Saju Ishimoto, who had been born on February 9, 1880. Her parents were Naohachi and Riki Ishimoto. Kitaro and Saju were married in Hawaii when she arrived. While he had began his job as a carpenter, they had no place to live as they were not part of the plantation. Kitaro pitched a tent near the current Wahiawa bridge which crosses over the Wilson River, and there Saju gave birth to her first son, Kazuto. A few years later, her second son, Hitoshi, was born in the tent city. They had to cook over a fire made from wood they gathered and lived a difficult life in those early Wahiawa days. The area near the Wilson River is full of mosquitoes and rains all the time. Red dirt stains everything so just the thought of Saju trying to keep her family clean must have been quite a challenge.

Kitaro was a skilled carpenter because Emperor Meiji had required all Japanese leaving Japan to work in the Western World be very highly qualified and of honorable character in order to represent Japan at its most ideal. Because of his skills, he was able to work on the irrigation troughs and other wood working tasks rather than the back breaking labor in the pineapple or sugar cane fields. I'm sure no sturdier or better built troughs were ever fashioned than those my grandparents made. Still, the work was hard, and the men were exhausted after a day at work.

Saju faced so many challenges trying to be a good uncomplaining Japanese wife, and she gave Kitaro eight children. When little Kisako was only four years old, she came down with a very high fever. There was only a train that came to the area to take passengers to Honolulu, where the Japanese hospital was located. Uncle H. remembers accompanying his mother and little sister on the train to the hospital

which is now Kuakini Hospital. Even then there were no antibiotics to fight the dreadful effects of diphtheria, and after traveling what must have been an interminable two hours from Wahiawa to Honolulu, Kisako passed away at the hospital. What a very sad trip home it must have been for Saju and her son.

My grandmother also developed a thyroid condition now known as Graves's disease. The muscles behind her eyeball kept growing uncontrollably pushing the eyeball out of its socket so the person looked as though she were staring. It is an inherited disease which my sister, Annette, also has though she was treated with radiation which slowed the growth and finally stopped it. In my grandmother's day, they had to remove the eyeball so Obaban only looked at the world with one eye. I always accepted her that way, and never questioned why she lacked an eye. She was very quiet and kind, and she endured much suffering. Her children loved her, and called her "Mother" though it came out as "Mada." I never got to know her very well.

Wahiawa, a town at a high elevation on the western part of Oahu, enjoys a very cool and wet climate and was the nearest town to the pineapple plantations. The early cottages were painted a Lincoln green to ward off termites, and had totan or corrugated metal roofs. I remember their house very well as I went there often as a child. Because we lived at the base of Diamond Head where the weather was very hot, it was quite a change of temperature to drive to Wahiawa, the highest point in terms of houses on Oahu. I always knew when we were getting to Wahiawa because I could smell the eucalyptus trees and see the line of them planted as windbreakers. The temperature change always made my sinuses swell, and I spent most of the weekend in bed in my Obaban's house.

The house was very sturdy though simple. My Obaban had the bedroom closest to the street and next to the living room. The other bedroom was for Auntie Patsy and Uncle Jack, who looked after her after Ojichan died in 1945. Sonny was born in February, and Ojichan died in April from stomach cancer. I think he got the cancer from having had to eat all the salted fish intestines for his lunch all the years that he worked building irrigation ditches for the plantations. He is my hero for having to endure that life.

The kitchen was the largest room and held a screened food keeper. I always liked to see it as it held cooked fish and plates of vegetables for the next meal. The screen kept the flies from getting in. Right outside the kitchen on the porch was a sink with a Bull Durham tobacco pouch tied around the spigot to keep the water from splashing everywhere. My grandmother cleaned the fish in that sink. Right off the porch was a little room where my grandfather lay when he was dying from cancer. The lavatory room was also outside the main house near the outside room. In short, it was a very livable house, and my grandparents must have been very proud to own such a house.

They also had a little bath house to the left of the back porch, and every evening, the fire was made to heat the furo water in the bath house. It always smelled like Ivory soap as bathers soaped themselves outside of the furo before going into the wooden box to soak in the steaming hot water.

Laundry day must have taken the whole day. Obaban made a fire and heated a tub of water over the fire to wash all the pants and shirts which were red with dirt from working in the fields. She washed all the sheets and towels as well as other clothes in the huge tub with Fels Naphtha soap (or so I guess) and stirred the laundry with what looked like a canoe paddle. Then she had to rinse and wring out all the pants and shirts, even the sheets and towels by hand. How she managed, I'll never know, but then she hung the clothes out to dry. Because Wahaiawa is very damp and rainy, it must have been a challenge to dry the clothes.

Uncle K. and Aunty Helen lived in the basement of that little house before they moved into their home on California Avenue in the mid 1940s. It amazed me to see them living in that dark basement with a dirt floor and hardly any light. I never went in so I don't know what it was like inside. Uncle K. owned an automobile garage and bought a home on California Avenue within walking distance of the garage. Their home was very ample for their large family. They had seven children, Wally, Toki or Ralph, Warren or Taka, Florence or Emiko, Jean, Cheryl and Miles.

During the War, Uncle K. became a neighborhood warden to protect his neighborhood from the Japanese and to warn them if anything happened. Later, I learned that Wally was not Uncle K's son, but the son of my Aunt Helen and someone else. Perhaps, that's the reason Wally never got to go to college as he wanted but instead had to go to work while Ralph was the first son in the family to attend college. I enjoyed going to their home for parties because Aunty Helen was a fabulous cook. I spent hours looking through the stereoscope at slides of Egyptian mummies and all kinds of weird people.

Their home had two levels and you entered an ample living room with a piano and followed the hall to two large bedrooms filled with beds for the kids. There was a steep staircase to the kitchen where Aunty Helen spent all her time cooking. She made the most delicious shrimp tempura, roasted chickens and turkeys, fried fish, prepared all kinds of salads and other dishes and most of all, she baked the most delicious sweet potato biscuits, so flaky and sweet as well as cakes and cookies of all kinds. Nothing made her happier than to be cooking for her family.

Aunty Helen had a beautiful sister who committed suicide when she was only 19 years old. She contracted tuberculosis and felt she would never get well nor ever have a normal life. She jumped from the deck of the hospital. Aunty Helen came from the Takeshita family, and her sister married a Chinese fellow so Vernon Lau

and Freddy Lau were my second cousins. I always felt that it was tragic that Chiyoko, the beautiful young sister never lived to enjoy her life.

Uncle K. always smoked a cigar and was stout from Auntie Helen's good cooking. She was a wonderful cook and her chicken was the best in the state. She won a Hawaii cooking contest and went to Michigan to represent the state. No one could beat her saimin or her sweet potato biscuits. She used a lot of butter in the things she made, and her pie crust and biscuits were always so flaky and delicious. It is ironic to think that all that wonderful cooking led to Uncle K's heart condition, and he died while on vacation in Japan. Both Wally and Taka also died early, in their 50s and 60s.

Auntie Helen even had a saimin restaurant in the 1950s, and her saimin was the best in town. The restaurant was called "Yoshida Saimin" and it was one of the old wooden buildings on Kilani Avenue right across the street from the movie theater. None of the buildings are there any more, but in the early days of Wahiawa, the Japanese had a community of sorts in that area: simple wooden cottages and a communal furo or bathhouse where the men could go to bathe after work. Mr. Sunahara even described the newspapers he pasted over the walls of his cottage when the wind whistled through the cracks during the winter. Wahiawa could get very cold in the winter, at least 64 degrees sometimes, and none of the houses were ever heated.

Jeannette Akagi's father also had a general store on Kilani Avenue, and a house right behind it with stairs going up to the house. His store was very simple with some vegetables, meat and canned goods, but especially cigarettes and cigars, and he was a joyful happy grocer who loved his children, especially my friend, Jeannette. The floors of his store were oiled as most of the buildings were in those days though I never knew why. Perhaps, it was to add a dimension of strength and also to keep insects at bay.

The Yoshida family had wonderful parties for every holiday, and Auntie Helen cooked all the food. She made the most wonderful sweet potato biscuits, turkey with gravy, hot potato tempura and shrimp tempura and a platter filled with kanten, sausages, grapes and other goodies. The whole family assembled and sat at long tables covered with paper. Everyone ate heartily, and the children always enjoyed the family gatherings. Our family usually spent the night at Uncle H. and Auntie Doris's house where Geri and I had twin beds all to ourselves, and all the Classic comics we wanted to read with all the delicious cracked seed and plums to eat.

Auntie Doris and Uncle H. didn't have children so Geri and I were their pet nieces. Every weekend, we slept over at their house which was always so neat and well-appointed. There was a little sun room at the entrance with beautiful orchids. Uncle H. had a green thumb and loved gardening so he spent hours tending the anthuriums and orchids. He even built a concrete pool in the back to raise tropical fish. They loved dogs so always had a dog or two. At that time, they had Scottish

terriers; one was named Gerry. Cute and perky, they wore plaid jackets. Eventually, they got Chihuahuas for pets, and although they were skittish, Uncle H. loved petting them and grieved when they died.

Aunty Doris worked as a saleslady at Castner Store, a wonderful department store in Wahiawa on California Avenue. It was much like Woolworth and had all kinds of goods: clothing, accessories, sewing items, candies, house ware and jewelry. For a time, I worked there after school and loved wrapping presents at Christmas time. The employer was Mr. Peanuts Kunihisa, who loved baseball. His desk was on the second level and he could see what was going on in the store from his perch. When he saw that I didn't know how to give change, he called me up there and taught me how to give change. To this day, I am grateful to know how to count change without relying on any computer.

Aunty Doris passed away after having a stroke which paralyzed her and also affected her brain. Uncle H. tended her himself and gave her baths and fed her. It was so difficult to care for her that he vowed that he would not live to need such care. When he was about 95, he committed suicide by shooting himself with Uncle Jack's old rifle. I was so shocked that someone so gentle and mild mannered would be able to do such a thing. Yet, he was from samurai stock and would not become incapacitated with no one to care for him. I will always be grateful to them for giving us the only Christmas present we had and for giving me a pen and a watch for my graduation. They were always so kind and generous to us kids.

Dad's brother, Edward Sueo, was younger and also the closest to Dad because they had lived together when they went to high school. Uncle Edward was his sidekick and did everything he was told. He married Ethel Inouye whose parents were very genteel. Her father was a tailor, and her mother was very well schooled in Japanese arts. As a result, Ethel was refined and knew how to cook Japanese dishes well; her nishime was perfect. She was also a wonderful seamstress and made beautiful clothing because she knew how clothes should fit. Edward was a landscaper with a nursery business and also a very skilled artist. In another life, he would have been a very well-known artist as his paintings and drawings were beautiful. They had three kids: Sue Ellen, Rhoda and Judy, all of whom live in Hawaii. Rhoda married Tadashi from Japan, and speaks very good Japanese.

Aunty Yachan or Alice as she was called was the only girl in the family of boys after little Kisako passed away. Her brothers protected her and doted on her. She married Susumu Nakamura from Waialua. Very kind and soft-spoken, Alice and Sus had three children: Christine, Wilfred and Cary. Wilfred became a very fine dentist but passed away after he drowned while diving for fish at Mokuleia. It was the saddest day when I learned of his death. Aunty Alice passed away after surgery from an aneurysm—both deaths were a loss of innocence for me as I had never really experienced the unexpected deaths of those in my family

The youngest son, Itsuo or Jack had been a daredevil pilot in his youth and flew light planes for fun. He married Patsy, and both of them cared for my grandparents in their old age. They had Gary and Bette Jane. Gary has lived most of his life in California, and Bette Jane took good care of her parents as they aged. Both Jack and Patsy were very kind; he always came to my graduations. He loved training birds, and had finches and all kinds of birds as well as mynah birds he taught to talk. When Patsy developed Parkinson's disease, he took good care of her as she had taken such care of his mother.

The Yoshida family were a close knit group as long as the brothers were alive. However, the children and grandchildren have gone their ways as living in the U.S. has affected each family in different ways. With the nuclear couple gone, and then the first generation Nisei, the ensuing ever growing third and fourth generations no longer keep in touch nor even know each other. Still, within the respective families, the children maintain connection. As the family expands and grows, it will take some effort to truly know each other.

Many have moved to the Mainland and to other parts of the world. It is interesting to know that from the four grandparents who came to this brave new world, the Yoshida family has expanded to the point of anonymity and estrangement from many in the family, but everyone has a better life because their ancestors dared to come to a strange new land.



Kitaro Yoshida



Uncle H. (Hitoshi) Uncle K. (Kazuto) Obaban (Sasu)



Obaban Mrs. Uyetake Ojichan

**BUILDING IRRIGATION TROUGHS
BOTH YOSHIDA AND NAGAI WERE CARPENTERS
THEY DIDN'T WORK IN THE FIELDS BUT BUILT THESE TROUGHS**





**RANDY, DAD, TERUMITSU
YOSHIDA MEN 2004**



**YOSHIDA CEMETERY
MISUMI, KUMAMOTO, JAPAN**



**OUR MONTSUKI
MISUMI 2004**



Mitsuko, Reiko, Tamiko
Carol, Dad, Hitomi
Akemi, Uncle H.



Yoshida Home, Misumi



Kimura
Grave &
Mon



Yoshida
The Family
Mon

Kodak
PREMIUM
Process
NOV. 1997



The man bending down
is Mr. Kimura

Kodak
PREMIUM
Processing
NOV. 1997

Ko
PRE
Proc
NOV



Castner Store

11



Chiyoko Takeshita
Died at age 19, suicide because
Of tuberculosis



Haruko and Teruko Nagai
Akimura Camp c. 1917 (@ 7 and 5 years old)



Tadashi as an ROTC cadet
McKinley High School



Jack Itsuo Dad Francis Susumu Nakamura Kazuto Albert Hitoshi Edward Sueo
Patsy Mom Nancy Alice Yachiyo Obaban Helen Masae Doris Ethel
January 9, 1960

Great Grandpa

Great Grandpa

Grandpa

Grandpa's Tree

Kumamoto Prefecture
District of Uto
Village of Tobase
Status - Heimin (Commoner)

TOZABURO YOSHIDA WIFE - Sōri YOSHIDA
Born - June 9, 1829
Died - Nov 9, 1908

5 sons and 3 daughters

Kitaro YOSHIDA (#5) WIFE - SAJU ISHIMOTO
Born Feb 2, 1874 Born Feb 9, 1880
Died Apr 9, 1945 Died Jan 16, 1963
Arrived Hawaii 1898 Arrived Hawaii 1902

MARRIED in Hawaii Apr 29, 1902
(Not a Picture Bride) 1937

TADASHI YOSHIDA (#3) WIFE - Nancy Teruko Nagai
Born Aug 15, 1910 Born Feb 9, 1912
MARRIED in Hawaii Apr 29, 1937

3-17-39 Carol Sunahara
Michele 3-20
Nicole 12-12
Beth 4-21
Megan 10-18

7-26-42 Geraldine Shiraki
Scott Mark

MARRIED to MARK LIU
Santa Barbara, Cal 6-29-91

2-20-45 Heidi Reid Maite

11-23-46 Annette Kawabato

Kari KRissy
MARRIED to Raymond Uyema 3-17-90
KRYSTIN Born 8-4-90

Grandmas Tree

Ehime Prefecture
Matsuyama City
Status - Shizoku (Samurai)

TADATA Nagai (#4) WIFE Ura MATSUMOTO
Born May 5, 1848

Ehime Prefecture
District of Onsen
Village of Tachiban
Status - SHIZOKU (Samurai)
Father - KYAJIRO MATSUMOTO
Mother - name unknown

Keitaro Nagai (#1) WIFE Kise Yoshioka (#1)
Born Apr 25, 1875 Born May 10, 1883
Died Mar 16, 1920 Died July 1, 1949
Arrived Hawaii 1898 Arrived Hawaii 1908
(Picture Bride) married in Hawaii Mar 30, 1908

Yamaguchi Prefecture
Dist. of KUGA
Village of MISHO
Status - Commoner
Father - SHINICHI YOSHIOKA
Mother - HISA

SHOICHI NAGAI
Born Feb 6, 1909
Died Feb 6, 1909

Dorothy Haruko Nagai
Born Feb 5, 1910
DIED MAR 30, 1990

Nancy Teruko Nagai, YOSHIDA
Born Feb. 9, 1912

Father - NAOHACHI ISHIMOTO
Mother - RIKI
(Same Status, Same Village)

Family Crest



丸
三
九
枝
竹

Family crest of the Yoshida Family and surprisingly that of the Yoshioka Family

Nine Leaves of Dwarf Bamboo in circle



Hitoshi Edward Dad Alice Jack
August 1975 65th birthday

**KEITARO AND KISE YOSHIOKA NAGAI
HARUKO DOROTHY AND TERUKO NANCY
CIRCA. 1914**



A HISTORY OF THE NAGAI FAMILY

**KISE YOSHIOKA NAGAI AND
KEITARO NAGAI**

NAGAI AND YOSHIDA FAMILY HISTORY

The Shinto gods and goddesses of the sea, the rivers and the forests of Japan accompanied our ancestors when they sailed from Yamaguchi, Kumamoto and Ehime thousands of miles to the shores of the Hawaiian Islands at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the new century. The Nagai and the Yoshida families brought with them their histories of bloodshed and vengeance by the samurai warriors who fought in the battles of the Genji and the Taira near the Kumamoto castle. Family lore from the village of Misumi near the sea describes the defeat of the Heike (Taira), and the corpses floating in the rivers. In an abandoned house in the village, a remnant of their part in the war still can be found—an ancient discarded armor, centuries old. It belonged to Buzaemon Yoshida, our early ancestor, and described as “antiquated, but complete with covering for the hands and leggings.” It is beautiful armor with braids of black threads. There is an inscription under the hand covering which reads: “Seihei-era, 6 years (1351) June 1, 1351 from the late Kamakura period.” The armor was 660 years old. (6th year of Shohei).

Bitter defeat, angry demons and ghosts seeking recompense still lingered and accompanied the families who thought they were escaping their native country to come to America and a new fortune. My childhood nightmares swarmed with shades of darkness, falling objects, bright colors which hurt the eyes and amidst them all, the enigmatic smiling painted face of the Noh mask of the shi-te or tragic woman. I didn't realize what I was seeing in this recurring nightmare until I studied the Noh theater of Japan and saw the image of the beautiful woman who had been betrayed and sought revenge in her madness. Perhaps, my nightmares signaled portentous events which had taken place and were to take place. As life unfolds, the karmic consequences of previous lives in our families continue to affect the destiny of those who succeed in each generation. In retrospect, I see that life is cyclical, and we share the lives of those who have gone before.

Japan had maintained a policy of isolationism for almost 230 years, fearing the exploitative and contaminating influence of foreign countries. With the new Meiji government following the Tokugawa reign (1600 to 1868), the Meiji government hoped to westernize Japan's economic and military systems and to encourage its citizens to travel abroad. With a rising sugar cane plantation economy, Hawaii with its proximity to Japan seemed ideal. King David Kalakaua, the Hawaiian monarch, encouraged the Japanese to become part of its populace. On February 8, 1885, more than 940 Japanese immigrants arrived on the steamer *City of Tokio*, and following that year many more Japanese workers arrived with the protection of the Japanese government. Among them, in 1898, was Keitaro Nagai, a skilled artisan from the city of Matsuyama in Ehime and my maternal grandfather. Born into a samurai family on April 25, 1875, he had “Shizoku” stamped on his passport providing his status. Keitaro's parents, Tadata and Ura Matsumoto Nagai, had both been from samurai families who had long lost their positions now that Japan was cautiously approaching the 20th century.

Gentle and soft-spoken, Keitaro had a sensitive artistic bent, and though he wasn't handsome, he was easy to look at with beautiful eyes which turned up at the corners like butterfly wings which my mother, Nancy, and my daughter, Beth, inherited. Because the Japanese were very ethnocentric, they did not marry the Native Hawaiian women as did the Chinese, but sent for Japanese "picture brides" from home. Although they did not even wish to marry those from another province, these risk takers often decided that being Japanese (though not Okinawan) would be all right and took brides from other provinces. They sent their photos to Japan through the services of a go-between and the bride-to-be also sent her picture. Keitaro could not know that his karmic destiny had determined that his bride would be so beautiful and elegant but also cold and fatalistic.

Tall, slender, elegant and very beautiful, Kise Yoshioka came from Kuga in the village of Misho, Yamaguchi. She was the only daughter of Hisa and Shinichi Yoshioka, commoners who allowed Kise to leave them to seek a happier life than they could provide. Born on May 10, 1883, Kise had an inbred elegance and refinement and scorned the bachelors living in her village. When the call for picture brides came to Yamaguchi, she decided to apply knowing that any man would be eager to win her as his bride. Only seventeen when she left Japan, Kise boarded the steamship to sail for Hawaii with the other picture brides. She kept to herself, and could hardly bear the difficulty of the long sea voyage with the smell of oil, the gigantic waves and great expanse of sea wherever you looked, and the dreadful odors of human beings in unsanitary close quarters. The sailors gawked at her and made crude jokes, but she scarcely paid them any heed, but kept her thoughts on the arrival in Honolulu and the man she would marry.

While the other picture brides waited anxiously for their husbands, one after another went off with them, while Kise had to linger at the arrival station for nearly a week before Keitaro came to fetch her. After weeks of anxiety and expectation, he disappointed his bride when he finally appeared. Shorter than average, mild and quiet, Keitaro could never meet Kise's image of an ideal husband. She was at least a head taller than he was. But off they went to live in Helemano, where because of his status as an artisan and carpenter, he had a large house, the third largest in the plantation. They were married on March 30, 1908. She didn't have to work in the fields as the other women had to, and could be at home applying her skills as a seamstress. He tried to make her happy and built her a pond filled with beautiful carp and gave her as much as he could. She loved beautiful clothing and had an eye for style. He even took her to Honolulu where she bought a beautiful hat in the latest fashion to go with her Gibson Girl skirt and blouse.

The others called her "the Waialua Beauty" and indeed, Kise was beautiful. With her melancholy liquid brown eyes and tall slender nose and elegantly shaped figure, she was a contrast to the homely short women whose suntanned faces from working in the fields made them look common compared to her very light complexion. When she became pregnant with her first child, Keitaro was elated. Perhaps, now she would be busy with the baby and would be happy, he thought. But finally when it was time to deliver the child, the midwives could do nothing to help her. Kise labored in great pain

for hours and hours, but the baby strangled with the umbilical cord around his neck, and was finally delivered dead after days of agonizing labor on February 6, 1909. Bitter and unhappy over the loss of a beautiful boy who would have been the son who would carry the Nagai name and also the pride of his mother, this well-formed boy could not survive the terrible birth and was stillborn. He was named Shoichi, and mourned as long as his parents and later, his sisters lived. My mother and father commemorated his birth during my growing up years and even after my mother died, my father and brother traveled to the gravesite in Haleiwa, now overgrown with weeds and even when the headstone and fallen into a ditch during a rainstorm and flood. The little stillborn child had he grown to manhood would have made a world of difference in the lives of my grandmother, Kise, and my mother, Teruko Nancy.

On February 5, 1910, almost a year to the day that her son died struggling to be born, Kise succeeded in giving birth to a beautiful daughter she named Haruko, child of spring. Haruko grew to be as lovely as her mother who taught her to always look beautiful. "The first thing you must do on rising," Kise told her little daughter, "is to comb your hair and to look your best. Never let anyone see you unless you are dressed to be seen." Later, Haruko who was my Aunt Dorothy, told me in turn, "Always put your makeup on and do your hair first in the morning. Don't let anyone see you looking messy." With such an outlook on life, with such high expectations, these beautiful women were heading for disappointment and suffering.

Helemano Plantation lies high on the crest of the fertile hill of red soil which eventually became the acres of pineapple fields of the Dole Plantation Company. Whitmore Village and the town of Wahiawa, where my father was born have somehow survived the plantation era and have progressed to a suburb of sorts and a small rural town. From the ocean coasts lining Haleiwa and Waialua, acres and acres of waving green sugar cane fields lead to Helemano which used to be almost hidden from view in the midst of the very tall sugarcane fields. The plantations were laid out according to one's place in the hierarchy: the *luna* or supervisor's house was by far the largest and imposing with all the amenities of the time. The cottages were segregated by ethnicity. The Chinese had their own section; the Japanese theirs, usually with a communal bath house in the center, the Filipinos had theirs and the Portuguese, who started out as *lunas* eventually became just part of the workers, and were identified by their ovens for *pao douce* or sweetbread.

The house that Keitaro and his friends built gave Kise status because of its size compared to the cottages of the workers. Keitaro built a lovely pond filled with carp and other fish to remind his wife of Japan, and he planted a garden of all kinds of vegetables: turnips, eggplant, cabbage, cucumbers and carrots. On February 9, 1912, Kise gave birth to another daughter and named her Teruko. They were disappointed that there were no sons, but Keitaro loved his little girls and worried about them when they were late returning from school. Haruko and Teruko had to walk miles to Haleiwa to attend elementary school near the sea. The tall cane hid them from sight, and they often tarried while returning home late in the afternoon, often returning in the dark. Irrigation ditches

could run like rivers and children playing in them often drowned or were swept away. With lantern in hand, Keitaro walked through the tall cane calling their names. Haruko often teased Teruko, and usually the younger girl came home crying. It was at least 10 miles from Haleiwa to Helemano. Not only did they attend elementary school, but walked a few blocks to Taisho Gakko, the Japanese temple and language school, where they learned the language and culture of Japan, and often did not leave until 5 p.m. To walk home the 10 miles often meant it was dark by the time they reached their home.

Meanwhile, Keitaro joined the other Japanese laborers to protest ill treatment and low wages. The white culture of Hawaii had not only been hostile to the native Hawaiians but forced annexation to the U.S. in 1898 and dethroned the monarchy of Queen Liliuokalani, and also took their land. Some of the early white families who had come to Hawaii as missionaries as well as those who came later as businessmen also looked down on those who came from Asia: the Chinese and the Japanese in particular. Because these Asians came from cultures which were ancient and superior in many ways to the early culture of the U.S., they were not accustomed to being maltreated. When the first wave of Gannenmono or early Japanese complained of being mistreated to the Japanese government, Japan responded by refusing to send any more of their citizens to America. Finally, after the intercession by King David Kalakaua and an agreement to treat the Japanese better, waves of Japanese arrived in Hawaii, including the Nagais and the Yoshidas.

The first major strike occurred in 1909 and involved most of the plantations on Oahu. At that time, Japanese were paid \$18 per month while the Portuguese and Puerto Ricans who did the same work were being paid \$22.50. The latter were also given better houses and the use of an acre of land each. The employers felt that the Asians did not have as high a standard of living. Several Japanese leaders: Motoyuki Negoro and the editors of the Japanese newspapers: Yasutaru Soga and Kinzaburo Makino, who had a white mother, were very assertive in stating the Japanese case. Grandfather Keitaro and his neighbors took an active role in the strike, but they were also very discouraged by conditions which were not ideal, and Kise was not happy with their life on the plantation and kept detached from all the excitement.

The Spanish flu epidemic which swept the entire world in 1918 decimated at least a fourth of the population. The small world of the Helemano plantation was not spared, and one by one Keitaro's neighbors came down with the high fever and the wasting of the disease. In those days, medical practice called for isolating the patient in a tightly closed room with windows sealed. Depriving the patient from water and food also was the prescribed regimen. When Keitaro's neighbors, the Abes and the Kabes, came down with the deadly disease, he went to their aid. Closed in their houses with the doors sealed and the very hot and humid climate, he, too, came down with the flu. In a few days, Keitaro was dead, another victim of the deadly influenza epidemic. He died on March 16, 1920 and left Kise and the two girls bereft. Not only did they lose their husband and father, but they also lost their home and the means of livelihood that Keitaro provided.

I have always thought that Keitaro probably died heartbroken and probably didn't mind dying. Life held so much promise, and he had taken so many risks. With a wife who didn't love him, so much difficulty and resistance from the employers and the death of his little son, Keitaro must have been very discouraged about life in Hawaii. Now that Kise was alone, she had to find a means of making a living as she had nothing. In those days, there was no pension, no compensation, no medical insurance so she and the girls moved to Honolulu where she hoped to work as a seamstress and tailor to support the little family.

They moved near the Palama Settlement stands today near School Street and Vineyard, and the girls attended Queen Emma School. Kise became very embittered and because she was a single parent and feared for her two girls as well as their rapid Americanization, she took all her anger and her frustration out on them. If they were just few minutes late returning home, she hid behind the door and when they entered, she hit them with the broomstick. When my aunt cut her beautiful long hair to do a bob in the fashion of the day, my grandmother was furious and beat her. Unhappy, very poor and frightened, unable to speak English nor find a suitable means of income, she kept to herself, smoked cigarettes she rolled herself and was sullen most of the time. As her beauty began to fade, she became even more unhappy.

When she turned eighteen years old, my aunt Dorothy Haruko Nagai, who became known as Chichan, left Hawaii to go to Los Angeles. Imbued with the spirit of her parents, she wanted to see new places and to seek better opportunities. Because she did not have any education except till the eighth grade, she took advantage of her beauty and grace, and became a geisha in Japan town on East Third Street. In the early 30's, the Japanese clustered near the Shinto and Buddhist shrines in East L.A. They were employed as fruiterers, as day laborers and as professionals. Aunt Dorothy learned to play the samisen and the arts of flower arranging and the tea ceremony. She learned to entertain the clients, mostly from Japan, who came to Los Angeles as businessmen and as travelers to America. Dorothy was very beautiful, slender and elegant with beautiful fingers and could look directly into anyone's gaze with aplomb.

As soon as possible, she sent for her younger sister and mother to live in Los Angeles. Despite the great prejudice and bigotry against anyone who was non-white, the Japanese Americans lived their lives as did other Americans and in the flapper days dressed and danced and lived as any other American of the time. Because Dorothy was so beautiful and confident, Toyo Miyatake, a world class photographer of his day made her his model, and soon he began taking photos of her in every pose. Jean Harlow and Mary Pickford were the famous actresses of the day, and Dorothy did her hair as they did and wore the long silk chemises they did and looked stunning. Because of the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1905, Japanese could not go from Hawaii to the Mainland to stay so Grandma Nagai had to return to Hawaii. During the time she was in Los Angeles, however, Nancy, my mother enjoyed being in the city and took every advantage that she could. They traveled to Mexico and enjoyed being tourists and Nancy even worked as an usher at the local movie theater.

In the years that passed, my grandmother grew silent and sullen. Even when mother married and had children, she could never make her mother smile for Kise had never realized the dream she held in her heart when she came from Japan. And everyone knows what happens to a dream deferred. Grandmother's beauty never brought her the admiration for which she had yearned, and her pride turned to humiliation and defeat in a land of strangers with crude manners and men who sought to ravage her body and wear down her haughty beauty. As she aged, she lost even this beauty, and her hair became very thin and her body shapeless. She sat smoking the Bull Durham cigarettes she folded, far into the night to take the place of food she had no money to buy. The landlord humiliated her further by making her cook for the workers in his grocery store when she herself was starving and could not eat the food.

In those days in the 1940's in Honolulu, I often went to stay with my grandmother and can still see her house. Her bedroom was in the very back of the house, darkened with shades drawn. Because it was a long house, the next room moving forward was a small bathroom with a porcelain tub with feet. Her kitchen had a small icebox, and the iceman came every day to put a new block of ice in it. She had a cement sink and a portable stove. There was a small alcove with her kitchen table, and she often sat there eating honey and bread in the dim light.

She had a living room called a parlor in those days, and the sewing machine was at the very front window. She sat and smoked rolled cigarettes from Bull Durham tobacco she wound herself from her tobacco box. There was a small couch in the corner and nothing else. In the bedroom next to the living room was another small bedroom with drawers where she kept her comb and pins. I often combed her hair, but by then she hardly had any hair, and her scalp showed through in many patches. She scolded me when I combed too hard. Still, her hair was very black though she may have dyed it.

Moilili was a network of houses closely built together in those days and near a rice field of water near the ocean. I remember walking with her to visit the rice farmer who lived in the middle of the fields. We had to walk on wooden clogs or *geta* to get to his house on plants which crisscrossed the rice field. As a child, I was surprised to see his boots full of mud clinging to the heels on his kitchen table. Today, the Ala Moana Shopping Center with Nordstrom and Nieman Marcus and all the designer shops are built over that duck pond and rice fields. Because it was so safe in those early days, I often explored the neighborhood and went to see the neighbors living in close quarters. I clogged over the narrow cement sidewalks through the burrow like walkways to make my way to the *otera*, or temple.

Many evenings, there were movies shown in the middle of the houses. A large sheet was hung across some trees, and someone came with a movie projector. We all sat on cars and boxes right outside grandmother's house to watch the movies. Because we were kids, we had fun, and I enjoyed playing with the neighborhood kids. We often went to the park across the street that is still there with the agricultural station nearby. Large banyan trees are still there, and we played among the giant roots of the tree while Grandmother sat and watched us until my mother returned from her errands

My mother did her best to see that her mother was well-cared for, but she had four children, all of whom were under ten years old. My parents always fought because my father insisted on living in Wahiawa, where his parents and siblings all lived, and he hated Honolulu with its traffic, heat and buildings. A farmer at heart, he loved the coolness of Wahiawa and being close to his mother and brothers. Being one of five boys, he enjoyed being with them and bought a parcel of land with the help of Uncle H. It was at the very top of an area that once were fields of gladiolas and the landowners had been the plantation bosses such as the Turners and the Petersons. Their chicken farm is still there today.

My grandmother often intervened, but she had little influence over him. On one occasion my mother took us and ran away from my Dad. She had nowhere to go, but we took the bus and went to Nuuanu, where her cousin lived. I remember going home to Wahiawa again in the trundle of an old car. I was very happy to be going home as I was in middle school and had all my friends by that time. When my grandmother was alive, we often stayed at her house when my parents had an argument.

Because she had a very bad heart, my mother wanted to care for her in our home in Kapahulu, which was very small. I remember Grandma in her futon on the floor. Somehow, she and my mother had an argument and my grandmother took the taxi and went home. My grandmother's heart was so weak that she had to go to the hospital, but she couldn't stand being there and felt neglected so she took a cab and went home. My mother promised to come and see her the next morning as she had to take us home to eat dinner and to bathe. My youngest sister was only a baby not even one year old. I remember going home, and my mother very worried about her mother.

The next day, my sister Geri and I took the bus to the public library in Honolulu and borrowed books and took the bus back to Grandma's house. When we got off the bus, I will always remember seeing all the neighbors gathered in the yard outside my grandmother's house. They were staring at us as we stepped down from the bus and walked with our books to the house. As we stood outside my grandmother's house, there was an ambulance, and two men came out of the house carrying what looked like a long black rubber bag. My mother stood at the porch, and as we neared the house, I could see that she had been crying. "Grandma is dead," she said.

"Her tall nose is all broken and black because she fell on her face when she had a heart attack, and her face is purple. She must have called for me, 'Teruko, Teruko,' "my mother told me. I was terrified thinking of my grandmother with a purple face and a black nose. "She was cold as stone," my mother continued.

That night, the mortuary returned my grandmother's body to the house in a lavender coffin. They set the coffin up in the room next to the parlor, and the custom was to burn incense throughout the night in a wake. Although friends and neighbors were supposed to pay their respects, I don't remember anyone coming except an awful old man. He said he represented the mortuary, and as we kids cowered in the corner of the parlor, he kept telling my mother stories about the corpses he had to prepare.

“Sometimes as I am putting on their pants, their eyes open,” he told her. I was ten years old—old enough to know what he said, and the smell of lilies, incense and the terror of his stories haunted my childhood long after the years had passed. My father did not come to stay with my mother and support her as he was building the house in Wahiawa.

On the day of the funeral, I would not look at my grandmother lying in the open coffin. I did not want to see her blackened nose nor her purple face. My mother kept insisting that I go up to the coffin to look at her, but I refused and went outside. I felt guilty for not being a better daughter, but my mother had frightened me so much that I could not get over death and a dead body for many years. Even when I was in college, I could not go to pay respects at an open coffin, and I can sympathize with the heroine of “The Three Faces of Eve,” the story of a young girl like me who developed a split personality after being forced to kiss the body of her dead grandmother. Even now, when I smell Easter lilies, I think of death and that awful experience.

My mother never got over the guilt for not being there for her mother. She blamed my aunt for leaving her alone to care for her and had nightmares after that until near her death. I always thought it was her mother haunting her until I heard the voice of the demon (or what it was) myself and realized that it was either my grandmother’s spirit seeking vengeance for an unfulfilled life or it was indeed an *oni* from the Old Country which had come to Hawaii. Why I was privy to hearing it will always puzzle me.

My mother always had nightmares and each time they would be worse. One night, she kicked the windows so hard, the glass rattled and shook. I was staying at my parents’ home in Wahiawa one night with my own family. I awoke at the sound of my mother yelling at someone to get away from her. It was about 3 a.m. Then I heard the voice. It was a man’s voice or what sounded like more a man than a woman, but it was dripping with evil, and it was laughing at her, taunting her in a very low snickering sound “*Okiru zo,*” it said in a threatening voice. Its voice was very ancient and taunted her. She kicked and kicked the wall and window and shouted for it to go away.

The next morning, I asked whether anyone heard the voice the night before. No one had heard it except me. Not even my mother could remember it. I pondered the event for several days and finally called a friend from Japan and asked her to join me for lunch. “Michiko,” I said, “have you ever heard of an *oni*?” I asked her thinking she would laugh at me. “Sure,” she said. “All the talk shows in Japan have them.” “Do you think I could go and see whether prayer might exorcise the spirit?” “Sure,” she said. So the next week, I took some flowers and manju to the temple in Wahiawa and sat before the large Buddha and burned incense. I prayed that the spirit would leave my mother alone as she had suffered long enough. By then she had developed ovarian cancer and was terminally ill. I sat there in front of the large golden Buddha smiling with a Mona Lisa smile in the columbarium where so many urns were kept. *After that day, my mother never had another nightmare.*

It could have been the spirit of my grandmother, so restless and unhappy seeking peace, or it could have been a spirit of the Netherworld which came with the unrequited from Japan and all the bloodshed of the days of the Samurai from our two families: the Nagai and the Yoshida, who fought the Genji and the Heike battles so long ago. I will never really know.

I mourn my grandmother's sad and disappointing life and understand how lonely and alienated she always felt. Still, there are many Issei women who suffered the same way and even more and were resilient and positive. These early risk takers from Japan and other countries suffered so much and wanted to have good lives. They never lived long enough to see what their grandchildren and great grandchildren would become because they had been brave enough to take a chance and come to America, but I think they would have preferred having a good life themselves, and so I mourn for them and am grateful to them. My grandmother's story needed to be told, and I am grateful to her and understand her suffering. I pray that she rests in peace.



**HARUKO, TERUKO AND MOTHER
KISE NAGAI (YAMAGUCHI, JAPAN
CIRCA 1915)**

**KEITARO NAGAI AND FRIEND
CIRCA: 1900**



横道齋館

**MEGAN MIYO SUNAHARA
TUNE**

ASSIGNMENT FOR ETHNIC STUDIES

**JAPANESE FAMILY PICTORIAL HISTORY PROJECT
CIRCA: 1991**

*NOTE: Megan interviewed Grandma and Grandpa Yoshida
to learn the history of their family*

INTRODUCTION:

When my seventeen year old great-grandmother Kise Yoshioka Nagai left Yamaguchi, Japan for Hawaii in 1908, she had no idea what her new life would be like on the Islands. Ever since the Gentleman's Agreement of 1905, the flow of Japanese immigrants had slowed, but the so-called "picture brides" were still being admitted to the Islands. Picture brides sent their photographs to unmarried men. These single men would make their choice, but often times parents would arrange the marriages. Kise Yoshioka Nagai's independence and pride led her to live a life where she had to struggle to make it in a new country, where American customs and traditions were very foreign to her. The immigration process from Japan to Hawaii was not only a tremendous challenge for Japanese immigrants, but it was also an opportunity for Kise and the rest of the other Japanese immigrants to assimilate to a new way of living.

IMMIGRATION FROM JAPAN TO HAWAII IN 1908

My great-grandmother Kise Yoshioka Nagai was born on May 10, 1883 in Yamaguchi, Japan. She lived in the district of Kuga in the village of Misho. Her parents Shinichi and Hisa Yoshioka were plain commoners who worked very hard raising their only daughter. At the age of seventeen years old, Kise left Japan as a picture bride to marry Keitaro Nagai in Hawaii. Kise would be voluntarily leaving her father, deceased mother and her home land on which she was born.

Her eyes were red and swollen from the lack of sleep she had received that restless night. Kise was tired, but the worries conjured up on her mind made it almost impossible for her to sleep. All Kise could think about was what Hawaii would be like, what would Keitaro Nagai look like, and would she be happy there. March, 1908 finally arrived. This was the day Kise Yoshioka would finally meet for the very first time her future husband Keitaro Nagai. She knew next to nothing about Keitaro. She had only exchanged photographs and that was all. She had received no letters from him like some of the other villager girls who were also leaving Japan as picture brides. Kise wondered if Keitaro was a nice man. What if he treated her poorly? What if he decided that he didn't want her anymore? Would he ship her off to Japan again? Thoughts and questions like these bothered her throughout the entire journey to Hawaii.

The great solid Japanese boat was crowded and full of malodorous noisy people. Anxious women who were also picture brides were on the boat, along with government contract laborers who were there to later help Hawaii's plantation fields, Hawaii's community buildings and houses in the villages. Just as Kise was about to board the ship, she noticed that many women and men were scrapping soil from the dock and collecting it in their tiny pouches and handkerchiefs. Like the rest of them, Kise took out her little silk purse to collect soil from her home ground, Japan. She clentched the silk bag tightly as she made her way through the noisy clusters of people to the very back of the ship. Many people

left Japan in hopes of either saving enough money in Hawaii to bring the rest of their families to Hawaii or improving their lives for themselves. Many immigrants also left Japan because of poverty in their villages, therefore in Hawaii they could create a better life for themselves.

As Kise stood in the back of the boat, she watched her home, Japan, get farther and farther, then smaller and smaller until she couldn't see anything but the ocean's calm waves and the tears that blurred her vision. It wasn't that Kise was afraid, even though she was one of a few women who was taking a risk by traveling alone at the age of seventeen, and by getting married to a man she didn't even know. The tears she had were for her homeland, Japan, a place she knew she might never see again.

Traveling across the Pacific Ocean for almost one month, Kise was fortunate to leave in 1908, because the majority of women immigrants arrived 1910-1920. If she had left during that period of time, the ships probably were more crowded and much more unsanitary. She was also lucky that she left before 1920 because in 1924, immigration ended with the passage of the Quota Immigration law. Thus, in 1924 Congress sealed off the United States and its territories from the Japanese.

The boat ride was terrible because people who got sick rarely made it. This was due to the fact that the ship was unsanitary. Kise was very anxious to arrive in Honolulu Harbor where she would meet Keitaro Nagai, her new husband. At the harbor, Kise was disappointed because she couldn't get in touch with Keitaro for a whole week. He wasn't there to greet her and he hadn't come for her until a week later. Kise waited at the station feeling uneasy. She kept her distance from the other giggly ladies. Kise thought Hawaii was extremely beautiful. She was determined to be the best wife for her husband. Kise had new hopes and courage, and she vowed to herself that she would be brave and strong no matter what happened. She had survived the Pacific Ocean journey on the boat and she had survived the diseases that plagued many of the immigrants

Continued (Immigration)

on the ship.

FAMILY LIFE

Keitaro Nagai came to Hawaii in 1898 as a skilled carpenter. He came from Ehime, Japan in Matsuyama city. His parents Tadata and Ura Nagai both came from the status of Shizoku (samurai). He was very talented with his hands in the plantation fields and also in building houses and stores for the Japanese communities. Keitaro was eight years older than Kise which was considered normal because usually picture brides were always much younger than their husbands.

When Keitaro Nagai finally arrived to meet Kise, his soon to be wife, Kise dressed in her finest kimono which was made out of fine silk. The kimono was made passed down to her from her deceased mother who had died when Kise was only thirteen years old. It was a purple kimono. The obi was made out of gold threads with cranes for good luck. In it, she hid her little bag of soil from Japan. Her long black hair was neatly placed on top of her head in Japanese style. Keitaro Nagai was plainly dressed, yet he had a clean, handsome and kind face that made Kise feel relaxed. The only difference was really in their heights. Kise was much taller than Keitaro, for Keitaro was a short man. Kise and Keitaro got married on March 30, 1908.

The Japanese immigrant woman leads a very difficult life in America, because of her multiple duties. The wife had to obey and serve her husband always. It was expected and considered to be a form of respect. Kise prepared the meals everyday for the family and she also reared and took care of the children. Cooking was considered a woman's duty in the household. Meals that were prepared consisted mostly of fish, rice and vegetables which they usually cultivated themselves in their plots of land. Keitaro's favorite meal consisted

of rice, tea, tsukemono, dried fish, fresh vegetables and a hot bowl of miso soup. Kise learned Keitaro's favorite meals in order to please him after his long hard day's work. Keitaro had many talents. He was not only the village's carpenter, but served also as their doctor. Keitaro also was an excellent gardener. He helped out in the sugarcane fields when he wanted to earn a little more money or he often helped neighbors cultivate vegetable crops of their own. He was a very generous man with a big kind heart. Kise knew she was very fortunate to have such a husband like Keitaro.

Kise and Keitaro lived in Helemano in one of the three biggest houses in the whole plantation area. Perhaps this was because Keitaro came from a samurai family and he was an excellent skilled carpenter rather than a common laborer. The house was built by Keitaro and some of the village neighbors. They even had a cultivated garden with radishes, cabbage, carrots and cucumbers. Near the vegetable garden was a small fish pond with a few carps and many guppies. Kise and Keitaro weren't fortunate enough to have many animals like their neighbors did. Their next door neighbor had a cow and two rabbits and many chickens.

Not too long after Keitaro and Kise's marriage in March, 1908, Keitaro wanted to have a baby and of course he really wanted to have a son. He wanted and hoped for a baby boy so that he could carry out the name of Nagai for future generations. Kise and Keitaro tried and tried when finally on February 6, 1909, Kise had given birth to her first baby which was a boy. This was not a happy moment in her life though, because the baby boy had been born dead. She and Keitaro still named the baby and gave him the name of Shoichi Nagai. Her first baby boy was still-born. How could this have happened to her? Doctor's weren't professional then, and most of the blame Kise felt inside went to the unexperienced doctor who helped her give birth. Keitaro still wanted a son, and although Kise did not want to go through a terrible experience she went through with her first born, she wanted to make Keitaro happy and pleased with her. On

February 5, 1910 exactly one year later from the time she gave birth to her first baby boy which had been born dead. This time she gave birth to a baby girl. Kise named her Haruko, child of spring. Kise knew Keitaro was probably disappointed, but Kise was not at all displeased with her baby girl. Kise now had someone to keep her company in the house while Keitaro was out in the village working long hours from early morning to late night. Two years later on February 9, 1912, Kise gave birth to another baby girl. They named her Teruko. Keitaro was again disappointed because he had hoped that this time it would be a boy. Nevertheless, he loved both of the girls. Due to the fact that Kise had two children to take care of, her duties doubled and life was not going to be easier. Kise's responsibilities were to make sure that her children were taught the values of hardwork, responsibility, cooperation and respect for others. Usually the mother reared the children, while the father (Issei generation) made the decisions. The Japanese families were bond together by strong values. In the family, one never caused shame for themself, their family or community.

JAPANESE COMMUNITY LIFE

The Issei generation created a new Japanese American culture in their new country. IT was difficult though, because the Japanese were often discriminated against in the labor force and in the city. Often times many Japanese immigrants felt distant and unfamiliar with their new home, because they weren't always given a warm welcome wherever they went. Therefore, the issei generation established their own Japanese communities and villages in order to keep some of their Japanese traditions and values. They wanted to assimilate to American ways, yet they also wanted the nisei generation to become aware and appreciate their ancestry and their Japanese heritage. The nisei generation would be exposed to both cultures. They would be nurtured in a some what pluralistic society. In the Japanese community, there were small businesses, temples, handicraft clubs, schools and other familiar cultural forms. Kise and her next

(Japanese dancing). In their Helemano community there was also a general store where they could purchase anything they needed for their household. They even had a pool hall, bath house and a ni-hon gakko (Japanese school) for Haruko and Teruko. In dealing with education, nisei girls weren't expected to go to college. Instead, the mother taught them important skills like sewing, cooking and preparing them to make good obedient wives for their future husbands. Kise really didn't master the English language like most of the issei generation. Haruko and Teruko helped Kise with English words whenever they went to town. The children also helped Kise with the housework and they also took care of one another.

Usually the issei generation like Kise and Keitaro didn't want their children to lose touch with their homeland and culture. Therefore, Kise made sure that Haruko and Teruko went to Japanese school as well as regular school, where they would learn English. They still celebrated Japanese traditions such as Girl's Day on March third and also sang Japanese songs. The Japanese community was an essential part of their village because it made them fit in easier with the rest of society. It allowed them to retain and keep their own culture. It made the adaptation process much easier for them and they also felt more at ease and it gave them a feeling of being back in Japan.

MAKING A LIVING/ DUTIES/ JOBS

Before Haruko and Teruko were born, Keitaro was the only supporter of the household. He was such a fine skilled craftsman and carpenter. He was even lucky enough to help build some of the village's temples and shrines. To do so was a great honor. Keitaro also helped out on the plantations. In the sugarcane fields, Keitaro would prepare the land for planting, irrigate the land, fertilize, and stock the wagons with sugarcane. He would rise at 6:00 a.m. every morning and work until 5:00 p.m. Keitaro always talked about the luna

(field overseer) to Kise and the children. Keitaro's luna was a white man and he supervised the hours they worked and controlled the work force. Keitaro always came home from work very exhausted and tired. Kise knew she had to help support the family as well. Kise decided that it would be wise for her to take on the responsibility to get a job. Kise was an excellent seamstress, she knew that although sewing for other people would be little pay, she would do it, because anything extra would help Haruko and Teruko with their schooling. Kise's lady neighbors also worked, yet they worked alongside the men in the plantation fields. Kise didn't want to do that because she really hated the extreme heat and the nasty bug bites Keitaro would often get from the fields. Kise would always get up real early in the morning around 4:00 a.m. to prepare rice and bentos for Keitaro and the children. Kise was not only the first to rise in the household, but the last to go to sleep. She would stay up late finishing the housework, or sewing papales (sun bonnets) and hankachis (scarves) for the field workers in the plantations. She knew how essential the sun bonnets were in the hot dry fields.

In the Helemano village where Keitaro and Kise lived, times became extremely difficult when the flu broke out. Haruko and Teruko weren't allowed to play with the other children due to the fear that they might catch the awful life-taking sickness. People who caught the flu would be locked up in their houses, and doctors weren't available to them. There was no medication invented yet to cure them and there also weren't any experienced doctors either. It was a very hard time. Keitaro and Kise's neighbors had caught the flu and this was the worst news they had heard because the flu was very contagious, plus there was no medication to help cure it. No one was there to help their neighbors. Keitaro knew a little about medicine so he tried to help cure his neighbors. Everyday after work he would bring them the hot cabbage soup Kise had prepared and he would give them cold towels for their forehead. A week after trying to

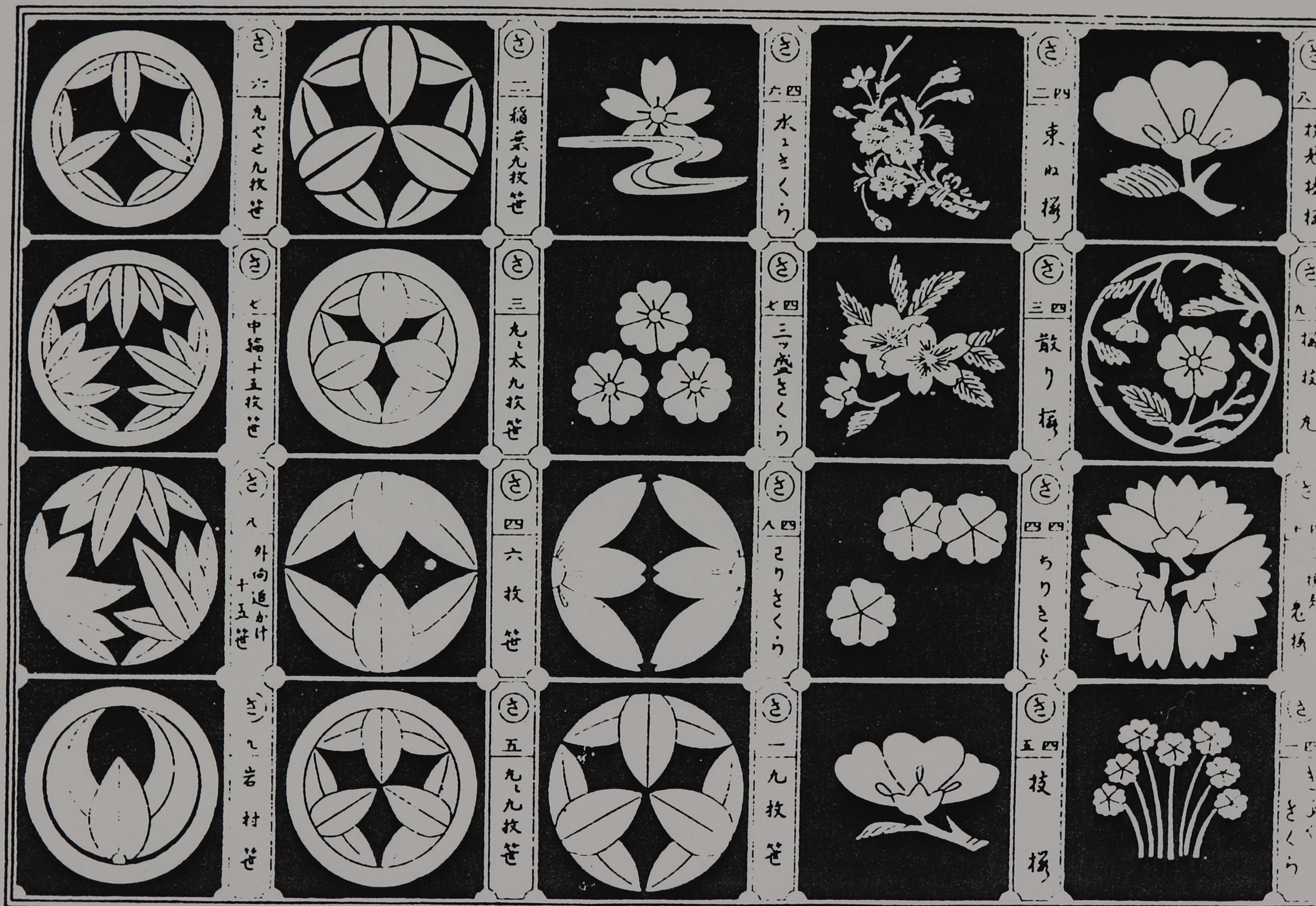
help them, Keitaro caught the flu from them and he got very sick. Keitaro died shortly after he caught the sickness. He died at the age of forty-five on March 16, 1920. Kise was left alone all of a sudden with two children who were only *ten and* eight years old. Kise was a widow on her own. Living without a husband was something that Kise never expected to happen. She needed more money for the children to get through school, and this only meant that she would have to work harder and longer hours everyday. Kise resorted to tailoring and dressmaking.

Kise became to be a very tense and nervous woman due to all the stress she had to live with. My grandmother, Teruko told me about times where her mother would hit her and her sister Haruko with a broom stick whenever she got angry. They didn't understand why she got so upset all the time, but now they can understand why she was so angry inside. Kise's whole life was a continuous struggle to just keep on going. She not only traveled to Hawaii alone as a picture bride, but her first child she gave birth to was born dead. Keitaro, her husband died only twelve years after their marriage, leaving her with two young daughters to raise alone. Kise Yoshioka Nagai survived all of this and she did so with pride and determination. She never gave up because her family was much too important to her. Life was very difficult, yet Kise was a survivor!

Haruko, the eldest daughter (nisei) adopted the American name Dorothy and went to the mainland to live. She was a very beautiful woman with a lot of sadness in her life. She never got married and stayed in retirement home in California until her death on March 30, 1990. Teruko, my grandmother also changed her name to Nancy. Nancy remained in Hawaii where she met her husband Tadashi Yoshida. They got married ~~on~~ April 29, 1937. They lived in Wahiawa and raised three girls and one boy. The eldest daughter named Carol (sansei generation) is my mother. She met Paul Sunahara and got married. They had four

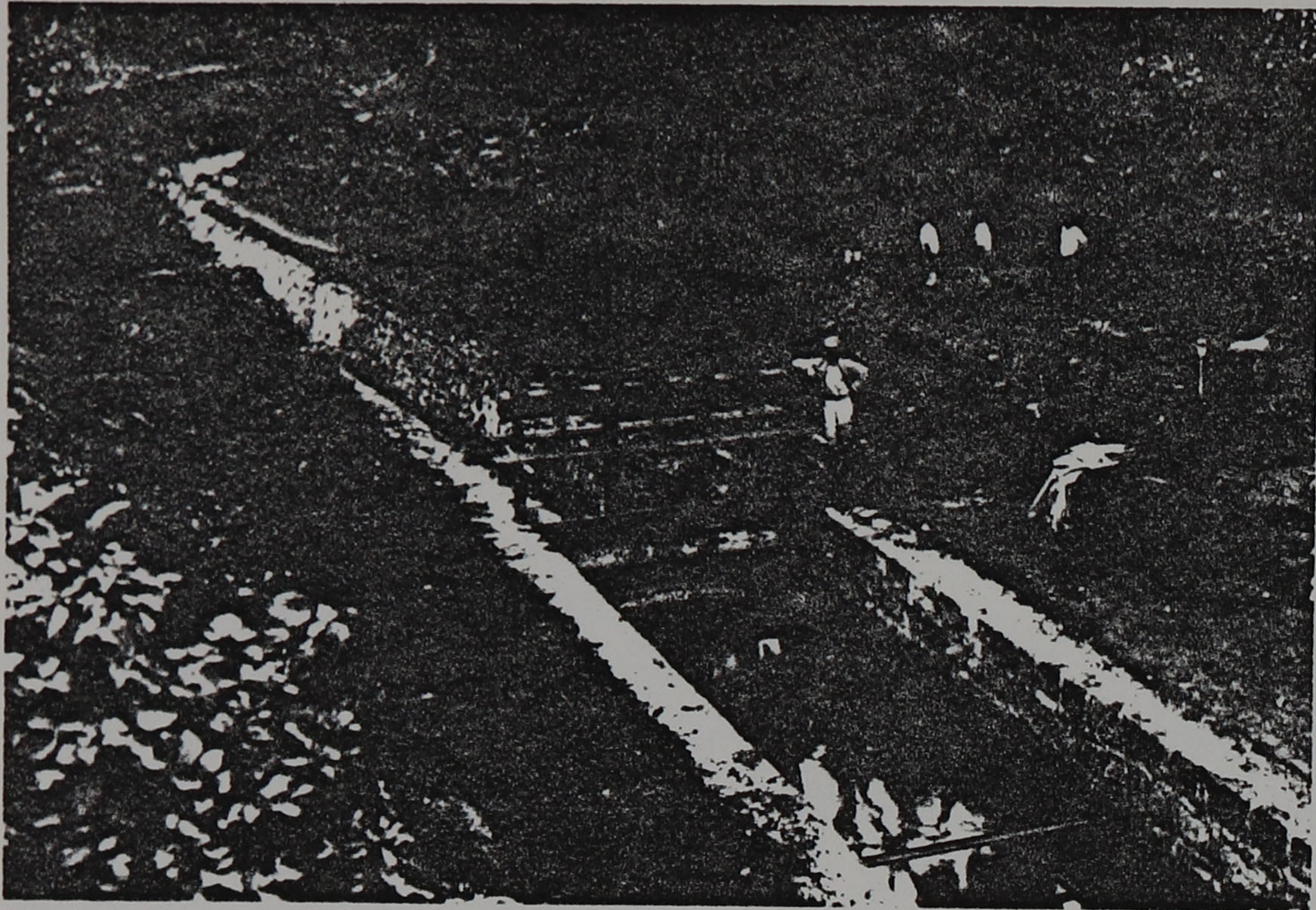
daughters (yonsei generation). Paul and Carol named their daughters Michele, Nicole, Beth and Megan.

And that is how I came to be where I am today. I am very fortunate to be where I am today. If it weren't for my brave great-grandmother who endured many hardships I wouldn't be here. In our family, we still celebrate Japanese traditions such as Girl's Day and New Year's Day, and we all live by many of the values held important to the Japanese heritage. Our family still respects our Japanese traditions that have been with us since our great grandparents (issei generation) arrived in Hawaii. The story and life of my great-grandparents Kise and Keitaro Nagai are all true facts. It amazes me of all the obstacles my great-grandparents had to endure to become accepted in Hawaii. If it weren't for them, I wouldn't be here today. Although I haven't lived life to its fullest capacity as my great-grandmother did, I will always know that my great-grandmother and I hold the quality of accepting life the way it is and making the best out of the worst. Kise Yoshioka Nagai is my idol. She had great determination and courage. I hope that I too, can have the same strong qualities as she did when times get tough, because this is what made her a survivor.



↑ Yoshida
Family Crest
+ Yoshioka
+ Sunahara

My mother's side and my father's side
Both have the same family crest symbol.



Olokele irrigation ditch, Kaua'i, ca. 1900-1910 (A. Gartley, photographer).



Japanese women workers (*hō hana*) during government contract period (courtesy of United Japanese Society of Hawaii).



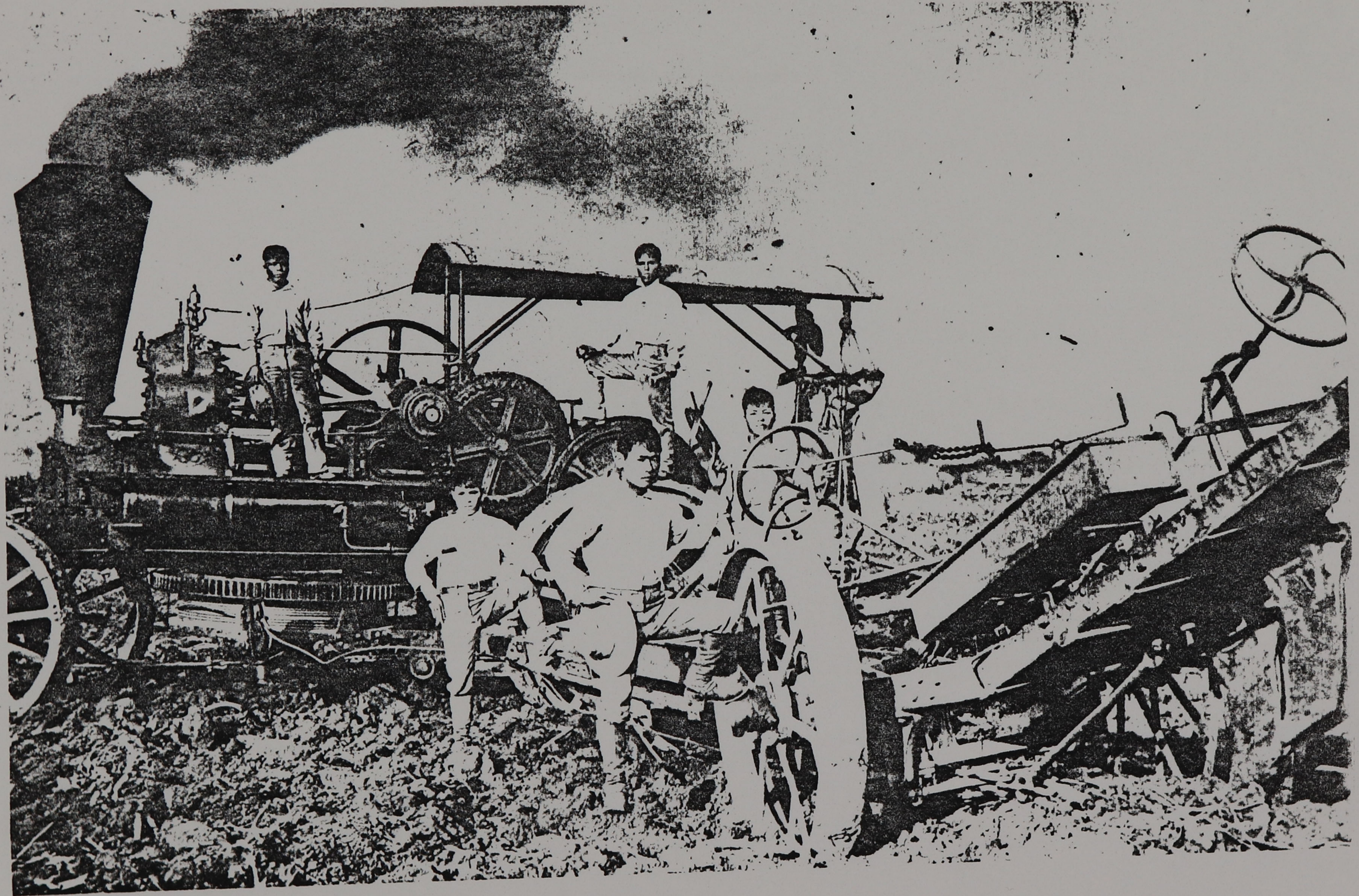
Japanese women weeding (*kālai*) in Honomū, island of Hawai'i (courtesy of United Japanese Society of Hawaii).



Cutting cane (*kachiken*) (R. J. Baker, photographer).

Plantation work to be done: irrigation duties, weeding, cutting cane and planting. 1910

Japanese field laborers pre-1900



Laborers and steam plow, pre-1900.

In the 1880s the steam plow replaced plows drawn by horses or oxen. The plows worked in pairs, with one on each side of a field and usually more than a thousand feet apart. One engine pulled a gang plow across the field, and the other drew it back. After the land was plowed and harrowed, with all the weeds turned under, the double mould-board plows were used to make the furrows for planting seed cane.

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Waialua pineapple field workers, O'ahu, ca. 1905.

Japanese immigrants working in the pineapple fields in Oahu, 1905



Japanese field workers of the Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar Company sat for this portrait in 1913 at the Kawano Photo Studio, Puunene, Maui. At right: this Japanese couple posed in 1895 for Christian J. Hedemann in Honolulu. The *kimono*-dressed woman maintains the traditions of Japan, standing behind her husband with her hand on his shoulder.

Japanese women field workers, 1913

These women field workers don't look very happy, perhaps it is because they had gone through a lot of hardship.

**WEDDING PHOTO
APRIL 29, 1937**



**TADASHI FRANCIS AND TERUKO NANCY
(AGES: 27 AND 25 YEARS)**

NANCY TERUKO NAGAI AND FRANCIS TADASHI
YOSHIDA

Dad was born the third son in Wahiawa, Hawaii, on August 15, 1910 and was always the favorite of both mother and father. Of all his brothers, Dad was the coolest, and also a very keen observer of life. Always devoted to his parents, Dad never failed to stop at Obaban's house on his way home from work when we lived in Wahiawa, and he was always so good to his brothers and sisters. A trickster, he got away with much with his brothers. Most of all, Dad loved his family: his children, his grandchildren and was never so happy as when we were at his home in his later years. To live in the house he built, to spend the entire day in his vast yard among his plants gave him such happiness.

He tells the story of going fishing in the gulch with his brothers when they were young. They were like the Huck Finn gang and spent hours fishing with nothing to eat and only worms for bait. Because he was younger than Kazuto and Hitoshi, they sent him home to get some food and return. The family lived at the lowest part of Wahiawa near the bridge, and the boys went fishing way up near the Wahiawa Heights. Dad lingered on his way home and often never returned to the fishing grounds with food. He made up some story about getting waylaid.

Always obedient and hardworking, Dad took flowers on the bus to be sold at the market. Because there was no high school in Wahiawa, he took the bus to McKinley High School. He would pick up the flowers from a family friend, Mrs. Masukawa early in the morning and deliver them to the market before going on to school. It must have been a chore, but he always delivered the flowers. Dad was a good student and remembers reciting the Gettysberg Address by heart. He graduated from McKinley in 1929 after living at the Okamura dormitory on the campus of the Honpa Hongwangji in those days.

Mom Nancy lived with her Mom Kise in the area now near Palama Settlement on Queen Emma Street and went to school nearby. She loved school and excelled in spelling and language. Shy and retiring, she had long braids for years because her mother refused to allow her to cut her hair in the popular bob of the day. When she finally cut her hair, her mom was furious and beat her. "You're a hussy! You're a cheap girl no one would want! Grandma Nagai didn't know how to raise a daughter in this new world. One daughter had left to find a better future, and Nancy was shaming her by cutting her hair. No doubt, her life as a widow with no money embittered Grandma, and she took it out on her children.

Still, Mom was very pretty and her shyness appealed to Dad. They often met when there were dances for the Hawaiian Nisei, and fell in love. He was supposed to marry a family choice, but he defied his parents and eloped with Mom. I was born two years later in Los Angeles, where they had fled for a better life. But the events of the impending World War II led to discrimination against the Japanese

Americans, and Mom and Dad returned to Hawaii in the nick of time before the Japanese Americans were herded into concentration camps.

They lived in East Los Angeles during those early days in a Jewish neighborhood as Japan Town was on East Third Street nearby. I was born on March 17, 1939, two months premature, in White Memorial Hospital in Boyle Heights which is now Latino neighborhoods. Dad was a fruiterer and Mom was happy in Los Angeles near her sister, Dorothy. However, with the Exclusion Act which prevented Japanese nationals from achieving citizenship and also the growing prejudice against Japanese Americans, Mom and Dad decided to return to Hawaii. Grandma Nagai was alone in Honolulu because she could not travel to the Continental U.S. Fortunately, we moved to Hawaii and rented a duplex in Kapahulu at the very bottom of Diamond Head.

I grew up on Campbell Avenue in a wonderful neighborhood of unforgettable people: the Itos, the Odanis, the Mikamis and Akita Store and Koga Store were nearby. It was early Honolulu, and the Japanese Americans were struggling to make a living. Dad became a carpenter and went to work at USED on the military base where he honed his skills. Eventually, he worked at Waimano Home doing carpentry for the State government with his side kick Hiroshi Okada. To supplement his income, Dad worked as a hash slinger at the Owl Café near River Street at night. He tells the story of following a customer all over Chinatown after the fellow failed to pay for his food. No doubt, Dad had to pay the bill.

We lived in a small duplex: it had only two bedrooms a bathroom, a kitchen and a "parlor." I loved living there because I knew no other home. Dad had a series of hobbies for fun and to supplement our diet. He raised a turkey in my playhouse; he began to raise tropical fish, and our parlor had huge tanks of fish for a while until Mom got tired of it all. He trawled for fish on the ocean and brought fish home for dinner. Dad loved playing cards with his friends and gambling so every weekend, several men like Uncle Sus and Bobura his friend came over. The kitchen table had a dent in it from Uncle Sus's elbows leaning on it to play cards. The ceiling had a huge spot where the pressure cooker had erupted, and steam had stained the ceiling.

My childhood world was filled with Thomas Jefferson Elementary School and the friends I made there; the stores with its Classic comics and bubble gum and Chinese seeds; the Bugs Bunny Club with its movies every Saturday and playing with friends in the small yard filled with coral and fine dirt. It was all I knew, but I grew up in an idealized world of Betty Grable dancing and singing her way down the street, Margaret O'Brien and Elizabeth Taylor and their animals and the "Song of Bernadette" and other such films which established for me a foundation of values and a world where everyone strived to make it a better place.

Geri, Geraldine Tsuyako, was born on July 26, 1943, in Honolulu and admits coming into the world crying for a more comfortable existence. She was a cute kid, and followed me all over the place. With naturally curly hair, she had a small nose and happy outlook on life which she has till this day. After two girls, Dad wanted a son, and Mom tried to give him one so when Sonny was born, they were overjoyed! Dad even bought Mom a wristwatch to celebrate, and they were happy to have a boy to carry on the Yoshida name. Mom named him Randall but called him "Sonny" because of the Al Jolson song so popular at the time, and his middle name was Tadao after Dad's name. Sonny's birthday was February 20, 1945, a few months before Grandpa Kitaro Yoshida passed away from cancer in April. It was as though Sonny would make up for Ojichan's passing.

Geri and I took the bus to the Makiki Christian Church every Sunday, and there we heard Bible stories which expanded our understanding of the world as a wonderful place where we all sought to be good children and giving people. It was there that I began my love of being in church and listening to stories of Jesus and doing good. It imbued my life with the love of God and wherever I go in the world, I go to a church or temple. They are always familiar and safe places to me. Most important to me in my life more than anything is to be in the house of God, and I trace this journey to my foundation at Makiki Christian Church.

On November 23, 1946, Annette Aiko was born, the fourth and last child of Nancy and Francis. Unexpected, she was a love child and named Aiko for just that sentiment. With big brown eyes, and dimpled cheeks, Annette was the most darling child and most personable kid in our family to this day. She took Japanese odori and was always sweet and loving to my parents. I will always remember how cute she was in always helping me get ready for my high school dances.

Dad loved his parents and brothers and sister; he had been brought up to be filial and devoted and had hurt his family by eloping with my Mother and scorning the girl they wanted him to marry. He was tired of trying to make a living in downtown Honolulu and living in a small crowded duplex. He and Mom argued all the time because Dad wanted to build a house in Wahiawa, where the Yoshidas all lived, and Mom wanted to live in the city. She had wanted to live in Los Angeles and always held the ambition of furthering her education, but if she couldn't do that, Honolulu would be all right.

She had worked hard to get Geri and me into Thomas Jefferson, one of the English standard schools of the time. Attending school with mostly Caucasians and with those who spoke well and whose parents were middle class provided me with a community of classmates who took their classes seriously, who loved books and who spoke English well. Dad often took me with him to the Hawaii State Library, and while he looked for books, I reveled in the Children's section and grew to love the time we shared together. In retrospect, I know that Dad would have excelled at the University if he had had the opportunity, and so would my mother.

Mom was very proud of all of us, especially Sonny because he became a dentist. Dad supported us in every way and loved his grandchildren. I'll never forget how he built furniture for us and baby sat whenever I asked him. He even built me a small theater for a class report and built Nicole a guillotine for a class project. Most memorable for all the grandchildren are the little dollhouses that he built. We wallpapered them, and the children have them to this day.

Mom did her best to fill her time with useful projects. She sewed dresses for herself and for the grandchildren and crocheted so many doilies. For a while, she crocheted beaded necklaces and filled a shoebox with many beautiful necklaces and leis. Most of all, she and Dad enjoyed going into Honolulu to see a movie and have lunch or dinner. For a while, Wisteria Restaurant was a favorite as was Gytaku and Zippy's. Although Dad never wanted to go on any trips, Mom made sure she saw the world, and traveled to Europe, Japan and even South America. Michele went on a cruise with her and will always be glad that she did so.

Mom developed ovarian cancer in her later years and passed away in March of 1990 at the age of 80 years. Dad lived alone for a long time and was happiest working in his yard and caring for his plants. Having coffee or lunch at Zippy's (Hawaiian stew, small portion) and visiting his brothers or Mrs. Matsunami made him happy. His wants were simple, and he was blessed with Sonny and Edlyn's good care of him in his old age. They treated him as a friend and always took him out to dinner with them. Their friends became Dad's friends. Both Mom and Dad enjoyed going to Las Vegas, and spent many happy hours at the casinos. Mom collected green faux jade frogs for luck and whenever she won even a small sum, was very happy.

As Dad aged and was in his 90s, he could no longer walk without the aid of a walker, and could no longer care for his beloved yard and plants. A few months short of his 100th birthday, Dad passed away on June 16, 2010. Dad was a man who tried very hard to make Mom happy, especially as she became ill and cared for her as best he could. He loved his children, and did everything he could for them, and he loved his grandchildren, who loved him back. Katey, Nicole's daughter, put it best when she said, "I loved Grandpa Yoshida because I could do or say anything, and he never judged me." The grandchildren will always remember Grandpa and playing in his beautiful yard among the flowers and trees: the playhouse he built them, the swings he put up for them, and the pleasure he took in everything they did.

Because of Mom and Dad, our Yoshida family continues to thrive and to grow. Our children and grandchildren are wonderful contributing members of society and great American citizens. We have a firefighter, an attorney, real estate brokers, ministers, a veterinarian, an engineer, teachers, a dentist, college development officers, a nurse, marketing professionals, writers, artists and poets in our family. Because the Nagais and the Yoshidas dared to come, we have become part of the American dream and a significant part of the American experience.

Dad had his way, and spent evenings and weekends building a house for us in Wahiawa. Uncle H. and Uncle Edward helped him as he toiled to put the foundation together, to build the roof and to make the house solid and beautiful, a place my mother would come to love and a place where his four children could grow up. The house was very modern for its day on a sloping hill in the cool Wahiawa Heights with a view of the Waianae mountain range. It had a kitchen with a place for the dining table and chairs and ample cabinets. It had three bedrooms and a bathroom, a luxury for that time. Dad had every right to be very proud of his house for it was built well, had style and was a wonderful middle class home.

He loved the huge yard which surrounded the house and grew vegetables and fruit trees. Once he built a huge hot house and grew anthuriums and orchids. He even had a calf, but didn't know how to care for it and it died. Mom had a spacious area to hang the laundry in the sun. But Mom was very unhappy in Wahiawa. She hated living near Dad's family who didn't like her "city" ways. Often, Mom felt left out because she couldn't conform to their "country" ways. She and Dad often argued and fought. Once we even left Dad and boarded a bus, but without any means of living nor relatives to help her, Mom had no choice but to return to Wahiawa.

In retrospect, I can see how different they were. Dad was content to be a "farmer" and have land of his own to cultivate. He worked very hard and was a good carpenter and built sturdy furniture. Mom tried to make friends of the women in the Fujinkai of Wahiawa Hongwangji, but she could never fit in, and they often left her out. Eventually, she left the Fujinkai. Mom tried to supplement the family income and applied her writing skills as secretary in town or at the nearby Schofield offices. She even went to night school and got her high school diploma. When she tried getting her associate's degree at Leeward Community College, the instructors were impatient with her questions about research skills and I will always regret that I didn't help her when she asked me. She even sold nylon underwear "Real Silk" to have some spending money.

Amazingly, it was she who insisted that girls are just as good and smart as boys, and saved her money so we could all go to college. Mom always made sure that each of us had a special birthday party, and I'll never forget the birthday party she made for me when I turned sixteen. How she ever had the money to pay for our gowns and fancy dresses for dances and small town beauty pageants, I'll never know, but I will always be grateful to her for her wonderful care of us when we were sick, for her vigilance and for her love during our difficult transition to a new town and new school and always supporting us in every academic endeavor.

In time, we grew up and went to college: I, at the University of Hawaii; Geri at Cal State Long Beach; Sonny at the University of Oregon and dental school and Annette at Cal State as well. We were the third generation in Hawaii as Japanese Americans, and our education propelled us to better lives with our own homes, successful professions and good spouses even though we all eventually divorced.

**PRETTY NANCY NAGAI
CIRCA: 1932**



**MOM AND DAD MET AT DANCES
IN THE '30S AND FELL IN LOVE.
THEY ELOPED BECAUSE DAD'S
PARENTS WANTED HIM TO MARRY
A GIRL THEY KNEW.
DAD SAYS HE LOVED MOM BECAUSE
SHE WAS "SHY AND PRETTY."
HE WAS A ROMANTIC!**

**MOM AND DAD, TERUKO NANCY
AND TADASHI FRANCIS
SAN SOUCI, HAWAII**





Marriage Certificate

It is Hereby Certified that

Tadashi Yoshida, 772 South St. Honolulu
and

Nancy Teruko Nagai, 922 Cedar St. Honolulu
were by me joined in matrimony according to the rites of the Jodo Buddhist
Mission and the laws of the Territory of Hawaii on the *29th* day
of *April* A. D. 19 *37*.

Witnesses:

Naomi Sano Wilson
Shigeo Sato

Officiating Minister

Signed *Gen. Bunetsu Miyamoto*

4322/16915

Application No. 3963

Certificate No. 14386

TERRITORY OF HAWAII
 OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Certificate of Hawaiian Birth

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME, GREETING:

Whereas, Application has been made for the issuance of a certificate of Hawaiian birth to

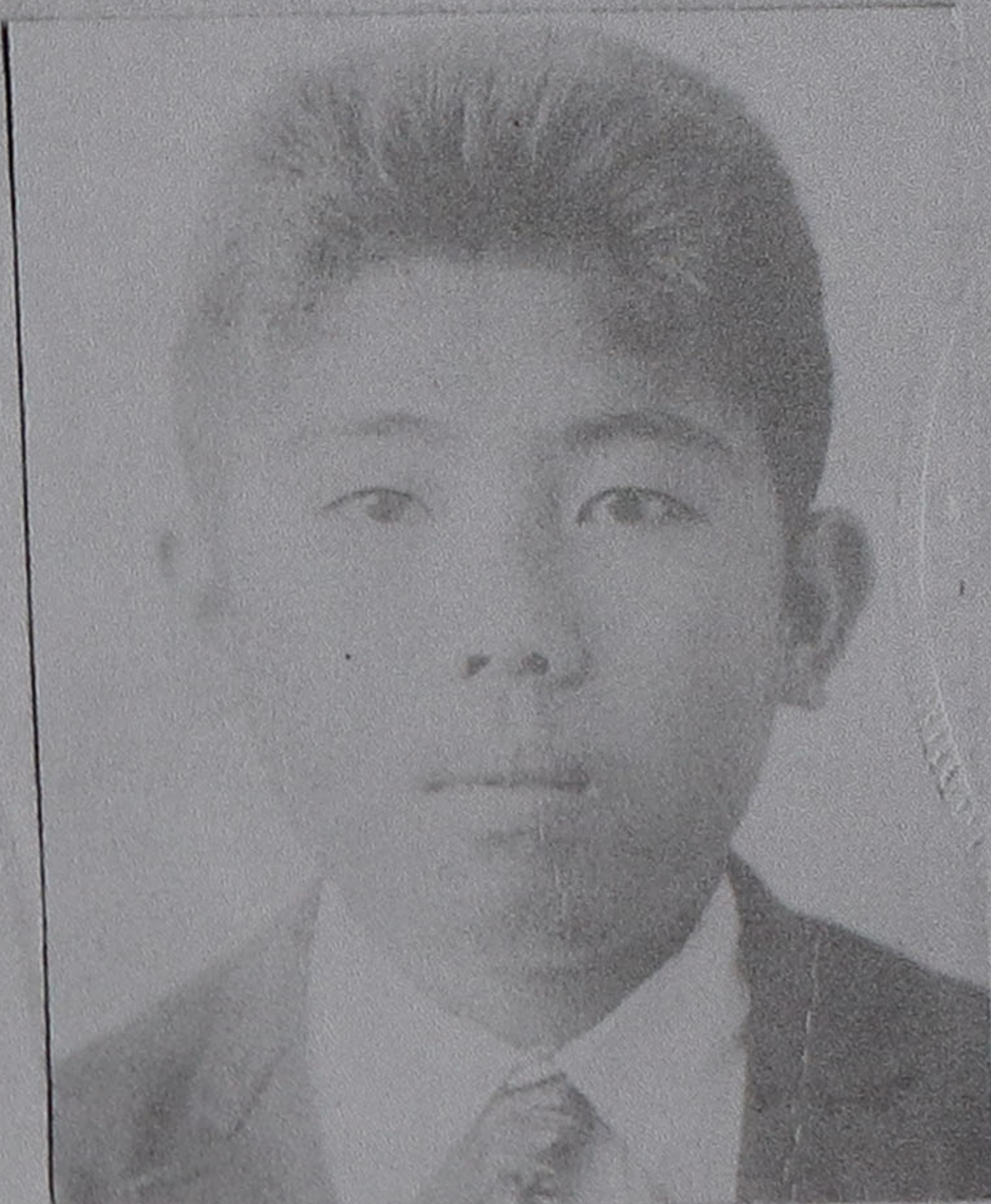
TADASHI YOSHIDA

now residing at Wahiawa, Oahu, Territory of Hawaii.

Satisfactory Proof has been submitted to show that he was born in Hawaii on August 15, 1910,

and the photograph attached hereto is a good likeness of him at this time; Therefore,

It is Hereby Certified, That TADASHI YOSHIDA



was born in Hawaii and is entitled to a certificate of Hawaiian birth in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 20 of the Revised Laws of Hawaii, 1915, as amended by Act 246 of the Session Laws of 1923. This certificate is not transferable.

In Testimony Whereof, The Secretary of the Territory of Hawaii has hereunto subscribed his name and caused the great seal of said Territory to be affixed.

Done at Honolulu, Hawaii, this twentieth day of May, A. D. 1925.

Secretary of Hawaii.

13724
L.A. baby
15000 Campbell Ave
Hon.

REVISED LAWS OF HAWAII, 1915.

Chapter 20, as Amended by Act 246 of the Session Laws of 1923

CERTIFICATES OF HAWAIIAN BIRTH.

Sec. 175. Issuance; procedure. The Secretary of Hawaii may, whenever satisfied that any person was born within the Hawaiian Islands, cause to be issued to such person a certificate showing such fact. The Secretary, with the approval of the Governor, may make such regulations respecting the form of application and certificates, the method of proof, kind of evidence and time, place and manner of hearing, and all other matters and circumstances connected with such application, proof and hearing as to him may appear necessary and such regulations, when so approved and published once a week for three successive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation published in the Territory, shall have the force of law, and such publication shall be deemed legal notice to all persons. The Secretary may furnish the form of such applications and certificates. All applications shall be by sworn petition, in which the party shall set forth circumstantially all the facts upon which his application rests, and shall be accompanied by sworn affidavits of witnesses.

The Secretary and such persons as he may designate and appoint may examine under oath, any applicant or person cognizant of the facts regarding any application, and for that purpose he and they may administer oaths, subpoena and compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of books and papers, punish for contempts and, generally, to exercise the same authority with regard to their special jurisdiction as is by law conferred on district magistrates.

It shall be the duty of such agents to personally examine all applicants for birth certificates before presenting the same

to the secretary and to personally perform all the duties in regard to the proper preparation of an application, without any aid from any capper or runner.

The Secretary of the Territory shall appoint not more than the following number of such agents on the following named islands:

Island of Hawaii.....	Two agents
Island of Maui.....	Two agents
Island of Oahu.....	Four agents
Island of Kauai.....	One agent

Sec. 176. Perjury. Any applicant, or any person, who shall give or offer any false testimony, oral or written, under oath, in support or respect of any applicant for a certificate under the provisions of Section 175, shall be deemed guilty of perjury and shall be punishable accordingly.

Sec. 177. Certificates prima facie evidence. Any Certificate of Hawaiian birth heretofore issued under or by virtue of any law of the Territory, or which may be issued in conformity with the provisions of this chapter, shall be prima facie evidence of the facts therein stated.

Sec. 178. Fees shall be charged in connection with the issuance of such certificates as follows: For the filing of each application for a certificate a fee of two dollars and fifty cents (\$2.50); for the issuance of any such certificate a fee of two dollars and fifty cents (\$2.50); for certified copies of such certificates a fee of one dollar (\$1.00) for each such certificate and a charge of fifty cents (50c) for each one hundred words contained in such certificate.

DESCRIPTION

Nativity of Parents:..... Both Japanese

Visible physical marks and peculiarities..... Pox mark in center of forehead.

CERTIFICATE OF CITIZENSHIP—HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

No. 960

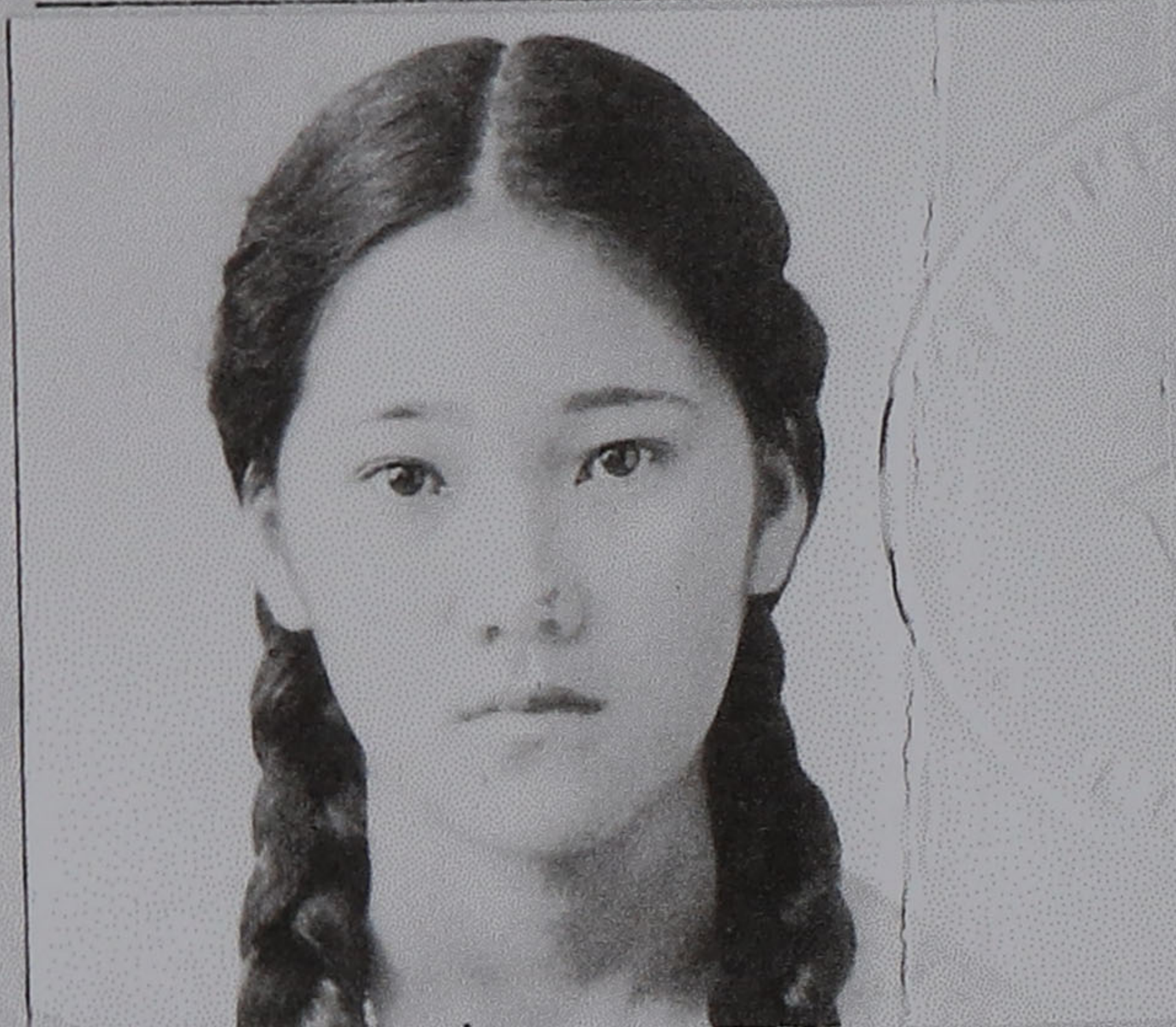
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
IMMIGRATION SERVICE
HONOLULU, HAWAII

This is to certify that TERUKO NAGAI, a person of the Japanese race, resident in Hawaii, in connection with an application to proceed to the mainland of the United States, has presented evidence which has established to my satisfaction his (her) United States citizenship, and this certificate is issued to enable him (her) to travel freely between Hawaii and the mainland of the United States.

DESCRIPTION

Name TERUKO NAGAI Age 16 years Sex Female
Height 5 ft. 2 in. Color of hair Black Color of eyes Brown Complexion Brown
Distinguishing marks or peculiarities Red pin mole inside corner left lower eyelid; two small scars base left index finger Occupation Student
Local residence 54 Kealoha St., Honolulu, T. H.
(Complete address)

File 4333/2079



Given under my hand and the seal of the Department of Labor this 12th day of June, 1928, at Honolulu, Territory of Hawaii.

[Signature]
Acting District Director.

NOTE.—This certificate shall be good only for travel between the Territory of Hawaii and the mainland of the United States. If found in the hands of other than the proper owner, it shall be lifted and forwarded to the District Director at Honolulu, with a complete report of the surrounding circumstances. If used fraudulently, and the person to whom this certificate is issued is a party to such fraudulent use, or if it is established that he is not properly entitled thereto, it shall be revoked by the issuing officer.

GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

FORM NUMBER TS-21
ONE WAY

MATSON NAVIGATION COMPANY THE OCEANIC STEAMSHIP COMPANY

IDENTIFICATION CHECK
CABIN CLASS CONTRACT TICKET

SERIAL NUMBER 49108

FROM HONOLULU TO LOS ANGELES HBR

NAMES OF PASSENGERS IN FULL	AGE
<u>NAGAI, MRS KISE</u>	<u>A</u>
<u>NAGAI, MISS NANCY</u>	<u>A</u>

RESERVATIONS			
S.S. <u>MALOLO</u>	CARRIER <u>MATSON NAV CO</u>		
VOY. _____	SAILING DATE <u>MAY 1 37</u>	HOUR <u>NOON</u>	
ROOM <u>362</u>	BERTH <u>ALL</u>		

GROSS VALUE OF TICKET 150.00

THIS IDENTIFICATION CHECK IS TO BE RETAINED BY PASSENGER UNTIL COMPLETION OF VOYAGE.

The accommodations covered by this ticket are available only to the FIRST part of arrival on the mainland. If necessary, PURSER will assign comparable space between FIRST and SECOND mainland port.

SELLING AGENT CASTLE & COOKE, LTD.

ADDRESS _____

CITY HONOLULU

REMARKS _____

WHOLE	HALF	QUARTER	INFANT	SERVANT
<u>TWO</u>	<u>X X</u>	<u>X X X</u>	<u>X X</u>	<u>X X X</u>

WCV

**The Third Generation
Sansei
49 years in America**



Carol
8 yrs 8 mos

Geri
5 yrs 4 mos.

Randy
2 yrs 9 mos

Annette
1 year

1947

Children of Nancy and Francis Yoshida









Aug 15, 1970



Sharon

8-15-1970

my 60th B/D

Aug 70



**Heidi, Fay, Reid, Randy, Mom, Kari, Dennis, Annette, Dad, Carol, Michele, Geri, Megan
Maile Kris**

**Scott, Mark
Halekulani Hotel August 20, 1989**

GROWING UP IN KAPAHULU

When I was a child, my family lived in Kapahulu, a neighborhood at the base of Diamond Head, the extinct volcano, which has become the symbol of Hawaii for all the tourist brochures. We could never run barefoot around the small yard surrounding our duplex because of the sharp coral reef just below the surface of which was scattered everywhere, evidence of a time when the Pacific Ocean had majesty over these Islands before the volcanoes beneath the sea spewed forth the molten lava and formed the chain now called the Hawaiian Islands. This middle class neighborhood was on the "other" side of Diamond Head. On the ocean side of this volcano resided the wealthy Haoles of Honolulu in their beautiful mansions which run into Waikiki, and still today, the homes along Diamond Head fronting the Pacific Ocean, continue to be prime real estate.

In those days, neighborhoods naturally fell into ethnic boundaries though I can now see that those boundaries were beginning to diminish even then to lead to the rich diversity that has now become Hawaii. Our little two- bedroom duplex lay behind the Mikami Grocery Store next to a little barbershop. The barbershop had a wooden owl perched beside the door rather than the red and blue striped pole usually found to identify the profession. The Mikamis owned the grocery store as well as the barber shop and our duplex. They had brought with them the culture of their country, Japan, and Mr. Mikami was a sensei of the arts: kendo, shamisen and okoto. The small grocery store held many treasures for a little girl: bubble gum balls for a penny, taffy for five cents and comic books for ten cents. Many a day, I spent at least a half hour deciding which comic book to surrender my dime for. Usually, I settled on a Classic comic.

In the very back of the store, behind the shiny glass cases, was the butcher shop, and the Mikami sons were the butchers. One had lost some fingers from the cleaver, and another son had a stump for an arm. At that time, I associated this loss of limbs with the meat cleaver, but in retrospect, the son without an arm might have had another kind of accident. All day, young men and seasoned masters went up and down the stairs behind the grocery store to practice their kendo. Donning white kimono and sometimes face masks which look like the catcher's mask in baseball, they wielded their kendo sticks which were made of wood, about a yard long. You could hear them shout out and the clicking of the kendo sticks as they worked in pairs practicing their moves.

Above the grocery store, in the Mikami home, Kay, the eldest daughter, taught women to play the samisen and the koto. The samisen is a stringed instrument, much like a violin with a long handle, played with an ivory pick, and is one of the first cultural arts a geisha learns. Geisha, or young women schooled in the various arts, are cultured attractive women, who entertain men in an elegant setting. In the afternoon, Kay sat on the floor on a zabuton and played the okoto, a long narrow stringed instrument about four feet long. The player sits in the middle and plucks the various strings while maintaining control of the strings with the

other hand. Kay was very slim and lithe, always elegantly dressed in a kimono when she taught these lessons. Whenever, her sister, Nancy and I played too noisily in the next room, she slid into the room and looked at us. That's all she needed to do, look at us, and we knew we had to quiet down. I watched the students as they sat on their individual zabutons or floor cushions with the koto in front while they plucked the very atonal sounds that came from this strange instrument.

Sometimes, the women sang Japanese songs as they accompanied themselves on the koto—long and somber notes full of sadness. Now I realize how lucky I was to have lived in this modest little neighborhood surrounded by culture in the days before the Second World War began. When Nancy and I tired of peeking at the men practicing kendo or listening to the women playing their musical instruments, we'd draw chalk lines on the sidewalk in front of the store and play Blocks. The barber would come out and shake his apron full of trimmed hair on the sidewalk and we could smell the pomade and the lotions of sweet scented oil.

Once Nancy invited me to spend the night at her house although I lived next door. It was my first experience in a furo, or bathhouse. We soaped ourselves outside and then jumped into what looked like a seasoned wooden box filled with steaming water. I nearly sat on the metal stove inside the furo and didn't realize it was filled with red hot coals to heat the water. "Watch out!" Nancy called out. "Don't sit there!" She herself had a scar from being too close to the kitchen stove as a baby. Their family had certainly been vulnerable to the demands of working parents as her scar over her eyebrow and her brothers' missing limbs indicated.

We had very few toys, but never missed anything for we amused ourselves on the sidewalk playing hop scotch and Blocks, or running across the street to St. Mark's School to ride the swing all afternoon. We'd sit on the back of the old Dodge and pretend it was a stagecoach as we fought the Indians on the prairie. Sometimes, my Dad would walk to the theatre, a block away from our house, and he'd let me go to the movies with him. "Run home and wash your face!" he'd say, and we'd walk together to the theatre to see a Betty Grable or Margaret O'Brien film. When the movie was over, we marched out of the theatre with the band music of John Phillip Sousa. Although the War was all around us, and we had to carry gas masks everywhere, we were kids and oblivious to its threat. We built battle scenes on the coral formations in the yard and played with toy soldiers fighting Hitler, Mussolini and Tojo and sang ditties about bombing them.

One day, soldiers came and took Mr. Mikami away because he was a leader of our Japanese community, they said. All he did was run his grocery store and his kendo school, but the government decided he would betray the U.S. so he was sent away for a long time. They also closed the Japanese language school, but none of that bothered me, and I didn't care one way or another. We went right on carrying our gas masks and playing our games. My mother had to destroy all the Japanese dolls we had and also all her kimono or anything that even looked Japanese. I couldn't understand why she had to burn my dolls and cried for a long time. Nancy's sister

had to hide all her musical instruments and the kendo school was closed. Being so numerous in Hawaii, the Japanese American community did not have to be relocated to internment camps as our brothers and sisters on the Mainland had to but puzzling changes took place in our neighborhood which stole some of the magic from my childhood never to be restored.

One of my playmates in Kapahulu was Walter Ito, an only child who lived with his parents in a two-story duplex. His parents worked and left him at home by himself so he and I often played together. "Waltah, we go play," I called out to him in Pidgin, and he'd appear at the doorway. Their kitchen was on the first floor of the house so Walter and I often wandered there. Dirty dishes lay in the sink, and stubbed out cigarettes floated on the dregs of old coffee in the cups stacked in the sink. The smell of cigarette smoke hung over the dark room, a depressing place for anyone let alone a boy of five or six. Sometimes we went upstairs and sat on the unmade beds and talked. Even today when I think of Walter, I see the kitchen with the stacks of dirty dishes and the lonely boy who never grew up. His parents liked to party when they were home, and they always did the rumba. One, two, three,---they danced into the night, and Walter and I watched from the porch.

Sometimes, we wandered a few feet up the hill to the corner liquor store, Koga Store, where I bought an occasional dime comic book. The Kogas were a family of mostly women, but their youngest child was a teenager named George. His bedroom was next to the fence in our backyard. Whenever I played in the backyard, mostly sitting in the small playhouse my Dad had built, George would saunter out of his room and call me over. Once, I was playing near the laundry my mother had washed in the old washing machine in the very small laundry area, which we shared with the Odanis. George called me to come over to his room. I don't remember much of what his pretense for calling me for, but I do remember him fondling my body and my private parts.

That night as my mother was giving me a bath, I told her what George had done. The next day, she went over to the store and reported what George had done to me. The women of the family lined up on one side of the fence and my mother and I, hiding behind her, faced them on the other side. Of course, they denied that their son would ever do such a thing and told my mother I was lying. She came home, very angry, and spanked me for lying. Many years later, I told my mother I hadn't lied—that George had actually abused me, a very young child of four. He grew up to become a State senator, and I never forgot the incident.

When I started to go to Thomas Jefferson Elementary School, I also attended the Japanese Gakuen after school. It was several blocks towards Diamond Head—a large old building painted in dark Lincoln green, the color of so many buildings of that time. The green paint warded off termites, or so they thought in those days. Kapahulu was always very hot so I wore shorts and a brief top to school. I was surprised when the boys called out to me, "Beach Girl!" I only thought of comfort and didn't realize how very much like a swim suit my outfit appeared to be.

The Okamura Store lay diagonally across the street from the school, and I often played with Shirley Okamura, the owner's daughter, who was my age. Her older sister, Helen, helped in the store, and the baby, Elaine, crawled around upstairs. Elaine grew up to marry Wayne Newton, the Las Vegas singer, and became super wealthy. Shirley and I often walked around the neighborhood and went to the St. Mark's playground to ride the swings. She would stand and swing, and I'd sit and enjoy the ride. We often entered the church and put holy water on our foreheads and then looked at the statues of Mary. I met Shirley again when we were seniors in high school. By that time, our family had moved to Wahiawa, and Shirley and I had gone to different schools. She had become a beautiful young woman with large dark eyes and hair. That was the year we both competed in the Cherry Blossom Festival, a beauty contest for young Japanese American women.

That year, the most beautiful and popular women also competed. Carole Saikyo, who was a model and had been trained to walk the ramp, won the contest. In those days, Margo's, a store for beautiful prom gowns, designed and created all the gowns. Carole wore a magnificent silk pink gown with pink blossoms sewn on it. She as well as Shirley had gone to Roosevelt, and Shirley represented Kapahulu, and Carole represented Kalihi. I represented Wahiawa. Mae Fukuoka, who was a student at Punahou, was also vying in that contest, and she became very popular as she had a very melodramatic story that made the rounds. Her family had been very poor so the owners of Pearl City Tavern had adopted her when she was a baby. She spoke perfect English and was a small but very attractive young woman. She came in second in the contest, and Shirley came in third. I was happy to be an "also ran."

Mae wore a beautiful taffeta gown with puffed sleeves right below the shoulder, and Shirley looked so glamorous with a red silk gown which enhanced her dark hair and eyes. Everyone wore hoop skirts under the gowns which were truly ball gowns and very splendid and elegant. Looking back at the experience, I realize how fortunate I was to run in that contest at the same time as these beautiful and accomplished young women. We wore ball gowns and we wore amazing formal kimono, and learned how to walk and to apply makeup. We had to appear in front of hundreds of people in the old Honolulu Stadium, and the contest was a big deal in those days. It was a singular experience, and changed me from a country girl to a young woman with confidence and style. I also never forgot my grandmother's adage: always look your best at all times.

But I am getting away from my days in Kapahulu.

FAIRYLAND KINDERGARTEN AND THOMAS JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mrs. Sabala's Fairyland Kindergarten actually lay only about two blocks away from my house on Campbell Avenue, but to a kid, it seemed very far away. Almost directly under the shadow of Diamond Head, the school had been a house with a large fenced yard across the street from the fire station and park. About thirty of us five-year olds made up the class and my happy memory of those days was playing the many musical instruments and making delicious noises through the day. I remember wielding the triangle and clanging happily away. Years later, after I had grown up and gone to college, I realized that most of the students that were the most popular on campus had been in that very kindergarten class.

In those days right after World War II, many of the Asian American families were climbing their way to the middle class in Hawaii. Several of us come from blue collar families, but many, especially the Chinese Americans were professionals and held positions such as accountants, small business owners and the like. My Dad was a carpenter trying to make a living at a trade he knew little about. Fortunately, we lived in Hawaii where Japanese-Americans were a majority race so many were able to fill jobs that they may not have had on the Mainland. Georgiana Yap, Melvin Ho, Vivian Shim, Linford Chang counted among my closest friends, and later I discovered that my college boyfriend, Jimmy Choi, had also been in the class when he showed me a photo of those early days. Sure enough, there he was, a fair little boy standing not very far from where I sat in my ruffled white organdy pinafore.

Mrs. Sabala, a Filipina lady, prepared us well to pass the English Standard exams which would carry us into the coveted spots in first grade at Thomas Jefferson School which was across the street from the Waikiki Zoo. We knew that if we didn't make it into Jefferson, we would have to go to Waikiki School, where all the "other" kids went. My Mother held high expectations for me so we practiced for the test every day for several weeks. "Be sure to say, 'That is a thimble,'" she'd say, stressing the "th" sound holding up a thimble. Because we had to speak like the Haoles, I had to learn to answer in complete sentences when we asked a question. She'd hold up a pencil and ask me what it was. "That is a pencil." I'd have to respond. Of course, I got into Thomas Jefferson School. My neighbor, Walter Ito, had to go to Waikiki School, and I looked down on him as an inferior person.

Our teachers at Thomas Jefferson were no-nonsense Haole women who made sure we received a sound education. Mrs. Becker was our librarian, and it was in her library where I spent many happy hours reading all the biographies of great men and women. We cherished the reading hour when she would read to us from some fascinating book, and our imaginations soared. Mrs. Jean Keithley was my First Grade teacher, and although she described me as being "aloof," she also profiled me as a leader, and encouraged me through the first year. Later, when I had to be hospitalized for a few days after we had moved to Wahiawa, she was my

teacher again at the Shriner's Hospital. Warm, but very formal, these teachers were serious about our formative years, and ensured a solid foundation for learning.

In those days, there was a definite delineation between the Whites and the Non-Whites although we were happily unaware of it. I learned of this prejudice for the first time when Alton Glover, Jr., opened his lunch box that had been in his desk drawer for several weeks. I became very indignant at the dreadful find and immediately reported it to Mrs. Moeller, my Fourth Grade teacher. In no uncertain terms, she made it clear that I was never to report on a Haole. Of course, I had it coming to me as a tattler fourth grader.

These were the days before children could not longer be enlisted to do dishes and do menial work at school. We looked forward to the day when we had to report for cafeteria duty as that day, we got a free lunch and also all the leftover snacks for the day. Dried apples were my favorite, and I loved working at the cafeteria. Behind the cafeteria were huge crown flower plants where the Monarch butterflies hatched their beautiful yellow, white and black caterpillars that became magnificent jade cocoons with a lining of thin gold around the edge. Kathryn Kinoshita, my best friend, and I spent many happy days playing among the butterflies and holding caterpillars and cocoons in our hands. The parsley also grew there in large parsley beds, and I disliked the moments when we had to try eating parsley.

Our favorite past time during recess was trading cards. I had a very handsome and much sought after deck of playing cards with different pictures on the backs. Most coveted were "Pinky" and "Blue Boy," the portraits in the Huntington Library in Pasadena. We had horses, flowers, dog pictures, pairs of every kind and spent recess trading cards with each other. Graham crackers and milk was our snack, and we tried to poke holes in the middle of the graham cracker by boring through with our finger without breaking it. Sometimes, we'd play jacks or jump rope. Looking back at those days, I realize that we were of similar disposition in that we had been reared with a certain expectation towards being polite and caring individuals and had not seen the real world yet.

May Day always occurred on the first of May, and we danced our dances around the Maypole and had a beautiful time. Our mothers sewed our skirts to match, and we made colorful hats with artificial flowers glued on white paper plates and tied with gaily-colored ribbons. Everyone came to watch us dance around the Maypole as each class came up to take its turn. Those days at Jefferson gave me confidence in my class work even though I don't remember anything I studied. I also learned to love books and looked forward to the lending library truck that came often to school to reinforce the resources in our library there. My Dad also took me to the Main Library in Honolulu, where the books lined the shelves in a huge room, and I could sit and read all I wanted.

We moved away to the country when I was in the Fifth Grade, and it was a very sad time for me. Not only did I hate to leave my cherished school and friends, but I also had to leave my best friend, Kathryn, and the neighborhood kids as well. I had to leave Campbell Avenue, Kapahulu and the shadow of Diamond Head. I didn't care that our house was too small, and we had to crowd together and our duplex had only a thin termite-eaten wall separating the two homes. I only knew that I had to go faraway to live in Wahiawa, where the kids would be different, and I would no longer be able to enjoy an English-standard school that had come to mean so much to me. All my fears proved to be true, and it would be a long while before I could feel comfortable in school again.

We used to play beneath the tangerine trees, our fingers sticky with juice and our toes slippery with dirt. The sun shone between the leaves and made our skin brown and our cheeks pink. We'd run through the trees and pull each other around in hand-made wagons, singing Disney songs and bossing one another around. We all had flowers from the garden woven into our hair, except Aidan, who wore his behind his ear.

To everyone else, we were cousins reunited by the summer. We were children close in age who could spend hours puttering about our great-grandfather's backyard, arguing and playing and exploring. We didn't see ourselves that way.

We were gods.

Grandpa Yoshida's yard was our Olympus and Katey reigned over it with a mighty fist. This was a matriarchy and she was our Athena, goddess of wisdom, the only one capable of managing the seven of us. She ruled from the highest branch of a tree, where she lounged in the shade and picked fruit, and if she needed to oversee her kingdom, she was escorted in a shiny red wagon chariot.

Aidan was our Hermes. While he didn't understand any of our arguments, and didn't care to, he was perfectly content wearing a brilliant plumeria behind his ear and laying beneath the sun. When his services were needed, he would sprint between the six of us, running around the entire yard, passing messages back and forth or bringing us new flowers or new cans of juice or rootbeer. Occasionally, he would take a break and help one of us lug a wagon over a stubborn tree root or he would help catch a lizard, but he was the messenger god and was kept busy.

Caro was Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty. She wove through the garden, finding vibrant flowers and maintaining the fragile peace. She was often found singing songs from *Hercules* or pulling Katey's chariot through the yard. She knew which flowers looked prettiest together, which smelled the best, and knew the flower garden like the back of her hand.

Kira was often Apollo and represented music, prophecy, and the sun. This wasn't simply because she loved the sun so much or was so brutally honest, but because of her voice, of her ability to make a musical instrument out of anything. She could make a beat with the side of a metal tub, with the wood of a wagon, even with the leaves of a tree.

Most times, Isabel was our Hephaestus, able to create and fix anything. She could rearrange the handle of a wagon to make it rotate properly or fiddle with the tap outside so we could fill our buckets with water. She dug through the sandbox or swung on the swings, sipping passion orange juice or eating a tangerine.

Alexa was often Demeter. She would fill metal baskets with ripe tangerines and flowers and bring us lollipops or arare from inside the house. She carried a delicate bouquet of flowers, picked with Caro, and would roam through the hydrangeas and pineapples and grapefruits, laughing and beaming amongst the foliage.

I was Artemis, goddess of the hunt. I ran through the trees, imagining I had a bow and arrow strapped to my back and dogs at my heels, feeling invincible as I leapt over roots and ducked beneath branches. I had no time for swings or sandboxes and instead focused upon finding a perfectly ripe tangerine or a vibrant hydrangea for my mother. I chased lizards and geckos—they were evil monsters, minotaurs and cyclopes and hydras—and kept Olympus safe.

During those afternoons in Olympus, nothing else seemed to matter. All that we were concerned with was whether Hermes was delivering our messages swiftly enough, whether Athena was governing properly, or whether Demeter was picking the ripe fruit. Our skin was warm and pink as we swung from branches that gave us blisters and sung different verses to the same song and rolled around in the grass until we were itchy.

It didn't matter that half of us would soon leave or that we weren't sure whether Olympus would still be ours when we were reunited again. During that summer, the seven of us were gods.



Happy Birthdays

HAPPY WAHIAWA DAYS
Sunahara Cousins
(Katey, Caroline, Leah, Isabel
Kira, Alexa, Aidan)



Kira, Caroline, Isabel, Leah
Grandpa Yoshida, Alexa
Aidan, Katey

July 27, 2009

Happy 98th Birthday Grandpa!!!!
You still look as handsome and
dapper as ever. Thanks for such a great
summer. We loved playing in your
beautiful yard. We love you lots!

Katey, Leah, Caroline, Isabel, Kira, and Aidan
↑
Alexa



Kira, Caroline, Isabel, Leah
Grandpa Yoshida, Alexa
Aidan, Katey

July 27, 2009



**DAD WITH FRIENDS
SANDY AND ROBIN**



**BEST FRIENDS ALWAYS
HIROSHI OKADA AND DAD**

Waialae Country Club
Kris and Shotaro Adam Shiono
June 19, 2004



Kari, Lynn, Megan, Sonny, Krystin, Carol, Sho, Kris, Annette, Dad, Geri, Paul, Michele, Kira
Jodie Ann

Krystin
Rick Tune

Mark Shiraki

Leah
Reid Yoshida



December 2001

**HARUKO DOROTHY
(CHICHAN) NAGAI**

**(FEBRUARY 5, 1910 WAIALUA, HAWAII
TO MARCH 30, 1990 LOS ANGELES,
CALIFORNIA)**

DOROTHY HARUKO "CHICHAN" NAGAI
(February 7 1910 to March 30, 1990)

During my growing up years, Aunty Dorothy was like a fairy godmother, who always sent wonderful packages that smelled of Los Angeles (smog primarily). All of my beautiful dresses and all the new things for our house came from her. Now I realize how much she had to sacrifice to buy us these things for her life as a seamstress in the sweatshops of Los Angeles was drudgery and arduous. My mother never appreciated these things as she always harbored a grudge against Dorothy for leaving her with her bitter and aging mother when she was young. As a result, we kids never learned to appreciate what she had done for us until it was too late.

Dorothy was my mother's older sister and the first daughter of Kise and Keitaro Nagai, and was born in Helemano, Oahu on February 5 or 7, 1910, the same year as my father. Her older brother had died as an infant during the difficult early days of the settlers to Hawaii from Japan. From childhood, Dorothy and my mother, Nancy, didn't get along as Dorothy was confident and ambitious, and Nancy was reserved, shy and lacked confidence. Their mother was widowed early in life, so Dorothy and Nancy took the brunt of her frustration and unhappiness. When she was 18 years old, Dorothy decided to move to Los Angeles for a better life and to earn a living to help her mother and sister. My mom and grandmother followed Dorothy to Los Angeles for a while, but with the Exclusion Act whereby Japanese aliens could not become citizens, my grandmother could not stay there. She and Mom returned to Hawaii.

From all accounts, Dorothy found many friends in the early days of East Los Angeles and the Nisei community. Because she was not trained for any skilled labor, she took a position as an American geisha at a teahouse in East L.A. As a geisha, she could play the koto, dance and entertain men with conversation. Dorothy was elegant and beautiful, and soon became the model of the early and famed Nisei photographer, Toyo Miyatake. A featured artist on PBS, Miyatake became one of the foremost photographers in America. He loved taking Dorothy's photos in every dress and pose. She wore beautiful long black silk dresses and sat on a satin divan. In another photo, she wears a fur coat and poses with a beautiful hat framing her slim face with a steady gaze and beautiful lips. They went out into the flower fields, and she took photos in the midst of the flowers, a flower herself. When Clara Bow, the actress of the Flapper days, came to the Japanese community, Dorothy stood with her to take a photo. Both represent the feminine ideal of their day.

Just before the War began with Japan, Dorothy met a handsome young lieutenant from the Japanese Navy, who "happened" to come to California. She fell in love with this dashing young lieutenant, who gave her all his attention and admiration. Together, they traveled up and down the West Coast in their streamlined 1939 automobile piled with trunks of fine clothing. In those days, travelers always dressed with suits, hats and gloves, and the Nisei also wanted to appear at their best as the tide began to turn to hostility and the war with Japan loomed on the horizon. "Lieutenant Ohtani" took Dorothy to San Diego, where the young lovers drove to take photos of the great U.S. Navy fleets docked in the harbor. Today, we surmise that he posed as a young lover while doing reconnaissance work for the Japanese.

They drove to San Francisco, where they enjoyed the restaurants, shops and night life of the City, and both had many friends they saw there. Despite the growing hostility of Americans to the Japanese, no one bothered this beautiful young couple, who obviously were much in love and dressed so well. Beauty always is an advantage in the animal world. They drove over the narrow and poorly furnished roads of those early days through desert, forests and stopped in every town along the Coast, no doubt marveling at the Hearst Castle in San Simeon in Morro Bay at its heyday during the '30s and '40s. Dorothy was beautiful, slim and confident. She wore beautiful dresses, suits and hats which always attracted attention, and he wore the latest suits with a hat ala Humphrey Bogart or Cary Grant.

They drove through the giant redwoods of the California northern coast and also to Oregon and Washington and even to Nevada. Photos show the couple in their best city clothes. They sailed on yachts and enjoyed the camaraderie of friends along the way. She was never to find another lover as dashing as this Japanese lieutenant, and she never married as tragedy struck and World War II began in earnest affecting all the Japanese Americans who lived in the western states. He probably left before the War began, and may have even fallen in love with Aunt Dorothy as he told her that he wanted her to come to Japan to see him. He was married, and with the War destroying any chance for circumstances to unfold uneventfully, she was never to see him again.

He gave her and my mother gifts which were difficult to come by in the days just before the war began. Nicole has the two Japanese dolls from that early time, now almost 100 years old, and I still have the Japanese vase with orange and white blossoms sitting on a cherrywood kenzan. The elegant dolls are almost three feet tall, and strike dance poses. One wears a silk red kimono, and the other does a samurai dance, dressed in a long orange kimono and holding a helmet. These items recall the splendor of Japanese things in the time before the War, and although they are not of great worth and not considered "antiques," they are cherished for the memories of a time long ago and the young lovers who enjoyed a moment in time when they were beautiful, in love and free. When I think of how difficult my aunt's life became and how sadly it ended, I remember that brief moment in time when the young lovers were together and even the world and its hostility could not interrupt their happiness.

When World War II began, Dorothy was in Los Angeles, and with her friends had to leave everything behind and report immediately to the Santa Anita racetracks where the Japanese Americans were herded into filthy horse stalls to live until they could be shipped elsewhere. Making the best of their situation, they cleaned the stalls and managed to make the makeshift living quarters do for the duration of their time there. Eventually, they were taken by bus and train to Heart Mountain, Wyoming. Dorothy, somehow, miraculously, saved her koto and the dolls, no doubt with Hakujin friends who kept them while she was away. All the Nisei had to burn their dolls and any Japanese item during the hysteria of the days of the War. It is a miracle that the dolls survive still, and live in Nicole's library in Woodside. Aunty Dorothy must have sold the koto when she moved to the assisted living quarters in Laurel Canyon. She kept them, remembering the lieutenant all the days of her life, and I regret not asking her for the koto.

I can only surmise what it must have been like for the Nisei in the internment camps. Because Japan had bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the Japanese Americans were not given any rights under the Constitution and were simply herded to camps in the remote places in the U.S. Most of these were out in the desert very far from any electricity or water, and where the weather was very harsh: bitterly cold in the winter and very hot in the summer. Heart Mountain is located about sixty miles from Yellowstone National Park, and from 1942 to 1945, about 14,000 Japanese Americans were incarcerated there. Many died of grief having lost property that they had worked so hard to obtain, and others committed suicide or died because of lack of medical care. Many women died in childbirth and others of cancer with hardly any treatment. Crowding and lack of privacy wounded the psyche and diminished the souls of the Nisei. Aunt Dorothy was young, in her 30s, and determined to make the best of it. She hardly mentioned that time, but when she did, she always describes the camaraderie of the Japanese Americans and how they tried to forget and have fun in simple things such as communal dances and social gatherings.

As soon as the War was over, the government decided to allow the Nisei to move to other states, Aunt Dorothy was one of the first to leave the camp. She went to Denver, Colorado for a while and then decided to go all the way to New York. In New York, she found a job as a nanny to a Jewish family, the Mendlows. She always remembers them fondly as a wonderful family so good to her. She dressed in a black dress and wore a white lacy apron in her role as nanny. She had three charges, three little girls. For many years afterwards, they always kept in touch with her and at Christmas, sent her a card. Now that I am Jewish myself, I wonder whether the cards were Chanukah cards, and I bless that family for their kindness to my aunt. The fact that they were Jewish and understood the injustice of the incarceration and loss of freedom for the Japanese Americans may have determined their reason for hiring her.

Aunt Dorothy may have had romances there as she befriended a woman from Hawaii, Dorothy Aono, and they remained friends as long as they could be in touch. One of Dorothy's friends, Aya, whose last name I don't remember, came to her funeral in 1990. She was most sophisticated Nisei I had seen and dressed in beautiful slacks with a colorful scarf and a French beret. I realized just by seeing her that she had gained much from living in New York and probably married a Caucasian and lived happily for a time. Dorothy, too, would have been very happy had she met and married a Caucasian. But she was very traditional inside although she could be very adventurous, and never wished to go against her mother's admonition to marry only her own race.

After living several years in New York, Dorothy probably decided that the discrimination against the Nisei had lessened, and she returned to Los Angeles. The Japanese town had revived on East Third St and Los Angeles St in East L.A., and she found work in the clothing industry as a top seamstress because of her speed and quality of her work. She bought a heavy duty sewing machine as used in her work, and she began to take home pieces to earn extra money. She worked for several years with Eve le Coq, Lucien Pickard and many name brands. I remember visiting her at work and the rows and rows of machines with seamstresses working on pieces. Because of the huge quantity of orders, each one worked on a "phase" of the order such as the collar or the pockets or the sleeves. These were certainly sweatshops, and the ladies churned out

the pieces. They were mostly from Iran, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Aunty Dorothy kept to herself and was trusted by the Jewish employers so she often took pieces home to work.

I am ashamed to say that I took full advantage of her offers to buy me even at wholesale so many beautiful dresses. I always wore the most beautiful and stylish designs—dresses of silk, suits of raw silk, sequined and pleated lace and always they fit me perfectly as Aunty Dorothy always made sure that she adjusted each dress to fit me. I stood for long periods while she measured and pinned the hems or the pleats always reminding me to look directly into her eyes and never looking away. That was always hard to do.

When we moved to Wahiawa in 1954, she sent all the expensive drapes and silk organza curtains for our window. The drapes were very good quality and had a design of white egrets against a maroon background—very elegant. Uncle Edward, an artist undiscovered, did a chalk drawing of the drape depiction which hung in our living room for many years. The organza curtains were crisscrossed and of very good quality—heavy organdy and made our simple rooms look so beautiful. Aunty Dorothy must have spent a fortune trying to help with the window coverings and all of our beautiful dresses ever since I can remember.

When I was in the sixth grade, I was chosen as a May Day princess, and she bought me a beautiful peach organdy long dress for the occasion. She also came to visit for the first time since she had left as a girl of 18, and made spaghetti for us. My mother had never made spaghetti or a pork roast so we ate and ate until we were stuffed. The saddest memory of that visit is how my mother argued with her sister. They argued because my mother always felt abandoned when she was young and left with a very unhappy and cruel mother. My aunt had sent money to her through the years, but for some reason, mother never could forgive her for leaving her behind to go to Los Angeles. Till the day Dorothy died, my mother could not forgive her, and even as an adult, I am ashamed to admit that I did not see for myself and wish I had tried to make Dorothy's later life easier.

Aunty Dorothy became an avid fisherman, and with her friends, most of them elderly women from Japan, she took her fishing gear and they all made bento and went very early in the morning (4 am) to fish near Malibu and to Lake Arrowhead and similar places. They enjoyed this sport so much that they became champion fishermen and won awards for their fishing. They usually caught trout and particularly enjoyed the outdoors, smoking cigarettes and the camaraderie of each other's company. Mrs. Yoshiwa, who owned a kamaboko factory; Mrs. Kiyomura and her daughter, and others were her avid companions. I'm very grateful to know that Aunty Dorothy lived life to its fullest.

When I was 17 years old and a junior in high school, I became a representative to the Asilomar Conference to Pacific Grove, California, or Carmel. With other teens from all over the Hawaiian Islands, we left for Los Angeles by early Pan Am clipper. Dressed in suits and hats even in those days of 1957, we flew for ten hours to get to California. Aunt Dorothy was there to greet the plane as I came down the ramp, and she cried when I gave her a hug. It was my first real acquaintance with her. In between my conference events, I visited her in her small studio in East Los Angeles near the Salesian High School. I learned to eat tacos and admired the Mexican graffiti which is quite artistic. But I also learned that I did not enjoy living with a harsh

and critical "maiden aunt." She didn't like my long hair, my makeup and the way I spoke (Pidgin English inflections). She wanted me to look like a model at all times so I had to wear the dresses she chose and heels. I learned to humor her with stories which she enjoyed and that took away the criticism.

It was a long summer after I left the joys of the Asilomar conference, and all my friends headed back home while I stayed for a month with Aunty Dorothy. I took to sleeping till noon after she had gone to work to make the time go faster and I marked the calendar each day so I could see when I could return home again. I disliked visiting her friends in the kamaboko factory. Mrs. Yoshiwa had two sons, Eddie and Freddie. Eddie was a huge fellow with thick lips and horn rimmed glasses, and he played the cello. Freddie was friendly and fun, but not very good looking. They used many Japanese phrases and seemed very old-fashioned to me, and their kamaboko did not taste at all like the delicious kamaboko we have in Hawaii.

I went Downtown occasionally on the bus, and went to the movies. Once I went to see Moby Dick, but in sleazy downtown L.A. which I had no idea was such a sordid place, a large man came and sat next to me and put his hand on my thigh. Frightened, but not wanting to hurt his feelings if you can imagine, I finally got up and went to the women's restroom. Not wanting to leave the movie which was very exciting, I went and sat next to a woman with a large noisy family and watched the rest of the show. That experience taught me how to live in a large city and how to be ever vigilant. I got to go to the Nisei Week ball with Ray Anthony's band when an older Nisei invited me to the dance. I was only 17 years old, but he didn't realize it, and sent me a beautiful soft blue angora sweater after I returned to Hawaii.

I was supposed to return to Los Angeles after graduating from high school, but I decided not to and went to the University of Hawaii instead. Living with Aunty Dorothy in L.A. was not my idea of fun. I'm glad I had had that experience because my friends from college and sorority are my friends today. Later after graduating from college in 1961, I went to live with Aunty Dorothy and Geri, who had gone to live with her and go to college in California. I decided to pursue an M.A. in English from UCLA, and thought I could handle the situation. But when I went to live with Dorothy, I could see that she and Geri could not agree. My sister is very outspoken and Dorothy was a very stern guardian who punished her by making her sit outside by herself. On one occasion, she nearly hit her with a heavy ashtray so I decided we needed to move. With the aid of friends, we moved to a huge old dilapidated "Hawaii home away from home" where old friends from Wahiawa gathered together and rented quarters.

When Aunty Dorothy found we had left with all our clothing, she was furious. She made Geri and me pay her back \$1000 each, a hefty sum for two school girls, but I urged Geri to sign the contract as Aunty Dorothy lost face when we left. Because of the stress and the demands of graduate work, I took a teaching job with Anaheim High School and left UCLA after a year without completing my degree. It was right for me as I learned so much more later in life when I returned to UH to do the M.A. in English. During the period that I taught at Anaheim, Aunty Dorothy and I reconciled, and Geri also. We still had to pay back her money, but she kept it in savings and left it to us when she passed away. She was very generous and always drove all the way from East LA to Anaheim to pick me up for the weekend and made a delicious meal and let me sleep on her bed while she slept on the floor.

She was generous and giving, but also stern. Very lonely living alone in her studio apartment, she had six parakeets which she loved very much. She named them Jackie, Nixon, Kennedy and other names I can't recall. She washed all her clothes by hand in the bath tub, even her sheets. To have privacy in her studio, I had to go to the bathroom and sit on the john to read. Finally, I set up a desk in the corner of the kitchen to study. It was a deprived and difficult life she led that even our simple home life in Hawaii seemed more abundant. I missed my friends and the freedom of living on my own when we lived with Dorothy.

I got married in 1963, and Aunt Dorothy made all the beautiful bridesmaids' dresses of silk organza. She also made her dress which was similar and very beautiful. Although she wasn't sure that she liked Paul, she was proud that he was a medical doctor and told all her friends.

In the years that followed, we often lived in Los Angeles. After we left Wisconsin, we moved to Oakland, where Michele was born and then to Hawaii, where Nicole was born. In 1968, we moved back to Los Angeles so Paul could complete his residency at UCLA. In 1969, Beth was born in West Los Angeles near the Japanese American district of Sawtelle. We got to see Aunty Dorothy often and she still made my dresses of beautiful wool fabric and took scraps and made red and white plaid coats for Michele and Nicole. She enjoyed the parties we had for each holiday. I'm glad we had that time together as the babies made her happy, and she had a family.

In the '70s we moved back to Hawaii, and Aunty Dorothy came to visit. I made sure her visits were fun, and we went to fish markets, she had her hair done by her friend Nancy Aono, and they giggled like school girls when Nancy told her stories about her forays to the beach where she met potential boyfriends. She enjoyed being with me and with the girls in our house I Hawaii Kai. I wish had helped her move back to Hawaii, but her friends and life of 70 years were in Los Angeles. She often saw Geri, and was glad that she had family in Los Angeles. Geri's friends were very good to her, and called her "Dorothy."

Soon after that she moved to Laurel Canyon to an assisted living place owned by Japanese. She had a very nice apartment with a bedroom and a large living room. She also had her sewing machine in her bedroom which helped her sew whenever she wanted. Right outside of her apartment was a place to garden, and she planted all kinds of vegetables. Geri lived close by in Chatsworth and could be there to help her whenever she needed help. The manager was a Nisei fellow, who was not very nice, and after she died, I found an iron bar under her bed. I'm sure she would have used it on him or anyone trying to enter her apartment. Whenever we visited her, she always gave up her bed to me, and again, I am always ashamed that I took her bed when I was there.

Remembering her early days of entertaining in a fine manner, she collected a set of beautiful fine china. The design was pink roses on a creamy background and gilt edges. I know how important the china was to her, and today, Beth has been good enough to keep the china. I know Aunt Dorothy would be happy to know that. I got busy in Hawaii going back to work and soon found myself in a demanding job at Hawaii Pacific University. I traveled to Europe for

much of my recruiting work, and often could have visited her, but didn't. She always had problems with diverticulosis or the weakening of the wall of the bowels with diverticulitis as a result, which was the infection of the "holes" perforating the bowels. We were planning to go to Kari's wedding, and she started to sew a beautiful dress to go to the wedding.

However, she was soon in the hospital because of the diverticulitis. My parents were in Gardena at the time visiting with Annette, who lived in Torrance. Beth and I went to the ICU to see Aunt Dorothy. When I finally got to see her, she held out her hand, and I did not take it. To this day, I don't understand why. I promised that I would return the next day at 9 am to see her with my mother. After we left, I went with Beth to Gardena, and my mother refused to go and see her. She was adamant about not going to the hospital. I was too tired of the struggle, and didn't resist so we never returned to the hospital, and returned to Hawaii without seeing Dorothy again.

Geri and her friends continued to visit her in the hospital. One of her friends, Phyllis, would go and sit with her for hours. Later, Phyllis died from cancer, but she was better to our aunt than any of us. Aunt Dorothy wanted me to promise that I would go and get the funds from her bank account and close it for her. Although I did promise, the resentment of having to pay her back the \$1000 was there, and I could not behave more maturely. I got very busy in my career life and did not take the time to go to Los Angeles to see her before she died. Not too long afterwards, she passed away, alone. She was 80 years old.

My trip to Los Angeles to ensure that her funeral arrangements would be right was very difficult, and I wept over the sordidness of her last days—the deprived way she lived and my inability or refusal to make her life easier. I saw to her arrangements for her funeral near the home in Pacoima where she lived, and my siblings and I went to her home to get rid of her things. I took a few mementoes—all her photo albums and her fishing award, but gave all her clothes, even a fur coat to the Goodwill nearby although the manager pleaded that we put them up for sale and for taking at the care home. I did not want her things to be displayed and picked over. She always had dignity, and I made sure that not a single piece would be displayed in the cafeteria.

We left behind the very heavy sewing machine and household goods, but took the china which we stored with Geri for many years until the earthquake occurred. Geri's house was badly damaged at that time, but the dishes were amazingly intact. Aunt Dorothy had a lovely service, and I made a display of photos of her when she was young and beautiful for all to see. The Yoshiwas came from Los Angeles, and so did all her friends from the care home. They thought highly of her, and liked her very much. It was the saddest time for me because I regretted those last days when I could have been kinder and wasn't. When I left Los Angeles, I took her copper urn with her ashes with me to the airport. I would later have a new urn made and engraved, and I had the urn placed with those of her parents in the Wahiawa Hongwangji. The nameplate read "Dorothy Haruko "Chichan" Nagai." I had been named Chieko after her nickname of Chichan.

I had not had time to go to her bank to close her account on that trip, and so her account lay unclosed for quite a while. One day, a large red cardinal came to the large plate glass window of my bedroom which looked out at the ocean, and kept pecking at the window. The

cardinal came and pecked and pecked at the window. Thinking that it saw the cockatiels in our home, I took the cockatiel to the window, but the bird kept pecking and the cockatiel did not count for much. "It's Aunty Dorothy," Binky, Michele's boyfriend said. I knew he was right, and soon afterwards made arrangements to leave for Los Angeles to close her account. I did so, and returned home. One night I dreamt of Aunty Dorothy wearing a beautiful lavender dress with flowers and a pillbox hat. She was smiling and waving goodbye to me. I knew she was happy where she was, and was generous even in death, and probably wanted me to have a happy memory of her. And so I shall—I'll remember the good days and not think of all the things I could have done. I know she is at peace, and we go to the otera and take flowers for her whenever we are in Hawaii.



**ACTRESS CLARA BOW DOROTHY AND FRIEND
CIRCA: 1929
LOS ANGELES**

January 10, 1989

President George Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Bush:

I strongly urge that you include Supplemental Appropriation in the amount of \$500 million in your FY 1989 Budget.

On August 10, 1988 the Japanese American community and thousands of supporters held national celebrations throughout the United States when former President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, thus enacting it into law.

Now we find that President Reagan's budget has not appropriated one penny for Japanese American redress. Was the celebrated signing of our bill no more than an empty promise?

More than 60,000 of the 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry who were imprisoned in these camps during WWII have passed away. We are losing hundreds more each month. The Office of Redress Administration has identified our oldest (and according to legislation - first) recipients: two 104-year-old gentlemen - one in Seattle and one in Los Angeles. It is for these elders and the many others who suffered throughout these years that we ask the maximum amount of \$500 million to be allocated as Supplemental Appropriations in your FY 1989 Budget.

In the words of President Reagan on August 10, 1988:

"What is most important in this bill has no less to do with property than with honor. For here we admit a wrong. Here we reaffirm our commitment as a nation to equal justice under the law."

We remember clearly your own commitment to support this legislation during your campaign for the office of President of the United States. And we would hope that you honor that pledge with positive action in your FY 1989 Budget. Thank you.

Sincerely,

(signature)

Name:

Dorothy H. Nagai

Address:

[Redacted]

City/State:

Pacoima, Ca. 91331





*Announcing the arrival of
Philip Thurlow
October 8th 1947
at the Mendlows'*

over

**MENDLOW FAMILY
AUNTY DOROTHY'S EMPLOYER
AFTER WORLD WAR II**



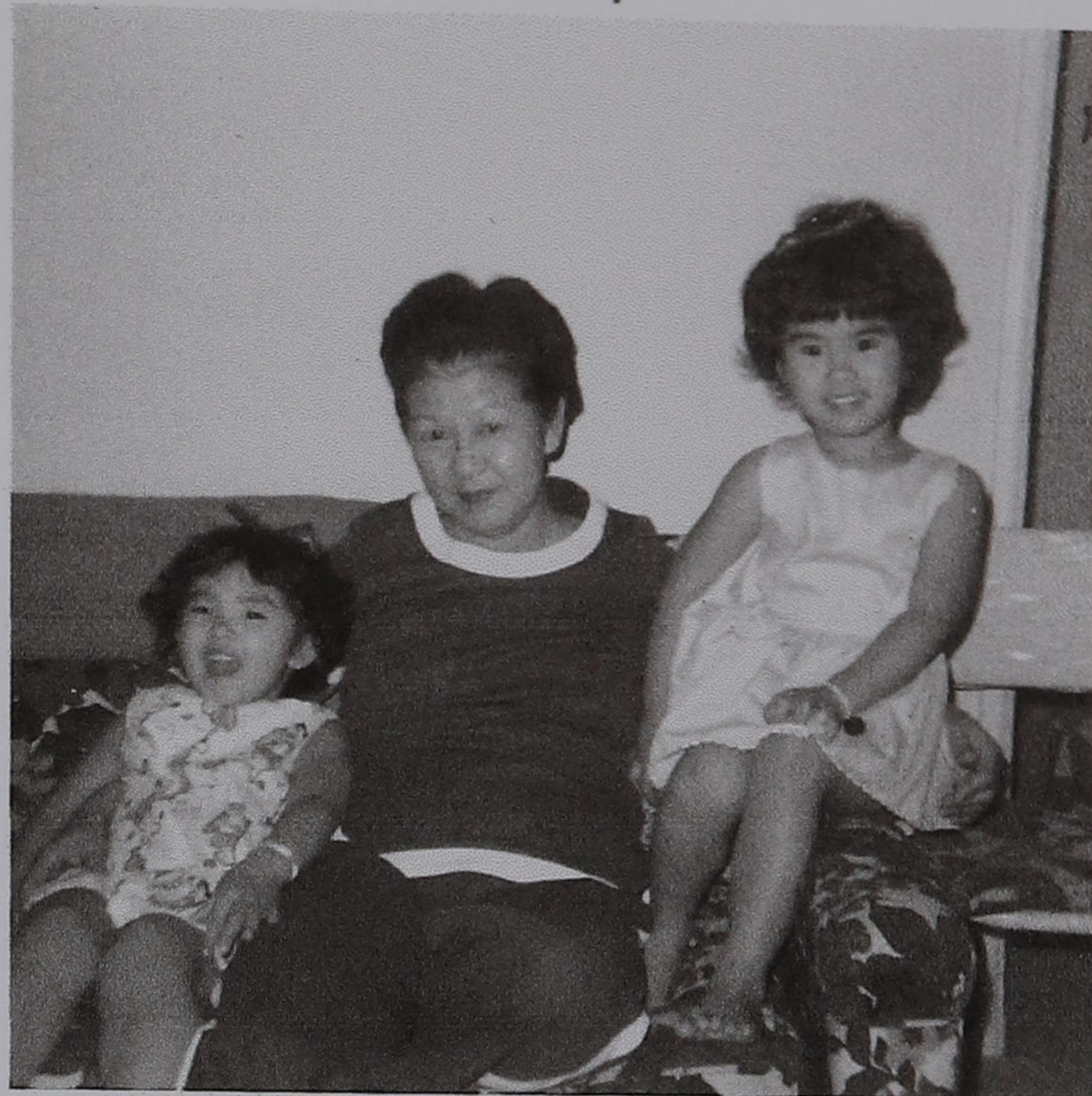
L. AUSTIN
2310 B'WAY, N. Y.

**DOROTHY IN NEW YORK
CIRCA: 1947**





LOS ANGELES SWEATSHOPS
Aunty Dorothy worked for several designers:
Eve Le Coq and others
She also took home sewing and had a heavy duty machine



Aunty Dorothy moved to Pacoima at Laurel Retirement Home
She visited us in Hawaii in 1972

Recorded by Tadashi Yoshida

Grandpa's Tree

Great Great Grandpa

Kumamoto Prefecture
District of Uto
Village of Tobase
Status: Heimin (Commoner)

TOZABURO YOSHIDA
BORN - JUNE 9, 1829
Died - NOV 9, 1908

WIFE SON YOSHIDA

Great Grandpa

Kitaro YOSHIDA (#5)
BORN Feb 2, 1874
Died Apr 9, 1945
ARRIVED HAWAII 1898

5 sons and 3 daughters
WIFE SAGU ISHIMOTO
BORN Feb 9, 1880
Died Jan 16, 1963
ARRIVED HAWAII 1902

MARRIED in Hawaii April 29, 1902
(Not a Picture Bride) 1937

Grandpa

TADASHI YOSHIDA (#3)
BORN Aug 15, 1910

6 sons and 3 daughters
Nancy Teruko Nagai
BORN Feb 9, 1912

MARRIED in Hawaii April 29, 1937

³⁻¹⁷⁻³⁹
Carol Sunahara - Michele
Nicole
Beth
Megan

⁷⁻²⁶⁻⁴²
Geraldine Shiraki - Scott
Mark

²⁻²⁰⁻⁴⁵
Randall Yoshida - Heidi
Reid
Maite

¹¹⁻²³⁻⁴⁶
Cimrette Kawabato
Kari
Krissy

Recorded by Tadashi Yoshida

Grandmas Tree

Ehime Prefecture
Matsuyama City
Status - Shizoku (Samurai)

TADATA Nagai (#4) WIFE Ura MATSUMOTO ←
Born May 5, 1848

Ehime Prefecture
District of Onsen
Village of Tachibana
Status - Shizoku (Samurai)
Father - Kyojiro MATSUMOTO
Mother - name unknown

Keitaro Nagai (#1)
Born Apr 25, 1875
Died Mar 16, 1920
Arrived Hawaii 1898

WIFE Kise YOSHIOKA (#1) ←
Born May 10, 1883
Died July 1, 1949
Arrived Hawaii 1908

Yamaguchi Prefecture
Dist. of KUGA
Village of MISHO
Status - Commoner
Father - SHINICHI YOSHIOKA
Mother - HISA

(Picture Bride) married in Hawaii Mar 30, 1908

SHOICHI NAGAI
Born Feb 6, 1909
Died Feb 6, 1909

Dorothy Haruko Nagai
Born Feb 5, 1910

Nancy Teruko Nagai, YOSHIDA
Born Feb. 9, 1912

→ Father - NAOHACHI Ishimoto
Mother - Riki

(Same Status, Same Village)

Family crest of the YOSHIDA Family and surprisingly that of the YOSHIOKA Family

Family Crest



九
枝
竹

Nine Leaves of Dwarf Bamboo in circle



**SHARON NAOMI ONUMA
YOSHIDA**

SHARON NAOMI ONUMA YOSHIDA
Remembering a beautiful soul

Randy met Sharon Onuma when he was in college at the University of Oregon, and she was attending San Jose State University. It was love at first sight for sure as Sharon was fun, beautiful, smart, a little shy and interesting. Lithe, and slim, Sharon was soft-spoken, and when she laughed, she had such a characteristic laugh like Heidi does now. I don't know all the courtship details, but I remember her parents lived on Young Street in Honolulu, and she was the third of four sisters: Nan, Judy, Sharon and Susan. She was their favorite.

They had a very interesting family because their Grandmother was about 100 years old and a very spiritual lady. In fact, she was sort of a shaman. She had said that Sharon was very special because she had been born with a birthmark on her forehead. Mrs. Onuma, a very beautiful, gifted and well-educated woman had a younger brother, Mr. Hasegawa, a very tall and thin fellow whom I remember being there often.

Mr. Yuzo Onuma, Sharon's Dad, was a shy and kind man, who doted on all his daughters. He and Dad got along well because he was also a carpenter. Mom and Dad Yoshida were very happy that Randy was getting married to Sharon as they all liked each other very much and got together for an engagement party.

Sharon and Randy decided to get married at the Shinto temple where Grandma Nagai often took me and Geri when we were little. In Pawaa, it is called the Ishizuchi Shrine, and located on Keeaumoku and King Streets. In August 1970, on a very humid and hot day, we gathered at the temple. Michele who was four years old and John Tsukamoto, about five years old, were the flower girl and ring bearer. They were so cute and dear, and they were so excited to be a part of the wedding.

Sharon was such a beautiful bride, and Randy so very happy. They were both so much in love and very happy on this day. Because Randy had to go to dental school, they soon moved to Portland, Oregon, where he went to the University of Oregon dental school. I remember driving from Los Angeles to Portland to celebrate his graduation. Michele and Nicole sat in the back of the station wagon while Beth had a porta crib in the middle. In those days, we didn't need seat belts. We had a great time visiting Oregon and seeing Sharon and Sonny so happy on his big day.

Heidi Lani was born on May 8, 1971, and in October, Sharon and Randy came to Honolulu to see everyone and to introduce Heidi to the families. Everyone was so excited to see them. However, I was in the hospital with Megan, who was born on October 18 and Randy, Sharon and Heidi had to watch Beth, who was three years old at the time.

Then Sharon, Randy and Heidi Lani went to live in Okinawa, where Randy had to return three years to the government for his schooling as a dentist. As a captain in the Air Force, they had a wonderful time in Okinawa. When Heidi was about four years old, they returned to Honolulu. We were living in Hawaii Kai at the time, and they bought a home on Wainiha Street in Hawaii Kai also. It was wonderful to have Heidi and Megan go to swim school and play together.

It was then that Sharon's depression began to become more than just melancholy or sadness. One day, Randy asked me to speak with her as she had been very sad, doubting herself and finding it very difficult to do even simple house work. Having experienced post partum "blues," I likened depression to that feeling. I told her that I understood how she felt because after giving birth, a woman's body becomes so exhausted in many ways, including hormonal. It is a sense of depletion and feeling as though you will never get well. However, in most women, after a month, the body heals itself and one can get back to feeling well again.

She was fine and healthy after Reid was born on August 20, 1973. We were all so happy to have a boy because we all had so many girls in the family and wanted a boy to carry the Yoshida name. Sharon was so happy to see her darling son, and she made Randy so happy too. They named him Reid Collins Tadashi after Grandpa Yoshida, who was beaming. However, a few years later, Sharon had a miscarriage, and I think she already had had depression even as early as her college days and maybe earlier. She was also such an achiever, and all she strived for perfection in all she did. Often, she doubted that she was doing all she could for her family.

One Christmas, she sewed beautiful skirts for all the girls—so perfectly made with ribbon draw strings and a lovely cotton fabric. The most amazing gift that she crafted was a huge fish (3 feet by 4 feet) where each section was padded so beautifully to perfection. What a fish it was! It had button eyes and embroidered features. We cherished it and loved it, and the girls always lay on it to watch t.v. Everything Sharon did was perfection.

She loved Heidi and Reid so much and spent hours taking them to the park, reading stories and doing all she could to show them how much she loved them. And still, she began to be so tired that she had to struggle to keep going. When Randy opened his new office on King Street, he had a wonderful opening. I could see that people wanted to stay, and it was going to be close to dinner time. So I rushed home to make a pot of chili and a pot of stew for anyone wanting to stay there for dinner. I remember Sharon asking me, "Where do you have the energy to do all that cooking when you have four kids?" She was already showing signs of depression and because none of us were familiar with this disease, which it is today, we didn't realize it.

Her children made her so happy: Heidi loved school and was always excited to go and be there. She had good neighbors who were her age so they played together. Reid was a very cute, cheerful and good child. He loved being at home with his mother, and also had begun going to kindergarten. Sharon loved Heidi and Reid so much.

Sharon's family couldn't understand why she was always so tired and unhappy. She could hardly clean her house or do all the things she had always wanted to do. "You're so fortunate," her Mom told her. "You have a good husband and beautiful children." Sharon tried very hard to be what was expected of her and made friends with several of their dental friends: Mel and Karen Kuraoka and Clyde and Vivian Umaki. Judy Kawakami was her dear friend as well as Mieko next door and others.

She often came to our home a few blocks away in Mariner's Cove as we had a swimming pool so while Heidi was at school, she brought Reid to the swimming pool to teach him to swim and not be afraid of the water. She took Heidi to swimming classes at the Hawaii Kai pool, and I also took Megan. Heidi had beautiful dark hair, and loved swimming with the others. No one realized how much Sharon was suffering because none of us understood the nature of severe depression.

We did not realize that depression is a disease like cancer or a chronic condition that is very difficult to treat. It is all the more difficult because those suffering from depression look normal in every way. They try their best to get up in the morning and to do what is expected of them, but each waking moment is one of acute suffering. It is not only the brain which is affected, but now I realize that it is a physiological illness as well. No matter how much the person is loved, and no matter how much they love others, they cannot feel well. It is a condition that is

worsened because everyone is telling them that they will get over it, and they don't.

Sharon and Randy had a busy social life with good friends like the Umakis and the Kuraokas. They loved going to dinner and celebrating different events. The Onuma and Yoshida families were also growing and celebrating occasions and expectations to have lunches, dinners and parties where always filling the calendar. For most wives and moms, it's a fun time to get together and plan parties and picnics and be busy with the children's events. For most, it's a demanding time having to bake cookies, buy gifts or make them and attend school events as well as all the family and friends' events in Hawaii.

I know Sharon always did the best she could. She loved Randy very much, and she loved Heidi and Reid so much. She doted on them, and always wanted to do all she could to make them happy. I know she must have chided herself for not being more energetic and fun. Her mind was always elsewhere, and in photos as early as 1970 when she got married, I can see that she already was miles away in thought at any event. She was physically there, but her spirit was faraway.

Dr. Dixie Miyahira was her psychiatrist and prescribed medication for her, but in those days, there was no Prozac or any kind of medication as there is today. There was very little understanding of depression and the cause or treatment. I'm sure Sharon felt very alone and troubled. No matter how wonderful she was as a wife, mother, daughter and friend, she could not get well no matter how much she tried.

On March 2, 1977, Randy celebrated her 32nd birthday with the Umakis. They had a wonderful time going to dinner and enjoying themselves. But the next day, March 3, as Sharon tried to muster the strength and energy to decorate her house for Girls' Day and to make Heidi happy when she returned from school, she could no longer go on. Life had become too much for her and her suffering had become unbearable. As much as she loved her children and Randy and cherished them so much, she felt so unworthy and could not go on any more. I think her depression, the immersion so deep became overwhelming.

I write this memory because I want Heidi and Reid to know how very much Sharon loved them—with all her heart. She was an angel with not a bad thought ever in her mind. Sharon was a pure being, and loved everyone and tried to make everyone happy. Perhaps, depression had been a genetic condition for Mr. Onuma also had bouts of deep depression. It tells us all that it is a disease and must be

understood and treated and even then the sufferer has difficulty in what seems like normal daily challenges.

Her leaving left a huge emptiness in everyone's heart, and changed everyone's life. There was a loss of innocence because none of us had ever experienced the shock of a beloved member of our family suddenly dying at such a young age. Her life had just begun. I know with all my heart that if she knew how much her leaving would affect everyone, especially her children and husband, she would never had left. She was not able to think or to be any more. She had tried with all her courage and will to do all she could to be there, and she just could no longer go on.

I tell this story because we will always remember Sharon and love her. We will be glad she was in our lives and that she had been mother to Heidi and Reid, who have grown up despite all the confusion and sadness they had in their lives to become the people Sharon would have wanted them to be. She was an angel here for a brief time, and she left her gifts and her beautiful memory. The best way to cherish Sharon and to love her is to live and to bring the kind of happiness to others that she tried so hard to offer.

I dreamt of Sharon one night when I first came to Oregon to live. I had not dreamt of her before, but on this night, the night after Heidi returned from the hospital having just given birth, I dreamt that Sharon was wearing a beautiful red silk gown and dancing in the air. I said, "Sharon, what are you doing?" She said, "Come, dance with me." So we danced up and down in the air.

The next morning, I was puzzled and asked myself, "Why did Sharon visit me in this dream?" I called Mrs. Onuma, who said, "Sharon is so happy because Heidi had a baby." But I pondered as to what it was that Sharon wanted me to do. I decided to drive to Washington to help Heidi, who was alone because Mark had to be somewhere.

When I got to Washington, Heidi had many children at her house even with a new baby because the neighbors just let the kids go over. I told Heidi to have a free day in town while I stayed with the children. I can't remember whether there were two and Amber had just been born. I was glad that I had gone because Heidi needed a break and when she returned, she gave me a most beautiful crystal candle vase which I cherish.

I know Sharon is still there in the lives of her children and very much at peace now. She needed peace more than we can imagine, and though she loved her family and friends so much, she was meant to give her beauty and kindness to all she knew and to be at peace early in life.

Sharon will always be remembered in the lives of Heidi, Reid and Sonny, and we will always know how blessed we are that she was in our lives and taught us how to love unconditionally. What gifts to her are Brandon, Kailee and Amber as well as Ryan, Jake and Brooke. And I know she is very happy that there is Maile and Novienne as well as Edlyn to make Randy happy. The best gift we can give her is to live our lives fully with as much joy and kindness that we can.

<p>Carol Chieko Yoshida Sunahara b. March 17, 1939 Los Angeles, CA</p> <p>Paul Itsuo Sunahara b. June 10, 1937 Wahiawa, HI</p> <p>Married June 22, 1964 Divorced 1992</p>	<p>Geraldine Tsuyako Yoshida Shiraki b. July 26, 1942 Honolulu, HI</p> <p>Edwin Shiraki b. August 9, 1940 (divorced)</p> <p>Partner: Musumi Iwanaga b. February 6, 1943</p>	<p>Randall Tadao Yoshida b. February 20, 1945 Honolulu, HI</p> <p>Sharon Naomi Onuma Yoshida b. March 2, 1945 d. March 3, 1977 Honolulu, HI</p> <p>Fay Yamashita Yoshida b. March 26, 1945 (divorced)</p> <p>Edlyn Sachiko Takayama Yoshida b. May 4, 1958</p>	<p>Annette Aiko Yoshida Kawabata Matsunami b. November 23, 1946 Honolulu, HI</p> <p>Kenneth Kawabata b. August 22, 1942 Lihue, Kauai</p> <p>Dennis Matsunami b. October 29, 1946</p> <p>Partner: George Phillips (Bill) b. August 24, 1943</p>
<p>Michele Michi Sunahara Loudermilk b. March 20, 1965 Oakland, California</p> <p>Paul Loudermilk (divorced)</p>	<p>Scott Shinji Shiraki b. June 26, 1969</p> <p>Nicole Shiraki (Isabella, Christian)</p>	<p>Heidi Lani Yoshida Liu b. May 8, 1971 Okinawa AFB</p> <p>Mark Liu (divorced) (Brandon, Kailee, Amber)</p>	<p>Kari Miyoko Kawabata Kuriyama b. September 16, 1967 Torrance, CA</p> <p>Raymond Uyema (Krystin) Mike Kuriyama</p>
<p>Nicole Terumi Sunahara Laubscher Scandlyn b. December 12, 1966 Honolulu, HI Rick Laubscher (div) Charley Scandlyn b. August 24, 1960</p>	<p>Mark Koji Shiraki b. September 26, 1973</p> <p>Lyndsey Najima Shiraki (Cade, Blake)</p>	<p>Reid Collins Tadashi Yoshida b. August 20, 1973</p> <p>Jodi Anne Silva Yoshida b. September 8, 1974 (Ryan, Jake, Brooke)</p>	<p>Kris Kawabata Shiono b. April 26, 1976 Torrance, CA</p> <p>Sho Adam Shiono, May 22, 1974 (Taisho, Audrey)</p>
<p>Beth Chiemi Sunahara Dominik b. April 21, 1969 Los Angeles, CA</p> <p>Bradley Dominik June 26, 1969</p>		<p>Maile Misao Yoshida b. January 11, 1983</p> <p>Matthew Hilton (Novienne)</p>	
<p>Megan Miyo Sunahara Tune</p>	<p>Honolulu, HI Rick Padraic Tune</p>		

	Carol Chieko Yoshida Sunahara	Paul Itsuo Sunahara, MD	
Michele Michi Sunahara Loudermilk and Paul Loudermilk (divorced)	Nicole Terumi Sunahara Laubscher Scandlyn and Rick Laubscher (div)	Beth Chiemi Dominik and Bradley Dominik	Megan Miyo Tune and Rick Padraic Tune (divorced)
	CHILDREN		
	Kelsey Kung Laubscher b. September 29, 1990 (Rick Laubscher and Jocelyn Kung)		
Leah Auli'li Emi Loudermilk b. April 6, 1999	Katherine Terumi Laubscher b. November 24, 1996	Isabel Chiemi Dominik b. March 28, 2000	Aidan Keitaro Ching Lee Tune b. December 22, 2003
Kira Pomai'kai Itsumi Loudermilk b. July 28, 2001	Caroline Kaori Laubscher b. July 10, 1999	Alexa Lee Akemi Dominik b. September 12, 2002	

	Geraldine Tsuyako Yoshida Shiraki	Edwin Shinji Shiraki	
	CHILDREN		
	Scott Shinji Shiraki and Nicole Shiraki	Mark Shiraki and Lyndsey Shiraki	
	CHILDREN		
	Isabella Ayako Shiraki b. August 1, 2005	Cade Shinichi Shiraki b. May 17, 2010	
	Christian Hideo Shiraki b. October 21, 2011	Blake Koji Shiraki b. June 1, 2012	

Fay Yamashita Yoshida	Randall Tadao Yoshida	Sharon Naomi Onuma Yoshida
	Children	
Maile Misao Yoshida b. January 11, 1983 Hilton and Matthew Hilton February 17, 1975	Heidi Lani Naomi Yoshida b. May 8, 1971 and Mark Liu	Reid Collins Tadashi Yoshida b. August 20, 1973 and Jodi Anne Silva Yoshida b. September 8, 1974
	Children	
Novienne Hilton b. March 4, 2017	Brandon Cory Mitsuo Liu b. November 9, 1994 Kailee Rae Kimiko Liu b. February 14, 1998 Amber Mei Mariko Liu b. April 29, 2000	Ryan Joey Tadao Yoshida b. April 9, 1997 Jake Collins Naoki Yoshida b. August 20, 2000 Brooke Mae Megumi Yoshida b. November 21, 2005

**Randall Tadao Yoshida
Edlyn Takayama Yoshida**

	Annette Aiko Yoshida Kawabata Matsunami	Kenneth Kawabata
	Children	
	Kari Miyoko Kawabata Kuriyama b. September 16, 1967 and Raymond Uyema	Kris Kawabata Shiono b. April 26, 1976 and Shotaro Adam Shiono May 22, 1974
	Children	
	Krystin Rei Uyema b. August 19, 1990	Taisho Christian Shiono b. November 8, 2005 Audrey Elena Shiono b. September 10, 2007

JAPANESE FAMILY PICTORIAL HISTORY PROJECT

Megan M. Sunahara

Ethnic Studies 101

MWF 9:30-10:20

Gregory Yee Mark

T.A. Heather / Scott

Dec. 1950 (Oahu)

On the right top, Sanséi generation:
Carol, Gerry, Sonny, and Annette Yoshida
Taken December, 1950 Oahu.



Carol
Gerry
Sonny
Annette
Yoshida

Sansei generation

1976 5yrs old (Oahu)

On the bottom right, Megan Miyo
Sunahara. She represents the
yonsei generation. Celebrating
Girls's Day in Hawaii. Wearing a
Japanese kimono and holding her
favorite Japanese doll.



Yonsei generation
(Megan Sunahara)
Celebrating Girl's Day

Haruko Nagai as a grown woman/ picture taken in the mainland



Haruko, Dorothy Nagai
Nisei Generation

My grandmother, Teruko, Nancy Nagai / Feb 7, 1931



Teruko Nancy Nagai
"Sweet Eighteenth birthday"

My beautiful great aunt, Haruko Nagai/ her American name: Dorothy

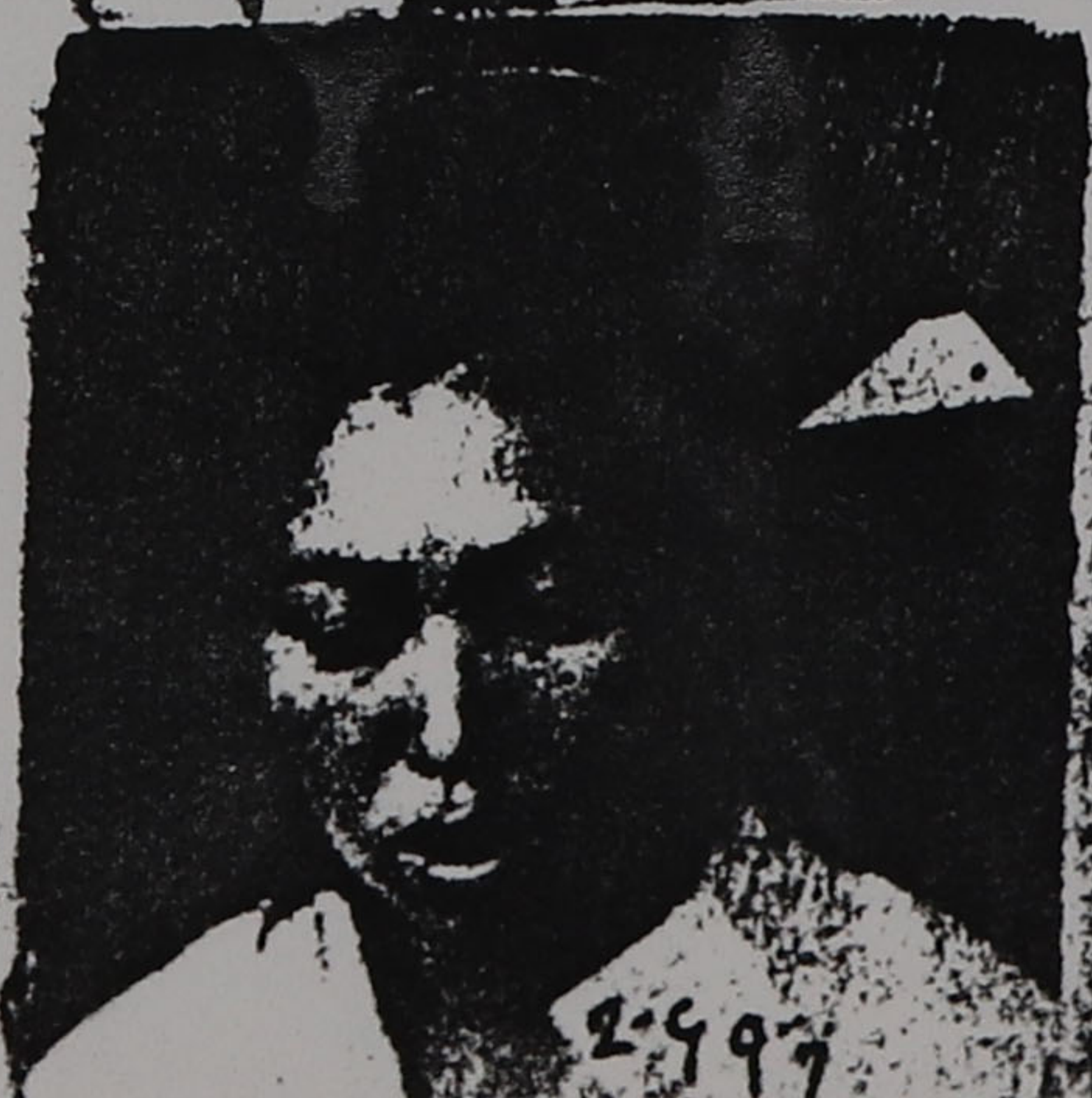
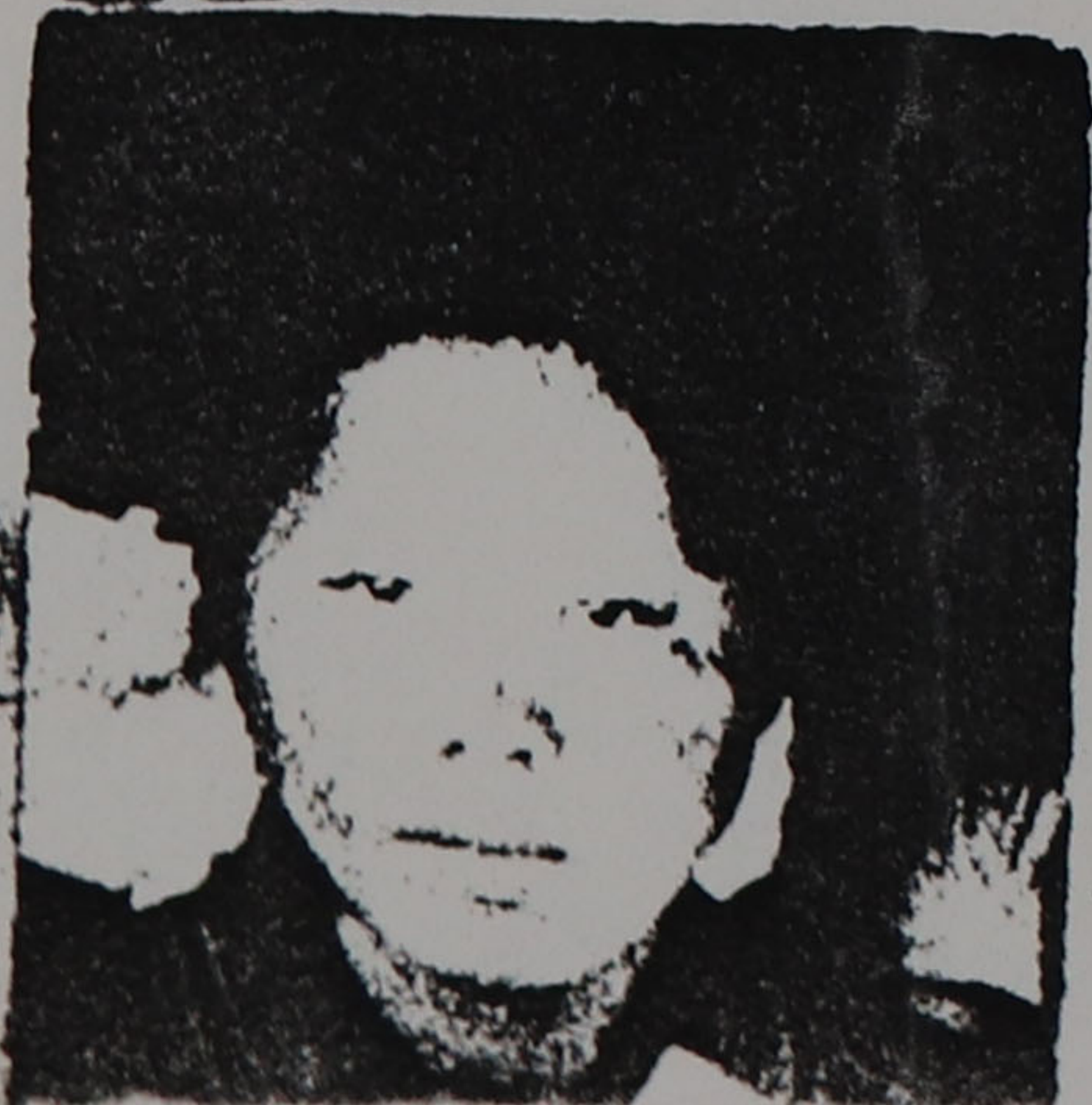
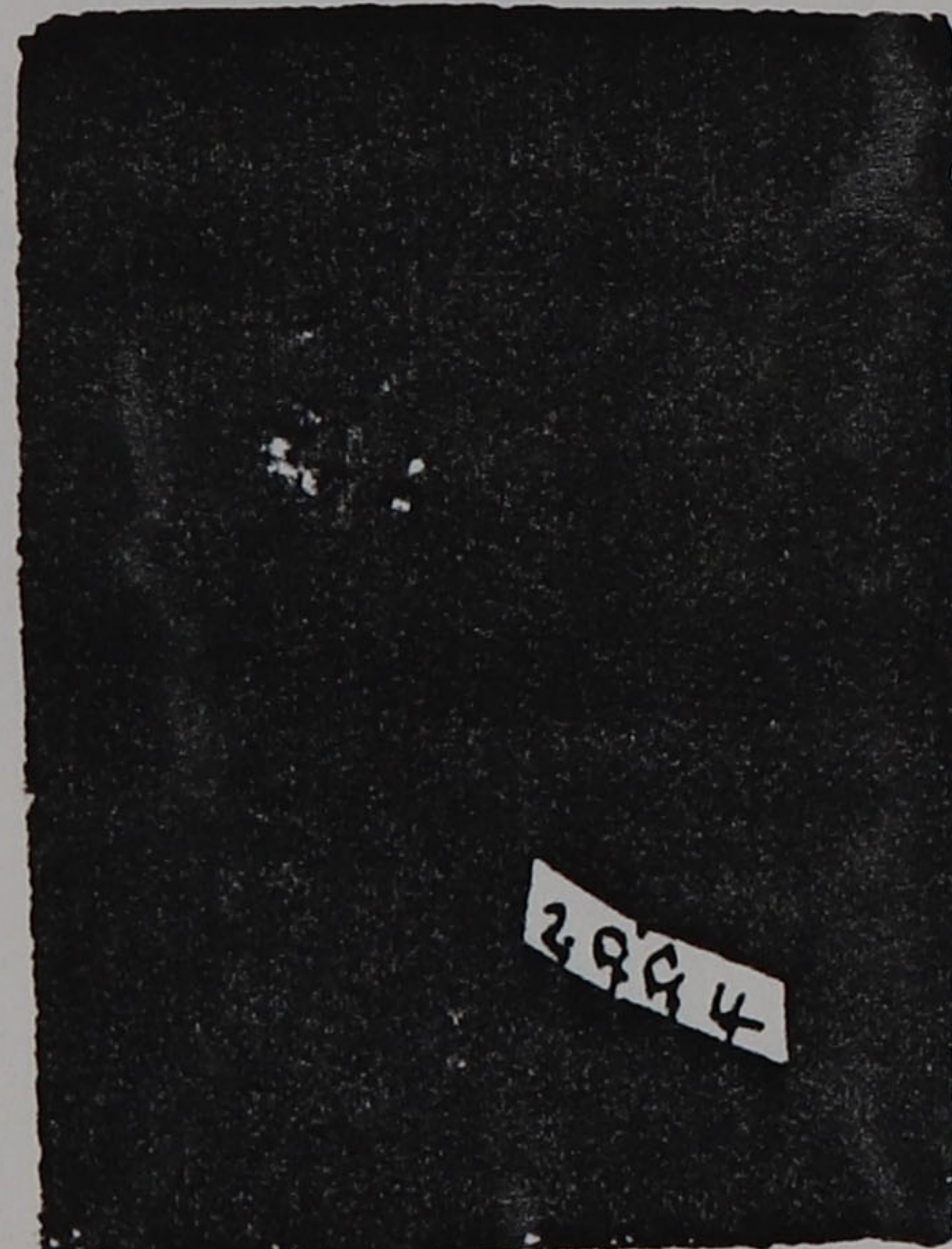
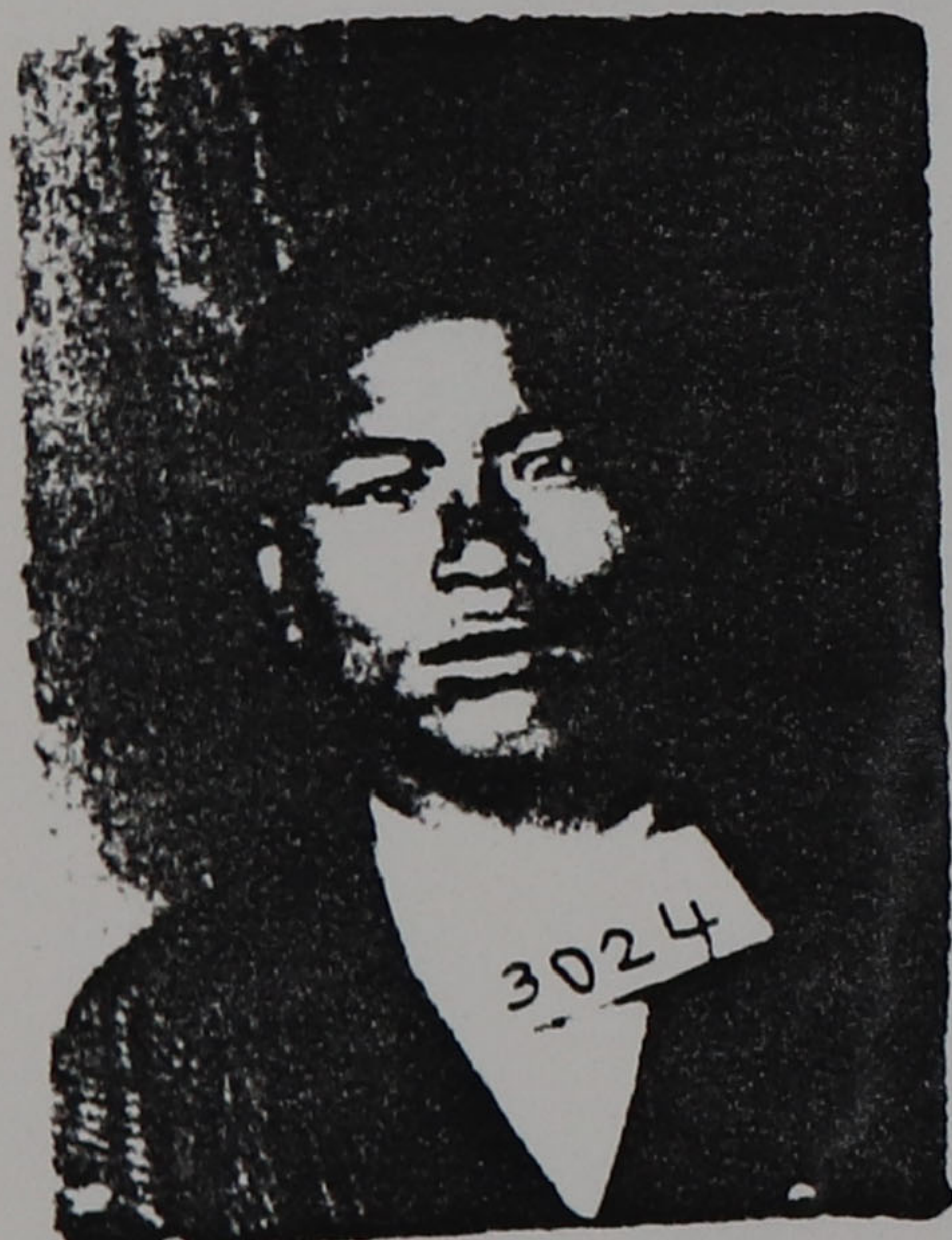
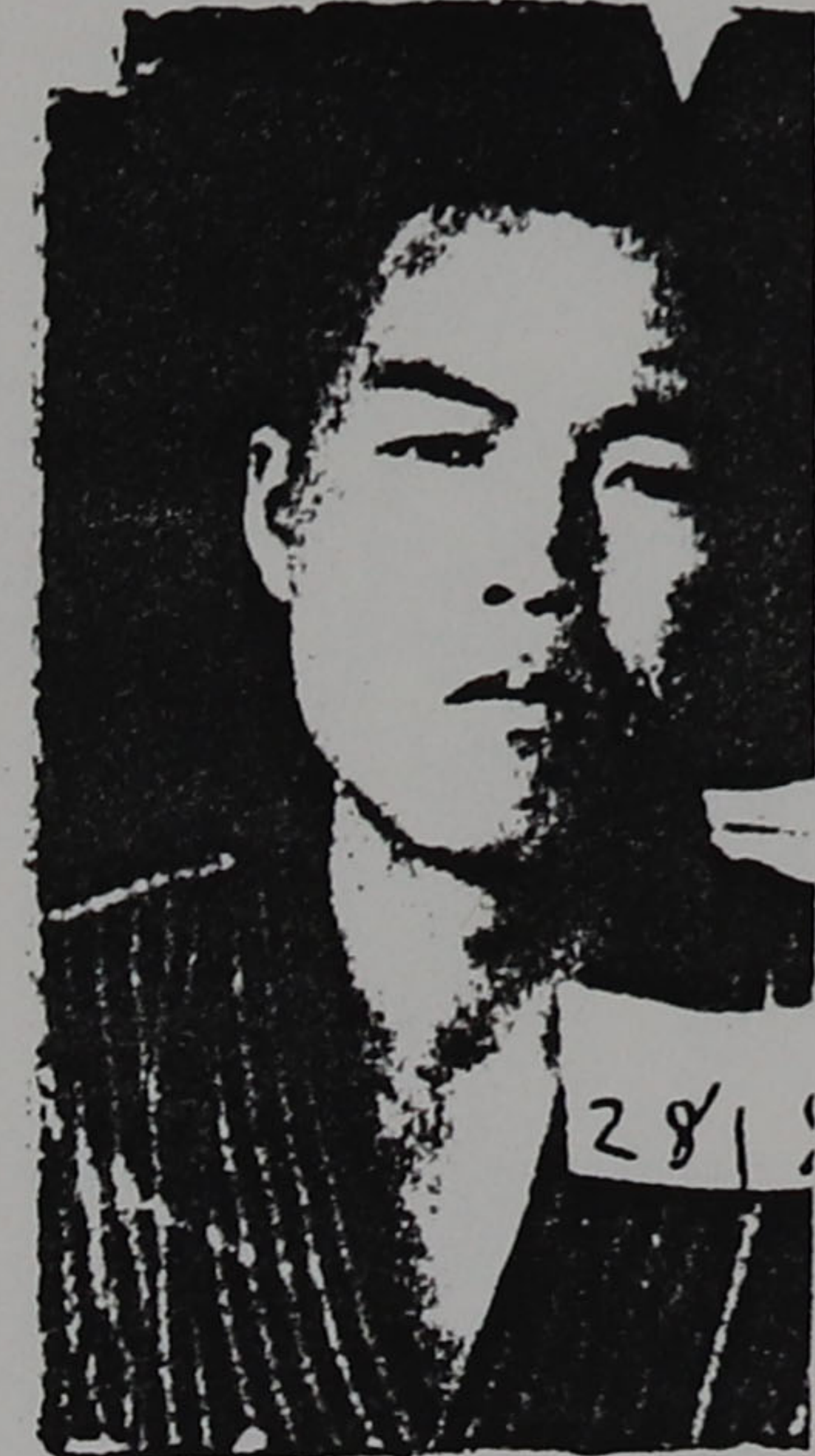
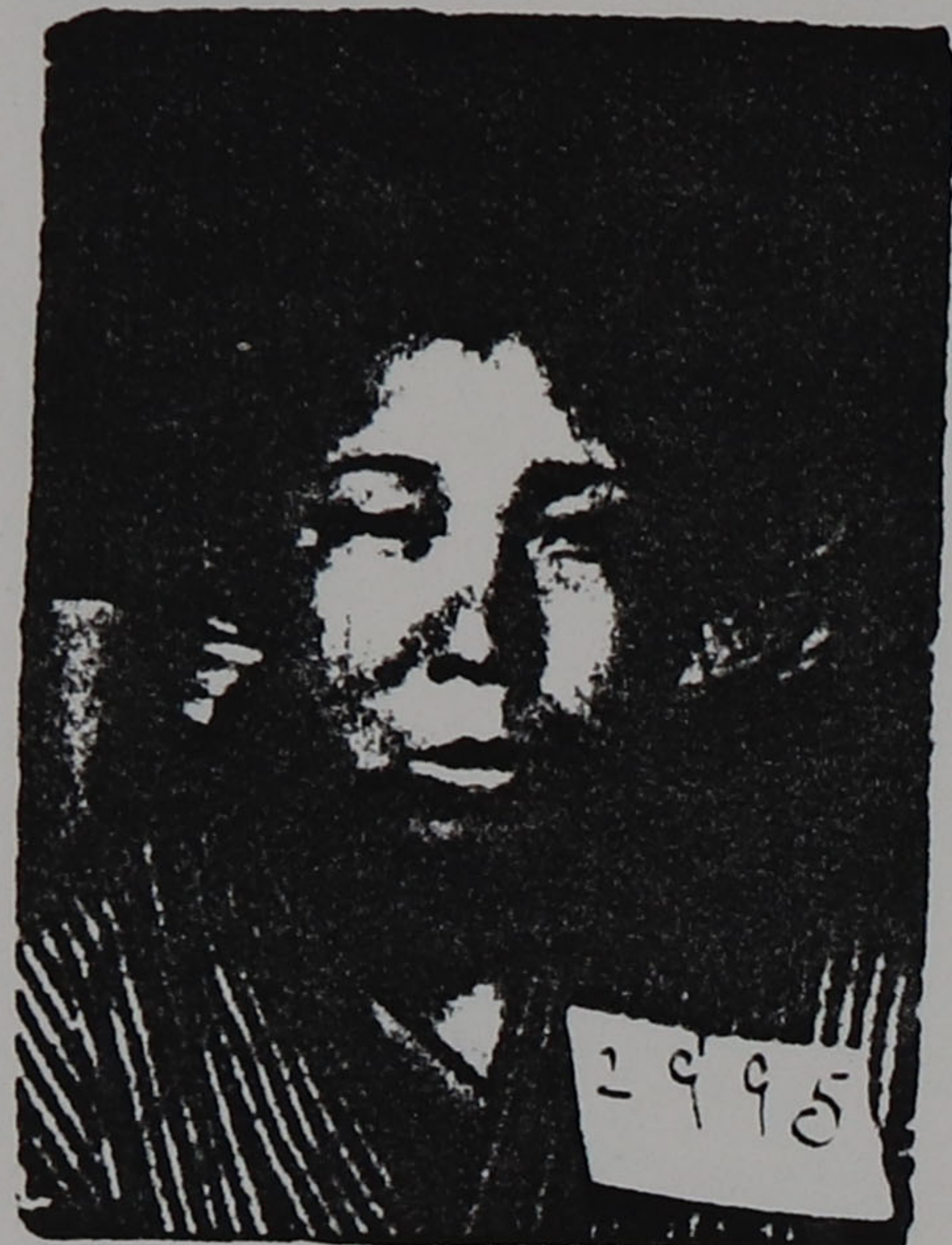
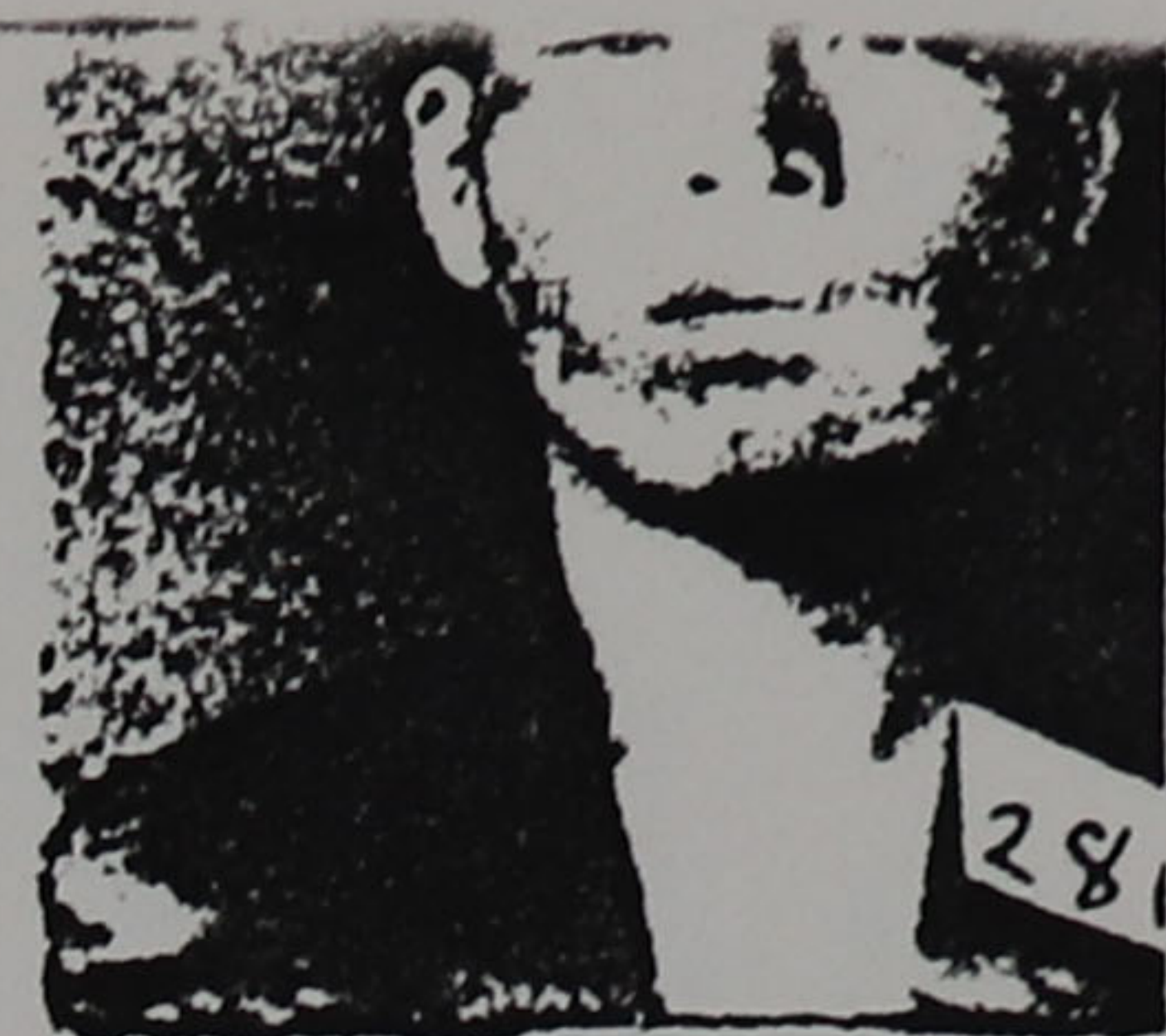
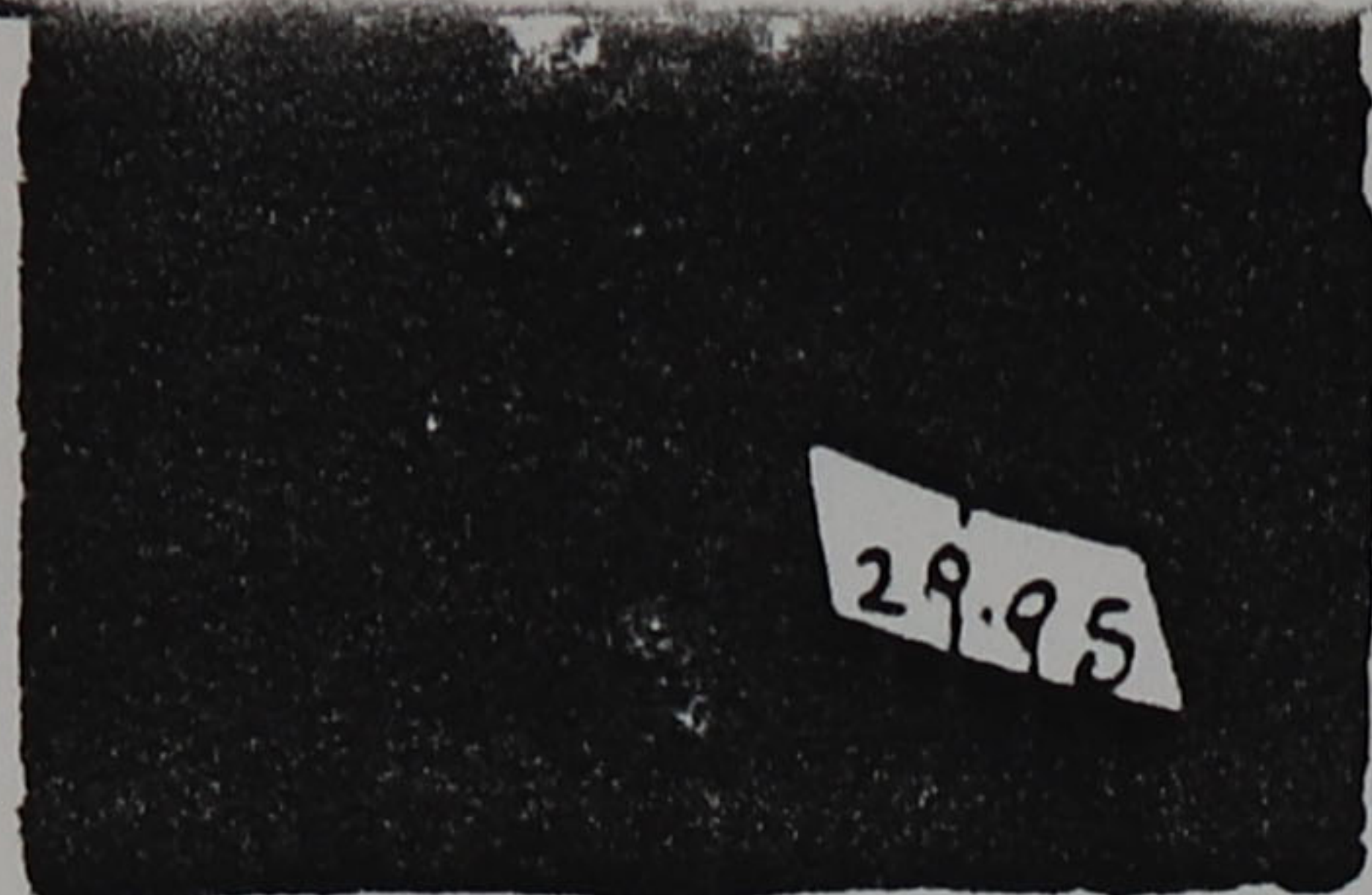
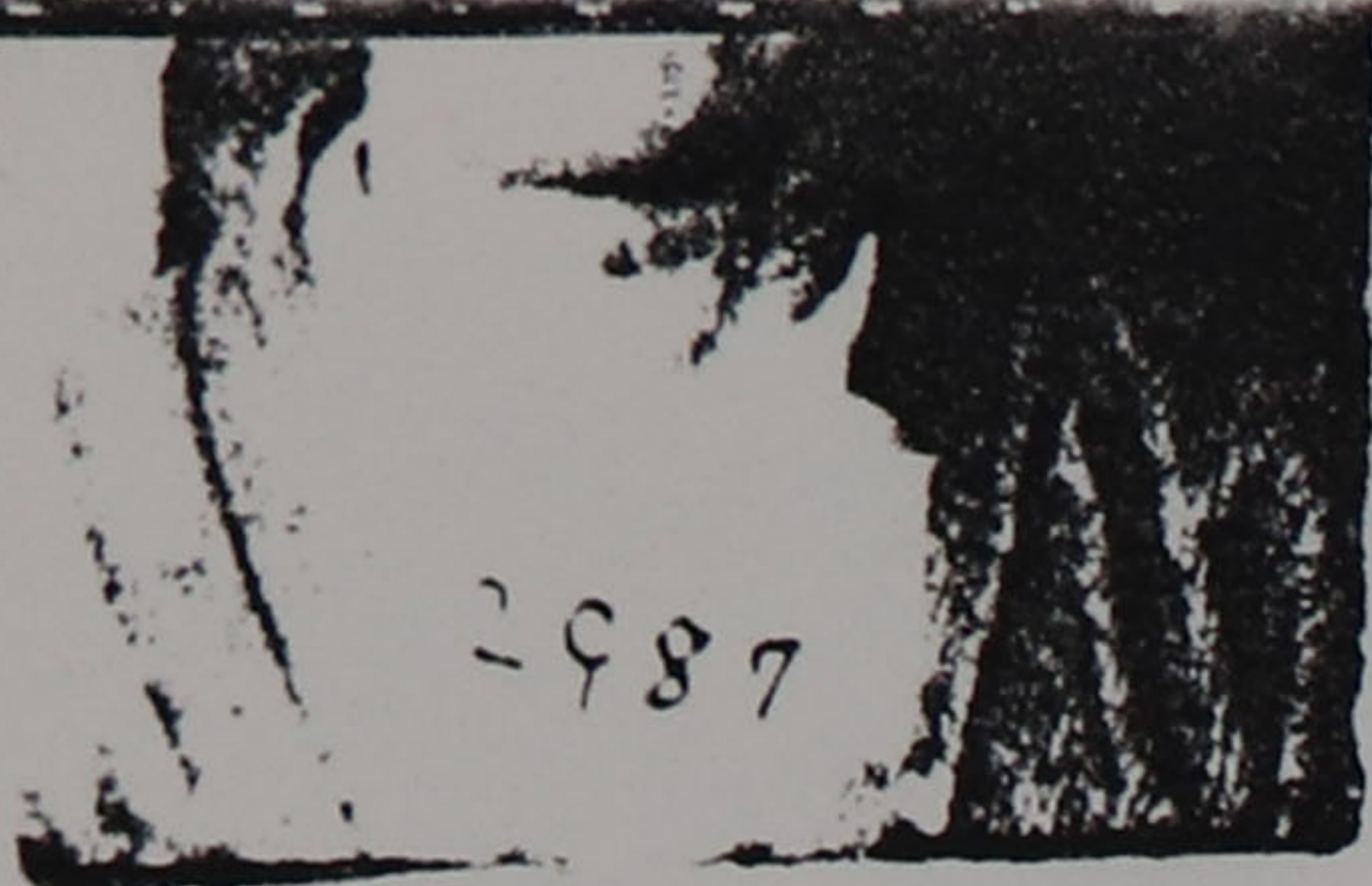


Haruko Nagai
Nisei generation

My mother, Carol Yoshida Sunahara/ She represents the sansei generation

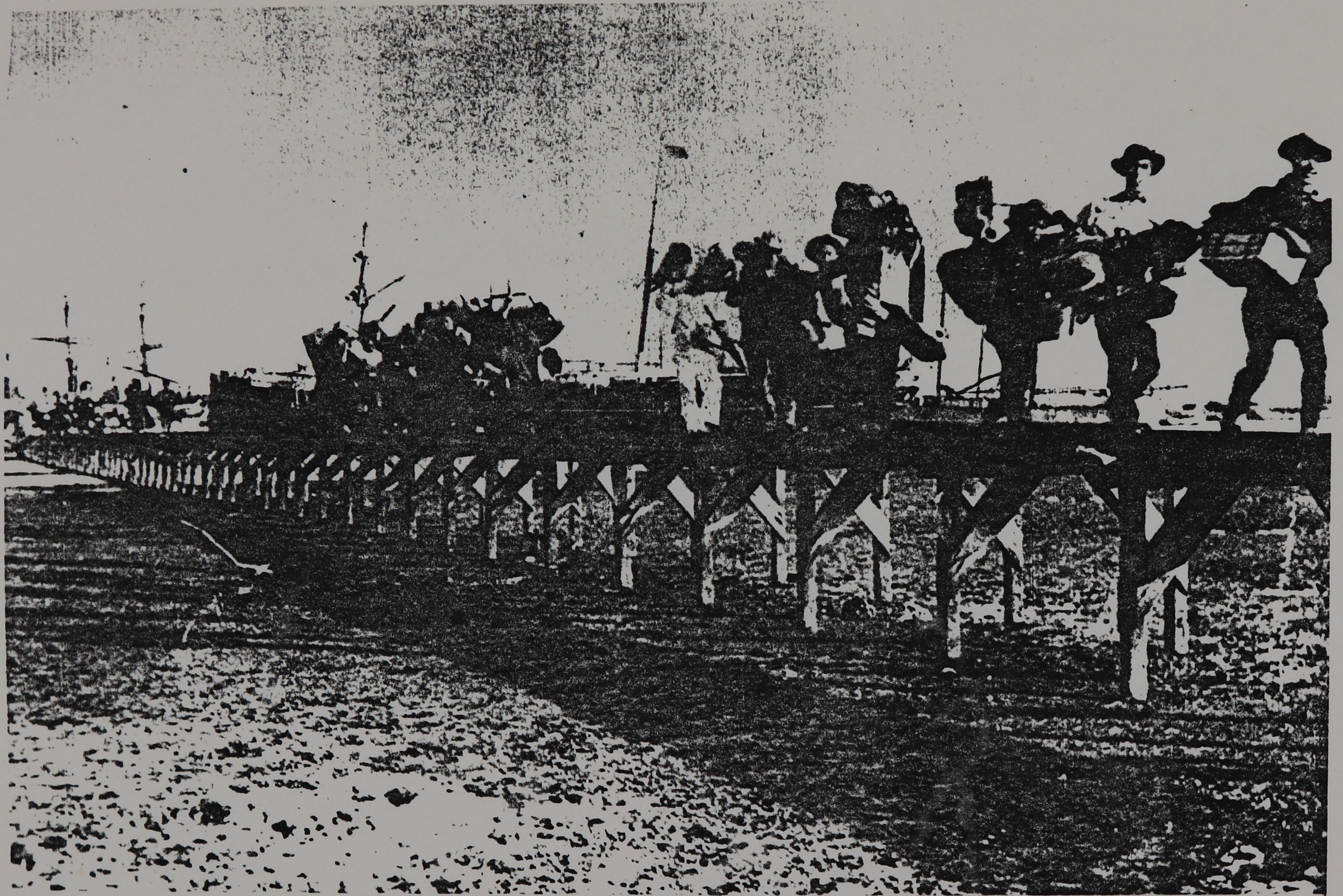


*Carol Yoshida Sunahara
(sansei generation)*



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Japanese immigrants on the bridge to Quarantine Island, Honolulu, 1893 (courtesy of Hawaii State Archives).

The immigrants had to walk down the "China Bridge" to enter the Immigration Station on the sandy island a mile offshore in Honolulu Harbor. The immigrants were kept in the station, surrounded by a fence, from 1 to 2 weeks to meet the quarantine requirement of 18 days following departure from Japan. When the epidemic of bubonic plague struck Honolulu, the confinement period was extended.

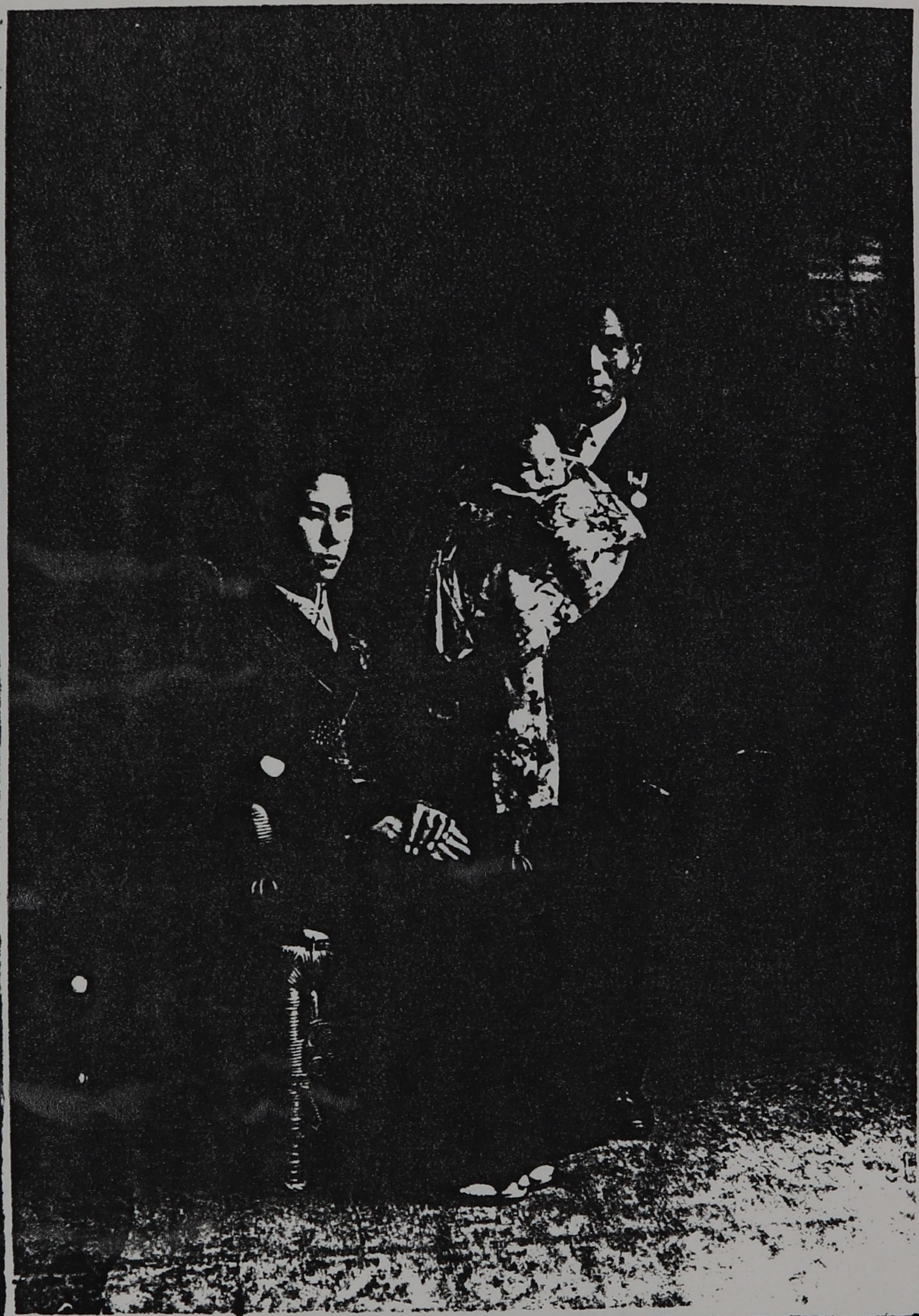
1893, Japanese immigrants happy to be on land. Japanese immigrants carrying their goods all the way from Japan.



View of Honolulu Harbor from Punchbowl showing the Immigration Station on Quarantine Island off Honolulu Harbor, ca. 1890s.

Honolulu Harbor 1890's

This is where Japanese immigrants arrived. Their first glimpse of Oahu.



Oahu

Kise and Keitaro Nagai
w/ Haruko 1910

Kise Yoshioka Nagai sitting in her silk kimono with Keitaro, her husband standing on the side of her holding Haruko. Haruko, not even one year old. 1910 Kise doesn't look very happy, perhaps she still thinks of her first baby son who had been born dead.

The Three Women in the Nagai Family: Kise, Haruko, and Teruko



Haruko, Teruko, Kise
1915

The Nagai women still wearing their beautiful kimonos with pride and respect for their Japanese heritage.



Japanese community and village street life

THE NAGAI FAMILY PORTRAIT



989-3388e

1914

The Nagai family

Keitaro
w/
Teruko
on his lap

Kise standing
behind
Haruko

Kise dressed in western clothes, Haruko dressed in her Japanese kimono and keitaro and Teruko dressed in western wear as well.

1914



Olaa Hongwanji, established in 1902, island of Hawai'i, ca.
915 (Iwasaki Collection).



Wainaku plantation village, island of Hawai'i, 1890s (J. A. Gonçalves, photographer).

A wooden flume and pipes to bring water from the hill are visible. A house with kōwhiri in the center appears to be the chief's residence.

In 1890, Japanese plantation village

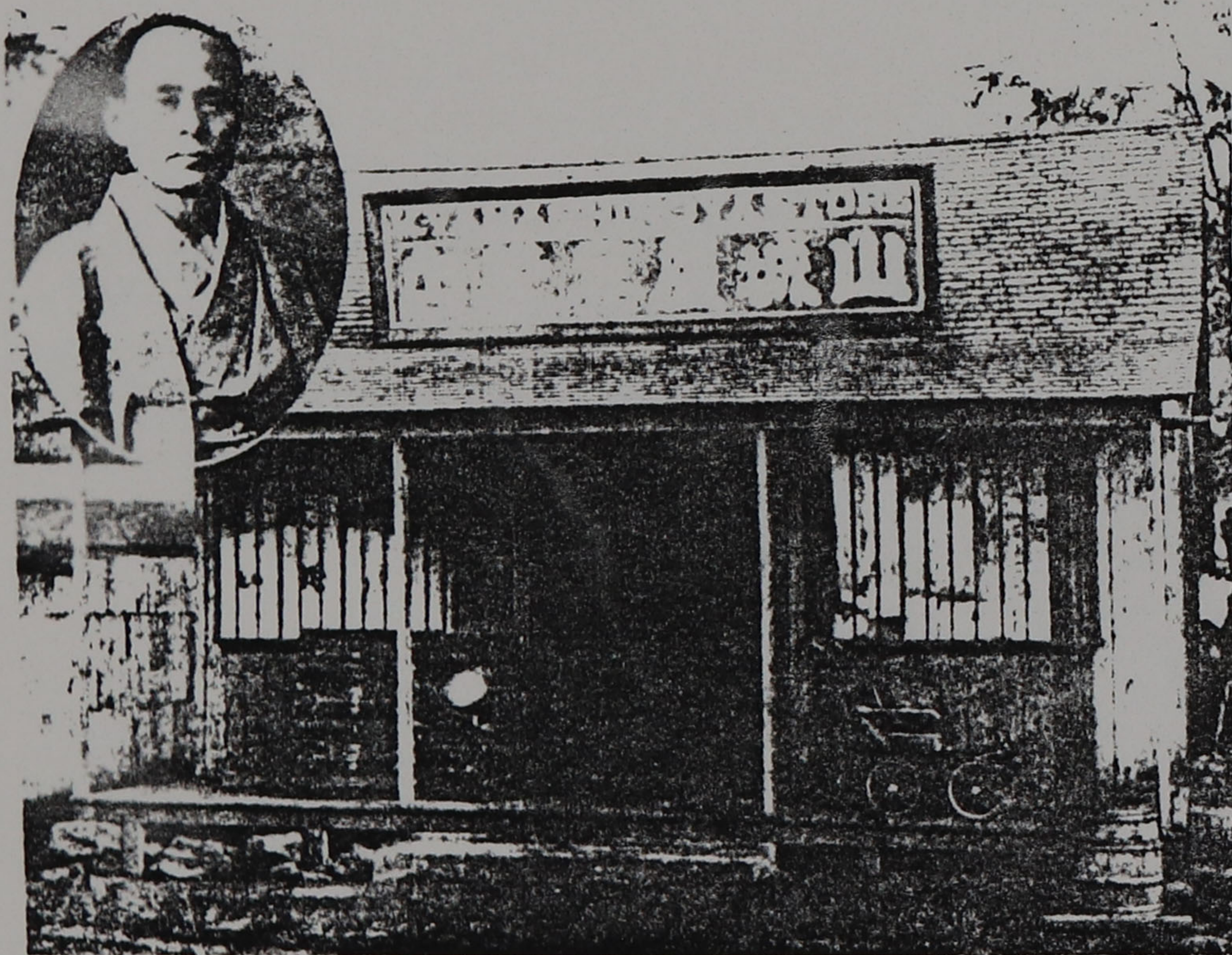


Ogata watchmaker, River Street, Honolulu, ca. 1914.

Owner Umetaō Ogata came to Hawai'i from Yamaguchi in 1902.



Japanese tailor shop, ca. 1910.



Yamashiroya dry goods store, Waimea, Kaua'i, ca. 1914.

Owner Kenhichi Yamashiro came to Hawai'i in 1890 from Yamaguchi.



Waimea Pottery Factory, Waimea, Kaua'i, 1915.

The factory was established by Hirobei Tabata, from Yamaguchi in 1915.

Japanese community/ store shops, tailor shop, dry good store and pottery factory 1910-1915



Funeral scene amidst cane fields, 1915 (Iwasaki Collection).

Japanese Funeral scene in the cane fields, 1915

We used to play beneath the tangerine trees, our fingers sticky with juice and our toes slippery with dirt. The sun shone between the leaves and made our skin brown and our cheeks pink. We'd run through the trees and pull each other around in hand-made wagons, singing Disney songs and bossing one another around. We all had flowers from the garden woven into our hair, except Aidan, who wore his behind his ear.

To everyone else, we were cousins reunited by the summer. We were children close in age who could spend hours puttering about our great-grandfather's backyard, arguing and playing and exploring. We didn't see ourselves that way.

We were gods.

Grandpa Yoshida's yard was our Olympus and Katey reigned over it with a mighty fist. This was a matriarchy and she was our Athena, goddess of wisdom, the only one capable of managing the seven of us. She ruled from the highest branch of a tree, where she lounged in the shade and picked fruit, and if she needed to oversee her kingdom, she was escorted in a shiny red wagon chariot.

Aidan was our Hermes. While he didn't understand any of our arguments, and didn't care to, he was perfectly content wearing a brilliant plumeria behind his ear and laying beneath the sun. When his services were needed, he would sprint between the six of us, running around the entire yard, passing messages back and forth or bringing us new flowers or new cans of juice or rootbeer. Occasionally, he would take a break and help one of us lug a wagon over a stubborn tree root or he would help catch a lizard, but he was the messenger god and was kept busy.

Caro was Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty. She wove through the garden, finding vibrant flowers and maintaining the fragile peace. She was often found singing songs from *Hercules* or pulling Katey's chariot through the yard. She knew which flowers looked prettiest together, which smelled the best, and knew the flower garden like the back of her hand.

Kira was often Apollo and represented music, prophecy, and the sun. This wasn't simply because she loved the sun so much or was so brutally honest, but because of her voice, of her ability to make a musical instrument out of anything. She could make a beat with the side of a metal tub, with the wood of a wagon, even with the leaves of a tree.

Most times, Isabel was our Hephaestus, able to create and fix anything. She could rearrange the handle of a wagon to make it rotate properly or fiddle with the tap outside so we could fill our buckets with water. She dug through the sandbox or swung on the swings, sipping passion orange juice or eating a tangerine.

Alexa was often Demeter. She would fill metal baskets with ripe tangerines and flowers and bring us lollipops or arare from inside the house. She carried a delicate bouquet of flowers, picked with Caro, and would roam through the hydrangeas and pineapples and grapefruits, laughing and beaming amongst the foliage.

I was Artemis, goddess of the hunt. I ran through the trees, imagining I had a bow and arrow strapped to my back and dogs at my heels, feeling invincible as I leapt over roots and ducked beneath branches. I had no time for swings or sandboxes and instead focused upon finding a perfectly ripe tangerine or a vibrant hydrangea for my mother. I chased lizards and geckos—they were evil monsters, minotaurs and cyclopes and hydras—and kept Olympus safe.

During those afternoons in Olympus, nothing else seemed to matter. All that we were concerned with was whether Hermes was delivering our messages swiftly enough, whether Athena was governing properly, or whether Demeter was picking the ripe fruit. Our skin was warm and pink as we swung from branches that gave us blisters and sung different verses to the same song and rolled around in the grass until we were itchy.

It didn't matter that half of us would soon leave or that we weren't sure whether Olympus would still be ours when we were reunited again. During that summer, the seven of us were gods.

Leah Lauderdale
2018



