BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: SEIICHI MIYASAKI, doctor

Seiichi Miyasaki, Japanese, was born in Waialua on December 18, 1903. His parents came to Hawaii from Yamaguchi, Japan. His father was a head carpenter for the Waialua Sugar Company. Seiichi attended Waialua Elementary, Mid-Pacific Institute, the University of Hawaii, North Dakota University, and Northwestern Medical School. He was one of the first non-plantation doctors in Haleiwa-Waialua.

Seiichi worked from a young age to help finance his education. He married a Honolulu girl who was attending the University of Hawaii. The Miyasakis raised four children. They live in Haleiwa.
NC: This is an interview with Dr. Miyasaki in Haleiwa. Today is Thursday, July 1st, 1976. Dr. Miyasaki, will you please tell me about where your parents came from. What work they came to do here.

SM: My parents came here in 1898. My father was a carpenter for Waialua Plantation. They both were born in Japan. I was born December 18, 1903. I was supposed to have been taken to Japan 1905. I remained there until 1913. I went to Japanese school there. August of 1913, I came to Waialua and I've been here ever since except for seven years that I've been on mainland to medical school.

NC: Why did your parents take you back to Japan?

SM: I don't know the exact reason, but I think they thought they had enough money.

(Laughter)

NC: But they came back. You were born in Waialua and you came back to Waialua?

SM: Yes.

NC: Do you have any brothers or sisters?

SM: I have one sister; she was born in Japan; at that time she couldn't come over to Hawaii.

NC: Has she come since then?

SM: She made only one visit in 1972.

NC: Did your parents come by themselves or did their parents come with them?

SM: No, they came as an immigrant.

NC: Did they come in a group or on their own?

SM: On their own.
NC: Do you have children?

SM: I have two boys and two girls.

NC: Can you tell about going to school here, how was it different from going to school in Japan?

SM: I didn't know a bit of English when I came in 1913 and I had to start from—at that time they call it baby class and it wasn't just me, there were many others, older than I. I remained in Haleiwa, so called Waialua Elementary School until 1920.

NC: In those days it was called Waialua. It's Haleiwa now.

SM: Then I went to Mid Pacific in 1920, graduated in 1924 and I went to U. H. for three years.

NC: Did you have the same subjects in the baby school and in the other grades, the later grades here that you had been studying in Japan?

SM: Oh, in Japan the first time I went to school, it was drawings; drawings only. I wasn't a great student. I didn't know how to read simple Japanese until about the third grade.

NC: Is the drawing the purpose of that? To prepare you for calligraphy?

SM: Yes, I think so. It was simple drawing, not complicated. It's just like squares and battleships and all those things.

NC: After you went to Mid Pacific, by this time, were you still bilingual? Did you retain your Japanese?

SM: Yes. In fact, I neglected to say that I went to Japanese school here in Haleiwa - Jōdō Mission.

NC: Who ran the Japanese School in those days?

SM: There were several schools. But they were one, two, three, four schools, including Kawaiola Japanese Schools. They were run by a certain sect of mission, Buddhist missions.

NC: Where did the teachers come from?

SM: From Japan. Not directly from Japan. They come from Japan to Honolulu and then the Honolulu Mission sends them.

NC: But it was an organized affair to keep the schools supplied with teachers?

SM: Yes, yes.
NC: Did your parents have to pay for you to go to the Japanese School?

SM: Yes, I don't believe it was more than dollar half a month.

NC: But a dollar half was a lot in those days. Did you catch up—I know that you're an intelligent person—but I mean when you were in school and you were not able to speak English. Did you finally or after awhile go into classes where the children spoke only English?

SM: At that time, there were many students, Japanese students, Chinese students, Portuguese and all. We all spoke pidgin and that got us by. But I really wasn't able to speak until about 4th grade. I skip the grades. I was not in one class long enough to learn reading.

NC: And then were children in the class...English speaking?

SM: Yes in fact I couldn't speak at all till 4th grade. I was able to write and I wrote compositions for another Japanese boy who was with me and I remember I got whipping....(laughs)

NC: Oh. It was not considered help? I guess they put another connotation on it. Oh well, speaking of whipping, who whipped you?

SM: The teacher.

NC: That was allowed?

SM: Yes, in fact it was a coconut petiole, dried petiole and you put your finger like this and wham, and then, in your buttocks.

NC: What did your parents say to that? Did they know that you were disciplined?

SM: I didn't tell 'em but I'm sure they wouldn't have objected.

NC: How would you compare your elementary school and Mid Pac experience with the education opportunities your children had?

SM: They have much more than, well at least they have more exposure. I was more or less confined to one institution at that time and students were mostly Orientals. But they spoke English and I got around. I was lonely in the beginning but I got around. First thing I learned was how to wash my own clothes, iron my own clothes. If I went from Waialua to M.P., in September, I couldn't come home till December, late December.

NC: Why was that?

SM: Well the transportation. Oahu Rail here used to bring people here to town but it took three hours. From town to here, it's three hours and so we couldn't come home and besides it wasn't cheap either.
NC: Would you have any idea what a fare would have cost you in those days? Just so we can compare.

SM: A dollar and half.

NC: A dollar and half each way. When you consider that's what your parents paid a month for your extra school. Your children then, had more choices of school to go to. Did they choose other schools?

SM: Yes. Three of my children went to MPI, but the last one went to Iolani. He had a choice.

NC: And then what about University, you went to University of Hawaii for awhile?

SM: Yes for three years. Then I started thinking what am I going to do. So many people were going into different professional work. I didn't have money (laughs) so I had to go to a small school where it was cheap. So I went to North Dakota, University of N. D. in Grand Forks. I stayed there two years. I worked part of my way. Then from N. D. I went to Northwestern University in Chicago and I stayed there two years. I interned for half year in Illinois Masonic Hospital and one year and a half in Milwaukee Children Hospital. And one year in New York Willard Parker Contagious Diseases Hospital. I earned enough in those seven years; I paid my own way back, steam fare as well as train fare.

NC: What colleges did your children choose?

SM: Well, my two children, two older girls went to UH. One didn't finish but the other one is teaching at Moanalua High and the older boy is a carpenter out here in the Wahiawa. My daughter is secretary at East West Center, (my second daughter) and my son is in San Francisco. He just completed two year residency and he took an exam and got a fellowship, a two year fellowship, so I don't think he's coming back to his mom.

NC: Well maybe later. One son is a carpenter. That's interesting because your father was a carpenter.

SM: Yes.

NC: Did the children grow up with the grandparents?

SM: Yes, they had exposure until 1956 when my father died. I took them everyday when possible.

NC: When you were a child, did the plantation provide any kind of a day care?

SM: No. Plantation had nothing to do with my education. I mean, they didn't promote me or anything like that.
NC: Was your mother able to stay home and take care of the family or did she also work?

SM: She worked part time. She didn't work all the years but she worked several years in plantation.

NC: When you came back, you set up a private practice?

SM: Right.

NC: While you were growing up, did you have any job on the plantation?

SM: Yes, every summer I worked on the plantation.

NC: Do you remember how young or old you were with your first job?

SM: I must have been 18 or 19. I worked in the summer under my father who was head carpenter.

NC: So you have carpentry skills also?

SM: Well, not as much as other people maybe, but at least I used to spend time in those days. It was ten hours work. It's not eight hours week (day). I used to get 50¢ a day.

NC: Did you do any other jobs in the plantation?

SM: No, that's the only work I did.

NC: And what kind of jobs did you do while you were earning your way through school?

SM: Yardwork, in certain doctor's home and then laboratory work at medical school.

NC: Dr. Miyasaki, while you were growing up and your dad was working in the plantation, did you have neighbors who were in other kinds of work?

SM: Yes, they were working in the cane field for the most part and I didn't have too much contact with the parents but with other children. We go to school the same way.

NC: So were the children of all nationalities?

SM: Right.

NC: Okay, did you have other neighbors, like were there teachers living near you or...

SM: No.
NC: Did you have a minister friend who was one neighbor?

SM: Yes, they live at the Jōdō Mission.

NC: Was this person close to your family?

SM: Yes, he was particularly close to me because my father and four other people started building this mission.

NC: What year was this?

SM: 1913 to 1914.

NC: Did this minister have an influence on your life?

SM: I think to some extent, yes. In fact I visited him in 1974 when I went to Japan. He's head of mission in Kyushu. I had a very short visit with him and came right back. He wanted to take me to Japan when I was little but I didn't care too much about going back to Japan where I came from and I knew my experience. The food, and I didn't like going school and all that (Laughs).

NC: What was the matter with the food over there?

SM: The food is just very simple food, sardines. They fetch the sardines from the ocean and we didn't have rice. We had wheat. Cooked wheat. And I didn't like the looks of the cooked wheat and I couldn't eat. My mother tried to make me eat but I couldn't. She used to mix half rice and half wheat. And I still pick out the rice and threw out the wheat.

NC: Was that particular to a special area in Japan?

SM: No that's, mostly poor people meals. In the country districts. There was seldom rice for commoners.

NC: Was the rice polished?

SM: Yes, more or less. Oh, we had both polished and unpolished rice.

NC: So really, they were better off eating the wheat?

SM: Yes, more nutritious. The very reason is that many of the soldiers who used to go into the army developed beri-beri if they ate rice. So they use to feed 'em wheat.

NC: And wheat was less expensive than rice?

SM: Right.

NC: Was it grown in Japan?
SM: Yes, yes. Well the reason I had to come this side is because I couldn't eat the wheat.

NC: You mean you think that your parents came back for that reason?

SM: No, my father was here before but my mother was with me, trying to raise me as Japanese, I suppose. My grandmother and grandfather were very strict and they tried to make me eat wheat. I just couldn't.

NC: Did your mother come back with you?

SM: Yes. That's another thing. We were in Kobe for three months trying to come this way. And when I passed the exam she didn't and when she passed the exam, I didn't. And the examination at that time were eye examination, mostly trachoma and round worms was in the bowel. So we could not come together. So I took a ship ahead of my mother and I came over 1913 with another lady who's not too close to us, but she's from Kuga (a village on Oshima-gun). It's quite a distance from us. She lived in Wahiawa for some time.

NC: And your father was waiting for you here?

SM: Yes, but I couldn't come up as an American citizen because my father looked high and low for a certificate of birth and couldn't find it. Dr. Wood was here in the plantation and my father told Dr. Wood when I was born to register me but apparently he didn't because it was not registered at Board of Health. Dr. Wood wrote a note saying that I was born in Waialua such and such day. And my father took that to Immigration Service but Mr. Haley who was the immigration officer there, said, how could Dr. Wood remember an event that occurred 12 or 13 years ago. So he said, no, you got to come up as Japanese. So I came up as Japanese but before I went to the Mainland in 1927, I got a Hawaiian Birth Certificate from Hawaii State Government having two witnesses to vouch for me. And that's how I went to the Mainland as a U. S. citizen.

NC: Do you remember the house that you came to when you were 13 years old when you came. What kind of house?

SM: White, one by 12 house. One by 12, one inch by 12 inch, planks or board. All white wash, not paint, you know, just well, sort of slack lime. Just like slack limes.

NC: About how big was that kind of house?

SM: Oh, I'd say some of them were larger than the others, but depending on the family, they use to get bigger houses...

NC: Were there bedrooms?

SM: Yes, but not beds. We slept on floors. And when I got the bed it was a wooden bed. Father made the bed. I think the length of the house
is very low but, oh, I'd say about six hundred square feet in area or somewhere around there. 500 or 600 square feet.

NC: Was there an inside kitchen?

SM: Yes, used to be in a T-form. This way and this way. Kitchen was this side and the parlor and the rooms is this side.

NC: Your sister didn't come?

SM: No she couldn't come. She was born there and immigration law at that time, I forgot, was 1924 or 1925, that they was stopped immigration from Japan.

NC: That affected the family considerably. Did your father go on living in the plantation until he died in '56?

SM: Yes.

NC: Did he get different kinds of houses?

SM: Well, we moved from the initial house to a T and G house. Tongue and groove house. Nicer house and my father built a house, two bedroom and a parlor and kitchen and bathroom; it was comfortable for me.

NC: Did your mother have to do-- was there a division of labor? Your mother did the housework?

SM: Yes, more or less in a Japanese family, the woman is supposed to do all the kitchen work, laundry work, and education-wise, cook; the children to go to school and all that.

NC: The education, is that for the male children and the female children?

SM: Both.

NC: Were you assigned any chores around the house?

SM: Yes, I remember chopping wood. At that time we didn't have electric stove so my work was clean the yard and chop wood. I'm an expert in chopping wood.

(Laughter)

NC: Was your mother able to do the laundry near the house or did she have to go to another place?

SM: Yes there was a cement block about six or eight feet square in which pipe--of cold water and round oil tubs--not oil anymore--but it's clean tub from mill and we use to wash in there.
NC: Did you have any pets of any kind?

SM: We never had pets, until in fact, I've been bitten by a dog and (laughs) I don't care much about dogs except my son brought those dogs.

NC: Did your parents keep any animals for food?

SM: No. Oh yes, but we never ate. In fact, because other children kept rabbits, we kept rabbits for awhile.

NC: But you didn't eat?

SM: I ate chicken but I never ate rabbit.

NC: Speaking of chicken and rabbit, did your mother cook Japanese style?

SM: Yes, all the way Japanese. She didn't know any cooking other than that.

NC: She didn't exchange recipes with the other ladies?

SM: Not to my knowledge. I don't know.

NC: So did she have any difficulty finding the ingredients she wanted?

SM: Well, at that time, there were men from different stores who would come around taking orders. For instance, our neighbor here. Mr. Fujioka, his father used to run a store, Fujioka Store in Puuiki and he used to come around. Once in two to three.

NC: And did they deliver?

SM: Yes, they did.

NC: Did he have an automobile for that or...

SM: No, at the beginning was horseback, wagon.

NC: So what the Japanese cuisine in those days, is it different, was it different from what is today? Was it?

SM: Very simple. In other words, pickles, radishes and all that and rice. And fish. We didn't eat too much meat. In fact, I never saw meat in Japan when I was there. Just vegetables and maybe chicken and things.

NC: Your mother did all the cooking?

SM: Yes, father was good in cooking because he lived quite a while as single in the camp up here. I mean before my mother came home.

NC: So did he do it once in awhile?
SM: Yeah.

NC: And who cleaned up after the cooking?

SM: Oh, my mother and my father.

NC: You father did help. Your mother had a wood stove?

SM: What do you call those, no stove inside the house until 1927. Outside, cooked on the outside.

NC: Was it a brick stove or a charcoal?

SM: Charcoal. We had charcoal and wood.

NC: Was there any kind of oven anywhere that the ladies could use?

SM: We didn't. They were kind of expensive things to have. One section, we called 'em Portuguese Camp, and then the Spanish Camp had. And Chinese were very few. Japanese, mostly Japanese camp.

NC: Were the cooking arrangement the same in all the camps?

SM: Yes, individual cooking.

NC: Now what kind of recreation was available when you were a child?

SM: Oh, baseball and basketball and, I didn't play too much. Just baseball for the most part. Tennis, after I went to MPI I started tennis. I tried to run but I couldn't run. (Both laugh)

NC: You mean like track?

SM: Yeah. So I confine my sports to tennis. Baseball, I fracture my wrist one time, and then after that...

NC: Did you have any activities after school that would be...well, you went to language school after school.

SM: Yes, we went to language school when I was here. Seven to eight in the morning and then from eight to two thirty, English School and three to six language school.

NC: And I'm asking you about recreation. (Both laugh) Well, did you go fishing or things like that?

SM: Yes. I'm no good fisherman. (Laughs)

NC: How about visiting friends or were there any other relatives that you could visit?
SM: No, I had no relatives here.

NC: Did people exchange visits in those days?

SM: Mostly adults. Every year, I've forgotten how many, in April, the Emperor's Birthday, they used to drink and they used to go around to different houses to celebrate and drink. And they'd get drunk. My father used to drink, too, but since 1919, he stopped entirely. He got sick from drinking. He mixed a drink too many in different houses. And I remember I went to call a doctor and we couldn't get him. So the best we could do we use to have a little electric battery operated stimulator of skin; I used to run that. Somehow he got better. And ever since that time he never drank a drop.

NC: That must have been some hangover. (Both laugh) Do you remember did the ethnic groups celebrate only their own particular holidays?

SM: Yes. But Christmas was almost universal. New Year is universal...

NC: Do you remember anybody going around with masks on New Year's?

SM: No, I don't.

NC: Somebody told us about it, and we thought we would ask. Were there any particular foods associated with the holidays?

SM: Yes. The kind of food that we have here. Sushi and sashimi and those things.

NC: Did your mother tell you that there was any particular significance to the different foods?

SM: Yes, but I've forgotten all that. (Laugh) I had to eat beans in such and such way. And then I couldn't eat some food. I shouldn't eat. But I've forgotten all those.

NC: Was there anything like going to the movies?

SM: Yes, I used to like movies and I've forgotten how much it was. I wanted to go but we were poor, so we couldn't go too many times.

NC: Was there any Japanese theater, live theater?

SM: Yes there was here, Haleiwa Theater. Was originally Japanese run.

NC: Was it live actors or movies?

SM: Movies. Occasionally there some actors came around (to put up shows in the theater).

NC: Did the actors come from Japan? Was it a local group?
SM: Well, sometimes during the celebrations, they put up their own shows. They call it Shibai. It's only putting up if somebody does something to exhibit, what you call those shibai, put a big front. They call it shibai.

NC: Pretend?

SM: Yeah.

NC: Was there any card playing?

SM: I was strictly forbidden to play cards, any kind of cards, or mahjong by my father. He, well, my mother too said that was gambling. So I was, to this day, I don't know how to play cards.

NC: And was there gambling then? Is that why your parents were trying to protect you?

SM: Not in the camp, but certain outside the plantation there was some gambling.

NC: Was there any clubs that children could belong to?

SM: Not to my knowledge; except Sunday school and so forth.

NC: Were there any clubs that your father could belong to?

SM: He had some organizations, local organizations but not anything that's really firm or binding.

NC: How about for your mother?

SM: She never went out.

NC: Never went out by herself or never went out?

SM: By herself or anyone. She belonged to Women's Club here, but she never visited.

NC: Is that a very Japanese thing?

SM: Well, you know in olden days, women belongs to the home, never went out on their own anyway.

NC: Do you believe that?

SM: Yes and no. (Both laugh) I'm half way in between so...

NC: Did the Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts, did they come around?

SM: Yes, long after the initial war, the first war.
NC: After the first war? Dr. Miyasaki, was there much correspondence back and forth to Japan? Your parents, did they write to their relatives over there?

SM: Not unless they really had to. They didn't write except my grandparents were there so they did write occasionally. But always sent few dollars over there.

NC: They would send money without writing?

SM: Sometimes.

NC: Was it because... why did they not write?

SM: Because they have, well, we don't write long letters but there are certain rituals carried on in the family in Japan and said Obon is coming. Obon is here August 6, and Obon in Japan is about the same; may not be the same date but we have certain rituals and it would cost them some amount. So we used to send the money.

NC: So your parents send money to their parents to help them observe the rituals over there. Would these rituals be bringing blessings to the family in some way?

SM: That's the purpose I suppose.

NC: Was writing paper expensive?

SM: No I don't think it was too expensive, use to waste lots of paper.

(Laughs)

NC: Well, okay, I just wondered. In some countries I know, even to this day, writing paper is a luxury. Did your parents know their calligraphy?

SM: My father was good at it. My mother was not.

NC: So that was not the problem then. Was it that...

SM: In fact my father used to write letters for other people.

NC: And about how long would correspondence take to cross the ocean in those days?

SM: At least two weeks, the fastest.

NC: And how secure was the money. How did it go?

SM: Post office. Postal money order.

NC: A money order. There would be no problem at the other end exchanging the money?
SM: Well, they are sent to certain bank usually and the banks notify the individual and they suppose to come and get it. But I understood that those clerks in the banks used to ask them to deposit at the bank, not take it home. So invariably they did deposit.

NC: Did your parents expect their parents to write about your sister?

SM: No.

NC: How did your parents keep track of your sister?

SM: They use to write to the son-in-law and to the sister-in-law.

NC: No, I mean while she was still little, how did they keep track?

SM: My grandfather didn't know how to read so my mother's brother used to read letters that we write.

NC: Now, so much for news back and forth. How about when the plantation wanted the people in the plantation to know something? How was, how did they communicate in the plantation?

SM: Well mostly through the groups; for instance my father's group, there were 21 carpenters and they gave the message to my father and my father had to communicate with them.

NC: Did they also communicate through like the ethnic camp?

SM: I think so.

NC: Did they post messages or was it mouth? More word of mouth?

SM: Yes, verbal.

NC: Was there much interest in the plantation, was there much interest in what was happening in the towns around the plantation?

SM: The plantation took care of its own groups and they could easily stop outsiders to come in to the plantation. You know, the camp police...They didn't bother too much about stopping coming in people like that.

NC: So when things happened in the town, would you say that the news got to the plantation?

SM: I think it would get there first. Anything happen in the plantation, to the plantation office, and probably we get it indirectly.

NC: And did the things happening in the towns affect the people in the plantation?

SM: I don't know, in what respect do you mean?
NC: Well, like suppose there was a robbery or murder in the town. If there was such a thing in those days.

SM: Yes, I didn't see it myself but my folks when they were here earlier, there used to be lot of murders using cane knife, killing them. And the original immigrants, I understood, were kinda rough people. They use to run away into the cane field; they can't locate and all that.

NC: And would that make plantation tighten up security?

SM: I think so. I think they should and I think they did.

NC: The plantation police--would you say they were there to protect as well as control...

SM: Yes.

NC: ...the plantation? When did the people start listening to the radio or when did you get your first radio?

SM: I didn't hear radio until when my folks had--the electric range before the radio, I think. I think it was around 1936, '35, when we got radio. I know the range was in my house for my mother in 1927 when I left there. And that was one of the three in Waialua Plantation. (Laughs)

NC: That was an electric range. So that's showed some consideration to the lady of the house. (Both laugh) Did that make life easier?

SM: I don't know. Maybe did because we had to go outside and light the fire and cook it on the wood. What we used to do is cut the kerosene, five gallon kerosene can in a stove fashion and put in that, and the Japanese, what we call hagama, cooking rice. We use to cook that way. (Long pause in tape)... until my mother died, we used to have similar arrangement where you have stoves outside. Cook mochi, I mean mochi, New Year's. Before the New Year, we use to have trays, steam, big fire. You would steam it and I don't know what form of rice but it's a gluten rice and I use to pound that mochi rice cake eh. We use to do that until recently.

NC: And you did that outside?

SM: Yes, I still have the stove. By that time it was still iron stove. And hole in the middle where you put the wood in there and then the stone, just like the Hawaiians gouged out that. I still have that thing out there lying around out there.

U-S-U was the name of that. Stone. You've seen them. Stone dug out and pound with the wooden hammer.

NC: Dr. Miyasaki, when did your parents have a telephone?
SM: Yes, I think they were one of few who had telephone. I think it was
1926 or somewhere around that.

NC: Do you know if it was an expensive item in those days?
SM: Yes, I've forgotten how much they paid but it was sort of expensive.
NC: Since it was such an expensive item, for what reason?
SM: Chiefly, my mother didn't go out so she used to order to the stores
what she wanted.
NC: Now as you were growing up here, and you mentioned before that you
played with the other children and so on, was there any kind of
delinquency?
SM: You mean, school-wise?
NC: Well, did the children do any kind of thing that would be considered
criminal or delinquent?
SM: Oh, as far as that goes only fighting I remember...(Laughs)
NC: Well, were there any other socially unacceptable behaviors? How did
the parents react to the fighting?
SM: I guess they didn't think it was a good thing but then most of them
had their disagreement with one another so, probably it was natural
carrying on.
NC: The children or the adults?
SM: Well both of them. I used to hear loud voices in the camp once in
awhile.
NC: Were there any vandalism or drunkenness in the camps?
SM: Only time I notice was holidays.
NC: Holidays, otherwise the people were pretty sober. Were there many
social activities like parties?
SM: Only weddings and parties and birthdays and all that, if they did.
NC: Did you get married on the plantation?
SM: No, I got married here.
NC: In Waialua or in Haleiwa?
SM: Haleiwa.
NC: Haleiwa, that's right. I wondered if you got married in your parent's
home?

SM: No.

NC: Or in Mrs. Miyasaki's home?

SM: No, I had a two story home, and I asked permission to have the party here.

NC: What was the wedding like in those days? First, a ceremony at the mission?

SM: Yes.

NC: And did you have a reception?

SM: Yes.

NC: And whom did you invite to the reception?

SM: Well my friends, about my age that I knew. Then my parent's friends.

NC: Was there any kind of a ceremony that was observed at the reception like toasts? Were there any formal parts to the reception?

SM: Well they talk, just like they do here now. I didn't want those formal affairs so I cut short.

NC: So, you didn't want those?

SM: No. I think that's a waste of money and time, that's all.

NC: Would you say that you have done away with a few Japanese traditions, doctor?

SM: I think I grew out.

NC: Was that because you felt more American than Japanese?

SM: No, I don't think so. That's my nature, I think. I was brought up very frugal anyway.

NC: Dr. Miyasaki, about your wedding, you cut out some of the traditions. But I'm sure your father had something to say about what you could cut off.

SM: Yes, he did. And I didn't want to oppose my folks too much so I let them have some of their own; they want to invite such and such people. And speeches by different people but I asked them directly, not through my father, directly to the speakers to cut it short.

NC: And did you serve a traditional kind of Japanese refreshment?
SM: Yes, from this store here. Yamada restaurant used to cater.

NC: Was it tradition and at that time, did people bring presents?

SM: Yes, monetary and some articles.

NC: Were presents in those days, that were not money? Were they store-bought present or did people make things?

SM: No, mostly bought from the store.

NC: Your wife was also born and raised here?

SM: No, she was born in Honolulu.

NC: In Honolulu, excuse me, I meant locally. How did you meet?

SM: Well my father used to visit Yokohama's Specie bank once in awhile. He happened to see this girl and in bank there was a fellow in the bank who my father had known who lived not too far away his home. He got us interested in this girl and I met her through the bank teller.

NC: Did she live in Honolulu?

SM: She went to University, so local; University of Hawaii.

NC: So did you have to travel in to visit her?

SM: Yes, I had my first car.

NC: What kind was it?

SM: Chevrolet.

NC: What year was that?

SM: I think it was '34 Chevrolet. Two door.

NC: How expensive were cars in those days?

SM: Oh, that was nine hundred dollars-- new car.

NC: Where did you shop for the car?

SM: At Wahiawa.

NC: Was that car agency there?

SM: Yes, Service Motors.

NC: So about how many cars were there in Waialua - Haleiwa?
SM: Oh, by 1934 we had a good many cars. But when I was working in the plantation, summer-time, Mr. Goodale the plantation manager was the only one who had a car, a Cadillac.

NC: How were the roads in those days?

SM: Well, very narrow and no roads like this. Dirt road.

NC: And about how long did it take them to go into Honolulu to visit?

SM: Mmmmm. I think one hour half. I'm not a good driver.

NC: It wasn't shortened by much. Now, your father was one of the founders of the Jōdō Mission in Haleiwa? Have you continued to participate in that mission?

SM: Yes, my last assign was treasurer for the new buildings that we just erected two years ago.

NC: Must have been hard work.

SM: Well, we have a very small congregation. I think it's less than one hundred. And those people pledged and donated ninety-three thousand dollars. And during the interval, I mean several years before, I was interested in Young Men's property out in Haleiwa which nobody seemed to take care. And there was a Filipino farmer living there free, tax free. And since the property belonged to Haleiwa Young Men's Association, I took interest, and I wanted this property for the mission because most of the young men there went to this school. (Taisho Gakkō, affiliate of Jōdō Mission.) And I had to get the signatures, from different people. I went way out to almost to Waipahu to get signatures. Finally got it signed plus four-hundred dollars. Three houses in the property. The old houses were useless. So we wrecked it and put in two, three new houses; not new houses, old second hand houses for rent. We were collecting rent but nobody wants to go through with the collecting rent every month. So after awhile we got tired, about 15 years ago and thought it was a good chance to sell. So we sold that three houses plus fifteen thousand square feet property. Not directly on the road but just about 75 feet inside and I priced it a sixty-five thousand dollars, but nobody wants to buy. I got it sold at sixty-two thousand five hundred (dollars) and that money helped us to defray part of the expenses in this Mission but the men and women donated ninety-three thousand or so much, and then ten thousand more from the sale of this property cleared everything. No debt in the church.

NC: That's wonderful. With only one hundred members?

SM: Yes.

NC: What activities does the Mission sponsor?

SM: Well, we used to have Boy Scouts. Women's club meetings
still going on and any month they used to have meetings, young men. But nowadays too busy so they not carrying on. (Taishō School is the language school affiliated with Haleiwa Jōdō Mission.)

NC: Are there holy days that are to be observed in a certain way?

SM: Well I do go to the church most days but unless I'm called I can't go.

NC: If you're called on a case, you mean. Do you get asked by some of the other religious groups in the area also to participate in anything with them?

SM: Not in any particular event, but just donations, they call for donations. That's about all. I don't participate; one is enough for me.

NC: Dr. Miyasaki, when you came back from the mainland and you were a doctor, you established a private practice?

SM: Yes, here in Haleiwa, yes.

NC: In Haleiwa. Did you have anything to do aside from your private practice, with the plantation health care?

SM: Not much except that these plantation people sometimes come to me because of language difficulties. And Dr. Davis asked me to visit the hospital once in awhile and then if he's not available, I used to go there once in awhile.

NC: Now you came back in the 1930's?

SM: '34, '35.

NC: 1935. Did they have a hospital then?

SM: Yes, a plantation hospital.

NC: Did all the people agree that they would use the plantation hospital or did you have some private patients because...

SM: No, I never sent my patients there. My patients, you either had to go to town or I had to ask Dr. Davis to take care. Outside doctors were not permitted into the plantation structure.

NC: And could a plantation worker choose to come to you as a private patient and not go to the plantation hospital?

SM: Yes, but if it needs hospitalization I couldn't go there, so I had to send 'em to town, down to some other doctors.
NC: How available was medicine, like if you prescribe things? Were there certain things that you could not give a prescription for because they couldn't be obtained here? Like, let's compare 1935.

SM: 1935, the only thing available was sulpha amide at the most; no penicillin or other expensive drugs.

NC: Was that discovered later?

SM: Yes, penicillin, after the War. (World War II.)

NC: After the War on somebody's bread mold, right?

SM: Yes. Well, another thing is money. Most of the plantation people--they don't want to spend money.

NC: This was in the 1935's when we're just getting over a depression. Did it change in the forties?

SM: Yes, gradually I think, it changed. Medicine is more available and I began -- 1944, I started to go Wahiawa General Hospital and I take my O. B. cases there and my hospitalization out there. So whatever medicine is available at the hospital, we could not get personally. For instance, I had one girl, she came in because of fever but I couldn't see anything wrong and she was a plantation patient so she visited plantation first. Three days after that I saw her, she was really sick. I notice that she had pustule on finger. I told her so why don't you go to the hospital? She said, "They wouldn't take me." So I told her why don't you go to Queen's. So I called up the doctor for them to see her over there. She went to Queen's and she was there for three months. It was septicemia, a blood stream infection. The first time she came, she looked sick; I couldn't find anything wrong, but she had extraction, dental extraction and because she was bleeding, she couldn't stop so I took off the blood clot and it stopped. Three days after that she was in the hospital three months, and then she came home. She was in two months again. She's alright now.

NC: They have not wanted to take her at the plantation hospital?

SM: No. Actually that would be, plantation didn't have any--one or two nurses and working problem.

NC: No doctors?
SM: Dr. Davis.

NC: This girl lived in the plantation? She's a member of a plantation family. But they wouldn't take her?

SM: Well, if a doctor thinks she's not sick enough, they won't take her.

NC: Did they have very few beds in those days?

SM: Yes, not too many. I think was 15 or twenty beds.

NC: Did you have more of one kind of case than another?

SM: No, had variable, various cases but mostly upper respiratory infections and nowadays the patients for everything.

NC: Why do you think more upper respiratory cases?

SM: Well, I don't know exactly why, but I used to get upper respiratory infection when I was in New York, too. (Laughs) I don't know. Maybe they're living too close together.

NC: Did you ever notice, was it seasonal?

SM: I don't---yes, in winter, yeah.

NC: Is there a particular kind of activity or lack of activity during those months on the plantation?

SM: No, plantation after awhile gave us holidays, so mostly it's staying at home, not at work.

NC: So it wasn't the sugar cane burning or things like that?

SM: No, no. We like to blame it to the sugar cane for asthma and all that but that hasn't been proved one way or another.

NC: Have you noticed it when there's a particular kind of activity that there might be an increase in any kind of symptoms?

SM: No, I wouldn't say that.

NC: I'm not trying to put a case on the plantation. I just wondered if these things happened. Did you ever know of any suicides in this area?

SM: I've known several, but I can't recall off-hand what...let's see, one I distinctly remember was two----a male one, three, all males. The wife had passed away, the children had gone away, he was alone and melancholia or something like that.

NC: Are there any, or as a doctor, do you get patients you notice with
some kind of mental strain, perhaps more than the physical cause?

SM: Yes and no. Most of the time mental.....old Japanese used to have trouble with women. More men than women. They use to fight over and used to have a lot of trouble.

NC: That was in the old days before they could bring their wives, bring their family. Was that during the time you were practicing as a doctor?

SM: During my practice...I don't know the cause but I still have one. 1936, '38, still on in at Kaneohe. She was only 18 or 19 when she went cuckoo.

NC: She was committed? Oh, could anybody guess as to what caused it?

SM: They were living in the farm out there and maybe...I don't like to say congenital. Not any particular disease. But one other sister is peculiar now...

NC: More eccentric than crazy. How about sanitation conditions when you came back? Was there anything that alarmed you?

SM: The latrines were still there, and cesspool had gone in but plantation was late. The plantation in due time put in regular toilets with running water. That was the distinct thing I remember then. It's just like one of these camps with running water. After that, these flush toilets came in. But that was a great improvement for the old Japanese.

NC: How about conditions for garbage collection?

SM: We use to have men who have pigs come and collect. Even now, some cases, they come and collect as well.

NC: Recycling. How about street cleaning?

SM: Street, there is no particular street cleaning except the City and County men, I noticed started some years back.

NC: Do you see any litter problems along the roads?

SM: Along the beach.

NC: How long has that been going on?

SM: Oh, for years. The Reverend out there cleans the beach every morning, you know.

NC: Do you think that litter on the beach may have an effect on the health of the community in general?
SM: Not so much the health as the injury from glass bottles and cans and...

NC: Cans. Have these injuries increased, I mean, are they bad enough that you end up treating people?

SM: Some of them; not much. It used to be worse but it's good now.

NC: Who's taking the responsibility of cleaning up the beach besides that individual doing one piece of the beach?

SM: Nobody except the Reverend cleans that, and the other side owned by a private individual. Nobody does the cleaning except for themselves.

NC: The City and County and the State...

SM: Yeah, and then the park.

NC: Do you know if any of the citizens complain to the different government agencies about this?

SM: No.

NC: How about the birth of babies? Has there been a statistical difference from 1930 to 1960, let's say?

SM: Well, I delivered quite a number at homes, individual homes and maybe I use to be there long time. To repair lacerations. Since 1945, '44, I put them in the hospital so it's easier for me. I just got a circular letter the other day, the UH trying to train midwife nurse to deliver, whether at home or in the hospital, I don't know. To take away some burden from the doctors. I don't do any deliveries now. Two years since I've done any.

NC: Dr. Miyasaki, have there been any retarded children in the area?

SM: Yes, few of them. Retarded have been sent to Waimano Home.

NC: To Waimano Home? Has this been the case that the children were diagnosed as retarded early or did they come to you with a medical problem and you have been the one to diagnose?

SM: Well, yes and no because I have one particular case, she's forty, 44 to 45 years old. I saw the child for the first time at five. When she was five. And I imagine some of other doctors might have seen her too, but she's definitely retarded. The public health nurse and I tried to send her to Waimano Home. The mother said okay, but when we arranged everything, she said no. So she's still with the mother.

NC: Still with the mother? How retarded is she?

SM: She cannot learn ABC. She cannot read. One of those school teachers
tried to tell her how to, to pounce on key C on the piano. She couldn't
remember. She doesn't do anything except sweep once in a while.

NC: So as an adult, this woman is still living with the mother and what
will happen to her when the mother dies?

SM: I talked to the brothers--no sisters, just the brothers involved,
seven or eight members. I talked to some of them, not all. The mother
is in the 80's now. So eventually, they have to take care of this
girl or send 'em to Waimano Home or take-care houses. But I guess
they understand that. They themselves don't want to take care.

NC: How long has Waimano Home been in existence? All during your practice?

SM: Yes.

NC: And before that?

SM: I think so.

NC: What kind of programs do they have there for the mentally retarded?

SM: Just keeping them, not too much in a way of education. Except in the
last ten, twelve years, I'm sure they have.

NC: So it's a custodial institution?

SM: Yeah.

NC: Have there been any epidemics of any kind out in this area?

SM: None except before I came home in 1919 and 1920 there was flu. The
kind of flu, that they're talking about, swine flu, Spanish flu, they
said. In this small location, locality, there were 52 people who
died on that. Jōdō Mission used to be a two story hotel. Many people,
I don't know how many, well, they all develop flu and minister, original
minister's wife passed away from the flu. Caught from the people.
This was quite a severe type of infection that was around.

NC: So, since 1920, this area has been fortunate enough...

SM: Well, I have not known of any since 1936.

NC: Have there been any wide-spread problems, not any epidemics,
but maybe has there been a rash of ringworm?

SM: I've seen lots of ringworm but I can't hold it. I think that's
common, ordinary.

NC: I was thinking of how fast something can spread here.

SM: Well, I don't think it's any worse than in any community.
NC: Do patients of yours, have most of them been with you since they were born, 'cause I know you delivered many babies?

SM: Yes, except they moved out of here to various communities. And they know that I'm getting old so time to go such and such place.

NC: Are there families that you have several generations to take care of?

SM: Yeah. So I don't...some people call me whom I've never known who want me but tell them, "Sorry but I cannot take anybody."

NC: Have you ever had the opportunity to go take any more course in medicine?

SM: I used to go to town every month, but I haven't been around now. I've been to San Francisco for medical conventions and things like that. Aside from that, most times tapes that I listen to. I get tapes every month.

NC: I asked you because I know how busy you are that I just wondered how you...

SM: I used to have it on the car but not any more. I listen to tape while I'm in the car.

NC: Oh, it's modern progress, isn't it? Okay, do you feel that since you started, are the people that you deal with more aware of how they can help themselves?

SM: I think so. And yet they come for every little thing and sometimes I'm annoyed. But they probably afraid so they come, I know. They not coming for fun but they might feel that this might get worse and they come to me.

NC: And you feel that there are things that they should take care of...

SM: Yes, I think so. They should be able to after talking to them so many times.

NC: Do you feel that you can help them practice preventive medicine?

SM: Individually, yes, not as a group. I don't like to talk in a group.

NC: Is this because conditions have improved for them as well as you?

SM: Yes, I think so.

NC: Dr. Niyasaki, do you recall any people in the community, as you were growing up, or during your practice years, that you would describe as colorful personalities? Anybody stands out in your mind?

SM: Yes, but he's dead already.
NC: Oh, and who was that?

SM: We used to call him Seaview Sato. He's the one that used to run the restaurant across the bridge. He was really colorful, he was really a go-getter too, and he used to be in everything, community-wise. Another thing is that he used to owe a lot of money and he never paid.

NC: Did they have another name for him then?

SM: I remember he pledged to donate $175 to this mission. He never came across and people went to ask, community assigned, I mean individual assigned to the man went to ask for the money, said "I'll bring it, I'll bring it soon." He never brought it.

NC: And do you remember any particular medical case of yours that you know, for you, outstanding case?

SM: Well, it's so long, there were many cases. That one I told you about, septicemia. Now, and let's see....Well, offhand, I can't recall. But some cases that I have to send to town for. One time, I definitely felt this is polio; I think around four years old, three to four years old. But he went to the plantation and they say it's not, but turned out to be polio and I felt sorry for the child. Of course couldn't do anything at that time, anyway. I happen to be trained at Willard and Parker for polio. I lived there for one year and I took care of a lot of polio, scarlet fever and all that. When I came back, I found one Japanese girl with scarlet fever. Beautiful scarlet and I reported that to Board of Health and the plantation doctor said we have no scarlet in Hawaii, but I called up the Board of Health, "Oh yes we have scarlet:

NC: Do you remember any thing about techniques, medical techniques that...

SM: Well, technique-wise I don't do too much surgery, so I'm not too anxious to talk about that; but medical-wise, things have changed. Different tests for different things and I have to pick up as I went along for my own. And it's true also of the hospital, too, and just like we used to keep leprosy cases confined to Molokai. Now it's in the Oahu area here. Seen some leprosy in Chicago Hospital, Chicago, that just confined for demonstration. People that never see early leprosy--you can pick up a book use that and compare and tell off hand it's not the same. That has changed quite a bit ever since I came home. I have only one case of leprosy that I knew. It's because, the parents, one of the parents had, I mean, leprosy. I discovered; she's still in Molokai, I think. But she has no place to go. She's all by herself.

NC: And how about paramedics? Do you find an increase in their use or in your practice? Do you...

SM: No, not in my practice but in hospitals they use that. I think it's a good thing in some respect.
NC: That's kind of a later thing, isn't it?

SM: Yes. Just recently. More or less recent. But I was telling you awhile ago how a nurse midwife is coming back and the UH is trying to find out whether there is a need to relieve the doctors from the busy schedule. If they going do it at home or if they going do it in the hospital, it's all right.

NC: We're gonna be different from, for example, in England, they don't have to be registered nurses to be midwives.

SM: Well those I worked with years ago came from Japan, Japan trained midwives. Nurse had gone through nursing schools and they were all right.

NC: What about the ladies in the camp who were midwives? When you came back in 1935, were there still ladies from the different ethnic groups practicing midwife?

SM: My contact was only Japanese but Portuguese used to deliver too.

NC: And in 1935, were they still doing it or were women coming?

SM: Yes, some, some. Not gradually, they shifted over from midwife to hospital. Just before the War. Or maybe thereafter.

NC: Would you say that was because the younger people didn't learn to do it or because the...

SM: Well, there were no midwives, except the ones that came from Japan out here, but in Honolulu there were some others....

NC: Oh I see. Now what were --- this will be rather personal. Can you think of events or occasions in your life that were the happiest you had and why?

SM: I couldn't say.

NC: You've had a good life, haven't you?

SM: More or less even. But I can't say one event is happy and not the others.

NC: You've had many good ones. Have you ever had an occasion when you were very angry about something?

SM: Oh yes, but I don't fly off the handle and try to deal with it. I let nature take its course. That's why I got that.

NC: I don't mean that. Sometimes a father gets angry with his children. I mean, was there something happening in the community that you perhaps thought was an injustice or a government agency didn't carry out its responsibility or something like that which affected the community,
which made you angry?

SM: I don't get angry for anything done by government 'cause government is very slow in acting and they said main highway will come out around the island. That's forty years ago they said they were gonna put a highway around there but nothing happened.

NC: Still don't have it. And now they're questioning whether they should make it at Kaena Point, yeah?

SM: Yeah.

NC: Maybe forty years from now.

SM: It was pleasant going that train, pass through Kaena Point Sandy Beach. You know what I mean. The train use to run from Kahuku through here, to Kaena Point, around to Waianae and to town.

NC: How late was that, how long ago did it stop?

SM: I think just before the War started.

NC: Just before World War II?

SM: Yeah.

NC: It would still be a good scenic ride now wouldn't it?

SM: Yeah, but they sold that railroad, land of the railroad property to different individuals.

NC: Would be harder now.

SM: And you Jodo Mission had to buy 200 feet by 40 feet. Oh, they wanted $7,500 but we but we don't have that kind of money. We jewed them down to $6,000. Then we got the two houses on the side and the next ten years it amount to, but we're still paying for it.

NC: Paying off the project?

SM: So the mission owns from the road to the beach.

NC: That's good.

SM: A valuable property now.

NC: Can you say some of things that made real changes in your life? Any event that made a real change in your life or set you in a certain path?

SM: No, it's not my chance, my.... what made me pick up medicine, that's about the only change.
NC: Can you tell me about it?

SM: Well I said before, this minister wanted to take me to Japan and I was afraid to go back to Japan and I didn't want to. And then when I was in MPI I knew, I'll be graduating, I have to go to college. What am I gonna do after I graduate from college. Then I happened to go to a doctor here, a Japanese doctor, was Japan trained. Said really if I work hard enough, maybe I can be one of them. That's how I gradually worked out.

NC: Did you go to him for help, medical help?

SM: No.

NC: You went to him to talk to him?

SM: No, medical help in the way. I think my father had tummy ache and I took him there. I went with him and when I was around, he did speak in Japanese and I happened to know a little bit and I thought that's what I want, it must be good profession. I didn't talk to my father about that for quite sometime and he asked me what am I gonna do? I had to spill the beans and we didn't have enough money to send me to the Mainland. But he said he'd try and he say, "Son, you have to help yourself." So I have to pick school I don't have to pay too much tuition. Cause nowadays, you gotta pay $5,000 for one year. Those days were $350 or 200 something a year. So I got by working part of my time.

END OF INTERVIEW
NC: This is the second interview with Dr. Miyasaki in Haleiwa. Today is July 8th, 1976. Dr. Miyasaki, it's interesting that you went from the local school all the way to Mid Pacific Institute. Who decided that you should go to Mid Pacific?

SM: Well, I had a friend who used to go to town and he urged me to go to town school--MPI rather than McKinley. McKinley was fairly big school at that time, and I could not commute from here, so MPI was the only school I should go to.

NC: And at McKinley, you would have had to try to get in everyday then?

SM: Yes.

NC: So, MPI was the only place where you could board?

SM: Right.

NC: When you were a child, you had a pretty busy schedule, but you did find time for some recreation. You said you liked tennis...

SM: Yes. Baseball and tennis. I broke my wrist and I didn't play ball anymore. I just played tennis.

NC: In the activities that you could participate in as a child, were there children of many ethnic groups?

SM: Yes, in school. Before we come home, we go to Japanese school. That is only Japanese. Now, you find many...from other ethnic groups going to Japanese school. Yeah. But at that time, was principally Japanese extraction.

NC: So, now, it has changed so that...

SM: Yes, a great deal. This school out here, at the peak, used to have four hundred so many students from elementary school. But now, I think it's less than eighty Japanese and the other students.
NC: Do you think that the children studying Japanese in the after school are there by their choice, or....

SM: Well, I don't think they have a choice. I think it's the parents tell 'em to go.

NC: So it hasn't changed in that respect?

(Laughter)

NC: Would you say that you were there by choice when you were a child, or your parents...

SM: Well, I think....see, when I came here, I was told to go to school in Waialua. I went there one year. And since this one opened, father told me go to the school, so I started going there.

NC: So after one year in Waialua, you went to the language school?

SM: There was a language school in Waialua. Hongwanji.

NC: Oh, I see.

SM: And then this is the Jōdōshu, so my father, being a Jōdōshu member...

NC: Now I have it straight. I thought perhaps they had opened an all day school.

SM: No.

NC: But you had told me that you went to Waialua through the eighth grade.

SM: That's elementary school here.

NC: Oh, I see. So, you really didn't have much chance to play with the other ethnic groups?

SM: No, excepting Waialua Elementary School.

NC: During the school day, was the discipline in the public school such that everything was organized all day long, or did you really have a chance to make friends during the day?

SM: Oh, yes. We had two recesses, one in the morning, one in the afternoon. So, plenty of time to play ball, or, other things.

NC: The teachers in the public schools, were they local teachers, or....

SM: No. During my days, there were only two local teachers. That is, local graduate here went to a Normal School in town and came back to teach here. Others were from Honolulu and from California.

NC: Do you remember the nationality or the ethnic group of the two local
teachers?

SM: Chinese and Japanese.

NC: So, would you say that...there was a chance at the teaching profession for different ethnic groups in those older days?

SM: Yes, yes.

NC: Do you know why teachers came from California or other places in the Mainland?

SM: I think English was emphasized so much that...they rather have some people from California come and teach the language.

NC: I think you're right there. The English Standard school...that was part of your experience?

SM: No, when I was going to school, there was no such thing. But after I finished, I understand there were three English Standard schools in Honolulu. But not out here.

NC: You remember that we also talked about midwives in the early days? And you thought that out here, it was only Japanese trained in Japan.

SM: Yeah.

NC: Could you tell me about what year that might have been?

SM: Well, the midwives were--there were three midwives when I came back from Mainland. That's 1935. But before that Japanese women, particularly, rarely gave birth in the hospital out here in the country. Always midwives. And when there's difficulty, the plantation doctors used to visit the home.

NC: Do you think that before 1935 that in this area there were midwives of other nationalities, or only those ladies trained in Japan?

SM: No, I have never met, but I heard of Portuguese women delivering babies.

NC: Yeah, we have, too, that's why I wondered. When you came back, you had a house here in Haleiwa?

SM: Yes.

NC: Did you have the house before you came back? Did it become your property before you came back?

SM: No, after I came back.

NC: You bought it when you came back.
SM: After, yeah.
NC: What made you decide to practice in Haleiwa?
SM: Well, not my choice. (Laughs) I had wanted to go back to the Mainland for studies, but it so happened that I was just grounded here due to my folks and also, that I got sick.
NC: So, it was Haleiwa, I mean, you could have chosen Honolulu, but you didn't.
SM: Yes. But I didn't want to go Honolulu.
NC: Could you tell me why.
SM: Oh, just that I didn't want. I'm a country boy, and I just.....(Laughs)
NC: Oh. You were comfortable here. As a young doctor, and being in Haleiwa which at that time had a smaller population than now?
SM: Yes, I think, not smaller. Maybe it's about the same. The only doctor at that time was Dr. Davis, plantation, Waialua plantation.
NC: He was the plantation doctor.
SM: Yes.
NC: So, the plantation took care of it's own, and then you had to depend on a practice...
SM: Yes, outside.
NC: ...for the outsiders.
SM: Mhm.
NC: But you still decided on Haleiwa, then, mostly to be near your folks?
SM: Yes. They were getting old and I didn't want to leave. If I left them and if I go to the Mainland, then I have to come back should anything happen.
NC: Now, another thing, when you came back, you got a car. Did you need the car for your practice?
SM: Yes, I had to do many house calls way up, five miles above this hill here toward Wahiawa. I had the first car. I had it for at least three years. And then, when I went to visit home way up the mountain, it was dry. On my way back, it started to rain. It rained just enough so that the surface is wet, then, the car start to skid on the muddy road, and I landed in the ditch.

(Laughter)
NC: Were you hurt?

SM: Wasn't hurt. It just gently went in there.

(Laughter)

SM: My blood pressure apparatus and my bag all running down in the ditch.

(Chuckles)

NC: My goodness. And what happened? What about the car? Was it working after that?

SM: Yes, but I left the car, then, I started walk down the hill, and I met a Filipino man who took me down to a garage. And the garage people came up to pick up the car. Repaired that.

NC: And you used the car in order to visit the young lady who was to become your wife.

SM: That was an incidental thing. That's the same car I used, you know, yeah.

NC: I won't ask you if you went in a ditch. (Laughs) Okay. When you were courting Chieko....a friend had introduced you?

SM: Yes.

NC: And did the friend also speak to her parents?

SM: Yes.

NC: Was that the traditional...

SM: Yes.

NC: ...way of introducing young people to each other?

SM: Mhm.

NC: Okay. Now....what kind of visits or taking her out was permitted in those days by the parents?

SM: I visit her once a week when I'm off. So, all we could do is just go to picture shows or something like that.

NC: And, so the picture shows were in Honolulu. Do you remember what kind of movies....talkies, or....yes, it was talking...

SM: The only one that I remember distinctly was this Nelson Eddy's what do you call that....singing. Nelson Eddy with....
NC: With Jeannette McDonald?
SM: Right. That's the one I remember. That was in Princess Theatre.
NC: Oh! In 1935, '36?
SM: Somewhere in '36, I think.
NC: Naughty Marietta?
SM: Yeah, that's one.
NC: Yeah. It was one of my favorites, too.

(Laughter)
NC: Were you allowed to take her to a restaurant or to have some refreshment or....
SM: I never did. Those days, I didn't have the time, anyway, and I don't want to keep her too long, so I took her back, generally. We had a little drink at her home. She was living in town.
NC: Was there an expectation that you would have to visit for so long before you could think about marriage?
SM: No.
NC: No. It just depended on the two of you?
SM: Yes.
NC: Were her parents the kind of people who observed Japanese traditions for the most part?
SM: Yes.
NC: I see. But, was this part of becoming Americanized that they allowed you to act as two responsible independent people?
SM: I think so. I think so.
NC: Was it their effort to get Americanized, or was it that they expected that you young people would....
SM: I think they just accepted....how were things going in the society like that.
NC: Yeah. Did they have other children?
SM: They had....one, two, three....
NC: What I really mean is, like, is she the first one?
SM: Yes, she's the first one.
NC: Oh, so she was breaking ice for the... rest of the family?
SM: One, two, three, four... four girls, you know, younger than... and the three brothers.
NC: So, she was kind of---maybe, I'm just reading into it. I was guessing that she was kind of helping the parents understand American ways, then.
SM: No, I think that is automatic. It just came along. She wasn't doing anything unusual.
NC: I see. Was she in school at the time?
SM: No, she was working in the bank as a teller.
NC: And had she gone to....
SM: Yes, she was....at the University for three years, and then, the parents were having hard time, so she stopped going to school. She start work at the Yokohama Specie Bank.
NC: So, she had to drop out?
SM: Yeah.
NC: Did she ever have a chance to finish?
SM: Strange things happened. When she went back, there was no record of her being there.
NC: Oh.
SM: Somebody switched her card. Similar name and her record was not there.
NC: I've known of other records getting lost.
SM: Yeah.
NC: I don't know if it was a switch. You know....I've known that to happen to several people here. I guess it's the system of bookkeeping---record keeping really. Now, we can get back to few other things. Dr. Miyasaki, in the 1919 flu epidemic, you told me that 52 people had died. Was that Haleiwa or Waialua?
SM: That's Waialua. I don't know about other nationality, but quite a number of Japanese died. I think the others got the flu, too, but Japanese being on strike, probably their sanitation was not as good as it should be then.
NC: Were some of those strikers evicted?

SN: I don't like to call it evicted, but the strikers just came to pick 'em up. Certain people came to push them out with the trucks. They pull out the things from the house, and the plantation itself did not---the police did not evict them. But the strikers came to... for instance, in my house, my father did not want to strike, but four men--I distinctly remember--four men came with the truck to load our stuff in the car.

NC: They tried to get your father out?

SM: My father didn't want, but because of me--I was little, and he thought I'd be in a bad situation thereafter, so he went out. But Mr. Goodale told him don't go, but he went out.

NC: So, you feel your father was forced to go on strike?

SM: More or less, yes. Not by the plantation, but by...

NC: But by the other strikers.

SM: Yeah, yeah.

NC: So, if the people were not evicted, but still they left. You say they were---you think that the strikers went and pushed the non-striking Japanese out?

SM: Yeah. Majority of them. But, some did not go out of the plantation. Some of the supervisory group. They stayed on. But after the strike was over, they were sort of---what do you call that.....

NC: Rivalry? Bitterness?

SM: They were bitter against these people who did not go out.

NC: Even though they were Japanese? The same as themselves?

SM: They were known as strike breaker, and....they didn't like 'em.

NC: Were you aware of the same feeling for the other ethnic groups that did not go on strike?

SM: No. I think this was principally Japanese strike. They were underpaid. My father was a head carpenter, and he was paid only two dollars a day. But a Portuguese shop foreman there was paid three something. And my father went to ask Mr. Goodale, who's the manager, why the.... discrepancy of payment. Mr. Goodale at that time answered, "We're not paying for the job. We're paying the men." So my father couldn't say anything. So he went back. But eventually, he raised his pay in due time.
NC: Do you think he raised only your father's pay, or did he raise other ethnic groups who were doing the same kind of work?

SM: I don't know about them. But, I know my father was the top man in salary amongst the Japanese.

NC: It's a pity the way some of those things happen.

SM: Yes, well, I was afraid of Mr. Goodale. He's nice man, but tall and (Laughs) my father would not give me the job. "You go and ask Mr. Goodale." So I had to go. I was scared to go in the office, but.

(Laughter)

NC: So your father wouldn't hire you without an okay, huh?

SM: Yeah.

NC: Oh my. You know, this was ethnic prejudice then, not to give the Japanese equal pay.

SM: That's how it was previously.

NC: Yeah. It seems to have been accepted by all the groups for a while. Can you think back with what might have started the workers thinking that wasn't fair.

SM: Well, I think, working just as hard as other people and they're not paid as much, probably....brought on that kind of a strike, and all that.

NC: You know, they did bring in other workers. Were you aware of other ethnic groups coming in after their working force went down in 1919, 1920?

SM: Well, I've heard, now that you mentioned, but I never realize that they were in the Waialua Plantation. Because there was a Spanish camp and there was a Puerto Rican camp and the Portuguese camp, Japanese camp. There were very, very few Chinese.

NC: Yes. They had left? Okay. Now, after that strike of 1919 and the epidemic and all that, was the Japanese group....then, the least represented amongst the workers? You know they had the fewest...

SM: For a while, yes.

NC: Then it picked up again?

SM: It picked up for a while, but in the meantime, many of the youngsters had left for Waipahu where they wanted more men. And many of our friends here had gone to Waipahu Plantation, Oahu plantation.
NC: To another plantation? Okay. So, they couldn't keep the young people here. Now, these young people were not the children of the ones who had been on strike, or were they...

SM: No, they both. Both.

NC: So, all the young people wanted to leave?

SM: Leave the plantation and start somewhere else.

NC: Could that have been due partly to the parents wanting something different?

SM: Right. For instance, my father told me, "Get in your own business. Don't work under somebody. You'll never get ahead." I think that was general throughout the place. They realized after the strike, I think, you cannot be working plantation all the time.

NC: Dr. Miyasaki, do you feel that your parents were almost owned by the plantation?

SM: I didn't feel that way, but everywhere you go, plantation is on top of you. And you don't want to do anything that the plantation didn't want. So, my father didn't want to strike, but, because of me, they went out. And when we came back, the Japanese did not win the strike. Yeah. They came back because they had to, and when my father went to see Mr. Goodale, he say, "Yeah. Come home and work." In fact, it was many years before that when my father asked for pay, equal pay with the Portuguese shop man, Mr. Goodale said, "We pay the man, not the work." Father left to work in Schofield, and they were building houses over there. Schofield. And he worked there for six months, or eight months, I think. And then during that time, Mr. Goodale came and asked him if he wanted to come back. Said, "Why? Give the same kind of pay that the others.... I'll go back." But he said, "No, we cannot give." "But," he said, "they want to build a Catholic church. St. Michael's over there. So, you want to contract that, you come back." Said, "Okay." So, he came back and he built the first Catholic church in that same place St. Michael's. And when Father Sebastian was still there, that Catholic church, first church that Father built burned down. He had the picture. But he felt quite bad afterward. He got his raise after that church was built.

NC: Now... where were you during the Depression years?

SM: In 1927, '29, was it?

NC: Yeah. '29. It hit Hawaii hardest 1931.

SM: I was in Chicago.

NC: You were in Chicago. And how did the Depression affect the help that your parents were able to give you?
SM: They were giving me money, but small amount. And I was...by 1929.... I was still in Chicago up to, let's see, '31. And I was interning. I was in the Masonic Hospital, and it didn't bother me at all, yeah. Because I was getting free meals and lodging and they used to wash my clothes for me. Iron my clothes. The only thing that bothered me was beans for breakfast, beans for lunch, beans for supper. (Laughs) In the hospital, you know.

NC: (Laughs) And you used to be a fussy eater, right?

SM: Right. But I didn't want to spend money, so I used to eat at the hospital. And the nurses were nice, they were. Thanksgiving, like that, they used to save things for me to eat.

NC: Now, you really had mostly beans, then?

SM: That time, beans, three times a day.

NC: Anything else from time to time? Yeah?

SM: Yes, but they were the most noticeable one, beans.

(Laughter)

NC: Did your mother, did your father, did any friends write to you about the conditions back home during those years?

SM: No, they didn't say that they were having a hard time or anything like that.

NC: Did you know that they were or were not?

SM: I heard there was a Depression, but....because I didn't feel anything, (Laughs) it didn't bother me, yeah.

NC: And your parents never complained about anything?

SM: No.

NC: So your mother's only worry was that you were so far away?

SM: Yes. Strange, you know. I seldom ever got sick after I left here. It's only when I came back that I got sick. (Laughs)

NC: What kind of sickness?

SM: As a child, I had pneumonia. I was sick....summertime. And I broke my wrist as I told you before, and after I came back, start practice here, I had a very bad gall bladder disease. Then, appendix.

NC: Such a young man! You...
SM: Well, I was younger, but I still had the gall bladder and I had appendix. They thought was appendix, and Dr. Strode operated on me, and then, a week later, I was still having fever, and they opened up the gall bladder and drained it. And I was in Queen's for 46 days.

NC: 46 days. Was that because of the techniques used then, or....

SM: No I was just sick. Things used to float before me. Flowers used to move up and down by the sill, window sill. And they tell me I was delirious for quite a while.

NC: Did they have a specialist there, or....

SM: Well, Dr. J. Strode was a surgeon, anyway. He was the top surgeon.

NC: When you came back...

SM: It was still Depression, but, not, probably, just the way it was.

NC: Were your patients able to pay?

SM: Very little.

NC: Did they pay you in cash when they paid? Did you cure on credit?

(Laughter)

SM: I'm softy and I never collected many of them, good many of them. Never collected.

NC: Did anybody ever pay you, like, with produce? You know, vegetables and...

SM: Yes, some did. But, I never demand those things. They bring for me and I used to thank them for it. But, if I had kept all the---they didn't pay, amount to quite a sum, but I never wanted to. They were sick and they can't pay, well, that's all.

NC: That's a wonderful attitude. You know, you were here...

(Telephone rings. SM answers. Afterward, taping resumes)

NC: Dr. Miyasaki, so, in this period 1935 did you feel that the plantation could almost reach out and influence your medical practice, for example?

SM: I did not feel that way, but, I know, because my father was still there, I was obligated to do some things that perhaps I didn't want. But.... on the whole, plantation managers have been very good to me, starting with Mr. Midkiff, who was very nice. He used to invite me once a month to their meetings on the plantation. I never used the hospital for my patients, but I used to do Dr. Davis when he calls. So, when he's not there, the nurses used to call. I have nothing against the
plantation. The present manager, Mr. Paty. Very nice. I was amazed the other day when there was a meeting. Was it April or May? He called on the outsiders, Haleiwa people by first name without any notes.

NC: During those first years, you didn't really have many people coming from the plantation. They had their own care system.

SM: Yes, only once in a while they used to drop in, because they were dissatisfied, and they used to come. I accepted them.

NC: So, those of your patients who could pay, what kind of jobs did they have?

SM: You mean in Haleiwa?

NC: Yeah.

SM: Well, variety of jobs. Stores, work in the stores. Or work in their own field out there, lotus fields. All kind. Carpentry and all that. Outside carpenters.

NC: Did you have any school teachers or....

SM: Very few, yes. Those school teachers were usually still from the Mainland, and relatively few local teachers.

NC: Were the teachers paid in cash, and could they pay you in cash?

SM: Well, they paid in check and they used to go to a bank, and they used to pay me.

NC: Oh, so they did have money? They had money? On the Mainland, some of them were paid with script during the Depression.

SM: I don't remember script out here.

NC: Out here? No, I haven't heard of it. I just was wondering. Now.... when you got married then, the Depression was almost over?

SM: Yes, nearly over.

NC: Was that a factor helping you to decide that you could get married?

SM: No, I don't think so.

NC: No, I mean, economically, you...

SM: I didn't have much trouble with my finance. (Laughs)

NC: I just wondered that if the people couldn't pay that....

SM: Oh, yes, but I had enough to get along, so it didn't bother me. I didn't
make a fortune, but I just get along.

(Laughter)

NC: But you could be married. Some people couldn't in those days. When mechanization started in the plantation--some of it was pretty early, but a lot of it happened during the late '30s and all--were you aware of any health hazards or any....

SM: I've heard of many accidents, but I don't know of any hazards otherwise.

NC: Well, I mean, hazards that caused accidents. So, you heard about them but there wasn't....

SM: I seldom ever treated anybody like that.

NC: The radio was kind of a recreation thing in those days.

SM: Yes.

NC: Did you have time to listen to the radio?

SM: Yes, I did. In the evenings and sometimes in the afternoons, I used to listen. I never listened in the morning.

NC: Did you have any favorite programs?

SM: I don't recall any.

(Laughter)

SM: Oh, well, in regards to programs...I used to listen to lot of Mainland programs that came in. Jokes, people telling jokes and all that.

NC: Oh, the comedians.

SM: But I used to listen to them most of the time.

NC: Okay.

SM: Eddie Cantor and his group and the one who died recently.

NC: Jack Benny?

SM: Jack Benny. I used to like.

NC: Did things get better about your medical supplies? You told me that you had to carry the medicine yourself, because there was no drug store.
SM: Still, there is no drug store here but because there are cars, they
go out and pick whatever they cannot get from me.

NC: Where do they go? Now?

SM: Oh, there're two drug stores up Wahiawa. Wahiawa Pharmacy and
Okimoto Pharmacy. And the Waialua Plantation, now, has the drug
department, and they can go.

NC: So, that has improved, then. The burden is not on you anymore.

SM: Yeah.

NC: You came back 1935. By 1941, we were at war. Where were you when the
Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor?

SM: Right here. I used to have a two story building in the next lot.
I was living there. My office was there. Two story. I used to live
up on the top, and the office was downstairs. One Sunday morning,
December 7th, it was, I started to see a patient, and suddenly, I
used to notice sounds of shooting, machine-gun shots. And the patients
that were in my office went out to see them. They say, "War, war!"
So, I said, "Ah, no war!" I went out to see them, but I did not see
the planes. So high, I cannot see what planes they were. But, by
noon, I found out that it was Japanese who were attacking here. And
I had to take back two of the Japanese boys who were my friends, my
friends of my parents I had brought home the night before to my
parents' home. I had to take them to Schofield. And I took them.
I picked up another one this Yamada's store, and another one--my mother's
neighbor--four soldiers. And I took them on my car, and start to go
on up this Kemo Hill. I was stopped and told to dismount, and....open
the trunk. They asked me each one who these people were. I told them,
"These are soldiers I'm taking'back to Schofield." Say, "Okay,
go." And there were a platoon walking down the hill. And when I went
to about couple of miles ahead, I was stopped again. Same thing. And
finally, I stopped at Service Motors, and I told the boys, "It's a
short distance. Walk from here. I don't want to go up there anymore."

(Laughter)

NC: Next time, they would have come with a gun, though.

SM: And then, I saw shots, bullet holes in the doors and all in the stores,
you know. And people wanted gas, gasoline, and the man won't sell the
gasoline. So, he told me to "Wait until these people are gone and I'll
give you some gasoline to go home." But on the way back, I was stopped
again, but they let me go.

NC: Was this military police who were stopping you?

SM: Yeah, Schofield soldiers coming down to the shore to observe what's
going on.
NC: Was there any damage any closer? Like, right here in this area?

SM: No. Not in my home or anywhere else here, but shots were being fired. And I heard those shots.

NC: I hope nobody in your family was hurt.

SM: No, nobody.

NC: Then, what conditions existed around here for the next few weeks after that?

SM: Blackouts. And I was awakened, because we hung a black cloth and paper, you know, so that if the soldiers from out there see the light from the window, they used to come and tap at the window. We used to blacking out. Only thing we listened to was radio, at that time. And one time, a police—I'm sure it was military policeman—entered. I had the radio covered with black, because the light shows in there. And he came to investigate the radio, but they didn't take mine, anyway. Many places, the radios were taken off, taken by these people away.

NC: By what authority?

SM: I don't know. They just took. They claimed, afterwards, but some of them were not able to get their radio. Mine was just small one, so they didn't take. They didn't do that in the plantation. Outside. Because Mr. Midkiff was there. Said, "I'll take care of my men."

NC: How were the children affected in the area? Did you have any nervous children to treat, or....

SM: No, I think they were fairly calm. I think the adults were more concerned than irritated.

NC: Did the blackouts affect your work in any way?

SM: Well, it was good for me. I didn't work night time.

(Laughter)

NC: For the rest of the year. Did they ration food or gas?

SM: Gasoline, yes. I still have some stamps that I used before. And, the food was—I didn't feel anything, because I wasn't buying the food. (Laughs) but the only thing I felt was gasoline shortage. I had to use stamp.

NC: But you were the doctor? Did the authorities make sure that you had more....

SM: Probably had more than the rest of the people. And I could ask for it.
NC: Then, again, about the children. Was there anything unusual for the children? What happened...

SM: I did not notice any discrimination, being Japanese children from the other nationalities. There may have been, but I didn’t notice.

NC: What happened in the schools, though? Did they go to school regularly?

SM: Oh, yes. After the initial shock, well, they all went back to school.

NC: Were the children out here required to get identification cards or anything like that?

SM: Yes. We all got the fingerprints and all that.

NC: Including the children?

SM: Oh, yes.

NC: Little children?

SM: Well, my daughter was... just two, then. Two of them got fingerprints printed.

NC: Fingerprinted. Were the children taught to used gas masks or anything like that?

SM: At one time, yes. But that quickly faded. (Laughs)

NC: Was that due to something like initial hysteria?

SM: Yeah, I think so.

NC: Was your practice increased by the influx of defense workers and military?

SM: No, I did not take care much of the military. Just civilians.

NC: Were there more defense workers coming into the area?

SM: No, most of the defense worker, men out here went to Wahiawa to work from Schofield.

END OF SIDE ONE.

SIDE TWO.

NC: What kind of travel was restricted?

SM: Particularly night time. Visiting patients. At one time, I went to--as I told you before--Kamaloa, where there’s an ammunition dump. I was called in to see a woman who was sick. I didn’t go, because I was afraid of the soldiers. (Chuckles) Then, policemen came to pick me up
But that policeman happened to be a Japanese policeman.

(Laughter)

SM: And when we got to, say, oh, around fifty feet—oh, and it was raining too. And they say, "Dismount," and we got off the car, and then, advanced to be recognized without umbrella. (Laughs) Carried my bag and I had to walk toward the guard. And ask me some questions. Where I'm going and why am I going. They passed us and on the way back, he stopped us again, but, uneventfully, I came home. But I was frightened.

(Laughts)

NC: Yeah.

SM: The guns pointing at me. You know, I would say...

NC: Only because you were Japanese?

SM: Yeah.

NC: Were all of these people who stopped you, were they all of other ethnic groups? Other places?

SM: Other nationalities. Afterwards, I learned that these people who were watching the ammunition dump were from New York. Some military, they moved to Hawaii.

NC: They were men who had been drafted?

SM: Yes.

NC: They were not people who were stationed here before?

SM: No. So, the men told me they used to hear gunshots in the Puuiki area where they kept the cows, the herd over there. Shots going out, night walk, and cows walking at night. The men got scared and they used to fire on them.

(Laughter)

NC: Poor cows! Were any of your friends interned? Neighbors...

SM: Yes, were. In fact, my Jōdō Mission minister was interned.

NC: Was he a citizen?

SM: And the Hongwanji Mission. The man who was there was interned. School teachers were interned. And...some fishermen were interned.

NC: Was the reason made known for why they were interned?

SM: In some, yes. One of my friends who's about two years younger than I—the only reason was that he signed his name on the paper that to borrow
money to buy trucks to be sent to Red Cross in Japan. And he was interned for two years in Sand Island area.

NC: What happened to his family while he was interned?

SM: Well, the wife and four children used to come to me, and the wife used to cry. And I used to write a letter for her. Again, I write a letter. I used to write letter stating that this man had nothing to do with...he was born here, never left the islands. But, I remember writing two letters for him. And, gave it to the wife and sent it in. But, after two years, he was released.

NC: But it took two years of his life. How did the community react along ethnic lines? Was there a division?

SM: There must have been. Probably other people looked down on Japanese, but as far as the plantation manager goes, Mr. Midkiff was very kind in that way. And he said he'll take care all the Japanese nationality in Waialua, except priests and teachers. But even to them, he was kind. He was the only manager of plantation who visited internment camp, and relayed messages, whatever they are.

NC: Yeah. How did the Japanese Americans, Americans of Japanese ancestry in the community react to this crisis situation?

SM: Well, I wouldn't know. But, personally, I was frightened, being right by the ocean...and they tell us that they're going to invade us. Mr. Midkiff called us, few people in Haleiwa area to be prepared. "What would you do if Japanese Navy invaded us?" He wanted to know. "Would you fight against them?" And we all said we will fight. We're not Japanese subject anyway. Just color was Japanese. So, I think he was convinced that we will not give away anything.

NC: Did the Japanese people make an organized effort to show their patriotism?

SM: Yes, that's a volunteer group first time. And then the 442nd, but many of them volunteered and some were rejected, but they were a young group and they went to Mississippi, and they showed themself what.

NC: And how about locally, the ones who were not able to join the military? What did the civilians do? Did they also form a group?

SM: No, the only diehard group are the old Japanese who believed Japan was winning the war. And they were not outspoken, but they stayed home, and (Laughs) they believed Japan was winning the war. When we tell them, it's losing the war, they were angry.

NC: Yeah, they probably did not understand. Were some of them citizens, and some not citizens?

SM: Relatively few, if any. Most of them were just alien Japanese.
NC: But they were not interned?

SM: They weren't because they didn't participate anything active. All the ones who participated in this truck buying business were interned.

NC: What about---was there a group known as the Victory Unit?

SM: Yes, that's the volunteer Japanese group with youngsters.

NC: Those were youngsters?

SM: Yeah, they were young. About 18, high school and over.

NC: They volunteered for the service, or did they....

SM: At first the service and then they wanted to join the Army, so many of them did. Some, they drop out.

NC: Was there any group out here that became involved in selling bonds or buying bonds, I mean buying United States bonds or anything like that?

SM: No, I don't remember. But, I remember such things....I used to buy bond every month.

NC: Yes. We did in school, too. Did they have that in the schools here?

SM: Yes. That's a stamp.

NC: Yeah, we used to buy those stamps. Save it up to a bond. Were you involved in any particular group of Japanese Americans during the War days?

SM: No, I didn't participate in any of those; I was in between, so, I didn't want to be suspected of anything. In fact, a sergeant at the beach, Haleiwa beach, he used to take care of the military group, put in a good word for me to National Guard Commander Lyman. And I used to have a military police and they used to come and ask me certain people, what you think about certain people? First generation group. But, I had to explain to them that many of them that I know are just mouth and they don't really have anything.

(Laughter)

NC: But still that put quite a responsibility on you.

SM: Yeah. And I was, let's see, military intelligence, and what's the other one? FBI. They used to come. I was scared at the beginning, (Laughs) but they were nice people.

NC: Would you say that the community remained more calm than excited?

SM: I think so. After the shock gradually calm down to their own business.
NC: Now...after the War, the union started to come to organize people. Did that affect Haleiwa?

SM: Not to any degree that I know.

NC: The activity stayed within the plantation as far as you know?

SM: Plantation.

NC: Now, your dad was still living there, so, there...

SM: Yes, but he never belong to union.

NC: Yes, well, was that because he was...

SM: Supervisory group.

NC: Did the supervisory group ever form a union?

SM: Not that they called union, but they have an organization.

NC: Did you, as a person who could stand aside and look in with a good close look, how would you appraise the coming of the union? Think in terms of the workers. What do you think it did for the workers?

SM: I think it did some good. But...in some respects, the demand was too great and too sudden and too rapid. And probably that was hurting them, but union is a good thing.

NC: After the union was established, then was there an effect on Haleiwa? Did workers in Haleiwa who did not belong to unions and who did not work on the plantation, do you think there was activity then?

SM: No, no. I don't think so.

NC: Haleiwa still stayed calm. (Chuckles) Did you know that Waialua was the last plantation to sign up with the ILWU?

SM: I didn't know, but I know they used to come and talk at the park over there.

NC: Yeah. Now that I've told you, could you take a guess why Waialua was the last one to sign...

SM: I think Waialua--the plantation management was...although it's a plantation, they treated people fairly good. And Mr. Midkiff was really nice.

NC: We've heard good things, you know. It's just that it's also interesting to see that--you're not really in there, but yet your father was. And you had, like I say, a front row seat at what was happening. Okay.
How about health conditions? Can you tell me about immunization?

SM: Out here, immunization was started I recall in 1937. Diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough immunization. From then on, gradually, in numbers, schools start to demand immunization, and I used to have quite a few. First one was DPT vaccination. Then, later on, typhoid immunization. And...I had some scarlet fever, but we didn't have penicillin at that time. The best we had was sulfa. So, because of those things, we didn't have too many diphtherias and....

NC: Now those are all kind of infant and childhood diseases. Because immunization started seriously in 1937, had there been grown ups before who were afflicted with any of these communicable diseases?

SM: I had three or four diphtheria cases. Adults. And....in teenage, I think, about two of them were really sick with diphtheria. I had to get diphtheria antitoxin and then...But relatively few. I have never seen diphtheria after immunization started. They went to a hospital or someplace, I don't know, but....

NC: Immunization helped the youngsters. How about....the birthrate and infant mortality?

SM: I think that must have helped a lot. We used to give the mothers DPT, and that may have some bearing. As far as deliveries at home, if anything's difficult, we used to send 'em to the hospital. So, death, at home delivery, in my case, hardly any, because we don't wait till it's too long. And the youngsters grew up. They don't die off, just like kids used to die of whooping cough and all that. We didn't have that. I've seen enough in New York. The thing called scarlet measles and all that. Not too many out here, no.

NC: Not too many out here in Haleiwa? Even before immunization?

SM: Yes. I remember only few cases of whooping coughs. I used to see a good number in New York, many time.

NC: Much more population over there, huh?

SM: It's not as crowded as New York.

NC: Yeah. This is still good fresh air and all that out here.

(Laughter)

NC: Do you see any other changes in the later '30s and then into the '40s as far as the health of the community is concerned? In the '40s, were the defense workers....again, were there any kinds of stress and strain that were really visible?

SM: They might have been overworked, but most of them were upper respiratory
diseases. And possibly due to overworking night and day and all that. That's why.

NC: Yeah. I've had people tell me that they worked seven days a week, sometimes six weeks straight. And some had to move into...Pearl Harbor. And they lived there as well as worked there. They were on call 24 hours a day in some jobs.

SM: Those are specific jobs.

NC: Did the people who work here, were those upper respiratory diseases due to conditions in the defense....

SM: I think so. In large measure, they communicate from one to another.

NC: Oh, because they were working in close quarters? I see. Okay. Then as far as the War was concerned, the community stayed pretty calm, and...

SM: Yes, I think so. I think they behaved fairly good.

(Laughter)

NC: Dr. Miyasaki, do you remember the six month strike in 1946?

SM: Yes. It didn't affect me, but I'm sure it affected some of the stores. The Filipinos couldn't get any pay and they were getting hard times. And the stores were getting difficulty in payment. I didn't ask for money, so, everything went alright.

(Laughter)

NC: Do you think that the hardships endured by the workers put any kind of strain on the health standards of the community?

SM: Not to my knowledge.

NC: How about the feelings of people in the community towards what was happening on the plantation and the effect it had on the storekeepers of Haleiwa?

SM: Well, they didn't like it, but I don't think they.....sympathized too much.

NC: Do you think that perhaps that showed that they felt they were caught in the middle?

SM: I think so. I was caught in the middle like that, too, but....I didn't care to. If a person is sick, he's sick, you know. I treat him whatever I can. But on top of that, I was asked to donate so much to the workers, you know, so I told 'em I'm doing my share.

NC: Yeah. Were you aware of the results of the strike?

SM: No, didn't bother me at all. (Laughs)

NC: So you didn't react to that? Yet, you know that it just about spelled the end of the perquisite system, the paternalism thing. Was that something that you thought about? The end of the paternalism?

SM: Yes and no, because, that was the plantation years ago, and I know it had to come sometime to the end. I didn't know when. If the strike or the union did that, well....that's good in a way.
NC: Okay. Did you have many Filipino patients?

SM: Yes. I did.

NC: Did the Filipino independence mean anything to them? Did they communicate this to you?

SM: No. They used to dress up and have parade once in a while and speeches and what not, and that's all I know. Rizal Day and all that.

NC: (Chuckles) Do you remember the tsunami that washed out the Oahu Railroad and Land Company in 1946?

SM: Was it nineteen forty....1946, yes. That's when we got Jōdō Mission temple was pushed 11 feet. Two story building. Pushed 11 feet forward by the ocean, the waves, you know. All, we had to reconstruct that. At that time, the water came here, too, across the road.

NC: Up to this house?

SM: Yes. Way up, three hundred feet beyond.

NC: That's a lot of force.

SM: Yes. And when it came, my car was right on the drive way, and my wife and my last son was looking from the two story building. When the water start to come, they came downstairs to tell me, get the car out, but when I did get a car, I could go only to that road. When I was in the car, I was floating back to the garage.

(Laughter)

NC: Wow! That must have been a peculiar sensation.

SM: Yeah. And then I got off the car. Knee deep water, and it receded, so I had some men, and then pushed that car out. Then, when I got there, another wave came and pushed the car to the next road there right in Mr. Fujioka's entrance, and there it just stop. I had to have that car cleaned and washed. Three days before it start to function

NC: Oh. It had to dry out. (Laughs)

SM: Yes. Oiled and cleaned thoroughly. The car lasted two years more, so it was all right. I was afraid at that time the heavy ocean water will topple my two story building. Was really high. Fish were floating in....they were in....this part here was little lower and the fish in the water. Men used to go out and pick the fish.

NC: Did anybody get hurt in this area?

SM: Not here. Not here. We all ran away.
NC: Then, how did people get into Honolulu after that tsunami?

SM: Well, they didn't. Many of them get stuck in the...(Laughs)

NC: (Laughs) Couldn't get home?

SM: No.

NC: In 1948, the Waialua company divided into two companies. Were you aware of that?

SM: Let's see, I had a stock, a share in there. What---I forgot the division they made in there.

NC: I don't know, though.

SM: I had to change my shares in the plantation. Castle and Cooke share. Forgotten how I did it.

NC: You had to trade them in for two new kinds of shares?

SM: Yeah. Mmm.

NC: Now, was your dad on any kind of retirement plan?

SM: No. He did not get any retirement, except a few dollars. He did get Social Security, small amount. But the plantation gave him watch and.... I think, fifty dollars a month. That's about the retirement he had.

NC: That was it?

SM: That was the fifty years of work.

(Laughter)

NC: Seems incredible to us now, doesn't it? Dr. Miyasaki, as the plantation changed it's way of cultivation and started using herbicides and things like that, has the neighboring environment, such as Haleiwa, changed in any perceptible way?

SM: The only things I remember is that the plants start to dry out. Certain papayas, for instance. Many of them died out. The plot just dried out, and no papayas---family papayas---in Kamaloa and even mine dried up. The vegetable growers used to---they say they going to sue the plantation. I don't know how it came out. And as for asthma and all those things goes, these people had asthma before, so I cannot say that caused the asthma.

NC: Is there anything that you can do about your plants or about your patients with the asthma? I mean, can you....would it be all right for you to talk to the plantation about their...
SM: No....

NC: ....use of herbicides?

SM: You know, I don't like to say this, but plantation is so big, small potatoes go out over there, it's not going to work at all. Recently, a dam up this Haleiwa broke, and it caused flood. I think three people died. Two Puerto Ricans, or was it Filipino? Yeah, Filipino. Rushed down this river that you cross along the bridge over there, and they couldn't be found. And the people there said that's due to the dam. The dam was not built well, and they should have--when it started to rain, they should have released the water. But they didn't until it broke and caused death and several houses were washed off. Caused damage in the vegetables and all that. But, when they'd speak to the plantation, they'd say, "Well, it's not due to the dam. It's the rain that...." (Laughs) I don't they think they had any indemnity at all.

NC: Did they ever use the phrase that it's an act of God? (Laughs)

SM: (Laughs) I don't know.

NC: Okay. What about other activities that affect the plantation? Are you aware of reactions in the community, like, back in 1950 when Harry Bridges was jailed? Now, I think, on the plantation, the workers were sympathetic towards Mr. Bridges. How about the Haleiwa community?

SM: We didn't. Mr. Bridges is all right, but then, he's too radical, eh. I for one think he has some good parts, but I cannot sympathize with his ways. So, I don't think many of them had anything....

NC: So, would you say, some of those things, even though they affect the plantation, which is right next door, may go almost unnoticed in Haleiwa?

SM: I think the average person didn't notice anything.

NC: Was the community aware of what happened in the elections of 1954, when the Democrats took over? Was this community aware of that take over?

SM: Aware in what respect? You mean....as far as I know, I'm Republican, too.

(Laughter)

SM: But, I noticed, there used to be a strong Japanese people, Democrats. About seven of them. Six or seven strong, Democratic people. But they were a minority, because of they were overpowered by the plantation. Finally, when they got the upper hand, they were elated. And they used to come to my office and talk about it. I don't want any politics in my office on that.
(Laughter)

NC: So, then there was some kind of awareness in the community that something big had happened as far as politics is concerned. Okay. Waialua had almost a one hundred percent shut-down in 1956. Another strike. And it was in protest to Senator Eastland hearings. Well, from what I've read, he tried to make it sound as though Hawaii was too Japanesey and maybe too radical to join the union. Was there an awareness of that....

SM: I think the newspapers made that clear, eh, that Mr. Eastman was anti-Japanese. And we were afraid. I never met that man. The only thing is I read about, but I didn't like him just because of that.

NC: Yes. Well, a lot of us don't get the chance to meet these people, yet, they affect our lives. Yes. Okay. So, to that, there was reaction in the community. Then, in 1958, there was another big strike. Did this also affect the economics of Haleiwa?

SM: In '58. I don't remember there was another strike.

NC: Oh, well, it was a shipping strike. I'm sorry, it wasn't....that's right. It was a shipping strike. (Shipping strike was 1949.)

SM: Oh, that's when we were short of things. This and that. Particularly rice.

NC: Yeah.

SM: Some of us were hoarding things, I'm sure. (Laughs)

NC: (Laughs) Okay. Then, in 1959, we achieved statehood. And how was that received in Haleiwa?

SM: Well, we thought it was a great thing. I didn't realize how much good it does. But the aliens who were not citizens thought that, "Well, I'm going to be a citizen from now on and all that." And I think they felt it's a good thing, yeah.

NC: Okay. Did statehood affect your family in any particular way?

SM: No.

NC: As you look back in the last few years, say, the last 15 years, do you see any major changes or happenings in Haleiwa?

SM: You mean, physically, the....

NC: Well, physically, or a feeling of community, a new kind of feeling or anything happening in the area?
SM: No, Haleiwa is kind of loose community...

NC: It is?

SM: ...and we do have a community association. Waialua Community Association. But I think it's in the last few years that when the senior citizens start to group together, I think, it's closer to them. When they were retired, then, they didn't do anything. But they are now coming out in the open to mingle with other nationalities.

NC: Yes. I've attended one of the meetings and it was a nice group. Nice big group. Nice people having fun together. Did any major political change occur in the last 15 years?

SM: Not out here. Except in the Democrats are more popular now than Republicans. Republican practically died down here. After the plantation sort of...plantation was the main pusher of the Republican party, so, after that, it's gone.

NC: Was it a long time ago that the plantation people themselves or did Republicans from outside the plantation come to organize the workers as Republicans?

SM: No, it's the plantation who used to call the meeting of certain people to organize. It's the office people who used to head that.

NC: Did they ask the workers to vote a certain way?

SM: Well, in a certain nice way, yeah.

NC: Was it more than asking?

SM: I don't think they went that far. I think, just in a nice way, ask them to vote for the...I remember distinctly when Mr. Farrington was running, plantation used to go strong for him.

NC: So then, a major change would be that the plantation is no longer asking anybody to.....

SM: No, I don't think they're asking or pushing anybody to do this and that.

NC: Well, if you don't mind a personal question, then, in comparing your life now with thirty and forty years ago, do you see yourself as having more freedom of choice in any respect? Whether it's political or personal, recreation or....

SM: I don't know. I had pretty much my way I want. I was restricted in perhaps some ways. For instance, Dr. Davis didn't want me to bring case to his hospital. My case. If I send them there, it's his case. And in the same way, Dr. Delarme told me—he was assistant to Dr. Davis—say, if that patient comes in the hospital, his patient, it's Dr. Davis' patient, not his patient. So, he didn't like it, and he left over there. But...he's an old Army doctor, Dr. Davis so I think he has his
ways. I don't begrudge those things.

NC: From our talks, I don't think you throw money away, but you're certainly not a person who's chasing money.

SM: No, I gave away lot of money.

(Laughter)

NC: I think you've put it to use in the community, when you say give it away. Like the mission across the street and things like that.

SM: Yes.

NC: But, you, yourself, are you--in terms of material wealth, are you more comfortable now?

SM: Well, I own this place, and I have....forty-three thousand square feet, here. Then I had a property--half an acre in Wahiawa--which I gave to my son. And I'm not those people---I cannot rent and collect rental. I don't like to collect.

(Laughter)

SM: And I don't like to see people complain, so I didn't go for those things. I bought stock. If I lose, oh, that's that. (Laughs)

NC: You've done a good job with your children. You have grandchildren?

SM: One only.

NC: One? Granddaughter?


NC: A boy. How old is he?

SM: I think he made four just the other day.

NC: Oh. Yeah. And as you look at him, do you....have hopes for him? Do you think about his growing up and living in Haleiwa?

SM: No, he lives in Pearl City. It's Pearl Ridge. But, I have fear that judging from this little boy's behavior--he's going to this restricted school. What do you call this? Hale....What's this?

NC: Hanahauoli?

SM: Yeah. It's going, gee, you...

NC: How is it restricted?
SM: Well, they won't accept anybody. You got to speak....you got to....
NC: Yeah.

SM: My daughter is teaching in town, so I guess she....thought that the child is bright or something like that, and put him in there. He is.. ..I wouldn't say bright, but little farther ahead from ordinary child, four year child. But I think he's going to be disliked because he expresses things so much. Offend, probably, offend other children. And I'm afraid that if the trait goes ahead just as it is, he's going to be a sorry person, because nobody's going to like him.

NC: If you've thought about it, do you see it as something that will be judged as bad manners, or is it a break with Japanese tradition where people are quiet?

SM: Well, my daughter is farther away from me in the habits of tradition. But he is getting farther away from the mother. Although the mother groans and this and that. But, if he goes to Hanahauoli, he's going to learn much more, and if he goes to public schools, I think he's going to be disliked. And that's what I'm afraid he's going to be left out.

NC: So you're anxious for him?

SM: This is the way I felt when I went to Mainland. No matter how much you can speak, how much money you have, you are still, your face is still Oriental. You're going to be Oriental. And I'm here to learn and if people don't want me, I don't want to go there.

NC: You're afraid your grandchild is facing the same kind of world?

SM: I think so. He's going to be discriminated in many ways because of his behavior, not because of his color.

NC: Oh, I see. So, it's not the same kind of world that you faced?

SM: Yeah. I was speaking mostly Japanese here, except in school. You know, strangely, because my folks didn't speak English, my language was totally Japanese in the home. And then, I'm in another world when I go to school. (Laughs) When I went to the Mainland, I'm dropped into a place like Chicago and Milwaukee, nobody spoke Japanese. Strange...

NC: They say nobody speaks English there, either. (Laughs)

SM: So, I had to learn something, and that's my education in a way, besides going to school and learning how to be a doctor and all that. But, other ways, I felt that, well, I have money to pay. I can work. And even when I started to be as an intern, whatever shortcomings there is in my color, I tried to make up with my work. And that was an original intention for me working overtime.
NC: But you knew better that there was no shortcoming with your color. Didn't you know that?

SM: (Chuckles) Well, I probably knew...

END OF INTERVIEW
WAIALUA & HALEIWA
The People
Tell Their Story

Volume V
JAPANESE

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