WAIALUA & HALEIWA
The People
Tell Their Story

Volume VI
JAPANESE

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JAPANESE
(N-R)
BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: NOBUYOSHI NAKATSU, retired lab supervisor, Waialua Sugar Company

Nobuyoshi Nakatsu, one of 12 children, was born in Kawaiholo, January 8, 1904. His parents came from Japan; his father first. He worked in a section gang.

Nobu completed nine years of school and started work on the plantation at the age of 14, cutting, loading, and irrigating cane. After the 1920 strike, he worked for a pineapple company for about two years and then returned to work on the plantation in the mill laboratory.

He helped organize sports on the plantation. In 1948, he was the ILWU president for the Waialua Unit. Nobu is married, has one child, and currently resides in Waialua with his wife.
This is an interview with Nobuyoshi Nakatsu on September 28, 1976 in his home. Mr. Nakatsu, could you tell me a little about your parents, why they came to Hawaii?

My parents, my father and my mother both came from Japan. My father was here first. He came...I don't know what year, but anyway, I was born 1904. He came before that. Around 1900, I would say. He was here for a while, then my mother came. And then I came.

(Laughter)

Then, well, I had a big brother which they left in Japan. They all came here. Both parents. And later on, my father called him. That was 1912 or 1913. Somewhere around there. He was about 15 years old. He came.

Oh, your parents were married in Japan?

Yeah. They were married in Japan.

Why did they come to Hawaii?

Well...I would say I think they were trying to make a fortune here. But, you know, majority, they try for the goal, but they fail. They stay here, with the children. Increasing family. So they stay here. And here we are. And they all die over here, except for my parents.

Did they work for Waialua Sugar Plantation?

Yeah. My father work for sugar. My mother didn't work any. She was a housewife, right through, eh. My father worked for the plantation right through. And he change his...(Chuckles) well, I don't know. He was still looking for fortune or what. But he took the whole family in Honolulu in 1912. He had a small business. Work in a laundry shop. He failed so he came back again to the plantation.

What was he working as on his first job?

They use to have locomotive long ago. And they use to transport cane by rail. So he was in what they call the section gang. It's maintenance on the railroad there. He was in a gang. Then
he didn't retire, actually. He quit the position, I say. Went Honolulu. Took the family and came back. And then he work for short while. And then he went to Haleiwa and open the same business again, see. And that was a failure, so he try to make another go in Honolulu again. So he went to Honolulu himself with my second brother, see. Our family remain in Waialua.

Well, meantime, he die. When he was 56 years old, he had a stroke and he die at 67. So 11 years suffer with the stroke. And my mother died way afterward. My mother was about 74, I think. She pass away in her sleep.

And I have two brothers at Mainland. They went to Mainland. And my second brother had strawberry farm there. And, you know, the War came up, and they were relocated in a camp. But other brother went afterward. They are still there. They are successful. One retired already.

PN: How many children in the family?

NN: We had seven boys and five girls. But one pass away, so that leave 11 in the family, children.

I'm the oldest now. Above me pass away, see. During the 1920 strike. He was born in Japan. The last one born in Hawaii.

PN: So you began working at what? 15?

NN: Age 15. Cutting cane. Then, cutting cane was incentive, see. The more cane you cut, the more money you use to make. But I quit that. And they had a big pump, pumping the irrigation water up highland, see, from down side. The pump is not there any more. And I started working there. And then the strike came. Then after strike, I work for pineapple for a year or two. Then, I came back on plantation again. 1922, yeah. '22, until I retire, I work on this plantation.

PN: Going back to the '20 strike, you know, who organize that strike?

NN: I would say these Japanese people. They all got together, the Japanese people. They elect a president and so forth to organize the union, see.

PN: Do you remember who the president was?

NN: Yeah. One of the president was Baba Tokaji and another as far as Waialua concern was Kajiwara. But that Kajiwara not related to any Kajiwara now. They all pass away now. The first one I remember is Baba. He pass away, too.

PN: He's from Waialua?

NN: Yeah, he was from Waialua. They had a headquarter in town. And
that's where they use to work, eh. I think Shigco Soga was a leader, I think. They all backing up the strike, too, eh. You know, the Hawaii Times. Horio No and all that. He pass away, too, now. Now the son taking care. You call that Hawaii Times, now. Those days, use to call Nippu Jiji.

And was pretty long strike, eh. And the people suffer. But we won. We won at last. And raising the daily wage 75¢ to dollar at least. (Laughs) A day. Not hour, you know.

(Laughter)

NN: After that, well, gradually, plantation start to recognize power of labor. You know, treat labor good, eh.

PN: Do you remember if these organizers were part of the Young Men's Buddhist Association?

NN: No. No. Religions was not connected. No religions.

PN: What did you do during the '20 strike?

NN: Oh. We just was young yet, so we just roam around, swim. We use to quarter down you know where the Sands now? Sands, Haleiwa (Sands), the restaurant?

PN: Yeah.

NN: That place. That building is still there. They had quite a number of cottages alongside. So all the people from this district, they all place them different place. Like we use to live Kawaiola, they call it now. So all Kawaiola people were quartered there by the Sands. You know, upstairs of the Sands. And use to sleep upstairs. And my father them was in the cottage. They had about three, four cottage. They took care all the Kawaiola people. Not all, but most of them. And some, they was located somewhere else, like Taihō Gakkō (Haleiwa Jodo Mission). Somewhere around there. And they had a headquarter right in front there. Used to call union headquarter for Waialua people. My father was one of the director. He use to work in there. I used to go fishing together to catch the fish for the community kitchen. They cook one place, and everybody go over there and cat. Pick up their food, see. And they use to get recreation like wrestling. That's Japanese sumo.

PN: This was all during the strike?

NN: During the strike.

PN: The plantation told you folks to leave the...

NN: Yeah, plantation told us leave. And some people were treated rough, you know. Just thrown out. They get camp police they use to call, eh. Cam-around and just throw the household stuff out. But mostly, single men was treated that way, no. Family men, they didn't treat
family men too bad as that. They just got out and went out, see. But those guys, single men, they were slow in moving. And that's the one they got after and threw everything out from the house.

PN: Did they board up the houses after you folks left?

NN: No, they throw 'em out. That's all, eh. They know they cannot get back. If they get back, they will throw you out, so. And, well, was quite organize, the labors were. And they had truck hauling the stuff away for the people. And go on located place, like Haleiwa Sand or Jōdō Mission. Front of Jōdō Mission had some camp, too. And Kamaloa, they call it. They all scatter around because they cannot take care all the people one place. So they had a community kitchen all over.

PN: Then did the merchants in Haleiwa help?

NN: Yeah, they help. They extend the credit like that, eh. Yeah, some help. But merchant had hard time, too. But when come to community kitchen, then, of course, the stuff was all donated, see. By merchant and all those....some good people. That's the money they bought all for the goods. Some goods, they got free from the merchant, like that. And they use that. So, the striker didn't pay anything for the food or for the houses. Everything was free, see. Only thing, they couldn't receive any wages. That's all.

PN: And then, when the strike ended, what happened?

NN: And then, all everybody went back. Mostly to the same job, no. Of course, they didn't discriminate you, the plantation. They give job, eh. They start to work.

PN: Were there many strike breakers?

NN: Yeah. They were all mostly....I would say about ten or more, no. I no want mention the name, but still living yet, some.

PN: Ten out of how many people in the strike?

NN: Oh....I would say about couple of thousand, no. Yeah. I think about couple of thousand. So wasn't too bad.

PN: I heard people call these strike breakers inu. (Japanese word for dog.)

NN: Yeah. Inu. Yeah. They use to call inu, eh. But as you know, people forget that, eh. Now they all forget and they associate with them. Of course, those old folks most of them passed away already. The children used to suffer, too, eh. They call 'em puppy dog, eh. Parents, eh.

PN: Then you said you worked there for couple more years. Then you went to pineapple company?

NN: Yeah. Pineapple field. I work about a year, I think. I went on
the incentive basis, too, eh. Make more money, try make more money.

PN: They paid a higher wage?

NN: Yeah. Incentive, you make more, of course, than daily wages. Because become a contract and everything. You picking pineapple, you go by incentive, eh. The more you pick, the more you make.

PN: So that's why you went from sugar to the pine...

NN: Only myself. Not my parent. Only myself. Then, after one year, I came back work for plantation. In the mill. Starting in the mill. That's where I stay right through. And they had openings, so I came back. Then, when I came back that time, I organize a ball team, see. I started a ball team. Then I kept through, that one, 1923 up to '37, I retire. I resign from that baseball stuff. After that, I came back again couple of time. They call me back so.

PN: Was there a ball team around? You started it out?

NN: Yeah. Because they used to get all different nationality team, see. Call that inter-plantation league. The Portuguese, Filipino, Japanese, of course, only three, see. But we use to play in the league. Then, after that, and we got a little better, so we join the Rural League team. That was AJA. All Japanese. That was 1928, we join up. Then, from that on, '37. I manage to take five championship for the Waialua team during that time.

PN: You said this is a senior league?

NN: Senior league. Senior.

PN: Before, they use to play only among their own race?

NN: Yeah. Inter-plantation. After that, as I say, in a way, I say, we graduate from that. I join the Japaneese Senior League, see. So we join that. They admitted us as one of the team, so. Play in there.

PN: Who belonged to their senior league then?

NN: Now, they still have senior league, but now, Waialua and Haleiwa is combine. They call it Haleiwa team, see.

PN: But back then, who belonged to that league?

NN: Waipahu, Wahiawa, Aica, Pearl City, Ewa, and Waianae. That was that's all, I think. And Haleiwa had, too. Yeah, Haleiwa, later on they came in. Had about six teams.

PN: You folks used to what? Travel by train?

NN: Well, Waianae had, too, yeah. No. In the former years before the.... yeah, just about when we join, we use to travel by train to go
Waianae, play with Waianae team, see. That was only short while. Then after that, they start to use car, see. We bought a car.

PN: The senior league would be made up of all kind of players?

NN: Yeah, yeah.

PN: Different nationalities?


PN: Later on, you folks joined up with the AJAs?

NN: Yes. No, that time, they call Rural Senior League, eh. After that, they change to AJA Senior League, the name. But of course, they combine with the town team, too, so. Some town team was inside with the AJA.

PN: So you started work at age 15?

NN: 15.

PN: Did you quit school?

NN: Yeah, I have to quit school. The sixth grade. I have to help out my family, eh, make a living, eh. Earn livings. And well, after that, I graduate from the adult education, high school. Yeah, they still having now. Adult education. We use to call it adult education, something like that. I finish that and I got diploma. So I am a high school graduate. (Chuckles) That one, I don't know how long ago.

PN: How many of your brothers and sisters also quit school?

NN: Gee, I think all of them. No, except one finish high school. That's all. The rest, all, they start to work. They start to work at young. Nobody went to college. Only couple of guys finish high school. That's all.

PN: To help out the family income?

NN: 'As right.

PN: What kind of games or sports did you play when you were a small kid?

NN: Oh, when we small, swam in the reservoir.

PN: Where? Up Wahiawa?

NN: No, Kawailoa. Have plenty reservoir. Couple of my friend got drowned. I wasn't drowned myself, though. Then we use to play baseball, but
not this kind regular skin ball. We use to make our own ball with string. You know, that string the store use to use? Tie anything. We use to put some big rubber in there and then tie it all around. Make a ball, see. Of course, didn't last long, but.

PN: You guys cover 'em with anything?

NN: No, no cover. Just string, that's all. So whenever you hit by that, you get the thread mark, eh, on the face like.

(PN laughs)

NN: Even bat, we didn't have a regular bat. We use to make our own bat.

PN: Out of what?

NN: Out of lumber. (Laughs)

PN: You say you guys use to watch sumo or participate?

NN: Sumo. Sumo....they use to sponsor sumo. They didn't last too long. Only short while.

PN: What kind of food did you eat in terms of....

NN: Oh, mostly Japanese food, I think. We use to eat once a week a meat. Meat was once a week. We didn't drink any milk. Mostly was soy beans and salt salmon. Yeah. And ume, pickle and daikon.

PN: You would take this to a school as lunch also?

NN: Yeah. Put ume inside the riceball. Then put nori around sometime. And use to bring small piece of salmon. Salt salmon. That's all. And we eat daikon or takuan like that.

PN: In what? Your lunch pail or what?

NN: In those days, school didn't have cafeteria, see. Everybody use to bring their own lunch.

PN: How did you carry it to school, though?

NN: Oh, wrap in newspaper. So riceball used get wording from the newspaper, yeah.

(Laughter)

NN: We use to eat that. We didn't care much about sanitary, like now. No sanitation around there. But they use to get the aluminum lunch can, too, eh. Flat one. Use to have rice and you put okazu on the side like that. Some people use to use that. But I didn't like that because you get trouble of carrying home, eh.

(Laughter)
NN: So, newspaper, you can just throw away.

PN: You guys used to subscribe to the Japanese newspaper?

NN: Yeah. Nippu Jiji. Only Nippu Jiji. I didn't see any English newspaper those days. Only Nippu Jiji. Only Japanese. Straight Japanese. Like this is Hawaii Times. (Rustling of paper in background.) They call it that now. This one Nippu Jiji olden days, see. This get Japanese and English section. Before was no English section. Just straight Japanese, see. We use to read that Japanese, see. So I went to school, Japanese school, so not bad. I can read and write at least Japanese.

PN: You went to Haleiwa Jōdō (Mission)?

NN: No, Kawailoa. We had our own school. Oh, we use to be big school, there, that school. Not like now days. My grandson is going Waialua Japanese School but, what. Oh, there's few people. I think little over twenty people. That's all. Twenty student. Our days, they use to get over fifty. Close to hundred.

PN: Chee. Do you know how many people were taking this Nippu Jiji?

NN: Those days?

PN: Yeah. Most of the Japanese were reading the Japanese paper?

NN: Yeah. But I don't think plenty people were taking,...those people, no. Mostly, the immigrant, maybe, well, they didn't care much, no, in the olden days. I don't know, they didn't know how to read or what. I think my father went to school in Japan, so. My mother couldn't. Didn't go to school, so she wasn't so good in reading. My big brother from Japan, he wanted to read Japanese paper. In fact, he work for a Japanese newspaper in Honolulu. Hawaii Hochi. As a delivery boy.

PN: And that's--your older brother, the one that died in that strike?

NN: Strike, yeah.

PN: Was he the only one that caught the flu?

NN: No. I had, too, but lucky thing I didn't go. (Laughs) Yeah. After my brother pass away, then I got a flu.

PN: What kind of treatments or remedies did you folks...

NN: They didn't have regular doctor, you know, those days. We had a hard time. They had only one, I think, regular doctor. And hire one doctor without license. Was working. You know, this....oh, that building not now already. You know, new post office, Haleiwa?

PN: Yeah.

NN: Behind there. Back of that, had one big building. Two story building.
That's where my brother died, too. They used that as a hospital during the strike. That's where the school, they call it Yamato Gakuen, they use to have Japanese school, see. And that's where some people came from far over there come to that school from Wahiawa. The principal, the man who put up the school, was a well known person, see. Matsumura. You know Monroe Matsumura? The lawyer in town. His father use to...

PN: Matsumura use to have the Kaaawa school?

NN: Oh yeah, Kaaawa school. That's the one. That one came down.

PN: When did they put up this Japanese school?

NN: Oh, must be before 1920, eh. Because 1920, they use that hospital, so.

PN: So there was a lot of people stricken with the flu then?

NN: Oh yeah! Especially, those pregnant women. They all went. Majority of the pregnant women went. I know, funny thing.

PN: You mean majority of them were afflicted with the flu?

NN: Yeah.

PN: Oh. Some people were telling me that they were dying so fast.

NN: Yeah, they were dying fast. Especially young people, they die fast. Lucky thing I was one of the youngest, but. My brother was over twenty, but I was under twenty yet.

PN: Did they give you any kind of...medicine?

NN: Oh, those days, not advance, yet, eh. Like no one had a flu shot like that. Not like now. Only get when you get it and you have to treat. And if you lucky enough, you survive. But if you unlucky, (Laughs) you just going. About in two weeks they use to die. High fever, eh.

PN: They didn't do anything like put ice pack or...

NN: Yeah, ice pack. They use to do.

PN: Is that all?

NN: Yeah, had some kind medicine, but I don't know what kind of medicine they gave, but. Yeah, continuously, we had to give ice pack. The fever so high. I use to go do that to my brother, but. Well, I had to take chance and go, eh.

PN: Did anybody else in your family come down with the flu?
NN: Only my big brother and myself. That's all.

PN: You remember how much you got paid at the pineapple company?

NN: I know was little more than plantation, though. That one incentive, so you have to work. The more pine you pick, the more you use to get.

PN: How would you get up to the pine fields?

NN: Oh, pine fields? Pine fields, they had a camp. Pineapple camp, they call it.

PN: Oh, you use to live up at the camp?

NN: Yeah. Uh huh. Myself. They use to call Laceyama Camp, see, up there. Way up Halemano side. Oh, Opaeula side was. Small camp about, I would say, oh....maybe about....thirty or forty houses inside.

PN: Mostly what? Single people? Married...

NN: No. Married and single. Those single was few. Mostly married.

PN: Why did you return to Waialua?

NN: Oh, because my father call me back. There's an opening in the factory, see. He figure it's better for me to stay near him, see. Instead of living separate up here.

PN: So all the time you were working at the pineapple company, you'd turn your money over to your parents?

NN: Yeah.

PN: That's how you got your job in the mill, when your father called you back?

NN: Yeah. Well, through connection, too, I would say. You had to get connection those days to get a job, you know. Was hard to get job. And he had a friend who did that for him. So he call me.

PN: Oh. So what was this? Work in the lab? What did you do?

NN: No. I work in the, they call it, sugar room. Dry sugar. Centrifugal. Centrifugal the sugar. Yeah. I didn't stay too long there, because they took me in the laboratory department where they test the sugar and juices.

PN: So how much did that pay?

NN: Oh....I think somewhere around forty dollars a month, I think, or something like that. Not much, of course, compared to now days.

PN: So what did you do in the centrifugal room?
NN: Just dry sugar then. Work for 12 hours. Those days about ten hours in the field, I think. 12 hour shift in factory.

PN: Just drying sugar?

NN: Drying sugar.

PN: Then when you went to the....

NN: Laboratory department. Then after that nineteen, I would say, thirty-six, I would say that, we got a new lab outside the mill. That's where this eight hour work came in. And social security came in, too, '37, yeah.

PN: What did you do in the lab?

NN: Well, they call that something like analyst, see. Combine with.... you have to go get sample, on cane juice sample, and sugar sample from the sugar room. And all those sample from the boiling house. That is, make juice. They call that syrup, clarifier—all those things. Then test the sugar content on that.

PN: How many people working?

NN: Well, we get two people on that shift. We had four all together, see. Two people on the shift.

PN: Who did you work with?

NN: Oh, let's see. They all change it. Hard. They didn't last too long. Only I'm the one lasted long there. They came in and go out; come in—go out. Japanese guy, Portuguese guy and Filipino. And haole guy. They didn't last too long. They came in but they work. And I was the only guy that stayed long there.

PN: Oh yeah? What? These other people left to go to other jobs or something?

NN: Yeah. They out of the plantation. Yeah, mostly went out. Only one person went to different department.

PN: Do you remember the Miles Fukunaga case?

NN: Yeah. I was working in here. Miles Fukunaga. In fact, my wife use to work with the sister in Kuakini Hospital. Mmm. Yeah, I read all that in the paper. Nippon Jiji. He kidnap one boy. He smoke cigar to quiet his nerves down or something like that, yeah. (Laughs)

PN: Oh. Japanese, what? They felt a lot of shame or something because somebody of Japanese race did this kind of crime?

NN: Well, I didn't feel that very much. But in the paper, use to write that, no.
PN: So there wasn't that much, you know, like shame among the community or community shame?

NN: No.

PN: What about after that Fukunaga, there was the Depression.

NN: Yeah. They had the Depression. That was what year was? I work under three, four manager, see. The first manager, we had a wage cut that year, Depression year.

PN: Oh yeah?

NN: Yeah, we had a wage cut.

PN: Only in the lab or the whole plantation?

NN: No, whole plantation. But that last only couple of months, though. I know I was getting hundred dollar and they cut me ten dollar. And then ninety dollar. I was ninety dollar a month. I was making hundred dollar monthly, then they cut down ten dollars all. Came ninety dollar. That one way back in 1920...somewhere around there, '28 or something. Depression year, anyway. Yeah.

PN: They said they dumped molasses out here in the ocean also.

NN: No, they don't do now. Before, olden day, when they get plenty molasses, well, you know, the pollution stuff was not there, eh, those days. They wen just dump 'em anything they don't want in the ocean, see. Even the mill oil or those opala like that, eh. Was all went to the ocean. Yeah.

PN: This was common practice or this just...

NN: Yeah, common practice in the old days. Nobody talk about pollution those days.

(Laughter)

PN: So it wasn't just one time that they dump molasses in the ocean. Because we read in the paper that, you know, during the Depression time, they dump molasses that they couldn't sell.

NN: Yeah, the excess molasses, they going take care. Went down the drains. In the ocean, in other words. But that wasn't an all time practice. Only once in a while, great while.

PN: Did plantation supply all the workers with firewood, kerosene, like that?

NN: Yeah, yeah, that time, yeah. We use to get free firewood, free kerosene. Of course, free house, too, eh, in those days. They use to bring that firewood cut by contractor who cut the firewood. That is not actually plantation people. Was outside contractor use to cut firewood up in the mountain. And they load on the flat car, they call that. One
Locomotive pull down to the camp and leave 'em right by the camp. People go over there and pick up the firewood. Sometime they use to unload that and make a fire. But most time was all on that car there. People go there and pick up their own firewood, eh.

PN: Was it kiawe wood?

NN: No, not kiawe. Those days, didn't have kiawe wood for firewood. They use to get what do you call that? What you call that?

PN: Plum?

NN: No plum, but some kind of ironwood. And what they call that yellow kind wood? I forget the name. Valuable stuff.

PN: Koa?

NN: No, no. Yeah. Had koa. And one more yellow wood. Oh, really, was all yellow. Was nice wood, though. But to burn wasn't too good. I forgot now. Maui had plenty. The Chinese like it.

PN: Oh, sandalwood!

NN: Yeah, sandalwood! That's it.

PN: So mostly was sandalwood and koa?

NN: Yeah. Oh yeah.

PN: You folks have a garden or any kind of....

NN: Yeah, we use to raise all vegetable in the yard. But they use to get plenty room for that, eh. Get one house and back of the house, backyard, oh, was big yard. You can plant any kind vegetables, yeah.

PN: You guys raised any pigs or....

NN: No. Pig was segregated to one gulch side so people have to keep their pig there. You know, they cannot keep the pig near camp, see. So, they use to put 'em where no house was around. Down the gulch side.

PN: So what kind of vegetables you folks use to raise?


PN: Did you notice that during the '30s that they increase this kind of perquisites to the plantation people? You know why they did that?

NN: Well, because the house was getting better. There use to build better houses, and people use to live in the better house. So, the perquisite was depend on the house you living. Up or down. People living in the old house like that, the perquisites were low.
PN: Oh yeah?

NN: Yeah. In fact, when I start to live in this house, I use to get perquisite, thirty-seven dollar half.

PN: Oh yeah?

NN: Yeah. Free house, that was, eh. After the package deal sold up, I bought the house, package deal, see. We pay only little over six thousand dollar for the whole place. So my son build one house back of that. Because had enough room. Zoning no allow that to build another house. Only build one house.

PN: When you bought this house?

NN: I know I finish payment before I retire, so that was....

PN: '69?

NN: Fifteen year affordable I think.

PN: '54 then, about.

NN: Somewhere around there. Yeah, somewhere around there, I think. Took about fifteen years to pay, see.

PN: That's when they started to sell the plantation homes to the workers?

NN: Yeah. Bishop Estate use to take care that. Bishop Trust Company or something. I don't know.

PN: Bishop Trust Company?

NN: Yeah. Not the Estate, Trust.

PN: What were you doing on December 7th, 1941?

NN: December 7th, I was home. That's a Sunday morning. I was at home listening to a radio. (Laughs) And then we heard the plane flying over our heads. I was home, yeah. My wife didn't work those days. She's working now. But those days, she didn't work yet. I was at home that time. We didn't think nothing of it until we heard over the radio that war is on, oh. Something like a lame airplane was pass here, though. With a motor spurting. I know that was a Japanese plane, yeah.

PN: Oh yeah? They shoot around here?

NN: Yeah, they shoot not around here, but down side. Then some shot went through the roof. Went in the room. Almost hit the person or something like that. I heard the story, but.

PN: This was down where? Haleiwa side?

NN: No, Waialua. Plantation camp.
PN: Oh yeah? What you thought when you heard the news over the radio about the Japanese attacking Pearl Harbor?

NN: Couldn't believe it. (Laughs) Couldn't believe it. That was it.

PN: Was there any anti-Japanese reaction from the community?

NN: Oh yeah. From the Portuguese. Other nationality. Yeah.

PN: Like what?

NN: They use to brag. They use to call you, "Jap, Jap" all around here. My wife use to get mad. (Laughs)

PN: What other kind reactions from the people?

NN: Well, as a Japanese, you couldn't say much, eh. Just shut up, eh. Even the mill was, even that superintendent was anti-Japanese. Yeah, I had argument with him. The hell I know. (Laughs) But he didn't fire me out.

PN: What nationality was he?

NN: He's haole from Mainland. From Mainland.

END OF SIDE ONE
SIDE TWO

(Before taping resumed, NN told of incident where a Japanese worker was fired when he came to work.)

PN: This is right after the War?

NN: Yeah, right after the War. Right next day.

PN: Next day?

NN: Yeah. Monday, went work. Everybody went work.

PN: What reason did he give?

NN: No reason. Just send 'em home. He got mad and just send 'em home. He was the only one Japanese fired.

PN: Did the guy come back to work after?

NN: Oh yeah, afterward, he came back.

PN: The supervisor was what department was he?

NN: Well, he was welder, so, welding department. (Mill superintendent.)

PN: You remember any other incidents like that?
NN: No. No other incident. That's all. But Japanese was used to it those days. You know all the soldiers around the mill, eh, with the gun, eh. And those soldiers all trigger happy. Any noise during the night....well, we use to work night time, too. Any noise, they shoot to where the noise came from, eh.

PN: Oh yeah?

NN: Yeah. Sentry was all really jittery.

PN: They were what? From the Mainland?

NN: No. These local soldiers. All the people, yeah, haoles, see. Yeah, that was Mainland, I guess.

PN: They had Filipino battalions also?

NN: No, over here didn't have.

PN: Those National Guards or....

NN: No. After that, they organize. That's all nationality included, eh. I join them and then, you know use to train for marching all that. (Laughs) I don't know why we needed that. Of course, I volunteer, but they didn't take me 'cause I was little too old for that.

PN: You mean one company from down here, Waialua area?

NN: Yeah, Waialua sugar workers.

PN: Oh. What kind of nationality was made up of this?

NN: Oh, Filipino, Japanese and Portuguese.

PN: But you folks would what? Only....

NN: Only drill, see. Or march. That's all we did. We didn't go in the service or anything.

PN: So when the War ended, I guess, the unions came around.

NN: Yeah. That's about....mm....that time. Yeah. They had a big strike in 1940. That was it. Yeah. The first strike, anyway, after the labor organize.

PN: Did you have any contacts or do you have any knowledge that the union was being formed prior to '45?

NN: Yeah. They was doing a underground work, though. You know, few people was meeting already, see, to organize. And this guy, Yoroko Fukuda--the father use to be revend here, minister. He was coming down from town and try to get the people together. They use to meet
once in a while. I know Mike Nagata was our first one in there. Yeah. And Joe Lee.

PN: What did you think of the unions being organized then?

NN: I thought it was a good thing for labor get something to say, eh. They had a voice, eh. Yeah. But this plantation use to be famous for buying out the leaders, eh. Use to buy out the union leader. They say, well, looks dirty, too, but people were saying that. Anytime come, union leaders, then couple of years later, he working for the management side.

(Laughter)

NN: Try to weaken the union, eh. That's the strategy they use. (Laughs) I was one of them, too, I would say. Yeah. I was president or what for one year. Then couple of years later, they wanted me come back to management side, see. Well, you working for wages, that's what you... get more wages. Nobody refuse. You don't play hard-head and be union man right through.

PN: So as far as early organizers, you know was Mike Nagata, Joe Lee, and what's this other guy? Yoroko Fukuda?

NN: Fukuda. He was coming from headquarters. ILMU. The one Jack Hall was running. Came down here. And they all meet. Not only the two guy. Had four, five guys, all. I don't know the other guys very much, but I think Mike Nagata and Joe Lee were among them, see. And some other Japanese, even Portuguese guy was there. I don't know. Oh, Seraphine Lobello like that. Something like that.

PN: Robello?

NN: Yeah, Robello, Seraphine.

PN: So were you part of the union...

NN: I wasn't involved in that organizing, see. So, after the manager heard about that, he found that out. The laborers were organizing. Then he call all the leaders. He didn't call me because I wasn't among the leaders. And then, they talk to them. He talk to them, see. I don't know what the outcome was, but. He try to, I think, stop them or what. I don't know. But he didn't succeed in doing that.

PN: But you were a union member during the '46 strike?

NN: Yeah, all union member. Because when they segregated who's supposed to be a bargain unit, what job belong to the bargain unit or not about management, and, well, the union leader, Mike Nagata, insist that I be in the bargain unit. So there I went in the bargain unit side. Management want to hold me back, but that's how the union was strong that time. So I went with the union.

PN: What did you do during the '46 strike?
NN: Strike? Oh, kind of a messenger boy, yeah. And representing Waialua union. Myself and, yeah, another guy. He's working for the bank now. Masa Tsuyu. Two use to go in town every day. For some kind of information and bring back, see. And we use to go in town to bring the message from here to there.

PN: To the ILWU...

NN: ILWU headquarter. They use to get meeting there. Everyday practically.

PN: You and who was this other guy?

NN: Masa Tsuyu. He is in the bank now, Bank of Hawaii. And Gandhi, Gandhi Warashina. Working the Waialua store now. Gandhi Warashina was involve in the organizing. I'm not so sure, but maybe he was. Because he was a big gunner on the '46 strike.

PN: Yeah. What else happened during this '46 strike?

NN: Well, nothing much. Well, we use to get community kitchen. And they get fish and all those things. One team go out in the ocean and get the fish, eh. Food, eh. Pig. Keep the pig. They use to feed the people.

PN: What about the support from the merchants and the farmers like that?

NN: Yeah, they use to go around for the donation. And they use to donate. Ask merchant like that. They use to donate. In fact, after that, I was assign to organize the supervisor to form a union. So I went around to get a signature. And practically all sign for the union. Then the ILWU, they throw away that idea of calling the supervisor, because couldn't get much protection from the government, eh. Those days, the law...the management can fire you out without any protection. They can fire you out. That's all, see.

PN: This was during '46 also?

NN: '46.

PN: I didn't know that. So lot of the supervisors was willing to join?

NN: They sign up. Yeah. They sign up. As far as I know, I went around to each individual.

PN: So whose idea was to try to get the...

NN: ILWU, I think.

PN: And you were assign to just take up that case?

NN: Yeah. As far as Waialua concern, I was assign to that. And I thought I succeeded in signing all. Had two or three more guys to sign up, but and they say don't have to already, so.

PN: How many supervisors were there?
NN: Those day, had about 16, I think, eh, not mistaken. Somewhere around there. Yeah. 16 to twenty. Somewhere around there.

PN: So you became what? Union president in forty...

NN: Yeah, after that. '48.

PN: How did you become president?

NN: Well, yeah. Like it is now. Filipino is American, eh. And if you get Filipino backing, you come anything. (Laughs) Like I had a friend, Filipino friend who pushed me up for president. So I got it. All this countrymen, voted for me, eh. (Laughs)

PN: What did you have to do for your job as president?

NN: As president? Well, you have to see that everything goes well. Then I started to form system that put, they call, a steward in each camp. Take care the camp, see. All the various camps. Then we meet them once a week. I started that. And after that, everyone follow that style. Then anything that the members, they can report to steward, so anything they want or anything, you know. Then steward can come to the meeting and thrash it out, eh.

PN: What kind of grievances came up when you were president?

NN: Well, as an individual, of course, oh, some, they ask for the house. You know, in order to get a house. Get a repair or something like that, eh. Not much. Family affair, too, you have to involve, you know. Sometime, the wife and husband get argument in the family. You have to go between sometime. (Laughs)

PN: What kind of grievances came up when you were president?

NN: Not much in terms of company-worker relationship?

NN: No. I would say no, because plantation had their speaker from themself. to represent them. Industrial relation man, eh, department. They use to contact the union all the time. Well, idea is to find out what the union doing. And the union trying to find out what the management doing, see. They try spy each other.

(Laughter)

PN: Some people were mentioning in terms of spying like that, did you hear of or know of tapping of phones by the company like that?

NN: No. That, I don't know. I don't know.

PN: I just was wondering if you heard about that?

NN: Tapping on the phone, no. I didn't hear. But somehow, the managers use to know way ahead of time, you know, what happening in union. And we were wondering how...there must be some spies report to him or, you know, from tapping of phone. I don't know. When I was president, we pull the one-day walk out, see. The whole plantation shut off, see. No operation.
PN: Why was that?

NN: We all want raise we had, the plantation didn't like that. They not agree with the union so. I forget what was it. Anyway, during that period, they use to get negotiations. Sugar company and the union, eh. Naturally, seeing that you got to show your power or something like that. So we pull out one-day strike. And manager knew it. And he call me up, "I do anything for you, so please stop the fellows." Was too late already. Was in the morning. Everything went out, the message.

(Laughter)

NN: So they all pull out, eh. But only after one day, told 'em to go back work.

PN: Next day?

NN: That just to show power, eh. Silly--silly what was.

PN: Were you still president when there was '49 strike shipping strike here?

NN: No.

PN: No? What did you think of the '49 shipping strike?

NN: The shipping strike, shipping strike, you mean the stovedore, no? I don't know. I don't know. I no was too concern about it. But I thought was kind of inconvenient. So the price of the food went up. And was people suffering, eh. Shortage food, all those thing, but. That's all about I thought about it. That's all. Didn't....

PN: Have any direct effect upon you, the strike?

NN: No, I wouldn't say that, because the food was getting short. The rice and all those items. Meat like that, eh. We use to get our share, though, but.

PN: Was about this time that you became part of management? When did you leave...

NN: Yeah, about then. About then. After that, yeah.

PN: What happened then?

NN: One year after that. I came back to management side.

PN: They change your job or...

NN: No, same job. But they promote me. Give me different title like that and give me a raise. (laughs)

PN: Oh. I see. During 1951, there was the Smith Act trials.
NN: Oh, you mean the Communist stuff? Oh, that's when the...what was that?

PN: Jack Hall. Reineckes.

NN: Jack Hall, Reinecke, yeah. Kawano.

PN: Jack Kawano.

NN: Yeah. Six guy over there. Six or eight guys, no?

PN: Seven. Had seven people there. What were your reactions to that?

NN: Well, I thought that was kind of witch-hunting. Witch-hunting, eh, by the manager. But they couldn't get anything out of it. That's Governor Steinback that time. Governor Steinback that time.

PN: I think so.

NN: He was on the Big Five side most likely.

PN: There was a lot of union people who testified in behalf of the Smith Act defendants.

NN: From Waialua, I don't know. I don't think so.

PN: In '54, the Democrats rose to power. What were your reactions to that?

NN: No. Don't feel nothing very much. I was Democrat, too. And then came Republican. Then I came Democrat again. (Laughs)

PN: When was this? When did you become a Republican?

NN: Oh, when I went back to manager side.

PN: Then in what? '54 you became a Democrat again?

NN: No. After that, I think. That time was Democrat. After that, was Republican. The manager was really political. They were pushing for the Republican party. Olden days. Now, they don't. But olden days, they use to push for Republican. And as long as you are in the management side, you have to help them out or else, it's something else.

PN: What is that? (Referring to music in background)

NN: Ice cream man, I guess. Oh, manapua.

PN: Oh. When you say "olden days," when was this they use to really push for the Republican party?

NN: As far as I know, when I start working on plantation, they was that way, see. The managers always look management side or Republican.
PN: Even when you became management, they still pushing the Republican party?

NN: Yeah. They were still pushing yet.

PN: What would they do? They tell you vote for certain person or what?

NN: Yeah. Correct. Well...we don't have to do that, the way they say. Up to us when go voting booth, eh. (Laughs) That's what I felt so. They use to in fact, put watchmen in the voting booths, some. But actually, they cannot prove that you vote for Democrat.

PN: I heard they use to watch the string in the booth, if it's swaying one way or the other.

NN: (Laughs) That, I don't know.

(NN gets up to talk to grandson.)

PN: What did you think of the '58 strike? That was a big strike in Hawaii. Was territory wide.

NN: '58? You mean, sugar plantation?

PN: Yeah.

NN: Yeah, they had a strike. And we were working because I was on the management side, eh. We use to get paid, see, the other side. So we had to go meet together every morning. That's all. That's about all.

PN: Could you folks work if the workers wasn't there?

NN: No. They didn't let us work. Because they use to get picket.

PN: You just go to the company and then what?

NN: Yeah, come to the company. And meeting room and ask if we can meet together, that's all.

PN: And you do this for several months until the strike was over?

NN: Yeah. Oh, we use to go visit other plantation, eh. Where you can get in, send 'em in. They inspect and look around.

PN: Like the price of sugar is dropping now.

NN: Yeah. That's got lot of thing to do. Company not going to make money that we hear. The cost of making sugar more than the price of sugar.

PN: What do you foresee as the future of sugar in Hawaii?

NN: The government has to do something at least to bring the price up.
I think open fields of all the foreign country just pour in the sugar, eh.

PN: What do you see for the future of Haleiwa-Waialua, like that? What do you think will happen in the next five, ten years?

NN: Well, looking back, it improve, you know everytime. You see new supermarket coming up. New bank coming up. That mean that's a little improvement there. Of course, when labor's wages good, then I think they can make a go. I hear they depend on that labor's economy around here. Mostly sugar plantation.

PN: You think this is a good place to raise your children and your grandchildren?

NN: (Chuckles) Like this school, you send them Honolulu school, though. Mostly, some well to do family, they send their children to Honolulu school. Like Punahou, like Iolani, something like that.

PN: What would you think if this place began to develop into a resort or a high rise area?

NN: I no think get any chance to be that way. They limit the living around here, along the beach side, eh. You cannot build more than three story high buildings or something like that.

PN: But suppose they could build, what you....

NN: All depends...the people have to work and depend where they work, too, yeah. I don't think the sugar plantation worker can buy all those high rises stuff. I don't think so. To live in. The plantation giving them the package deal. Build a house and sell to them. The price is real double, triple up now. Use to be about twelve thousand. Cost now about thirty-six thousand. For the house and the lot, too, eh. And that, when they offer for sale, so many people want to buy the home. (laughs) Buy the package deal, eh. They get no trouble in selling, because if it's own people. But if plantation people don't buy that, they can always sell to outsider, but.

PN: Let me ask one more question. Can you compare your life now with your life thirty, forty years ago?

NN: In what way do you mean "compare?"

PN: Material wealth, friends, you know.

NN: Forty years ago, yeah, it's true. I use to own a car forty years ago. And still, I own a car now. That part, not much difference. But the wages really came high. Because of the union, living condition improve and wages improve, too, eh. Even when the union get the raise, they use to give supervisor a raise. But not any more now.

(PN laughs)
NN: They don't do that now. Yeah. So some supervisor gripe, eh, now days.

PN: Do you think you're better off now than you were thirty, forty years ago?

NN: Well...with the free perquisite, I don't know. Not much difference. Of course, now dollar value altogether different, eh, compare. Well, in fact, I save more money now after I retire than working. (Laughs)

PN: Do you think the value of the dollar is worth more now or thirty, forty years ago?

NN: Let's see. Of course everything high, so not much difference I think. Even though the wages high, but those days, everything was cheap, yeah, the food. Living expense was cheap. With the low wages, too. They use to make a go of it with dollar a day. That's all. Of course, like big family had hard time. Like our family. Was 14 in the family. Kind of hard for dollar a day. My father and I work on it, too. We go work. Now, I think, for some people, like school teacher draw good pay, eh. Like my son and daughter-in-law, two school teachers, so they make good money, see. As far as that concern. Of course, they get quite a bit bite from tax, though, but. Olden days, we don't have to pay income tax. You just pay the poll tax, five dollars a year, eh. That's all to it. No income tax. No such thing as that. Now, income tax.

PN: Which do you think is better off? Thirty years ago or now?

NN: I don't know. Now is little better than olden days. Everything improve.

PN: What would you like to see Haleiwa-Waialua become later on?

NN: Well, that hard to say, no. They kind of progressing, though, yeah. Little by little.

PN: Well, like to add anything more or you like to....

NN: I'd like to see the school get on the par. Not like the olden days, the schools. Different, see. They can cut class anytime they like. Our days, no. Once you enter school, that's it.

PN: Was very strict.

NN: Yeah. No. They cannot be so strict. Maybe, now, I don't know. Hard part is the parents don't cooperate now days, no. See, they know that children's wrong, but still back up the children, see. You try to discipline the children, the parents get after you, eh. They think their children's right. Most of the parent like that, now. I wouldn't say all, but.

PN: What would you say was the most significant event that changed your life?
NN: Well, I would say get championship for the baseball team, eh.

(Laughter)

NN: Yeah. Use to be a big day, no, when come to baseball game Sunday. In fact, there's no union that time, but plantation that was all out. They use to get band from Schofield, 26th Infantry. Every Sunday, they play. The band play at ball games. And that was something. You cannot do now days. Yeah. And then when you win the championship, the manager can send you to other island. They send my team twice other island. Kauai and Hawaii. Yeah. My coaching the championship in the Rural AJA, Senior league.

PN: You folks beat the other two teams in the other islands?

NN: Yeah. We beat all the team. Got the championship, eh. They gave us a vacation with the pay. And free trip, everything, free. Those days, no planes. Those days was boat, see.

PN: (Laughs) How long was the vacation?

NN: One week. But that was good enough.

PN: That was a pretty good incentive then.

NN: Yeah. That's why olden days, all the boy used to stick together. But you cannot make the boys stick together now. They all go out and work. Well, you cannot have a good team. Yeah. That's all. And every Sunday, win or lose, all the camp people is waiting with the chicken hekka. You know, they kill the chicken. All the old people used to back up the team, too, yeah.

They had a certain group making ready for chicken hekka whenever finish baseball. Mostly watch the ball game, but, there were few who were preparing for the hekka for that night. Every Sunday. I don't know how many chicken was...

(Laughter)

NN: Of course, all donation, that one.

PN: Mostly Japanese people?

NN: All Japanese. All Japanese.

PN: How many people use to watch the baseball games?

NN: Oh, quite a many, there were plenty. Old people, eh. Young people, too, but. Both side had a stand. Was full most of the time. Yeah, how many people were in there. Quite a many, though. You compare to now. Now, hardly can see any spectator. Yeah. Even the manager used to come every Sunday watch the game. Plantation manager.

PN: How did you become coach?
NN: Well, I was one of the old-timer. And there was nobody to run the team, I guess. (Laughs)

PN: Must have been a pretty good coach, eh.

NN: I think five championship out of seven years playing with the Rural League. Not bad.

PN: Maybe can wrap up this interview and we talk a little about your marriage. How you met your wife and...

NN: Oh. I met my wife at Kuakini Hospital. She's from Maui. She's born in Haiku. And, well, I got engaged three years with her, because what, I was ready to marry then she got sick. She had a pleurisy, see, so had to rest three years. Then '37, we got married. Came down here. This house was just like built for me. Because those days, had quite a "drag" from management. They build house. They left for over half a year, yet. And many people want this house and they couldn't get it. So they use to complain to the management that why I don't move in the house. He like the house empty. They want the house. Say, "No, that house is just for me."

PN: How come they reserve that for you?

NN: Oh, you know, they go by application. They apply all the house everybody. Who apply and they want the house, they move in. Well, I didn't move, you know, that, see. Yeah, because I was minus wife, eh, yet. (Laughs)

I had house down camp side. Mill 8.

PN: So when your wife became well, then you move...

NN: Yeah. Married, I came here. Then I get only one child. Then she didn't work for twenty years. So after twenty years, she start to work again. She is ready to retire next year in July.

PN: How come she went back work?

NN: I didn't send her back. She wanted to work, see. Less monotonous than stay home. Only one son, but the son grew. And then he wasn't home with us all the time. Our son join the Air Force. Go Mainland college like that, no. So she start to work, but. She had a hard time to get a job, because she was off for twenty years. And you know, those nursing technique, they change, you know, every year. So she has to go get license. So she went and she got the license alright. She start to work.

PN: If you have anything more you'd like to add?

NN: No.

PN: Wrap up this interview. Thank you for your time and...

END OF INTERVIEW
BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: PHILIP NINOMIYA, retired teacher

Philip Ninomiya, Japanese, was born in Haleiwa on December 22, 1906. His parents came from Oshimagun, Japan, to work on the plantation. There were three children in the family.

Philip's father opened a blacksmith shop in Haleiwa which he gave up when automobiles became popular.

Philip attended Waialua Elementary School, McKinley High School and the Territorial Normal School. His first teaching assignment was at Kaupo, Maui in 1929. He returned to Haleiwa in 1931 and started teaching at Haleiwa Elementary. In 1967, he retired from teaching.

Philip was married late and has no children. He and his wife live in Haleiwa.
Tape No. 1-40-1-76

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Philip Ninomiya (PN)

July 2, 1976

Haleiwa, Hawaii

BY: Araceli Agoo (AA)

AA: This is an interview with Philip H. Ninomiya at his house, 66-112 Haleiwa Road, Haleiwa. Today is July 2nd, 1976. Okay, Mr. Ninomiya, can you please tell me about your origins?

PN: You mean ethnic origin?

AA: Where your family is from, where you were born...what town your father came from.

PN: My parents came from a little island off the coast of Honshu, called Oshima-gun. It's in the southern part of the main island of Honshu. My father came first and later on, he sent for his wife. I was born right here in Haleiwa.

AA: Did he come because of the sugar? What was the reason for coming here?

PN: I think...I'm not too sure, but...I think he worked for a plantation originally, but I forgot about the details. Maybe he was at Waimanalo someplace. I'm not so sure.

AA: Yeah. Waimanalo was also plantation...his reason was to work in the plantation.

PN: Yeah. They all came to work in the sugar cane fields, originally. And some of them decided to change their jobs later.

AA: Can you tell me about your family, then? Which schools did your children go to?

PN: In those days Japanese parents wanted their children to be educated in Japanese. I know my sister went to a Japanese school in Kaaawa. It's a long distance away from here.

AA: Did you live in Haleiwa and she went to Kaaawa?

PN: She and I were about six years in age difference but I went to a Japanese language school near....Taisho Gakkō, beyond Haleiwa Surf.
AA: Haleiwa Surf? The Jōdō Mission? Right here?

PN: Yeah, but just beyond that, there is a place, right next to Haleiwa Surf, there is a camper—what do you call? Haven't you seen it?

AA: The beach camp?

PN: Yeah, the beach camp with so many campers.

AA: Oh, it's called the Haleiwa Beach Club now? Is that what you're talking about?

PN: No, right next to it. Haven't you seen it? Oh, my goodness, you don't know your Waialua!

AA: I know Waialua, not Haleiwa. (Laughs)

PN: ...you go from the beach, you see lots of these...it's not like a tent city, but it's individual campers, and people pay a fee and stay there. But right in front was an old Japanese school. Later it moved to Hongwanji in Waialua.

AA: You only have one sister? Only two of you in the family?

PN: No, I have only one sister now, but I have had two sisters. One went back to Japan to live, because she was...born and raised in Japan. And then, some years later, after she grew up, she became a picture bride of another man in California. After her husband passed away, she became a social security beneficiary. Then, she decided to go back to Japan to live on her home island, where she was raised. She passed away some years ago. Another sister lives in Honolulu, but she's senile, so I can't ask many of the things that I would like to ask.

AA: Were you the one that said your father was a blacksmith? Can you tell me, like, where was his...

PN: Well, his blacksmith shop was located right on the main Kam Highway, opposite Liliuokalani Church where the Assembly of God church is presently located. Many years later, the automobiles came into existence, and right next to it was Waialua Garage. The original company for Service Motors. So, pretty soon my father had to give up the shop.

AA: Where did he go to work after? What kind of job...

PN: Well, he did odd jobs, here and there.

AA: Do you remember who were the people that came to use his services?

PN: Well, in those days, practically everybody had to have horses, except some who preferred walking. Shoeing horses and repairing carriages
were important trades.

AA: Was your father the only blacksmith in Waialua? Did the plantation people come with their horses to him?

PN: He did have the only shop but I think plantation had it's own.... But, when the automobiles became popular, he had to give up his business.

AA: And how did that affect your family when he had to give up something that was bringing in regular income?

PN: Well....in those days, at least, the cost of living was cheap, so even if my dad had odd jobs, like carpenter or something, at least, he was able to maintain his family household expenses. Besides my sister, who's living in Honolulu at present, had to quit work after eighth grade, to support the family. Japanese believed that girls didn't need too much education.

AA: What about your education, then? Can you tell me all the schools that you went to?

PN: Well, in those days, we had no intermediate schools or high schools in Waialua. I attended Haleiwa Elementary School, formerly known as Waialua Elementary School. That was the only elementary school, at that time. Later on, we had the Kawaiola Elementary School, but, those were the only two schools in Waialua district. After I graduated from Waialua Elementary School, eighth grade, most of us who wanted high school education had to go to McKinley High School. That was the only public high school on Oahu.

AA: About what year was this when...

PN: That was 1921. I graduated from McKinley in 1925. Leilehua High School and other high schools in the rural districts came into existence long after that.

AA: How did you get back and forth to McKinley? Did you live in town?

PN: Yes. I had to live in town. We used to have the so-called Waialua taxi. The taxis would take passengers to Honolulu, say about two times a day. Once in the morning, once in the afternoon. We used to use those facilities.

AA: The Waialua taxi? Was it just one person, one car, or....

PN: There were several people, I know Mrs. Aoki's father used to be one of the taxi drivers. Mr. Fujita, who passed away last year was a taxi driver who commuted from Haleiwa or Waialua. They picked up passengers here and there in the camps, and then they would go to Honolulu.
AA: Okay. Did you have to pay?
PN: Oh, yes. I think it was rather reasonable. About dollar and a half, or something.
AA: For one way?
PN: Yeah.
AA: That was reasonable at that time?
PN: Yes, because that's a long distance, you know.
AA: When you were at McKinley, then, how was your typical day? What time did you have to get up?
PN: Since many of us didn't have relatives who would be able to accommodate us, so---people like Mr. Edward Matsumoto...And Mitsuki Matsumoto and I stayed at a Japanese High School dormitory. In the afternoon, after McKinley High School classes were over, we attended the classes at the Japanese High School. Otherwise we wouldn't be able to stay at the dormitory.
AA: You stayed at a Japanese dormitory?
PN: High school dormitory.
AA: So, that means you went to Japanese school after the day?
PN: Yeah. That's the one affiliated with Hongwanji.
AA: The kids over there were mostly Japanese, at McKinley?
PN: Yes. That's right. Right.
AA: Uh huh. Was Punahou around at that time?
PN: Oh, yes. People who could afford to send their children to Punahou sent their children, but I think very few Japanese students went to Punahou. Now, it's mixed....
AA: Okay, so the students at McKinley were mostly Japanese. What would you consider was the second largest group there?
PN: Oh, I suppose, we had lots of Chinese students, too. But very few Filipinos, you know, in those days.
(AA laughs)
AA: Yeah. What kind of discipline, you know, that the teachers put to you at McKinley?
PN: I don't think there was any discipline because we all were very conscientious. I don't think the teachers had any problems. Not like today.

AA: So, can you tell me, like, how do you feel about the value about the education then? How... as compared to now, you know, where teachers have to put some sort of discipline into their teaching. They have to send them to the vice principal once in a while. Can you sort of tell me just how you feel?

PN: In the old days, you know, we maintained discipline because the children knew that discipline was necessary in school. Some of the Japanese parents used to say, "If my child misbehaves, you can do anything with him." Wow! Such a broad privilege! But, you can't do that now. If you try to discipline a child, the next day you see the parents storming into the principal's office.

AA: So you would say that... with freer laws now, if the children are less disciplined. That we have more...

PN: Oh, yes. Definitely so. I have two nieces who are school teachers. They say that I retired at the right time.

(Laughter)

AA: 'Cause you do stuff like that.

PN: Yeah.

AA: What about your jobs done? All the jobs that you have held? Could you go over them?

PN: What do you mean?

AA: Like, all your teaching jobs or other odd jobs that you have done.

PN: What about my job, you said?

AA: Can you just sort of go down the list of all the jobs that you had?

PN: Well, in the '20s, you know, when I graduated from Normal School, we all had to be farmed out on the outside island. You just have to serve your term on the neighbor islands. It's a good thing it was a one semester job in an isolated school called Kaupo on the tail end of Maui. In order to go there--in those days, there were no airplanes. So, I had to ride on a boat to go to Kahului. There the supervising principal picked up another teacher and me and took us to the schools where we were assigned. The other woman was the teacher-principal at Keanae School. After that, my supervising principal took me to Hana where I had to pick up some pots and pans, and clothing that I had shipped previously on a boat. They were kept at Hana School. I packed them in two gunnysacks, threw them over the
saddle at Kipahulu where he got two mules for us. I mean, one mule for himself, and one mule for me. We went up and down the gulches for three and a half hours ride to Kaupo, Maui. I was the only occupant of the teachers' cottage. It was a very primitive town.

AA: How many teachers were there in all?

PN: Only two teachers. The principal and I. And since the principal taught the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade, I had to teach the first, second, and third, where I had no experience whatsoever.

AA: Was Kaupo, Maui a plantation town?

PN: No, it's still ranch country. Now there is a road to Kaupo. I haven't been back there since the road was built. During the Depression they built a road good enough for one car. One hour, traffic will go in one direction. Another hour, the traffic will reverse. Once a month Mauna Kea used to come out to Kaupo and since there was no harbor, the boat would stay outside, away from the shore. They brought the things to this Kaupo landing by small boats.

AA: Mauna Kea is the name of a boat?

PN: Yes. Steamer Day was very exciting for the kids. Once a month. Hawaiians made up the population in that community. Boy! The children stripped off to swim on Steamer day. And swim, you know. (Laughs) I wasn't quite used to seeing children swimming naked. But then, nobody would laugh, so I didn't laugh either.

AA: After Kaupo, where did you go to teach?

PN: For the next three years, I taught at a school called Halehaku School in Peahi, Maui. That school is gone now because some years later, we had the Depression. The pineapple industry was in the dumps. So...the school became smaller and smaller. And eventually disappeared from the map. An interesting thing about that school was, another male teacher and I were assigned to that school, but we had no living accommodations. There was the principal's cottage plus one other teachers' cottage. Two men couldn't very well stay there, so we were told to live in a pineapple camp house some distance away. No paved road. Only, muddy road. Before the school year began we went there to clean up the place. Both of us didn't have a car, so we had to walk to school on the muddy road. But the principal got special dispensation from the Department of Education to let us occupy one of the rooms in her cottage. That meant four unmarried people lived in the same cottage. The principal was a nice part-Hawaiian woman. She told us that since we lived there, we'd have to clean the bathroom one week and the next week, the parlor. And that's what we did. We used to get rating, at the end of the school year.

AA: Rating?
PN: Rating...whether you were teaching properly, the use of correct English, behavior in the teachers' cottage, and so on. Both of us got superior for cottage behavior.

(Laughter)

AA: You mean they did stuff like that for teachers? You were rated?

PN: The principal had to rate us at the end of each year. One of them was cottage behavior. We lived with the principal----and another woman. There were two bedrooms. Two men occupied one room, while the principal and her cottage mate occupied another room. Both of us got rated superior in cottage behavior. Of course, we had to behave, you know. It was so different from now-a-days.

AA: Okay. Your next job?

PN: In the meantime, my mother became paralyzed. She was staying with my married sister. So I asked the department whether I could be placed on Oahu so that I can be near home. I was assigned to Waianae School. I didn't apply for Waialua, because I didn't want to teach in my hometown school. Since I didn't have a car in those days, I was thinking of taking the 3 o'clock Sunday train from Haleiwa to Waianae. Every Sunday, the train would come to Haleiwa Hotel about noon time. At 3 o'clock, it would leave for Honolulu. So, I was thinking of going to Waianae, Sunday before Labor Day. Day after Labor Day, school would start. But I didn't have to do that. In the meantime, the department wanted some teachers who didn't have to occupy the teacher cottages. In those days, the teachers had to live in the cottages. You couldn't commute from Honolulu. The rules were rather strict. Mr. Sam Haga and I were placed at Haleiwa---Waialua Elementary School. There I taught until I retired. That was in 1931.

AA: You started in 1931?

PN: Yeah, in Waialua.

AA: Okay. Can I ask you a question about the train? How much did you have to pay to ride a train to Honolulu?

PN: Oh, let me see. I can't remember. Because I never did use the train.

AA: Yeah. You didn't go that trip, right. Okay. What about the hours? 1931? The hours at Waialua Elementary? Was it eight to two? The regular hours?

PN: Yes, that's right. Some of us stayed after 2 o'clock to prepare for lessons for the next day.

AA: The grades--did you teach just one grade in one class or did you have to mix your children?
PN: Well, at Haleiwa, being a larger school, I taught one grade. But in 1941, the year the War started, Kawaiiola became a part of Waialua Elementary School. So, I was asked to teach at Kawaiiola Elementary. I taught there one year. But I didn't like it, because it was so isolated. Nobody seems to come and visit us. Nobody bother you. At the same time, we had no contact with other teachers.

AA: They only needed one teacher at Kawaiiola?

PN: No. We had Mrs. Kawashima who was a permanent fixture there until she transferred to another school. Then there was another teacher. So three of us were there.

AA: Were you living in this house, then, when you were...

PN: Yeah.

AA: And how did you get back and forth to Kawaiiola?

PN: Back in those days, I already had a car.

AA: Oh. 1941?

PN: Yeah. So I commuted from here.

AA: And that's all your teaching jobs that you have had? So, what things did you have to buy around this area? Say, 1920? That's when you started? 1925 is when you graduated...

PN: From high school. Then I went to Normal School for actually about two and half years. Actually it was two years, but I extended my stay and I got out in 1928 after the first semester. As soon as I finished Normal School courses I went out to teach.

AA: Why was it called a Normal School?

PN: Well, it was the only teacher-training school. Normal School required two years of training. That's all. But, later on, most of us, except some oldtimers, went back to the University to get two more years of schooling so that we could get a degree in education.

AA: Okay. So when you graduated, then, did you live alone or did you still live with your family?

PN: Well, I was sent out to Maui.

AA: Okay. Excuse me. 1931, that's when you began at Haleiwa?

PN: Yeah. The year I came back, my father passed away. So, my mother and I lived together for a long time.
AA: Okay. So, what were the major things that you had to pay for?
Electricity, water, and....

PN: Yes, food.

AA: Were there any kind of free things around because you were a teacher?

PN: No, no.

AA: I was thinking of the plantation, excuse me.

PN: But the pay was very, very cheap in those days, because cost of living was so cheap.

AA: So, it was enough for you to live on?

PN: Yes.

AA: And could you still use the bank?

PN: Yeah. I think we only got about $110.

AA: A month?

PN: Yes.

AA: And about how much would you say it would cost you and your mother to live for a month?

PN: Oh, that I wouldn't know, but, I was able to save, too.

AA: So....what about the banks and the savings and loans? Did you get to use them?

PN: Well, we didn't have credit union in the beginning. The only bank was this....

AA: First Hawaiian?

PN: Yeah, but we used to call it Bishop Bank. The bank is still there.

AA: So this was the first bank in this area?

PN: Yes. And then there was the Bank of Hawaii where the kukui nut factory is located right now.

AA: Did you participate in something called tanomoshi?

PN: No, not for me. Because I was....a school teacher, very few people asked me to join. But, I know many of the local people had tanomoshi.
AA: So as a school teacher, you were sort of respected?

PN: Yes. I don't think they wanted to ask me to join.

AA: Were there any organizations that existed to help the people around the area? I know the community group, Waialua Community Association.

PN: Yes, and we used to have this so-called Seinen Kai, Young People's Association that used to meet back of the Haleiwa Post Office. There used to be a Japanese language school there. Later on the school closed because we had Waialua Hongwanji Japanese School and Taishō Gakkō. They couldn't make it a go. Finally, Haleiwa Seinen Kai, Haleiwa Young People's Association, got the building and the property. We used to meet there. Every Christmas season we used to patrol that Haleiwa area during the wee hours of the night. At least two of us would go around. The only thing that people steal would be chickens or something like that.

AA: That was the only thing you can remember? Seinen Kai.

PN: Seinen Kai? And then I used to help the Rural YMCA...boys' activities in the country. Mr. Taichi Matsuno, rural YMCA executive organized the so-called Friendly Indian Tribes throughout the rural Oahu communities. I used to help him. That's where I learned quite a number of old time songs.

AA: How come it was given this name, Indians? Were there Indians in Waialua?

PN: No, no! YMCA used to organize these boys' clubs. But girls were ignored in those days. I never heard of any girls' clubs except Girls Scouts but now that the YMCA has buildings in Wahiawa and other places, they don't have the Friendly Indian tribes.

AA: Okay. You were talking about language schools. Do you remember any other language schools other than Japanese?

PN: I don't remember any other language schools, although there were some Chinese. I think Chinese students went to Wahiawa Chinese language school.

AA: But as far as you can remember, it was only the Japanese in Waialua?

PN: Yes, that's right.

AA: You didn't hear of any Portuguese school?

PN: No, I don't think so. Some of these old time Portuguese belong to Senior Citizens Club. I ask these Portuguese, "How do you say Happy New Year?" Some of them even can't say Happy New Year in Portuguese.
PN: It's pathetic, you know. I help at the Area Wide Horizon Socialization hour every week. At New Year's time, I ask the Filipinos, "How do you say Happy New Year in Filipino?" I know how to say Happy New Year in Japanese. And I would ask some of these Portuguese oldtimers, "How do you say Happy New Year?" They can't even express it.

AA: Okay. Let's move on. Did you date? (Laughs) What kind of dating patterns did you have when you were growing up?

PN: Very strict, yes. I don't think we have any dating like the kind that we have now.

AA: But, did you go with a group of young men and then you went to a picnic and there were a group of young ladies there, and that's how you met?

PN: No. We had this Seinen Kai, young people's activities. We didn't have these parties and invite women at all.

AA: Seinen Kai was mainly boy, then. All boy.

PN: Yeah. Young men. We had New Year's parties, but we never invited women.

AA: How fun was it, then, when there weren't any girls around? (Laughs)

PN: Well, I suppose, in those days, we didn't think it was funny, because we had a strict moral upbringing.

AA: So how did you get to meet your future wives, then?

PN: You know, I got married at a very late age. I met my wife through the founder of this religion. That's how I got married.

AA: What about your friends? How did they, you know, they didn't get married as late as you were.

PN: Some of them got married through so called miai. Miai means there's a go-between. The go-between thinks there is a certain lady who would make a good wife. So he arranges a meeting. That's how some of my friends married. In those days, no dating, absolutely.

AA: What about the weddings of you and your friends? Were they big parties?

PN: Not as big as present days. In those days we had no Seaview Inn, no Dot's Drive-in. So, whenever there was a wedding reception, it was held there at home. They put up a tent or something like that. The family friends got together and prepared food. Of course, we didn't have the varieties like the kind we have now. I remember when Mr. Fujioka got married.
AA: Mr. Hiroshi (Fujioka)?

PN: Yeah. He put up a big tent in the Hongwanji Church ground.

AA: That's the one in Waialua?

PN: Yeah. Right opposite their present store. And then, we had the reception and party right under the tent. No loudspeaker in those days.

AA: Did you have a band?

PN: No!

AA: No music? (Laughs)

PN: No such thing. Those things came in later.

AA: Okay. (Laughs)

PN: Yeah.

AA: About when did you start having bands at parties? Orchestras.

PN: Well, I think, after the War the customs changed quite a bit.

AA: What about Japanese customs that you took from home and used here in Hawaii when you got married?

PN: Well, I think the Japanese custom that still remains is this banzai at the end. We give three cheers of banzai for the bride and groom, and three cheers of banzai for the guests. That seems to remain in Hawaii. Some Japanese visitors say they are surprised that we are still doing it. In Japan, they don't do that any more. Some of these customs that disappeared in Japan are still being maintained right here in Hawaii.

AA: Is that the only example that you can think of?

PN: Yes, I think so. In the old days, all of them got married in Japanese kimono. But not any more. Kimono is rather impractical. Once you use it for your wedding, you don't use it any more.

AA: Kimonos are very costly to make?

PN: Right now it is.

AA: What about the rice on the bed? My sister is Japanese and she had rice on the bed? Under the bed? Isn't that a Japanese custom?

PN: I never heard of it.

(AA laughs)

PN: That's something new to me.
AA: Yeah. Well, my sister is Japanese. My sister-in-law and her mother did that on their wedding night. She put....

PN: Really?

AA: Well, maybe that's something new.

PN: Oh! Live and learn. That's the first time I've heard of it. When my wife comes back, I'm going to ask her. I never heard of that kind of custom.

AA: Okay. This was the house that you've been in all this time? This house?

PN: Yes.

AA: This house is built around nineteen....

PN: Thirty-eight.

AA: Before that, where were you living?

PN: My brother-in-law used to operate the Haleiwa Service Station. He had the main house. And right next to it was this Queen Liliuokalani's summer cottage.

AA: You lived in it?

PN: Yeah. But nothing to boast about. That land is owned by the Liliuokalani Estate where Haleiwa Service Station is.

AA: That's the one right in front of Sea and Surf?

PN: Yes. That's right.

AA: So that house was really nice. It had indoor toilets?

PN: No. That came afterward, I'm sure.

AA: The indoor toilets came afterwards?

PN: Yeah. When Queen Liliuokalani....was using that, I think, she must have had an outhouse.

AA: Okay. This house was bought. (Referring to present house) Was it new?

PN: Yeah.

AA: You were the first occupants of this house?

PN: Well, my brother-in-law and I asked the same contractor. My brother-in-law owned those three houses right next to me. This is my own. Since we had the same contractor, people thought I own those three rental units for many, many years. Up to a few years ago, people thought I owned those houses. We only had the same contractor.
In the meantime, my brother-in-law sold it to somebody, and it has changed hand many times. And yet people thought I owned those rental units. Some people would come and ask whether I had any units to rent. And I said, "Oh, no"...

AA: They're not mine's. (Laughs)

PN: Said, "No. I never owned those three houses."

AA: So living with your mother alone, then you had to take care of mostly everything?

PN: Yes.

AA: You had to do your garden. You had to do the housework?

PN: Yeah.

AA: Okay. What kind of food did you used to eat?

PN: Well, you know, we weren't raised on milk and cheese. To this day, if I should drink milk, I have running stomach.

AA: Really?

PN: Yeah. I go for hot lunch at Haleiwa Gym sometimes and that's one thing I decline. I don't drink milk. But if it's as cheese or ice cream, it doesn't affect my stomach. As I was never raised on cheese, I don't buy cheese to put in my sandwiches. I was telling some of my friends at the Haleiwa Gym, "Oh, I won't buy cheese to eat. But since it's served here, I don't want to waste it." So I put it between the sandwiches or rolls and eat it. But we weren't raised on milk or cheese.

AA: So, mostly your diet was rice and fish?

PN: Yes. In fact, my mother said I was very weak when I was young, so she made a vow to a patron saint that she would cut out meat which she like very much. So she never touch meat after that.

AA: But then, she fed you meat?

PN: Well, when she used to cook for my brother-in-law's family, she used to prepare meat. But she never touched it herself. But that's an old-fashioned custom. If you ask a favor from a patron saint, you cut out something that you like very much.

AA: And are you healthy now?

PN: I think so.

(Laughter)

PN: I don't know if it's because of her vow, but that's what she told me.
AA: Okay. Most of the... since you live out here where the ocean is so close, did you mostly eat fish that...

PN: Yes. We used to have fish peddlers. This area used to be called ryoba, fishing village. Ryoba. The fishermen lived just beyond our house. Many fishermen lived there. Most of the diet consisted of fish, eggs and things like that.

AA: I've heard of a Mr. Molle? He used to be a fish peddler? You don't know him?

PN: No. Not Japanese?

AA: No, it's a Filipino.

PN: Oh. Oh, I've heard of that name.

AA: Fortunato Molle?

PN: Yeah, yeah. But before he came into existence, we had lots of fishermen like Mr. Minoru Aoki's father. His father and mother were occupied in catching and selling fish.

AA: Fish and seaweed then?

PN: No seaweed. Mr. Aoki's mother used to bunch up two or three aji and sell them. Is that akule?

AA: The fish?

PN: Yeah.

AA: Yeah.

PN: She would tie them together with this reed that grew along Anahulu Stream. It was called akakai (reed).

AA: Is that Hawaiian?

PN: Yes. When we were small, we used to go upstream and cut akakai, tie them up and make them into rafts. We used to go up and down on akakai rafts. Boy! We used to have lots of fun. There was a very large hau tree beyond this place.

AA: There's still a hau tree there. A little hau tree.

PN: Yeah, but then, this was a huge one, growing---right beside the river. And we used to climb the tree and build tree houses.

(AA chuckles)

PN: Really fun. Children now a days have to have store toys, you know. But we used to make all kinds of things. We used to make... this hau swords. Get a hau branch, and cut a ring at one point. You
tap the side of the hau where the sword's blade would be. You keep on tapping. When it becomes loose, out comes a round sword. The scabbard is the hau bark. We used to play with these swords; we had lots of fun. We just had to make our own toys in those days. There used to be a railroad bridge right there.

END OF SIDE ONE
SIDE TWO

AA: Let's talk about the kind of recreation that you had after work. Other than your job, what things did you do?

PN: Well, I was always interested in gardening, so, I did quite a bit of gardening and raising plants. I'm not too sports minded, so I didn't get involved in baseball. But baseball has been very popular since our younger days. We used to have a golf course right here (area known as Alii Beach). But in the old days, very few Japanese people played golf, because you have to be rather affluent to enjoy the game. But now, it's every man's game.

AA: You also like movies.

PN: Oh yes!

AA: I saw you one time at a Filipino movie. (Laughs)

PN: Yeah. I tell my wife that I think I'm the only Japanese who would go and see a Filipino movie. I used to go and see Fernando Poe. But this last Monday, I went to Koga Theatre to see Fernando Poe and Albano Brothers. I was disappointed. It had very little action.

AA: (Laughs) Okay. You like to see action in the....

PN: Oh, yes, I do. I go to kung fu movies all the time. Is it next week they're having this Filipino kung fu movie? Snake Women or something?

AA: Haleiwa? I don't know. I can't see the board any more. When I pass by, usually I can see the big boards. But now they use the little boards and I can't see.

PN: Yeah.

AA: Okay. Did you belong to any organizations or clubs like the---you said you belong to the---Seinen Kai. You said you belong to that. What about other clubs? Like even now.

PN: Well, I used to help with the YMCA boys activities and then....I used to be a member of the Lion's Club. I....I couldn't keep it up, because I was so involved in other activities. Besides, I had to slow down my pace.

AA: What kind of things did the Lion's Club do?
PN: Well, the main thing is to help the people who are blind. Or to prevent blindness. I notice lately they are offering scholarships.

AA: Yeah. Okay. You said your stomach doesn't agree with milk. Is it because you weren't brought up on it or because, maybe, there's something wrong with your stomach.

PN: No, I think it's because some people just can't take milk. When I go to hot lunch, some Japanese people decline their milk, too, because they cannot drink milk. But...if I eat ice cream or cheese, it doesn't affect me at all.

AA: Okay. What about illnesses? Have you had accidents or illnesses?

PN: No accidents so far, but then, I think I have a weak stomach, though.

(Laughter)

AA: Then how can you watch those movies? Those bloody movies? (Laughs)

PN: I tell my wife. She gets all excited when I take her to movies. The next day, she's pooped. So I'd say, "You take the movies too seriously. So just think that you are looking at a movie, and you won't get too excited. And that's the way."

AA: When you got sick or injured, did you go to Waialua Hospital?

PN: In the old days, we weren't supposed to go to Waialua Hospital.

AA: Because you were from here? Oh!

PN: Because we are non-plantation people.

AA: Plantation....okay. So where did you go? Dr. Miyasaki?

PN: Yeah. Of course, we didn't have Wahiawa Hospital those days. So we all have to go to Honolulu. The Kuakini Hospital was called Japanese Hospital.

AA: Okay. You said you married pretty late? So then your wife never had to bear her child?

PN: Yeah. Too late already.

(Laughter)

AA: Too late. Okay. Do you remember any children here that were retarded? How did the community react to them? Where were they take care?

PN: Well....I think most of the parents kept their retarded children at home. You know that....woman who maintains a little store next to Tanabe's? She still takes care of her retarded daughter. But I suppose, now days, since both parents work, they would prefer sending their retarded children to an institution or something
like that.

AA: So the retarded children, then, they were kept at home and kept away from people?

PN: Well, stay close to home. I don't think they mingled with the community. Unless the mother took the child with her whenever she went.

AA: Were there any superstitions involved with that, like, there was...

PN: Yes. Concerning harelip. Japanese superstition is...if a pregnant woman should fool around with the fireplace she would have a harelip baby. In our days we cooked our rice outdoors, with firewood.

AA: Wasn't it also a bad sign, like, the parent have sinned or they are paying for something that they've done, because...

PN: That's the Buddhist philosophy of karma. Whatever you sow, you reap later. They call it karma.

AA: Yeah. Okay. What about people who committed suicide? Do you know of any here?

PN: Well, there have been few cases of suicide. I notice some of them who are ill and if it was incurable, some committed suicide.

AA: Who took care of the streets around Haleiwa? Who picked up garbage, you know?

PN: Oh, in the old days, we never had this rubbish....I mean, refuse collection. We just burned our rubbish in the backyard.

AA: Your first car, what kind of a model was it?

PN: My brother-in-law used to have connection with Castner Garage.

AA: Castner Ford?

PN: Yeah. Later it was known as Castner Ford. Castner Garage used to be where the Datsun agency is. He worked there for some years. Later on, he opened his own service station. He got me a Ford Roadster. That was a second hand Ford Roadster. It was my first car.

AA: Was it just your car?

PN: Yeah.

AA: How much did it cost you? It was second hand? Can you remember how much...

PN: I think just a few hundred dollars.

AA: Did you ever own a bicycle or a horse?
PN: Oh, yes. When we... went to school, some of us used bicycles. But nobody stole our bicycles in those days. It was very safe. (Laughs)

AA: Did you ever own a horse? You must have had lots of horses.

PN: Yes, my father had a horse. And I used to ride on horseback.

AA: Did you have a post office then?

PN: The only post office we had was Waialua Post Office, and we had to go and get the mail at the Waialua Post Office. You know right where the present library is.

AA: Yeah. I still remember it. How did you find about things that were happening in Honolulu? You know, you had newspapers?

PN: Oh, yes.

AA: Okay. The newspapers were published in town?

PN: The Japanese papers were delivered to your home, everyday. Because there was an agent here, right here in Haleiwa. He used to have a newsboy to deliver the paper daily.

AA: Well, what I meant more was how did you get to hear about, you know, the news? How did you get to hear it?

PN: Only through the newspapers. Because we didn't have radio in those days.

AA: There weren't people that come back with enough from Honolulu-Waialua that could tell you what was happening there?

PN: No. Mostly through the newspapers.

AA: And what was the newspapers then? What was the names of the newspapers then?

PN: Nippu Jiji. That's called Hawaii Times right now. And Hawaii Hochi. But Hawaii Hochi changed its name to Hawaii Herald during the War but went back to Hawaii Hochi again.

AA: And the English papers were the Honolulu...

PN: Star Bulletin. And Advertiser. But when we were attending Japanese school, you know, we used to celebrate Emperor's birthday. The Japanese teachers used to tell us to bow deeply in front of the Emperor's picture.

AA: This was done in your Japanese school?

PN: Yes. But after the War, all those customs just flew out of the window. It's good, too.
AA: How come?

PN: I don't see why we should bow at the Emperor's picture.

AA: (Chuckles) Okay. When did you get your first TV and your radio?

PN: Oh, I just got it two years ago when we had cable TV. My roof is made of cement and asbestos, and it's supposed to be permanent. If anybody should get on top of it, the roofing will crack. So I never did get TV until the cable TV came into existence.

AA: How come it was built like that? I don't think any other houses are built like that.

PN: This used to be called Hawaiian Roof. As it would shed water quickly. But, in this day and age, it's very expensive to have a Hawaiian Roof.

AA: So that protects against fires, then?

PN: Well, the cement asbestos...a man whom I knew said, "Why don't you have a permanent roofing instead of shingles, because every so often you'd have to change your shingles." So, he put it up for me.

AA: The cement asbestos roofing. When did you get it?

PN: Oh, let's see, sometime after the War.

AA: Was it popular then? I never heard of it.

PN: I don't think so. I know my friend has it near the beachfront. The same man who put this cement asbestos roofing for me did it for him. But, he had a TV antenna on top, and the roof cracked. To this day, he said he can't find the leak.

AA: Okay. Your radio then.

PN: Oh, radio was very popular. I can't remember when I got my first radio....

AA: When do you recall the Japanese dialect, the Japanese language was used on the radio when they had Japanese programs?

PN: Before the War. KGU had a Japanese language program, at certain hours. So many stations had a Japanese language program at certain hours.

AA: Okay. What about the telephone? About when did you get your telephone?

PN: Let's see....I didn't have telephone for a long time. I don't know when I installed my telephone actually. When I first got it, there were only two Ninomiyas on the directory.
(AA laughs)

PN: But now, the so-called clan has expanded, and I see quite a number of Ninomiyas on the listing.

AA: Okay. What about gossip? You know...

PN: Well, gossip is a pastime, you know...

AA: Oh, most times, what did you gossip about?

PN: Oh, about friends and how they got married, and so forth. That's about it. I think topics of gossip don't change at all.

AA: Okay. So that in a way that was a way of communication. It was like a newspaper in some ways.

PN: Yes. That's right. Unless you go to wedding parties, or funerals, you wouldn't pick up gossip about friends who have been so far away.

AA: Okay. What about crime in this area? Like, could you tell me about...

PN: Hardly any! I could just leave the doors open and visit Haleiwa and come back. Nothing was stolen.

AA: But, there were some people that behaved, you know, in a manner that wasn't accepted by you all. There must have been some. (Laughs)

PN: I suppose so, but....

AA: None that you know of.

PN: Before Christmas quite a number of chickens used to get stolen. So, that was about the biggest crime around here.

AA: What about drunk people and....

PN: Oh!

AA: ...gambling? Nothing like that?

PN: Oh, in the old days, it was a Japanese custom, on New Year's Day to, you know, visit friends from house to house. At each house, you're offered some sake. By the time you visit about four or five houses, you'd get drunk. I know my father used to enjoy such customs. But I didn't.

AA: I've heard of a place here that people used to go gamble, and play mahjong. Do you remember that?

PN: Oh, well, I think gambling has been going on for ages....
AA: No. There was one house around Haleiwa. And it wasn't known to all.

PN: Chee. I wonder. You know, I've been away---while I was attending high school...

AA: Maui?

PN: Yeah. I don't know many of those things.

AA: (Laughs) Okay.

PN: But I know there was a well-known gamblers.

AA: Well-known gamblers?

PN: Yeah.

AA: Okay. Do you remember the Fukunaga murder case? Fukunaga?

PN: Fukunaga. Yeah.

AA: Can you tell me about it?

PN: Well, I wasn't here at that time. Where was I? On Maui, some local people got some reward money. Those were the days when the Big Five were very powerful. Some people were antagonized with the Big Five activities. Until the War ended, the Republican Party was the party. You hardly heard of the Democratic Party. And no labor unions.

AA: Okay. These political parties, about when did they come around? Nineteen forty...

PN: Yes. After the War.

AA: Did you belong to any of them?

PN: No. I'm always an independent voter. When election time comes, I give some of my votes to Republicans as well as Democrats. In the primary, I vote as a Democrat. But that doesn't mean that I'm going to vote for all Democrats in the General Election.

AA: Could you explain more about your religious group? The one that you are in now?

PN: Well, this is a post-War religion. It was started by a woman named Mrs. Sayo Kitamura. She preaches that we are born unto this world to polish our souls. At the present time, man has forgotten the initial objective of this life, and he seems to be thinking only of his own welfare. That's why the world is deteriorating. There are many crimes, because everybody thinks of himself only. We have
forgotten the message of God that we should polish our soul, and as
we polish our soul, we'll come to a stage where we can enjoy
heavenly bliss while you are living on this earth.

AA: You're very active in this?

PN: Well, in fact, I'm the branch chairman for this locality.

AA: Where is your temple?

PN: Actually, we don't have a temple, but we meet in a member's house,
every week. Right now, we go to Mr. Ohama's residence on Paalaa
Road. But it's interesting to note that whatever religion you
belong to there are more women than men. It seems that women are
more religious or more interested in religion. Maybe men have too
many outside activities.

AAL Mrs. Sayo Kitamura, is she from Waialua?

PN: No, she is from Japan. That's the founder's picture right there.

AA: Oh, that's Mrs. Kitamura?

PN: Yes. We are building a new church building in Palama. It should
be completed sometime at the end of this summer. That's how I got
married to my present wife.

AA: Is your wife from Japan?

PN: Yes, she's from Japan.

AA: Okay. Who was your boss at Haleiwa Elementary?

PN: Well, when I first came back in 1931, we had Mr. Philip Cooley.
Then later on, we had Miss Ruth Rankin. You remember her?

AA: No. I had Mr. Goldman?

PN: Dawson. Not Dawson, Dawson. Miss Rankin was sent to this locality
from Waikiki School to improve the situation, and she certainly did
a good job. Very strict disciplinarian, and I think the people didn't
appreciate her while she was here. After she left, then people said,
"Oh, she was a fine principal." It's too bad that after she left the
people seem to recognize her work.

AA: So you had a very good relation with all of the principals, there?
Okay. Oh. Can I ask you what are your reactions to mixed marriages?

PN: I am very open minded.

AA: Okay. You might not really have an answer to this since you're not
from the plantation, but why do you think they had segregated camps at the plantation?

PN: Well, I think in the old days, the plantation haoles thought of themselves as a class above everybody else. And I think they still have that kind of notion. A little bit. You know, we have this AreaWide Horizon and Hui Ilima O Hale-Wai Senior Citizens Club. You know, we have Filipinos, Portuguese, Japanese, Koreans, every nationality groups except haoles. They still think that maybe they wouldn't enjoy themselves, mixing up with people. That's too bad, because we have such a good time. And they're missing plenty.

AA: (Chuckles) Okay. In Haleiwa, then, was it a mixed up of---mixed with each other people were living to---Filipinos, Portuguese and Japanese in Haleiwa?

PN: No. In the old days, Japanese associated with Japanese strictly. Of course, there weren't so many Filipinos in those days. Some Filipinos. They lived in camps mostly. So we hardly mixed together.

AA: You hardly mixed with the other children then?

PN: Yeah. Except at school, but we didn't have too many Filipino children in those days.

AA: Was it mostly Portuguese and Japanese?

PN: Mostly Japanese.

AA: Okay. How do you think the relationships between the different ethnic groups have changed? After the War?

PN: For the better. Because so many mixed marriages. You can't be too particular, you know.

AA: Okay. What about unionization of the mill? How do you think that has changed the relationships?

PN: Unionization of what? You mean sugar mill? The plantation working people?

AA: Mhm. Well, it must have affected some of you here.

PN: Yes, I suppose so. They get better pay, and better....working conditions and so on.

AA: What I meant was do you think that because they had to stick up for a common cause---stand up for a common cause, they were more friendly towards each other now?

PN: Yes. I suppose so.
AA: The Waialua Community Association has a yearly fair. Did you ever participate in that?

PN: Yes, during my younger days, I used to help. In fact, I used to help the Waialua Community Association activities when Mr. Midkiff was the advisor. Not Mr. John Midkiff, but Mr. Frank Midkiff was one of the founders of Waialua Community Association.

AA: What about the Sea Spree. Did you help out on that?

PN: No. I haven't helped at the Sea Spree. In fact, the Lion's Club, pulled out of the Sea Spree.

AA: Oh! But the Lion's Club used to have Memorial Day over there.

PN: Yeah. They still have it. The Lion's Club helps with the Waialua Community Association Carnival, each year. I don't know when they're having it this year...

AA: The what association?

PN: Waialua Community Association and Waialua Athletic Association have a combination carnival every year. That's when the Lion's Club helps.

AA: Mr. Midkiff formed a Cosmopolitan Club or something like that. Do you remember something like that? Where they had the....educated men from each ethnic group join, and I think that was the beginning of the Waialua Community Association.

PN: Let me see. Maybe it was before my days. When I was on the outside island, maybe, it might have happened. But...

AA: Yeah. People like Mr. Baysa, Mr. Sarmiento and some other people were on it. They had every ethnic group in there.

PN: Oh, is that so?

AA: And they had some teachers, too, I believe.

PN: Oh, is that so? I can't remember that.

AA: Okay. It was referred to as a Cosmopolitan Club. (Laughs) Could you relate to me what were the happiest parts of your life? What was the happiest part of your life? Thus far? (Laughs) And then later on you can tell me the saddest part of your life.

PN: I don't know what I would say the happiest---well, I suppose getting married and having a different environment in the home is the happiest part...

AA: The saddest?
PN: But, you know, I always am an optimist. I'm not too depressed like some people, so you have to look at the brighter side of life. That's why I like to sing this song Que Sera, Que Sera. Whatever will be will be I just taught that at the Senior Citizens Club.

AA: You teach them songs?

PN: Oh, yes, I like singing. But the trouble is I'm not a musician. I can't read notes. But I like to sing, so, I introduce many new songs. In fact, Willie Rego said the other day after we sang Love's Old Sweet Song, "That was very nice." And to find the words was most difficult. I went to Haleiwa Elementary School looking for the words of the song. They had thrown away so many old songbooks, and the new songbooks just don't have those old fashioned songs. It's really pathetic. To find the words......did I go all over!

AA: The library didn't have them?

PN: No. They have some modern songs, though.

AA: Okay, what about the saddest part of your life?

PN: Well, I used to tell my mother, "My friends got this, and my friends have that." And she used to say, "Never look up. Always look down. If you look up, there's no end to it. But if you look down, there are many more unfortunate people than you are. So, you know, you shouldn't be complaining."

(AA chuckles)

PN: "So, never look up. Always look down." To me that's a good philosophy. You'd like to be affluent and like to have all your desires answered, but then, you can't do that in your life, so, if you look down, then, you find many, many unfortunate people far more unfortunate than you are.

AA: That's right. What about the most boring part of your life?

PN: Boring part? Well, I'm a very active person, so I don't like to stay still. My doctor told me to slow down, but it's kind of hard.

AA: What about the most angering part of your life? Have you ever been really angry at something?

PN: Well, I suppose I have had my clashes with Miss Rankin, but, it turned out that she had a healthy respect for me after my arguments.

AA: Okay. What about individuals in the community that you think contributed a lot? That you think highly of? Can you name me any of them? They can be dead or alive.
PN: You know, we used to have a Mr. Kazouaki Tanaka. He's the founder of Esmond Department Store. He used to have a store at the present location of Matsumoto Store. He did lots of community activities while he was here. And Mr. Midkiff...

AA: Which one? Both of them?

PN: John Midkiff, the former manager of the Waialua Plantation, was very helpful. He stood up for all the Japanese employees in the plantation, and...not one Japanese employee was taken in by FBI during WWII.

AA: The FBI?

PN: Yeah. No other plantation has that kind of record, because he said, "I will guarantee their behavior."

AA: Okay. Any others?

PN: Well, you know, we have been very fortunate that our plantation managers in the past have been thinking about the community as a whole. Not only plantation. So Mr. Paty is a good, community minded manager. And we had Mr. John Anderson.

AA: That was the manager also?

PN: Yes...the one before Mr. Paty wasn't too community minded, but then, we've always had a good relation with the plantation.

AA: Before Mr. Paty was Mr. Midkiff. Right?

PN: No. No.

AA: Thompson?

PN: We had another one. He had a home at Papailoa Road. He had a stroke so he had to retire. I don't know where he is.

AA: You don't?

PN: No....he didn't mix in with the community too much, so I can't remember his name.

AA: (Chuckles) Yeah. Okay. Is that like about it? What about the people other than the managers? The teachers, you think there was any outstanding teachers at Haleiwa Elementary?

PN: Well, you know, Mrs. O'Donnell was well liked. Maile O'Donnell. And I used to have a friend called...Miss Fanny Howe. Hoo, she's...H-O-W-E. Actually, her name should be Fanny Wong. Her father used to be called Wong Hau. So they adopted the name, Howe. People thought she was a haole. But then, her family name is Wong.
AA: She was a teacher, too, here?

PN: Yeah. She taught at this school for a long time. Then we had Mrs. Annie Keao. Vice principal during her later years.

AA: Mhm. Okay. Are you tired? Can I ask you another question? (Laughs) Can you relate some of your experiences when you were part of the Waialua Victory Unit?

PN: Some months later, after the war started, some Japanese niseis, second generation Japanese, organized the Emergency Service Committee. They organized a branch in Haleiwa-Waialua area called Victory Unit. We used to have to assist in their activities. I remember going around collecting money from the isseis and niseis for the Bomb Tokyo program. I happened to go to one home although they were locally born, I knew they were pro-Japanese. So I just told this party, "Just because I'm going around collecting money for this, I don't want you to talk in my back and say that I'm, what do you call, doing this to defeat Japan. But I am doing my duty, and I don't want you to talk stink about me in the back." I still remember, because that was a famous pro-Japanese family. Pro-Japan family, although they were locally born. Many of them just contributed quietly to the fund.

AA: These funds were used for....

PN: To be presented to the Governor to bomb Tokyo in retaliation for the Pearl Harbor attack. We used to help with the memorial services for the boys who were killed in action.

AA: In Hawaii, or....

PN: In Haleiwa-Waialua area. Most of the Buddhist ministers were interned, so, we used to have Buddhist ministers come from Honolulu.

AA: You were saying that Mr. Midkiff... Mr. Midkiff saw to it that none of the people from this area weren't...

PN: No, he couldn't guarantee the behavior of Haleiwa people, but those Japanese who were under the plantation, I mean, those people who were working for the plantation. He said, "I'll vouch for their loyalty." And not one Japanese employee from the Waialua Plantation was interned. And the people were very appreciative. But Haleiwa people, quite a number of people were interned.

AA: Yeah. Okay. Can you think of any other stories about that?

PN: Well, I suppose some of the older Japanese must have looked at us in the Victory Unit with suspicion, but, heck! I didn't care.

(Laughter)
PN: See, back in---my mother and I visited Japan in 1929. My father died in 1928, and we took his ashes back to his home village. And my mother showed me the family rice fields. "This is your own." And then she pointed to the hill and said, "That's your hill where the trees are growing." In those days in Japan, you cut your own lumber in your hillside forest, built their home. I told my mother, "I don't want any of these things. If you want go give them to your relatives, go ahead. I'm not going to come back to Japan to live. I'm not going to be a farmer." But the Chinese were wiser, China was overcrowded. They had no intention of going back. So they acquired properties and expanded right here. The Japanese were not so wise. They all thought they would be going back to live in Japan. So they were way behind the Chinese.

AA: Yeah. But you've made it up there.

(Laughter)

PN: Made it after the War.

AA: Okay, so that's about it?

END OF INTERVIEW
This is the second interview with Mr. Philip H. Ninomiya at his house 66-132 Haleiwa Beach Road, Haleiwa. Today is July 23, 1976. Mr. Ninomiya, can you tell me why you became a teacher?

PN: Well, you know, I didn't know exactly what to do. So I went for a job orientation interview at Nuuanu YMCA. Whoever interviewed me advised that I should be a schoolteacher. My parents wanted me to be a dentist but I didn't want to be a dentist. Actually, I didn't know what career I should choose. (Laughs)

AA: Did you know this person?

PN: Yes, he was an old-time YMCA employee. Nuuanu YMCA.

AA: Yeah. Did you have any kind of respect for him that you....

PN: He worked among the young people, so that's why I knew him.

AA: So what grades did you teach?

PN: Well, I didn't want to teach the primary grades. That's first, second, and third. In those days, there weren't any kindergartens, and so I decided to teach the upper elementary grades. That's fourth, fifth, and sixth. But when I went out teaching for the first time, I taught the first, second, and third grade. It was a good thing it only lasted one semester.

AA: This was in Maui?

PN: Kaupo, Maui.

AA: When you came to Waialua, what grades did you teach?

PN: I think I taught the fifth grade for a while. Then later on I was given a sixth grade class, and till the day I retired I taught the sixth grade.

AA: How many years did you teach your fifth grade class?
PN: Oh, I think about two years.

AA: Two years? How did your...

PN: You know, when the War started, I was at Kawaiola because that was part of Waialua Elementary School. The former name of Haleiwa Elementary. There weren't enough students so, Mrs. Kawashima taught first and second, and there was a Miss Doris Tanaka who taught the third and the fourth, and I taught the fifth and sixth.

AA: This was at Kawaiola?

PN: And then...let's see...I came back to Waialua Elementary after that. I taught the fifth grade for the next two years, I think, and then I got transferred to a sixth grade class.

AA: Why were you transferred to a sixth grade class?

PN: Well, I suppose there was an opening, and they wanted men to be teaching the sixth grade class. In those days, men teachers were very few.

AA: Can you explain that Section One, Section Two thing that they had at Waialua?

PN: We had a good ability group, and average group and so on. But I never actually taught a very good class.

AA: Could you explain how kids were placed into this class. Like I remember one class was, you know, number one.

PN: Yeah.

AA: And there's number two. And there were like about five or six different classes.

PN: I think it depended on the principal's policy. But I can't remember too well. I suppose the children were selected for their scholastic ability and English background and so on.

AA: So you would think English was the main thing they selected you upon. The main thing that put you in Section One or Section Two.

PN: You mean the schoolteacher?

AA: No, the...student.

PN: Yeah, I think so.

AA: English was the most important part of learning.

PN: Partly scholastic ability, too.
AA: Okay. Did teaching methods at Maui when you first graduated that was around 1929, '28 was that a set curriculum? Did they have you teach this way, or could you make your own?

PN: Well, I think we had a regular curriculum guide. I remember a little booklet, in which were listed the minimum essentials for a certain grade.

AA: Over the years, did that ever change?

PN: Well, I think it changed somewhat, but, for us old-timers, we don't change too much, you know. (Laughs)

AA: At Waialua, was it strict? Did they want you to confine your teaching to what they had set up for you?

PN: No, I don't think so. I don't think the principals were too strict about that. Of course, we always got complaints from the high school teachers that we didn't teach certain things in the elementary grades, but that kind of criticism has been going on for ages. (Laughs)

AA: Did you yourself introduce any new things to your classes?

PN: Well, I don't know exactly, but I liked to teach some things that are not in the regular curriculum. For example, I'm very poor in math. Oh, I don't like math, period. The only reason I took two years of math in high school was that I wanted to go to college, so I took up algebra and geometry, but oh, if anybody should ask me about those things now, I don't know beans about them. One of the things that was introduced some years ago was this additive method of subtraction. You give the cashier a dollar currency and your bill is only 37¢, as you give the change you add as you subtract. I used to teach that every year--the additive method of giving change. You know some of my friends who work in the stores complained that some of the high school graduates nowadays can't even give change properly but I made sure that everyone in my class learned how to give change.

AA: Were the teachers stressing additive subtraction that much?

PN: No, I don't think so, it all depended on the teachers. In my case it was the easiest way to subtract because I was poor in math. If I have to borrow and so on and so forth, in subtraction, I'll be puzzled.

AA: Let's concentrate on your days at Waialua. When you were teaching fifth grade, what was the subject that you taught first, you know, in your regular day?

PN: Well, we have to have the flag pledge in the morning--the so-called opening exercises: taking attendance, singing a patriotic song, and so on. That was the routine. And then you went to subject matter
teaching.

AA: Yeah. You don't remember whether you taught English first or music...

PN: No. That's too far back, the subject matters were in the curriculum that you'd have to teach, them.

AA: Okay. Can you compare the kids now and then?

PN: Oh yes. When I retired, the, discipline was getting worse. In the old days, you can discipline your children. Some Japanese parents used to tell me, "Well, as long as my children are in your school, they are in your hands, so you do whatever you want to do." But now it's altogether different.

AA: This was '67 that you retired, right?

PN: No, long before '67.

AA: In the beginning part of your teaching career, did you feel freer to discipline the children?

PN: Oh! Yes! When I first started teaching, you can use yardstick, but not now.

AA: Did you ever use a yardstick?

PN: Oh yeah, in certain cases, you just have to use the yardstick.

AA: Did you supervise the children in the playground and during lunch hours?

PN: Yes. But we used to have so-called Yard Duty. Ever so often teachers had to go out in the yard to supervise the playground. We didn't actually have to supervise the games during the recess, but at least should go around and check on the children so that they won't be doing anything dangerous.

AA: Mhm. And what kind of games do you remember that the children played?

PN: Softball games... we didn't have any of these swings and things like that. Those playground equipment came later.

AA: What about games inside the classroom other than outside? I mean you must have had checkers.

PN: No, you know the old-time classrooms. Remember those small cottages on the side of Fresh Air Camp Road? You could play games in small classrooms. That's the kind of classroom I had in the beginning.... Those small cottages. But modern classrooms are so much larger.

AA: Yeah. What about little games that the children played on their desk, you know where two people can play? Remember any of those?
PN: I wouldn't know. We didn't have such things until later.

AA: Okay. When did tenure come to be? Do you remember?

PN: You mean teachers' tenure? Let's see. I cannot remember about that word tenure too much. We just start teaching and you're in the system...

AA: It didn't change anything as far as your teaching went?

PN: No. We talk about tenure now, but in those days, I don't know whether that word was in the vocabulary.

AA: Did you ever have any problems with the other teachers?

PN: Well, I suppose we're all human beings. There are some teachers with whom you can get along very well and some you cannot. I don't think, personally, that I've had too many personality clashes, but there were some personality clashes among other teachers. But that's human.

AA: That's human. What about the parent attitude toward the teachers?

PN: Oh! In the old days, the parents respected the schoolteachers. It's not true any more.

AA: Were there more people? Were there more parents participating in school activities than now?

PN: No. I think parents didn't participate the way they do now.

AA: Why is that?

PN: Well, I suppose time has changed. In the old days, I don't remember having a PTA in the school.

AA: When can you remember the PTA coming to be?

PN: Oh, that's quite late, I think. Maybe in the '50s but I'm not sure.

AA: What percentage of the students do you think went on to high school, and how much of those went on to college in the early part of your career?

PN: Not too many. Now everybody goes to college but not in the old days. In fact, when I grew up, there was only one man whom I know had gone to college. We used to admire him, because he was the only college graduate in our community, but...

AA: In Waialua?

PN: In Haleiwa section.
AA: Can you tell me who that was?

PN: That was Mr. Masatoshi Katagiri. We used to call him Masa Katagiri. He's deceased.

AA: What about your class in high school? How much of you went on to college?

PN: Not too many.

AA: Can you tell me, what was the racial breakdown, the ethnic breakdown of the school---of the students in Haleiwa?

PN: Well, there were so many Japanese students, and some Filipinos. Not as many as now.

AA: Today we have most Filipinos.

PN: There were some part-Hawaiians, a sprinkling of Portuguese, and sprinkling of haole students.

AA: Were there a lot of haoles? Could haoles go on to better schools do you think?

PN: Well, I think the plantation haoles considered themselves one class above, so some of them didn't want their children to be educated at the public schools. But gradually the situation has changed.

AA: What private schools were in existence around---let's see. You came to teach in Haleiwa in 1935? When did you begin to teach in Waialua?

PN: I started teaching at Waialua---it's now Haleiwa, Waialua Elementary School in 1931.

AA: How many private schools were there then at that time?

PN: Well, we had Punahou and St. Louis College. We used to call it college instead of high school. Actually it was a high school. And let's see. Iolani. Some of the well-to-do parents used to send their children to Mid-Pacific Institute. But during the elementary days they stayed in local schools. When the students reached the high school age, they transferred to some of these private schools.

AA: St. Louis, they called it a college, but it was a high school?

PN: Yes.

AA: When you graduated, did you have a college diploma or a high school diploma?

PN: Yes, a high school diploma. In the old days they used to call it St. Louis College.
AA: Do you remember what was the average per semester tuition for the private schools?

PN: No, I can't remember. I didn't attend any of those schools.

AA: What about in the beginning of your career here at Haleiwa-Waialua, did you require your kids to bring in paper napkins, things like that?

PN: No, no such things. We just brought our home lunches.

AA: Oh, these home lunches--did you have cafeteria service at that time?

PN: I think so, but very limited service, and most of the children brought their home lunches.

AA: Did these children ever share their lunches?

PN: No. Some of them were very shy about opening their lunches. You know Japanese have this pickled radish?

AA: Daikon?

PN: Daikon. Oh, I tell you, when anybody brought anything like that, the whole room used to smell. So I used to tell the student to take it outside and leave it outside.

AA: Okay. Why do you think the Japanese had the most kids in school?

PN: Well, I think Japanese parents didn't want their children to go through the kind of hard life that they'd been having, so they were very conscious about education--educating their children.

AA: So then most of the Japanese were more better-to-do than the rest of the population?

PN: Yes. I think that's the reason why there are so many public school teachers of Japanese parentage now. Gradually more Filipino school teachers are coming in, but they came in very late, especially when jobs are getting scarce.

AA: Too late. Okay. What was the general town school attitude toward country schools?

PN: Well, I don't think they looked down upon us. I don't think they had any confirmed attitude toward country people.

AA: But didn't we have less of everything? Less of those modern teaching books?

PN: Well, I suppose so, but many of the children in Honolulu schools got--especially in public schools--the older teachers who were old, because that's where the older teachers wanted to teach. After they
served their time in the country schools, whenever there was an opportunity to teach in a Honolulu school, they moved to Honolulu.

AA: Why did they like to teach at a Honolulu school?

PN: I suppose because of the conveniences, cultural activities, entertainment, and so on, sports activities.

AA: How did you handle the fast and the slow learners?

PN: For a while I had a pretty good class, a so-called "B" class. But that came later. When I first taught at Haleiwa Elementary, I had a so-called "D" class. Strictly on ability and the whole class was made of "D" or "F" children.

AA: You had a "B" class.

PN: Later. Later on, I had a better class, I had at least two or three groups in reading.

AA: You had a class that you had three groups in reading? How did you work that out?

PN: Well, you have to assign certain workbooks or work to a certain group, and then you move on to the next group and so on and so forth.

AA: In Maui, there were three teachers?

PN: No, only two teachers at Kaupo. At the first school where I taught.

AA: So then---they were mixed up, like you didn't really have a grade.

PN: Yes, but certain subject had to be taught separately, but certain other things you just put them all together and teach the same thing.

AA: Could you give me a description of the Waialua Elementary School in 1931? How many buildings were there?

PN: Well, the only so-called modern structure was the one that is not being used now. The old office and the classrooms. We had all those bungalows---right along the side of the Fresh Air Camp. The cafeteria was located---in the corner...

AA: That was the back room?

PN: Some were toward the modern tournahau'er road. But it was not made of hollow tile or concrete. Lots of small bungalows, and some of them are still standing there.

AA: How many classes do you think there were? Can you remember? How many classrooms?
PN: Oh, I suppose, maybe each grade had about two classes or so, and then gradually the number increased.

AA: About how much classrooms are there now?

PN: Gee, I can't recall.

AA: Can you describe the new facilities? They have a new library, I think.

PN: New library, new administration building, and new classrooms. But in the old days we didn't have them at all.

AA: And there's like about an average of five classrooms to a grade now, isn't there?

PN: Yeah.

AA: Did you hold a summer job after school ended?

PN: No, only during the War years. They corralled the schoolteachers to supervise the student pineapple field workers. I think I worked only two years.

AA: What were the students told to do? (Laughs) Pick pineapple?

PN: Well, they had to pick the pineapples by hand, put them in a bag, and take them out on the roadside, and pile them up. Somebody would cut the tops and put the fruits in boxes.

AA: Were the children paid for this?

PN: Yes. But I don't think they got a good pay like present day boys and girls.

AA: And you said this happened only in the War years?

PN: Well, in my case I just worked, let's see, 1942, 43. That's about all.

AA: You were forced into this?

PN: No, they came to school to ask schoolteachers to help. And then I remember we had so-called "Victory Gardens," and school children, especially the sixth grade children were asked to do some volunteer farm work in school. We raised beans and what not. Of course, they weren't school gardens, you know. I remember some civilian supervisor supervised the garden and we went out to help.

AA: Victory Gardens---for who were you planting vegetables?

PN: I think it was sponsored by the government.
AA: These were distributed to the citizens or to the Army?

PN: I cannot remember but I remember taking our children to work in the bean fields, string beans field.

AA: These string bean fields, were they by the school?

PN: Yeah, near the school. Sugar cane is growing there now.

AA: What did you do in the summer then?

PN: Well, you see, some of us who graduated from Normal School were encouraged to get a degree in education, so some of us went to summer school.

AA: Did you?

PN: Yeah, I went to four summer sessions, continued summer sessions, and got my degree. Besides that I took Saturday morning classes.

AA: At the University?

PN: Yes.

AA: Okay. During the War did you notice any bad feelings toward the Japanese children?

PN: No, I don't think so.

AA: There was no effect...

PN: No, no.

AA: Did you close down the school during the War at any time?

PN: Yes. After Pearl Harbor was attacked, I think we were closed about two weeks. Two weeks or one month, I'm not so sure, but, school teachers had to be paid, so we were drafted to go and interview the aliens. I remember going to Waimca pineapple camp---Dole. In those days, Hawaiian pineapple camp---and we interviewed quite a number of Filipino employees. That's why I remember so many of them said, "I came from Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Norte." So I still remember the place called Ilocos Norte and Luzon.

AA: Okay. This Hawaiian pine camp at Waimea, was it called Takeyama?

PN: No, that's the one in Opaeula. We used to call it Ashley. There's a place called Ashley Station. In the old days, pineapples were transported to Honolulu on trains, and there was a station right there. That's where the new kennel is? There's a vet who has a kennel. The doctor who used to have an office at the Waialua Shopping Center.
AA: Oh yeah, I remember.
PN: That's the place. From there we went up to Ashley Camp, Waimea.
AA: Did they have a cannery there?
PN: No, no cannery.
AA: Do you remember if Takeyama had a cannery?
PN: No, that was a pineapple camp.
AA: What can you tell me about the Takeyama pine camp?
PN: Well I was there two summers, as a common laborer.
AA: Okay, can you explain more to me about the akakai rafts? How did you make them? Seems really interesting.
PN: You know, I don't see akakai anymore, but it's a reed. It just grows straight, and it's very buoyant. So, you cut them with a sickle, and tie them with a cord, and make a raft. You made your own paddle. You'd go up and down Anahulu Stream.
AA: You don't know, by any chance, what is the scientific name for this akakai reed?
PN: Well, that's the Hawaiian word, but I wouldn't know. I wouldn't know the technical name of akakai.
AA: And as far as you know, there isn't none any more?
PN: I'm sure it's growing somewhere, but I haven't been up that stream at all in recent years.
AA: It's Anahulu Stream where it's growing at?
PN: Yeah.
AA: Do you, by any chance, have any pictures of it?
PN: No. But that was a very useful reed. It's not exactly a reed because there wasn't this so-called puka. Fishermen's wives used to cut them, dry them, and use them to string four or five fish.
AA: To dry or just string them?
PN: No, to go around and sell to the people.
AA: Oh, so you could move it around a little, a lot.
PN: Yeah, it's pliable.
PN: Well, I was once a secretary or something, but you see, I cannot type. To this day I cannot type. So I declined the job of being a secretary. But I used to help out in the Community Association. Mr. Frank Midkiff was the "kingpin." That was the first community association on Oahu, and since his brother was the manager of the sugar plantation, he worked well with the brother. To this day, Waialua Plantation gives a hand in the activities of Waialua Community Association.

PN: Oh, let's see. Sam Nishimura.

PN: Yeah. Miss Rankin used to be a member. Ruth Rankin, principal of Waialua Elementary School in those days. Can't think of any more.

PN: We were asked to participate in the community Christmas program by the plantation. That's why we used to perform.

PN: Oh, I can't remember. I think it must have started during Mr. Midkiff's days.

PN: No, it didn't begin with me.

PN: Well, practically all the Buddhist ministers and so-called big shots among the Japanese community were interned.

PN: Well, you just have to accept it. You can't do anything about it. Actually, I had no feelings.
AA: You have no feelings? (Laughs) Okay. When the union came to the plantation, did it result in more children coming to school?

PN: No, I don't think so. Because we had compulsive school attendance law, all parents had to send their children to school.

AA: When did this compulsory attendance come to be?

PN: Oh, we had it for a long, long time.

AA: But weren't a lot of the children involved in child labor, and so they didn't come to school?

PN: No, I don't think so.

AA: Did the children come with better clothes or better lunches now (after unions)?

PN: Oh! Yes. Definitely so.

AA: You could really see that change?

PN: Mhm.

AA: About your dorm room in McKinley, you said it was a Japanese...

PN: No, it's not McKinley. It was the Japanese high school dorm.

AA: But you went to McKinley.

PN: Yeah.

AA: Were there any kind of other dorms like Christian dorms or...

PN: Oh yes. Mr. Francis Miyake of Waialua, stayed at Okumura Home. That was a dormitory operated by the Makiki Christian Church.

AA: Did Mr. Miyake also go to McKinley?

PN: Yes, he did.

AA: Do you remember any Buddhist dorm?

PN: Well, that's the one that I used to stay. Mr. Edward Matsumoto and I stayed at the Japanese high school dorm, conducted by the Hongwanji Church.

AA: Okay. Hongwanji is the Buddhist religion?

PN: Yes.

AA: Okay. How did the strike affect the schools in Waialua? In what ways?
PN: I beg your pardon?

AA: The strike of the plantation?

PN: Which strike? We had several, you know.

AA: Well, you began teaching in 1931 so, let's begin with the 1946 strike, that was the whole Territory.

PN: We had one, long before that, and I remember the plantation workers were asked to move out of their camp houses. We had a family from Kawalooa staying in a little house beside our blacksmith shop.

AA: This is when you were going to school yet, not when you were teaching, right?

PN: Yes, that's right.

AA: So this must have been the 1920 strike?

PN: I suppose so, yes. Later on, when the sugar workers were on strike, they weren't asked to leave their camp houses. They just stayed in the camp houses.

AA: They were asked to leave?

PN: Well, in 1920. But after the unions were organized, no sugar workers were asked to leave their plantation houses during the strike.

AA: This 1920 strike, do you remember it being associated with the flu epidemic?

PN: Oh yes! You know there was a Seinen Kai building back of the courthouse.

AA: Yeah.

PN: I don't think the building is there any more. So many people died there because of the flu. Oh, it was terrible.

AA: This was the time when the people were told to get out of their houses, right?

PN: Yes.

AA: Okay. The other strike was in 1946. You were here already in Haleiwa. What can you remember about that strike?

PN: Gee, I think it went along normally, so I don't remember it at all.

AA: During strikes, did the children stay home? Or did they still come to school?

PN: No, they came to school, and the union brought their mobile kitchen and fed the plantation children.
AA: That happened for all the strikes? All of them had a mobile kitchen?

PN: Yes, I think so.

AA: Okay. Also in 1949 there was a six-month shipping strike. Do you remember that?

PN: Oh, we've had so many shipping strikes. (Laughs)

AA: I guess this one was a big one, it was six months.

PN: I know we hoarded rice, and I'd scrounge around for rice. That's about all.

AA: Do you remember an act called the Smith Seven Act?

PN: Oh yes. That's the Communist trial. And I see the Reineckes are trying to get back their good name. They were fired. I notice the former ILWU boss, Mr. Hall, was involved in it, too.

AA: What did you think about all this name-calling? You know, they calling them Communist and all that?

PN: Well, I suppose some of the government officials were a bit too anxious to convict these people, and I'm glad that everything turned out okay, except that I felt sorry for the Reineckes for losing their jobs.

AA: The Reineckes are Waialua people?

PN: No. Mr. Reinecke must be from the Mainland, but his wife is a local-born.

AA: Local Hawaii.

PN: A schoolteacher, Japanese girl.

AA: When you were going to McKinley, what other public high schools do you remember?

PN: Well, there's the Iolani and St. Louis College, which was actually a high school, and Punahou.

AA: What about Farrington, it wasn't there yet?

PN: No.

AA: Okay. What was the school rating at McKinley? Do you recall? Rating. You know like they'll say Farrington's number one as far as academics go.

PN: Well, that was the only public high school.
AA: Just McKinley?

PN: Yes! In 1925. Farrington and other high schools came into being later. (laughs) So that was the only---whether you like it or not---if you wanted free high school education, you just had to go to McKinley.

AA: Uh huh. Anyway, it wasn't called a run-down school or anything, right?

PN: No, that was the school. You know this man, Mr. Esposito, the Blaisdell Center administrator.

AA: Matt.

PN: Matt Esposito. He said that McKinley High School was a dump. I was very much annoyed.

AA: Was he from McKinley?

PN: No! But he happened to manage the Arena. And I don't think McKinley High School's a dump. I was very much annoyed. So I'm very happy that he has to seek another job. Calling somebody's alma mater "dump."

AA: (laughs) So you're happy that he got kicked out?

PN: Yes! Imagine calling our high school---alma mater---a dump!

AA: Okay. What about your trip to Japan? How much was your fare on the boat?

PN: Oh, you know those things I can't remember, but it was reasonable compared to modern fare.

AA: Okay, what about the kind of facilities they have on the boat? Do you remember that?

PN: We had to travel "steerage" or third class. That's the term for the lowest class. It wasn't too comfortable at all. I'm not a good sailor and it took about nine to ten days to reach Yokohama. About two or three days before you reach Yokohama the ocean became rough. It was due to the current. Oh, it was terrible! I got seasick.

AA: You said your father died in nineteen...

PN: '28. So, my mother and I took his ashes back to the home village.

AA: I understand money was very tight then. How did you get the money to go?
PN: Well, after all I started teaching, yes, in nineteen---let's see. Was it in 1929, I think?

AA: You had your first job in 1928.

PN: Yeah, '28. My mother must have saved some money. She had savings, and so we decided that we should take my father's ashes to his home village.

AA: Also, weren't you and your sisters already grown at that time?

PN: Yes, that's right. You know, in the old days, if you're the eldest, you'd have to sacrifice higher education and work for family livelihood. Usually the younger children got the breaks. I was the youngest. So my sister, after finishing her eighth grade, started working as a housemaid.

AA: Well, you were lucky, then.

PN: Yeah.

AA: So what was Japan like at that time?

PN: Well, Japan wasn't as modern as now; there were no bullet trains and modern facilities. We travelled by train. There were hardly any buses in those days.

AA: What about food, was it scarce? Did you have a lot of it?

PN: No, but it was substantial.

AA: You know that drinking sake at New Year's Eve you said---or Christmas?

PN: New Year's Day. It was a Japanese custom. You visit your friends, and at each home, you gulp down some sake.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

AA: This drinking sake, was it called "masquerading?"

PN: "Masquerading." I don't know what that means.

AA: Masquerading. You know, like you put a mask on.

PN: No.

AA: No. Do you remember any kind of celebration that was called masquerading?

PN: Isn't that an English term---masquerading? I know the word, but I can't see how it has relationship with the Japanese. You just visit your friends. The Japanese are famous for preparing lavish food. On New Year's Day.
AA: Oh, your sake, how did you prepare it?

PN: Well, you put it in some kind of ceramic bottle, and place in hot water. And when it becomes hot, you serve it.

AA: Did you make your own sake or you buy?

PN: During the days of Prohibition, my mother used to make sake for my father. But that was against the law.

AA: Your fare to Maui, your boat fare, how much was it?

PN: Oh, if you ask me those things, I won't remember.

AA: How long did it take you to go there---to Maui?

PN: Overnight.

AA: And what kind of a boat was this?

PN: Well, it was the famous Haleakala. It was supposed to be the best inter-island boat, but it was famous for rocking, too. And while I was on Haleakala I never ate, so I actually lost out.

AA: Mr. Ninomiya, was it Haleakala or Mauna Kea?

PN: Well, Haleakala was a passenger boat, Mauna Kea was, I think, partly passenger and partly freight boat.

AA: But which one did you ride on?

PN: Haleakala. That was about the most famous. When Christmas vacation started, many of us would hire a taxi and go to Lahaina landing and wait for the cattle boat Hawaii. It was a cattle boat, so we bought so-called mattress, and we slept on the deck during the night.

AA: Just for fun?

PN: No! We wanted to come home to Oahu as soon as possible, so we just had to take that boat. That was the quickest way to come back to Honolulu.

AA: Oh, so you had your space if you stayed there overnight.

PN: You can smell the cattle---oo. But then, everybody was anxious to come back to Oahu.

AA: How much teachers were there in Maui that were from Oahu?

PN: Oh, quite a number. We all had to be farmed out to outside islands before we could teach on Oahu. Nobody could actually teach on Oahu from the very beginning.
AA: Did any outside island students come to the Normal School?

PN: Oh, yes.

AA: Was there a lot?

PN: Oh! Yes. Normal School was the only teacher-training institution.

AA: What other kind of training institutions were there other than the teacher-training?

PN: Well, some people went to the University of Hawaii, and became school teachers. Mr. Naito went to the Mainland, and after four years he came back to teach.

AA: About your religion, what were you before you converted to this?

PN: Well, I was a member of Sōtō Buddhist sect at Kawaiolao.

AA: If it's not too personal, can you tell me exactly why you decided to switch to another philosophy?

PN: First of all, many of these Buddhist churches were just traditional—chanting of sutras. You don't actually get anything out of it except that they were just handed down to you by your parents. When the founder of this religion came to Oahu in 1952, I listened to her sermon. It seemed the things she said were very true, and they hit my heart. So I decided I should be a member.

AA: Before 1952 were you an active Buddhist member?

PN: Yes.

AA: And how was that in relation to your collecting money for the "Bombs on Tokyo?" Wasn't that against Buddhism, against Japanese...

PN: No, no, no. You see, we had the so-called Emergency Service Committee organized by the leaders of Americans of Japanese Ancestry during the War. Many of us were asked to help with their activities in the country. That's the reason why some of us participated.

AA: Okay. I have another question regarding education. During the War, were any of these Japanese language schools closed down?

PN: Oh! Yes, they were all closed.

AA: All of them were? And when did it start resuming?

PN: After the War, maybe a year or two later. The Japanese language schools were conducted mainly by the Buddhist priests, and they were interned. They were interned on the Mainland. Some of them went to---Tule Lake. There were so many camps for the internees.
AA: So there was a decline of the Buddhist religion around here then?

PN: Oh! Yes. There was only one Buddhist minister who wasn't interned. He was a citizen. He came from Hongwanji temple and whenever one of the soldier-boys from the Japanese community died, we used to have memorial service. This particular minister had to come all the way from Honolulu to participate in the services.

AA: So there was only one Buddhist priest after the War here?

PN: Yes. He was kept very busy.

AA: Okay. The Haleiwa courthouse and jail---was it ever in use?

PN: Yes. There used to be a jail downstairs.

AA: Yeah. Who used that? I understand the plantation took care of their own people.

PN: Oh, you mean for the people who were arrested by the FBI after December 7th? No, that jail is for common, ordinary people who got arrested. Not for the people who were arrested right after the War started.

AA: The courthouse, did you actually have court hearings there?

PN: Oh yes!

AA: When did it start declining? I mean because nobody uses it any more. I don't think anybody goes there.

PN: Yeah. That's because it's too expensive to have small courthouses here and there. So now people in Waialua have to go to Wahiawa.

AA: Your marriage licenses---I know you never used one then but---where did you get them? Did the courthouse supply them?

PN: No. We used to have a Chinese woman who issued marriage licenses for the Waialua area but right now I don't know where you'd have to go. (Laughs)

AA: This Chinese woman used to live in Waialua, Haleiwa?

PN: She was a resident of Waialua. Her husband worked for the plantation, and she was the licensed agent for the Board of Health.

AA: Did she take blood tests then?

PN: No, not in the old days.

AA: You didn't take blood test?

PN: No! No such thing. Those things are new, you know.
Okay. What about the stores---how did you shop in them? Did you ever go on credit in any of the stores?

Oh yes. All the stores had credit. Only when the supermarket came, you'd have to pay cash.

You're talking about Kit's and IGA?

Well, IGA's former existence was Sakai Store. You know where the new First Hawaiian Bank is being built? Right there. There was a store there for a long time. Later on they founded the Haleiwa Supermarket on the opposite side of the road.

Can you describe the credit system then?

Well, you just went there and bought things and charged. At the end of the month or when you get paid, you would pay the store owner.

Did you ever experience any---like you couldn't pay or, maybe you did, I'm not saying that you did---but did you know people that bought too much and they couldn't pay?

Oh yes! Fujioka store had quite a number of customers who just couldn't pay, especially during the strike.

How was that solved?

Well, I suppose some of the debts were simply forgotten. And some of them paid little by little in monthly installments.

Do you remember something called jabon?

Jabon, yeah.

What was that?

Jabon means "borrow."

"To borrow?" Was it a Japanese term?

Isn't it a Filipino word?

I don't know. Someone just told me it was "jaw bone," you know.

Oh, that's the first time I've heard of that explanation. I thought was a Filipino word. Sounds like a Filipino word.

Well, I keep telling people it's a big grapefruit. (Laughs) Okay. What about suits. How much did your suits cost?

Oh, my goodness. Very reasonable. I think about fifty dollars.
AA: Fifty dollars? Mr. Nishimura, was he the only tailor at this time?

PN: No, we had Miura tailor. We had some other people, but Mr. Nishimura and Miura Tailor were the only established ones.

AA: Fifty dollars was a bit too much. How did you get to pay for your suits? You couldn't just give them fifty dollars.

PN: Well, you can _jabon_ and pay by month.

AA: Do you know of anybody that shared the suits? You know, they helped pay for one, helped pay for half, you know. Two people.

PN: No, I don't think so, except that Filipinos used to own so-called---partnership car.

AA: But not in suits?

PN: No, I don't think so. (Laughs)

AA: Where did this material come from, the material they used for the suits?

PN: Mostly from the Mainland.

AA: How long did it take them to make you a suit?

PN: Let's see. In my case, I don't remember ever going to these tailors to make a suit. I usually bought a ready-made suit.

AA: Which stores did you get your ready-made suits from?

PN: Hub men's store at the corner of Fort and Hotel streets. The store's been there ever since I went to McKinley High School.

AA: There weren't any ready-made suits in Waialua.

PN: No, no.

AA: Okay. Let's talk about the pre-Depression, 1930 and below. That's when you were going to school?

PN: No, I was already teaching.

AA: '28 you started teaching?

PN: Yeah, mhm. Depression came in about 1934. Isn't that right?


PN: That's about the worst time, I think.

AA: Were there any kind of violence during the pre-Depression?
PN: No, not in Hawaii.

AA: Not in Hawaii? Okay. The Depression—you were teaching already at that time and you still say there was no effect at all?

PN: No, our salary was cut.

AA: By how much?

PN: I don't know but we started with $110, but during the Depression I remember getting a cut. In fact, all the government employees' pay was cut.

AA: What can you tell me about the fire station at Haleiwa?

PN: I don't know. That's been there for ages.

AA: When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, where were you at that time?

PN: That morning, I was supposed to accompany Reverend Tanaka of Kawailoa Sōtō Mission to go to town for some kind of a religious ceremony. When I went to Kawailoa, I was told that the War had started. That's the first time I found out that Pearl Harbor was bombed.

AA: Were there any damages to your house?

PN: No, no.

AA: Any part of your family injured or any of them involved?

PN: No.

AA: How was the community like the first weeks after the bombing?

PN: We had the so-called "blackouts", and we couldn't put on our lights at night. So I had to make one room a "blackout room." Where I could at least read and do things. We had to build air raid shelters. That was required.

AA: You had to build air raid shelters when you were living in this house...

PN: Yes.

AA: So you built one around here?

PN: I built one right there in the corner of the lot.

AA: Did you get to use them?

PN: No. Thank goodness.

AA: What did you put in them—-in your air raid shelter?
PN: Nothing. I didn't keep any food, but just in case there was an air raid, I was supposed to go in there. Just before the Midway battle we were asked, "Do you have any place or friends in Wahiawa where you can seek shelter if the Japanese should invade the Hawaiian Islands?" They expected the North Shore to be used as a landing place. So everybody in Waialua and Haleiwa were to evacuate. But no such thing happened. Thank goodness.

AA: What about the rationing of food and gas?

PN: Oh! I tell you I don't want to go through rationing again. Really! You just have to stint on your travels and your freedom is limited.

AA: How was the gas rationed? Was it according to family size?

PN: No, according to your work and travel. People who had to work at Schofield got more than we who just had our job right here in our community.

AA: What about the martial law? Were any of your activities restricted because of the martial law?

PN: Oh yes! You know we had to paint our headlights sort of bluish, and then there was a pinpoint opening where the light could go through. I accompanied Dr. Miyasaki to Waipahu once. He was asked by a doctor friend to help in a appendix operation. When we came home, we just crawled back to Haleiwa. You can hardly see the road.

AA: Did you hear of the Philippine independence? It was just something that you heard. Did it have any effect on you?

PN: No.

AA: No. Okay. Oh, what about the 1946 tsunami?

PN: Oh, my goodness! We had---not only in 1946, but I think we had about ---two tsunamis? After the War.

AA: I don't know.

PN: Oh yes!

AA: Mhm. So how was your travelling done then, when the railroads were washed out? You still could use them?

PN: By that time, we had automobile it wasn't bad. The water came---not from the front---because my neighbor's property is lower than mine. It went into her yard, but the ocean water came from the back. But luckily, we have some pukas to take care of flooding.

AA: The 1949, 1951 there were tidal waves then. Did you vote in the 1954 election?

PN: Yes, I have voted in every election.
AA: You were born here. You were an American citizen.
PN: Yes.
AA: And when was the first time you started to vote?
PN: Let's see. I must have voted since I came back to Waialua.
AA: Okay. '31. What, were you voting in '31?
PN: No, I think we vote on even years---'32, '34, '36, and so on.
PN: What was that now? Senator Eastland from Mississippi. I don't even remember what kind of hearing he had.
AA: I don't know much about it either.
PN: Senator Eastland is from Mississippi. Eastland, I just remembered his name. He was one of those narrow-minded people from the South.
AA: Did he live in Waialua?
PN: No! He came from Mississippi. He must have conducted hearings at the Capitol.
AA: Nothing to do with Waialua, Haleiwa?
PN: No.
AA: Okay. How do you feel about Hawaii becoming a state?
PN: Very good. Because after all, we were working hard for statehood, and we finally got it.
AA: What do you mean by "working hard for statehood"?
PN: You know, we were a territory, and I think we had a delegate, but not a voting delegate. So Congress could do whatever she wanted with Hawaii. But now that we have two senators and two representatives, they have to treat us fairly. But if we were a territory, we were treated as a stepson.
AA: Okay. Becoming a state. That's when you started to sing all those patriotic songs?
PN: No! We sang patriotic songs when we were a territory because for the opening exercises in school, we had to sing one patriotic song.
AA: Which are "America the Beautiful."
PN: But you know the custom is fast disappearing.
AA: Do you know now if they still sing?

PN: Oh yes. At the senior citizen club, we always sing "God Bless America" and "Hawaii Pono'i."

AA: At that school, at the elementary school, do they still sing?

PN: No, I don't think so. Some of these present-day kids, don't even know "Hawaii Pono'i." How pathetic!

AA: What can you say is the most important thing that has happened to you in the last 15 years?

PN: (Laughs) Oh, I don't know.

AA: Your retirement? Your marriage?

PN: (Laughs) Well, I suppose my marriage.

AA: Okay. Can you compare your life now with thirty or forty years ago in terms of how much you're making, how happy you are now, you know, living with a wife and not being single like before? What can you say? How can you compare....

PN: It's nice to have a wife. (Laughs) Somebody always prepares your meals.

AA: You think Waialua's a good place to live?

PN: Oh! Yes.

AA: It's a good place to raise children?

PN: Yes, I think so.

AA: Do you say that because we hardly have any crimes around this area?

PN: Well, I wouldn't say that! We have some crimes, you know. Sometimes I'm surprised because somebody on Haleiwa Road was arrested by policemen because of possession of marijuana and things like that.

AA: Hale---this road?

PN: Surely! Sometimes it appears in the papers. And I don't know who they are. In the old days, we knew everybody in the community, but not any more.

AA: Okay. So that's about it for the tape.

END OF INTERVIEW
AA: Mr. Ninomiya, can you tell me about the folk medicine which you and others practiced in the old days? What were the ingredients? How was it prepared and which ethnic group introduced it?

PN: ....I don't think I practiced folk medicine in the old days. But whenever I catch cold, besides the aspirin and other medications that I take, I usually boil a combination of handful of rice straw plus a root called kanro--let's say from five cups--I boil it down to about two cups, and drink it regularly. And it seems to help relieve my cold. I won't say it would cure, but then I urinate quite a bit, and that seems to bring down the fever. Besides, I learn from experience that even if you take antibiotics, sometimes it helps to have some kind of folk medicine. I'm a great believer in using earthworms. Especially earthworms that live in dirty places. My sister taught me to use earthworms. I also used to use earthworms long before my sister taught me, but my sister's method is better. Wash them clean. Then put them in a piece of silk cloth. Put a little bit of sugar and hang it up over a glass. And within some time, you see a clear liquid dripping down into the glass. When it begins to drip blood, then you should stop. But, it's clear liquid. You mix it with orange juice, and boy, it takes the fever away. The Japanese also use carp's blood.

AA: Fish?

PN: Yeah, you know koi that we raise? It should be from a pond, because if it's from a clean pond, I don't think it has the quality of being antibiotic. I used it for my mother's pneumonia long time ago. You sharpen a piece of chopstick and poke it....let's see....what do you call this place?

AA: The upper palate?

PN: Yeah, upper palate. And get some fresh blood, mix it with sake and you drink it. It's miraculous how it cures pneumonia, brings down the fever. When I talk about it with some oldtimers, they say they've used it, too. But for earthworms, well, you can boil it. For example, in my case, if I boil the rice straw and a piece of root called kanro, you put a few clean earthworms in it--and it seems to help.
AA: Do you know what it is that's—you know, what the clear juice is made out of?

PN: I think the clear juice is from the internal organs, if earthworms have them. But that seems to help. Once, I wrote to a doctor who developed streptomycin for TB. Let's see, Rutgers University. I forgot his name. I mentioned that the Japanese use earthworms when we have high fever. And he was most appreciative and sent me a very nice thank you note. I have it in my house somewhere, but I don't know where it is right now.

AA: (Chuckles) These are mostly Japanese, right?

PN: Yes, but I think Chinese have the same kind of idea. Both my parents have had stroke. As you approach old age, you don't want to have stroke. So, I've been very careful about my blood pressure. And I've been taking home-grown kuko tea. Kuko. I don't know the exact scientific name or the Chinese name, but Chinese markets sell them in bunches sometimes. It grows up straight and has thorns. The fresh leaves are supposed to be very rich in vitamin A. My friend, Miss Fanny Howe who used to be a school teacher at Haleiwa, told me once that when she was a child, her eyesight was very bad. In fact, I think she must have suffered from some kind of eye disease. So the mother used to get some kuko leaves every morning, and would put them in her soup. After using it continuously, her eye sickness was cured.

AA: There's no kuko leaves around here in Hawaii?

PN: Well, I have them in the backyard.

AA: You have?

PN: Some others have found the value of kuko tea. So, they ask us whether we can spare some. Since our religious group is building a church, I've been selling them to my friends for the benefit of the building fund. Of course, some people give up very easily. Some people continue for years. I have some clients who been drinking kuko tea for ages. So, I think it has some value. In fact, one middle-aged woman had high blood pressure. When I heard it—I know her well—I gave her a bag. She used it religiously. After a month, when she went back to the doctor, he said her blood pressure was normal. Because of my regular use of kuko tea, my blood pressure so far has been okay.

AA: Really?

PN: Yeah. At AreaWide Horizon, every first and third Wednesday, the Public Health nurses come to check the blood pressure of the elderly. I've reported to them many times. Each time I've been told that my blood pressure is normal. So, I'm very happy. Maybe that's due to kuko tea. I wouldn't say it is a fact, but then, I feel that my normal blood pressure is due to kuko tea.
AA: Any others?

PN: Of course, in the kuko, we also add comfrey. My wife never used to drink this tea, but after she read some benefits of comfrey in the Japanese newspapers, she decided to drink it. It seems to help with her movement. So, she and I drink lots of kuko tea.

AA: There were some stuff you had out here...

PN: Oh, that's... Japanese call it hatomugi. It's a variety of a pupu plant I think. You know what pupu is, don't you?

AA: No.

PN: They make seed leis to sell to the tourists.

AA: Oh! Okay. Right.

PN: Those whitish-grey seeds. Hatomugi is supposed to be good for... diabetic people. It won't cure diabetes, but at least, it controls it. After I got the seeds, I've planted them, and we add it to our regular kuko and comfrey tea. It seems to help.

AA: Yeah. Also, I saw this... the first time I came, I saw this yellow weed that you had out here with sort of star-shaped flowers?

PN: Let's see.

AA: I didn't ask you about it, but I remember seeing it.

PN: Were they drying on that screen?

AA: Yeah.

PN: That must have been kuko.


PN: Oh! I don't know about the Portuguese, but Hawaiians use herbs quite a bit.

AA: Okay. Can you relate some Hawaiian stuff?

PN: A long time ago, when we used to cough quite a bit, there was a weed that had yellow flowers. We used to boil it and drink it. That seemed to control heavy coughing.

AA: You don't know what's it called?

PN: No. I don't see those weeds anymore. There are so many new weeds and they seem to outstrip the old weeds.
AA: Any other kind of stuff that you can think of?

PN: In the old days, when I used to visit a shrine... a Shinto shrine, this woman used to prescribe herbs for all kinds of ailments. And one of the things that she prescribed was moist heat, using three kinds of weeds. Eucalyptus leaves, sea vine—but I don't know the name. You know, in the old days, you would see them on the beach, growing wild on the beach. It spreads out with a sort of a purplish-white morning glory type flower.

AA: The leaves are around it a little bit?

PN: Something like this.

AA: And it's kind of woody?

PN: It just spreads out. If you go to the Mokuleia beach, you still find them. But you wouldn't find them around here, because the beaches around here are overdeveloped.

AA: It's not sea grape that you're talking about?

PN: No, it's not sea grape. And then Pride of India leaves. Three kinds, you see. You boil them together and apply the boiled liquid as moist heat.

AA: This was for what? To cure what?

PN: When you have aches and backaches and things of that sort.

AA: What about spiritual healers? Faith healers, that kind of stuff?

PN: Oh! I don't know. I've never believed in such things, though. praying loudly to exorcise the spirits. But I've never come across such people in my life.

AA: What about kahunas? Hawaiian kahunas around this area?

PN: I don't know of any kahunas living in Haleiwa. When the Hawaiians died in the old days, they used to have mourners. They would wait for hours on end.

AA: Would they deface parts of their faces, too?

PN: I don't know. I've never gone into the house, because I didn't like the wailing.

AA: What about dentists? When did you first have the dentist here in Waialua?

PN: Oh, we didn't have dentist for a long, long time.

AA: When can you remember? Was it after....about what?
PN: Maybe before the War.

AA: We already had a dentist here?

PN: Yeah. But I know my dentist was from Honolulu who came to the country on week nights. And that's how I went to him. He would come from town. And he had an office in the Doi Hotel Building. That was right in front of the surf shop in Haleiwa. But the building is gone. I think in it's place you see Shimamoto's home. Just on the Kawaiola side of Sato Barber Shop. There was a string of buildings, but those buildings are gone.

AA: He came before the War? He didn't stay here?

PN: No, he came on certain nights.

AA: And then when did we have a permanent dentist in Waialua?

PN: Oh, let's see. Some time after the War.

AA: Was it Dr. Sunahara?

PN: Dr. Sunahara has been here maybe about ten years or so. And Dr. Shimada, Waialua.

AA: You can't think of any other dentists that were here before them?

PN: No, we had to go to Wahiawa. Dr. Kanemaru and who was that man? He passed away a few months ago. We didn't have any dentist in Waialua.

AA: Okay. Did the dentist in Wahiawa, did they have novocaine or did they just come into your mouth and torture you? (Laughing)

PN: Well, it was a very painful operation in the old days. I know somebody who is so afraid to go to dentist because he has had a very painful experience.

AA: So, they didn't apply any kind of numbing.

PN: Well, they did. But not as modern as present.

AA: How did they do it?

PN: I know it was very painful. I mean, even if it's a novocaine or something that they use, it wasn't as good as the present time.

AA: Did they inject it into your gum?

PN: Yes.

AA: Like they do now?

PN: Uh huh.
AA: What about fillings?

PN: Oh, gold! Look at my teeth! I used to go to a dentist in Honolulu. He'll just fill my teeth with gold!

AA: Gold?

PN: Yes.

AA: Regular fillings, they used gold?

PN: Look. I quit because that's the old fashion style. Japanese used to value their gold in their mouth, but not me. So I changed my dentist because he was using too much gold.

(AA laughs)

AA: What is the average cost of these gold fillings?

PN: I can't remember, but they were reasonable.

AA: Why is that you don't agree with the other Japanese in valuing gold in your mouth? Isn't that Oriental?

PN: Yes. But I'm not from Japan. I don't want people to glare at me, you know. Looking at all the gold in my mouth.

AA: Okay. You know, canned goods. I'd liked to know if you've had canned goods as far as you can remember?

PN: Oh yes.

AA: What types were they?

PN: Well, bamboo shoots.

AA: Like 1902? Is that when you were born?

PN: No. 1906. You make me older.

AA: I know. I'm sorry. Say, 1911, will you say that there were bamboo shoots in the store?

PN: Oh! Yes. That's one thing we didn't grow too much in Hawaii. We used to have Haleiwa Hotel right across here. And in one corner of a yard was a grove of bamboo. Some Japanese used to go there for bamboo shoots.

AA: Okay. Bamboo shoots which were imported from Japan.

PN: Yes.

AA: Any other kind of stuff?
PN: Oh, some canned goods cooked in soy.

AA: From Japan?

PN: Yeah.

AA: What about the stuff we have now?

END OF TAPE #1-41-3-76

NOTES

The other half of my third session with Mr. Philip Ninomiya was inadvertently not recorded. These notes are what I can remember. The interview was at his house on August 13, 1976.

CANNED GOODS

Mr. Ninomiya remembers canned goods in the stores as far back as he can remember. He was born in 1906.

He remembers no Spam but remembers the Libby brand of corned beef. He said it was packaged the same and looked the same.

Most of the items he mentioned were imported from Japan. Examples are dried mushrooms and shrimps, soy, cooked canned goods, and bamboo shoots. He mentioned a bamboo grove behind the Haleiwa Hotel where fresh bamboo could be had.

Saloon Pilots baked at Diamond Bakery in Honolulu topped with condensed milk was cake to them as kids.

As far as containers, he remembers the safe and the "ice box." When asked about the ceiling container, he replied that he never used them and so had nothing to say.

SALT

Salt was bought from the stores in plastic bags. Moisture formed easily; thus his mother often had a time scraping salt from the blocks that would form. No one, as far as he can remember, ever made their own salt in Haleiwa. The salt they purchased was U.S. made.

FICTIONAL HEROES

Because of the Japanese school's domination of his early life, all his heroes were Japanese characters in the books he read. Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Sarutobi Sasuke, a magician, were such heroes.

EYE DOCTORS

Dr. Susumu Otake is the only optometrist that has had a permanent practice in Waialua. Wahiawa and Honolulu had optometrists and with cabs, getting to them was not really a problem.

END OF INTERVIEW
BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: SAM NISHIMURA, tailor

Sam Nishimura, Japanese, was born in Haleiwa, April 28, 1905. His father came from Kumamoto, Japan in 1899. His father worked as a gardener on the plantations in Puunene (Maui), and then came to Oahu where he worked at Aiea and Ewa. In about 1904, Sam's father moved to Haleiwa, married, and started a truck farming business. Later, the truck farm was sold and Sam's father went to work at Waialua Plantation. He later apprenticed as a tailor and opened his own tailor shop in about 1915.

Sam finished high school at McKinley in 1924. His mother passed away, and Sam joined his father in the tailor shop. The young woman who was to become Sam's wife worked there also. The Nishimuras have two sons and four daughters.

Prior to World War II, Sam had signed a bank note for a truck that was sent to the Japan Red Cross. He was the only nisei to sign and was picked up for questioning at the beginning of World War II. An investigation took place in April, 1942. Mr. Midkiff and Mr. Anderson vouched for him as character witnesses, but Sam was taken to Sand Island Detention Camp and was later transferred to the Honouliuli Internment Camp. He was interned until January, 1944.

After the War, he went back to the tailor shop. His wife passed away in 1960. Sam remained active in the Senior Citizens' lunch program and his tailor business until he passed away on February 4, 1977, just a few months after the last interview was completed.

The Oral History Project is extremely grateful to Sam for sharing his vivid memories with us and those who will read these transcripts.
PN: This is an interview with Mr. Sam Nishimura on July 12th, 1976, in his home in Haleiwa. Mr. Nishimura, could you tell me about your parents? Where they came from?

SN: Well, my parents came from Kumamoto-ken, Japan. It's on the island of Kyushu. He came here in 1899 as an immigrant, and he went to Puunene to work as a contract laborer. Well, after his contract expired, he came to Oahu and worked for a while at Ewa and at Aiea. Then, he came to Haleiwa in about 1904 and started truck farming. Well, during that time, my father married my mother. And I was born in Haleiwa. Reared in the truck farming place where today it is all cane field. Then somebody from Aiea came to buy my father's truck garden, so he moved to a plantation camp in Opaeka'a. Here, I was raised, and when I was six years old, I was sent to Kaaawa School. That's beyond Kahana. We took the train from here to Waialua to Kahuku. And from Kahuku, we transferred on the small train and went to Kahana. From there, we proceeded to Kaaawa School. The primary purpose of my father sending me to Kaaawa School was trying to make me more proficient in speaking Japanese. So, I was there two years. But I was all right. I became pretty good in Japanese, but I fell back in English, because I stayed two years there. Came back, I was still a first grader. So I lost two years in my schooling. And well, I started my schooling in Haleiwa Elementary School. Or rather, it was called Waialua Elementary School, at that time. And after finishing school there--Japanese school and the English school, I went to Honolulu. And there I stayed at a Japanese high school dormitory for one year, because I graduated from the high school---the Japanese high school in one year. I enrolled at the McKinley High School as a freshman, and took up commercial..... that was way back, about 1921. Then, I was not able to stay at a dorm, because all the graduates from the Japanese high school who were boarding there were not allowed to stay there. So, I moved to a place in Palama, and from there, I went to McKinley. I went to McKinley for three years, and finished the commercial course in 1925. Came back, and I applied for a job at a Bank of Hawaii in Waialua. But, in the meantime, my mother died. My father was running the tailor shop. And naturally, I was the only son. Nobody to take care of the store, so I had to join with my father in running the tailor shop. I had to learn my cutting system from the correspondence school, the Mitchell Correspondent Tailoring School in New York. I finished the course,
and until today, I'm a tailor. (Chuckles)

PN: Could we go back... Your father came to Maui, but why did he transfer to Oahu?

SN: Well, all his friends told him that there was a contract in Ewa where he could work three years and make more money. So, he came to Oahu and there were his friends from same prefecture in Kumamoto. So, he came to Ewa, but somehow, they got involved at their working place, and he had to leave Ewa plantation. So he worked for only about a month at the plantation.

PN: Was this because of the strike?

SN: No. The fellows (oldtimers) who were living there took advantage of the newcomers. In other words, they give the rough work to the newcomers, and they take the easier work, to make more money. That's the reason why they had to fight and the cook at that place told him, "You better run away, otherwise they're going to hang on all of you." So they all ran away to Aiea.

PN: This was because....

SN: Well, they beat the other guys with cane stalks. They did a lot of damage to them, I think. The oldtimers had a big meeting and decided to attack the newcomers, so my father and the others all ran away to Aiea. For the work they did at Ewa--no compensation. At Aiea, he was working.... at...... a place called Makalapa and Halawa digging kiawe roots, taking away stones, etc. He worked around there, but it wasn't steady work, so, he came to Waialua to look around for a job. And here he saw a good truck farm garden. Well, he was used to that kind of job in Japan. So, he started truck farming. Raising daikon and cabbages. And from the farm he had to carry the products a good five miles on his back to sell to the plantation laborers for a meager 5¢ or 10¢ a bunch.

PN: He was working for somebody else?

SN: No. He worked for himself. Then a fellow who came from Aiea to see that field, saw the field was so green and so productive, that he decided to buy the farm. So, he sold it. Then he went to work for Waialua Plantation.

PN: To work as....

SN: Well, he worked as a plumber. He worked as a plumber, for a couple of years, and.... he found a good job in Schofield, laying pipes for all the barracks. So he worked about one year there. Then he became the apprentice for a tailor shop, to be a tailor.

PN: How did he become apprentice? Did somebody choose him, or...
SN: No, no. There were lot of tailors at that time here. So, he (father) went to ask Mr. Kitaoka, if he could be taken in as an apprentice. My mother and father were accepted. They work as apprentice for one year and a half. To make a pattern, that's another thing, because they don't teach you patterns too easily. It's not easy to learn, anyway. So he had to go in town to learn. The proprieter down here didn't show him how to cut. He was now ready to open a tailor shop.

PN: Did they pay him while he was an apprentice?

SN: Maybe some spending money.

PN: He was married, then, yeah?

SN: Oh, yes, I was there, so....

PN: How did he support your family?

SN: Well, he must have had some extra money, I think. I don't know.

PN: How long was he an apprentice?

SN: Maybe year and half. One year, I think. Then he started this store. It was a small store. He started this store about nineteen fifteen, or sixteen. It's over sixty years now.

PN: So, what was required to start a tailor shop?

SN: Well, he had to get all the material woolen and cotton. He was able to sew suits. Coat and pants. And my mother sewed shirts. So that would help him.

PN: Your mother worked as a helper to your father in the tailor shop?

SN: Well, she had to sew all the shirts and the working pants. But mostly shirts. Father used to sew all the pants.

PN: Did he need a license to open up?

SN: Oh, yeah. Well, right. You have to have a license. $25 license to operate a store at that time. Now, it's different. You just get your license for starting the business. It's very cheap, now, but at that time, at least $25.

PN: Did they have to take a test?

SN: No, no. No such thing.

PN: Just application?

SN: You just apply for a license to open a store. You apply for that.
PN: You know, this apprenticeship training period, how--it's....

SN: Regular hours.

PN: Just regular hours? And when you complete it, you feel sure that you can open your own shop.

SN: No. Well, they went in with the agreement that they would be there for so many years. A year or year and a half. After the agreement was made well, if the proprietor saw that he was ready to start, he couldn't stop him.

PN: And all what he sold as an apprentice goes to the...

SN: Oh, yeah. He must have had some kozukai, Japanese call it. You know, spending money. But, I don't really know because I was too small to know what was happening.

PN: It's a little after he started his own business that World War I began. Do you remember...

SN: Yeah. Well, when World War I, he had to register. If he wanted to. He could have volunteered, but he didn't. So...he didn't, until---I don't know how old was that. But anyway, he told me that he didn't go into the Army. They had to register, though.

PN: Going back to this Kaaawa School, what was the name of that school?

SN: Kaaawa School.

PN: It was both---English-Japanese school?

SN: The Kaaawa School is still standing there. I've noticed that. But the Japanese school is defunct now, but, you know, at that time, that Japanese school was very popular. People for...all over Oahu came to the school. The Japanese school was called Kaaawa Nipponjin Shōgakkō, which was run by Mr. Tamotsu Matsumura...was a very good school teacher. And very strict. And besides he was from the same prefecture where my father was born. That's the reason why parents wanted to send their kids to his school. There were girls and boys from Honolulu, Waipahu, Ewa, Waianae, and all over the place.

PN: They were sent there, because it was a good Japanese school?

SN: Japanese school was, yeah, very disciplined. Very good Japanese school. But after, I think he got married to one of the pupils. All these parents stop sending the kids. That's the reason why we had to come back. Stayed two years.

PN: He married one of the pupils?

SN: Morale was very low, you see. Teacher is not supposed to do that, according to the old Japanese style of teaching, so, they didn't like
the idea. Do you know that place? I was six years old, so you can imagine how small I was. We had to lay our own mat, and sleep. Not enough food, and lot of these young kids used to urinate on that futon, so they had to take it in the yard and then dry it themself and carry 'em back again, see. 'Cause nobody to help you. You on your own.

PN: Oh, nobody to watch over you folks?

SN: No, no. They watch over you, but whatever you did you had to do on your own. They didn't help you. You had to be independent.

PN: They had a kitchen that fed you?

SN: Right, right.

PN: What kind of food was....

SN: Typical Japanese food. Morning time, miso shiru. You know, that miso soup. And, maybe once a week, meat, I think. I don't know. I forgot. Anyway, somehow I survived so it must have been alright.

(Laughter)

PN: Did you like it there?

SN: No. We didn't have enough food, so during the weekend, we used to go up in the mountain, pick guavas and papayas, and eat that. Otherwise, no other foods. So, there was a lot of constipation there. You know, guavas.

(PN chuckles)

SN: Lot of constipation. So, lot of kids were suffering. I noticed that.

PN: You know how much the school cost?

SN: Well, it must have been very cheap, because fifty cent was sufficient for me to go and come back from Kaaawa to Haleiwa.

PN: That's for traveling?

SN: Yeah, traveling money. So must have been cheap. I don't know. Maybe ten dollars, or less than that, I think. I don't know.

PN: You mean, you commuted back and forth all the way...

SN: No, no, no. We stayed at a dorm. We had a dorm that...

PN: How many times during the year did you...

SN: Once a year. Only New Year time, we came back. We went in September.

PN: That's the only break?
SN: Yeah. That's the only break we had.

PN: So you went to English school during the day, then Japanese in the afternoon?

SN: Right. No, no, no---yeah, yeah. Same thing. Yeah. English in the morning time and Japanese school in the afternoon. Yeah, I wasted my---well, I became pretty good in Japanese, but my English was---I lost out two years. So that's the reason why when I finished high school, I was twenty.

PN: Oh, I see. So when he married his pupil, you came back? Your parents brought you back?

SN: Yeah, my parents...I left everything. My mat. My trunk. Didn't bring 'em back. There was no way of bringing them back. You see, when we went to that school, we had to go on the buggy. We took all our belongings on the buggy. We came back on the train and we didn't want to go back and bring our belongings back. So they were left there. I don't know what happened. (Chuckles)

PN: (Chuckles) Do you remember how long the buggy ride took?

SN: Oh. Good half a day.

PN: That's---you're renting it out?

SN: From a---no, no. One of my relative's son was going, so I went together with him. From Haleiwa, we rode on a buggy, past Kahuku and then Kahana, then to Kaaawa. Yeah. That's the only transportation. We used to walk quite a bit, because, those days, nothing to ride on.

PN: Do you remember any games or sports you folks played there?

SN: They used to play ball. Indoor ball at that time but outside of that, I don't know. I don't know what they were playing. Too small, you know. Now, children who are six or seven today won't be able to go that kind school. I tell you, it's not easy. Yeah, if about seven, eight years, not so bad. But, you know, six years, just started school, my gosh, I tell you. Rough. Very rough.

PN: Could you, like, compare that kind of school to Waialua Elementary? You came back and went to Waialua Elementary?

SN: Yeah, well, no comparison, because you're at home, now. You commuted from your home, so everything is there, but when you go to those dormitory school, you don't have anything. You know, you don't have candies, and goodies. My father used to ask me...."Did you get any candy?" I'd say, "No." He sent a couple of times, but they must have been confiscated. And were given to some other children. See, that's what they used to do. You cannot just enjoy by yourself. Everybody had to share. So, it's same like when I went to Japanese high school in Honolulu. We're not allowed to hold too much money, you see. So
whatever came in the mail, they used to open up. If there was money in there they took it and put it in your account. So, you didn't have the spending money. So in Japanese high school, well, what they used to do was to give us the money when we needed. Every Saturday, well, you made a requisition that you would buy a shoe. You want to buy a book. And you present that to the master there. Then he says, "What're you going to do?" You say, "Well, I'm going to buy a shoe." And he'd say, "Bring your shoes." And then you bring the old shoes, all worn out, so he says, "Okay." Say, "Okay." But no, instead of buying shoes, you go and buy chop suey and eat 'em all up. Yeah.

(PN laughs)

SN: Yeah, they don't buy. When they have requested. (Laughs) That's what happened. Yeah. 'Cause not enough food to eat at anyplace. When you go to boarding school, not enough food. But somehow, you have to survive, so....

PN: Your parents would send you money while you went to this boarding school in town?

SN: Yeah, yeah. While you are there. They have to send. They send a requisition from school. From the school to the parents, and they will send it to you.

PN: How did you get into that Japanese school? You had to apply?

SN: Apply for it, yeah.

PN: Take an exam?

SN: No, no. The dorm, I didn't have to. But the school....if you wanted to---see, they had from freshman to senior, so if you're proficient in Japanese, they'll ask you for....what they call--henyu shiken or coming in examination, or entrance examination. You know, by that, they'll determine whether you'll be in the second year, third year, fourth year. But I was somewhat fortunate, I think. When I went from country to there, I was in the senior class, already. Without taking examination, I was in senior class, so, in other words, I finished Japanese High School in just one year. Comparatively, I think it wasn't too hard for me, because what I learned in down here (Haleiwa) was pretty good, because I could compete with them. We had about fifty students. When I first entered, I was about number twelve or eleven. This was pretty high. But when I graduated, I graduated about 18 or 19, so, still not too bad. On the paper. Yeah. So, still today, I can use my Japanese at wedding party or funeral. To make a speech. They call on me, I can make a speech, I'm not afraid to do that. At least I learned my Japanese. (Laughs)

PN: That's good. What was the housing like there at the Japanese boarding school?
SN: You mean, at Honolulu? Well, it was divided into about four sections of... And there were leaders in that group. And all the seniors were in charge of their group there, so...let's say, in one room, we had about twenty, I think. Twenty in one group. Had about, up and down. So, had about eighty. When I went, there were about eighty.

PN: This is total enrollment?

SN: Yeah. And at that time, everything was about $17.50. One month.

PN: One month? Tuition?

SN: Tuition and boarding and everything. Well, comparatively, the Mills school was charging $175 a year.

PN: What school was this?

SN: Mid-Pacific. At the time when we entered, you see how cheap the tuition was? So, if you went to Mid-Pacific, they had a scholarship. In other words, you can work in the mess hall, you can work in the yard, and they'll deduct. So, the amount that you put in, from that you can deduct, you see, so they didn't have to pay too much. But like ours, we didn't have such a thing, so, we paid about $17.50, I think. So that's about $175—a year.

PN: So, they divided between two groups. There was any dorm for the girls in...

SN: Well, girls' dorm was altogether in a different section, different place. I don't know that place, but, anyway, it was about quarter mile away from our place. I think, more. Quarter or half a mile.

PN: So, when you speak of eighty students, that's all boys, eh? The boys' section.

SN: From freshman up to seniors.

PN: Seniors took care of a certain number?

SN: Yeah, well, senior care of—-it was formed just like a company. There's two head. They call 'em ryocho. They're the head of the school dorm. Two boys that are in charge are seniors. Two boys are in charge of the two sections. One this side, one, this. Left wing and the right wing. And then under him, they had, what they call a hancho. In other words, just like a sergeant. Take care of all the groups, up and down. So, all in all, six persons new in charge the whole compound. And beside that, they had two, the boarding school master and the assistant. They were in charge of the whole dorm.

PN: They would check on curfews or...?

SN: Right. We had curfew 9:30, and after that, if you wanted to study, they had a special section whereby you can go there and study. Otherwise,
all the rooms are all closed. Darkened, already, so cannot.

PN: What other restrictions were there?

SN: Well...if it's already 9:30, you're supposed to sleep. But you are going to high school, so naturally, you have lot of homework. If you cannot finish, you have to go upstairs. There is a place where you can study.

PN: Did they have, like, no eating in the dorm?

SN: Well...anyway, food was very scarce. We hardly saw food in our rooms. Maybe only candies, like that, but...cookies, like that, I don't know. I didn't see. I didn't taste it, anyway, so I don't know. (Laughs)

PN: Did you like it there?

SN: Well...you know, you get to know friends from Hawaii, Maui, Kauai, and so, that's one thing good about it. And then, you get used to living as one group, whereas you'll never experience that kind of life if you don't go to dorm school. But, it's just like the army. You know, you have to learn how to get together with the boys, and then, at the same time, you have to learn how to wash your clothes, what do you call, underwear and what not. But on the outside, well, the shirt, pants, is taken outside to be laundered, so not so bad. But, underwear and what not, the small things, you have to wash your own. Same thing happened when I was interned. So the life style was similar to the boarding school. You have to do your own, because nobody going to do your laundry for you. You got to do your own. (Chuckles)

PN: At the dorm, at this Japanese boarding school, you folks free time, how did you guys get money to go movies, or...

SN: Well, once a month, they used to give us fifty cents. Let's see, now, fifty cents. Yeah. Fifty cents a night. That time, movie was about ten cents or 25¢. Saimin was ten cents. That's all you got fifty cent. Then you come back. You walk to the Princess Theatre.

PN: Now, we were talking about the Japanese school, and, you said, you folks traveled from McKinley to the Japanese school by what? Trolley?

SN: Well, the Rapid Transit was going at that time from Fort Street. So, we used to ride on that and get a transfer, and went to Hotel Street, and then to the old McKinley High School which is---do you know the old McKinley High School?

PN: No.

SN: Linekona School by Medical Arts Building and right in the back there's a school there on the Diamond Head side of Thomas Square. It's between Beretania and Young Street. Thomas Square---right opposite Thomas Square. The school's still there; you can see the stone building. That used to be the science and typewriter rooms. The fare was two and a
half cents, one way. And we were allowed ten cents for our kaukau. Lunch, or in other words, fifteen cents a day. So, for one week, it was ninety cents. That's all we were allowed at that time. Not anymore. If you wanted to eat more, you had to get your own money. That's the reason why you wanted some extra money; to eat. But ten cents was not enough. What're you going to eat? You know, the milk, and then some sandwich. That was all.

PN: They served this at McKinley?

SN: McKinley. That's all you can eat. So what we used to do, just to save the ten cents, we walked from that...Japanese boarding school to McKinley.

PN: To save the...

SN: Then to save the 10¢ we walked back, to school (boarding). There used to be a store called Centeio. We used to stop by there, buy a loaf of bread and then ham, put 'em inside. Eat one loaf. We ate together with the other guys, so it wasn't too bad.

(Laughter)

SN: Otherwise, not enough to eat. Yeah, then, like in Japanese school, they used to have fire drill once a month. We all woke up about five in the morning. Sometimes earlier than that. And we used to climb the Punchbowl. That mountain there. You know, there's a crater, now. They used to let us climb that place, you know. (This is a Japanese dorm life.) That was some chore. There used to be a lot of grass at that time, but, lot of guys used to go there. And they would time us to see how many minutes it took us to go on top there. It wasn't easy.

PN: Part of the fire drill?

SN: Yeah. Just to find out how much stamina you had. And like in kaukau side, too, we didn't have too good a food, but once a month, we had meat. Hekka. You know that hekka. Once a month. So, well, we who sit at the same table worked as a team. "You get the shichirin (or grill). And you get the charcoal. And you go for the...small sticks so we can start the fire." So when we were dismissed, we used to run for that shichirin. Then, bring it out, start the fire. But if you don't have a good gang, boy, by the time we had the fire started the other guys were eating, going home, already.

So they used to do that once a month. Not chicken hekka, but meat hekka. **Beef.**

PN: **Beef hekka.** They used to feed you breakfast and lunch at the boarding...

SN: Right.

PN: And breakfast and dinner?
SN: Breakfast, yeah.

PN: But lunch would be at McKinley?

SN: Either McKinley, or some of them were going to commercial school at that time, so....

PN: Could you tell me again about commercial school and what else was there? Prep school, and....

SN: Well, McKinley High School was divided into general studies, commercial, and preparatory. Was three those days.

PN: How did you get placed in there?

SN: Well, you apply for commercial. Like me, I was a commercial student. So, first year, you have to take....business; arithmetic. Second year, bookkeeping, typing, and shorthand. You have to take all that. So, by the time you graduate, you have to accumulate so many points in commercial subjects. Otherwise, they won't classify you as a commercial student. They classify you as a general student. In other words, you can pick any subject and make the grade point for general course. At that time, it, was 16 to 18 credits. 16 is required and beyond that you can just choose anything...

PN: Do you remember the entrance exam that you had to...

SN: No, we didn't have an exam. They didn't give us an entrance exam, but it was rather strict. Cause some of the classmates I met in September, when came December, they were all gone. I asked, "Where are they?" Say, "Oh, they got a notice saying don't come back to school".

PN: Why is that?

SN: They're flunking out. If you flunk in two subjects, they just take you out from the school. Those were the days. Because McKinley was the only high school in the state, in the territory at that time. No other high school.

PN: They got kicked out where?

SN: Well, some of them went to lolani. At that time, well, the standard was low. Go down there, make up the grade point, come back about junior year. Some of them I know, they came back. (Chuckles) So those days, they used to flunk you out, because even you're a senior, until the last examination, you don't know if you flunked the subject. You don't make the---if it's English, that's the most important. English, history, science, math. If you don't finish, they don't graduate you. Now, they just push you up. But those days, they don't. You have to make the grade.

PN: Was the teacher strict, or were the courses hard?
SN: Well, the classroom was limited. Naturally, they have to eliminate somebody.
PN: Oh, I see.
SN: Not like now. You have in different sections.
PN: Did you look forward to going to McKinley High School, or was it your parents wanted you to....
SN: No. When I went, I wanted to go to McKinley myself. Because by going to McKinley, I could study some more Japanese. Because, where as you go to Mills school, (Mid-Pacific) they had Japanese, but not too proficient. Not too good.
PN: You took Japanese here when you were going to elementary school, too?
SN: Right, right.
PN: How was this Japanese school over here?
SN: Pretty high standards, because when I finished the Japanese school here in Haleiwa, without taking an examination, I was put in senior Japanese high school. Some other classmates were put in the junior classes.
PN: Waialua Elementary School, at that time, was---how would you rate their school? Were they strict, also?
SN: They were very strict. You can flunk and just stay back one, two years easily. They don't promote you. Like my friend a sixth grader, he had 74 points...well, his grade was 74, anyway and 75 was a passing grade. They didn't want to promote him. I asked the teacher, "You know, why should...he's only behind one point. Why don't you promote him together with me?" But, he just flunked. (Laughs) So, you can imagine those days. Because not too many students, well, they can do that. But now, with the increased population....
PN: When you were going to Waialua Elementary, Intermediate?
SN: No intermediate. Only elementary.
PN: Oh, they call that elementary school? To eighth grade?
SN: No intermediate. No high school, no nothing. You have to go Honolulu.
PN: Oh, I see. What was the racial breakdown of the school children at that time?
SN: Maybe about 35 to 41 class.
PN: What nationality were there?
SN: Well, very few Filipinos, but, lot of...Japanese, Hawaiians, Chinese.

PN: And what were the teachers?

SN: Chinese. My teacher was Chinese. And some Caucasian that came from, you know, the Mainland.

PN: Did you feel, I guess, out of place, because you were older than the other boys?

SN: No. Because we used to play together, we didn't think about age.

PN: So, I guess, your childhood friends were from this Haleiwa area?

SN: Right, right.

PN: Could you describe what kind of things you folks did during your free time? Games, sports.

SN: Well, to start with, we swam in this (pointing to river next to home) river. Right opposite, well, we used to swim in the river full naked, because we didn't have no swimming trunks. And for playing, we used to play ball. We played marble, and Peewee. Peewee, you know, you cut the stick. There's so many lengths. One is about one foot. And then, the other one is about four inches long to play you dig a hole and put that short stick in the hole. The short stick is placed slanted, in the hole and with that one foot stick, you hit the short one. And then when that short stick rises into the air you have to hit (refers to small stick) it again. Then that short stick goes toward the other fellows. Then the hitter places the stick across the hole. If the short stick is caught by someone while it's in the air, you're out. Or if someone picks up the stick from the ground and hits the long stick that's over the hole, you're out also. Until then, you can just keep on going. We used to fly some kites too. Make your own kites. From bamboo. Making with a bamboo, and the...you know, Japanese, they call 'em hanshi, the thin Japanese paper surround that...You paste that with cooked rice. Paste 'em around.

PN: And you learned how to build kites from how?

SN: Well, just looking at the other guy's kite. That was about it, I think. Nothing else. Not too many games.

PN: What kind of household chores did you have?

SN: Well, not too much. Not like....you know, the olden homes, it's not like now days. It's so crude that you don't have too many places to clean. So, you don't have too much. And the mother used to do most of this.

PN: Did you help your father, like, in the tailor shop?

SN: We had a bath house underneath this house. My chore was to heat the water for the bath.
PN: Could you tell me about---this is the house your father lived in when he came here?

SN: Right here, yeah. Well, when we first came in here, the house was rather small. But in 1924, he remodeled this, and made it little larger, because it was a small house. So we have one, two three, four bedroom, now, in this junk house, anyway. But still, it's liveable. (Chuckles) 'Cause I raised--how many--six kids here.

PN: They own this house when they first got here? Or did they rent it out?

SN: Well, this is a lease land. It's not our land. It's a lease land. So we leased the land. That's why Haleiwa town doesn't grow at all, because most of the land is lease land. Whenever you build a building on a lease land maybe for, say, about 25 years, when it expires, the building belongs to the fellow who owns the land. Reverts to them, so no use of making big nice buildings that you spend so many thousands of dollars, and they take it away. We first leased from the plantation. And when the plantation lease expired in....let's see, 1940, I think about. The Weed Estate took care. They were the lessor, so they took care. After that, we were under---Weed Estate.

PN: After that family.

SN: Yeah. We're still under Weed's Estate. It's a lease land. It's not our own.

PN: So how long is your lease now?

SN: Well, usually we take about a ten year lease. So not too bad. The next door people bought two shares of that seven. There are left five more shares. And I bought one share. So we have three-seventh of the seventh-seventh.

PN: Next door?

SN: I have one-seventh. He has two-seventh. So four-seventh were owned by four others. But of the four, only one is alive today. Therefore three-seventh of the seven-seventh went to all the surviving children of the three deceased persons. I told this lady (the only surviving member of the Weed Estate) to make a will. Otherwise you have about 13 children, so they'll be able to inherit only one-seventh Weed Estate. Now in order to get the clearance of that, of the one-seventh, we need the 13 signatures. You see how hard it is to sell this property. Now I don't think you would be able to buy this property. I have six children, so they'll inherit in one-seventh of this property.

PN: I see. One-seventh, you have.
SN: So in other words. Yeah. So, say, six...so it's got to be divided into forty-second, so it's going to be about...two, four, six. Two forty-second, each. (Laughs)

PN: How big is this property?

SN: Oh, almost about half an acre. That's it. Yeah. Because, this building, you know, you can imagine. This building's about 13, 14 feet high, from ground. It's high. This is a pretty high building, because underneath is, you know, what do you call, lowland. It's only about four feet above sea level, so, everytime we have big water, the water just rises. Yeah, down here is very low. So whenever we have a tidal wave, wave just comes up. About four feet water everytime underneath.

PN: Oh yeah?

PN: Remember any floods, like, when you were a small kid?

SN: Well, when I was small kid, we used to have a room underneath here. We used to live underneath. But, after about 1920, we were not able to live underneath anymore. Because the water was getting higher and higher. That is on account of the cultivation and civilization. You know, they started to open up the plantation field, the pineapple field. So naturally, olden days used to have such a thing called conservation of water, you know, that all the leaves and what not. The rain would just---keep all the water. But now, they have a furrows, you know, the ditch. Just goes into the river. So that'll make a big water down here.

PN: So more water come down cause they open up the fields?

SN: That's the reason why we cannot have any building underneath. I used to live underneath here. We used to have room. But now it's all wasted. We cannot do anything, because...in the last flood, we had ten inches water in here. (Store)

PN: Inside here? Yeah? (Laughs)

SN: Yeah. Ten inches. Two years ago. I was talking to my son-in-law. When I noticed the water seeping through the floor I said, "Eh, eh, that water is coming through here. So I don't think I can be talking to you. I'm going to run away." So I just ran away. Boy, that was a big water 1974---what was that? 1974. Two years ago.

PN: '74?

SN: Yeah. '74. April 19, 1974.

PN: That was the biggest flood you ever saw in this area.

SN: I don't think we'll have any more.'Cause I've been living here over
sixty years, now. First time I ever experienced. That is because one of the big dams up here (plantation's) burst, you know; the dam gave away. So that's the reason why about 11 million gallons of water came down. Next door had big damage. Garage (service station). All the gas—all the tools and everything. Big damage. And across the street they used to have store there. All damaged and three quonset huts were...what do you call, shoved out. Moved off the foundation. And in one of the quonset huts, three members one family of died in there. It floated down the river out to the ocean. It hit the bridge in Waialua, broke to pieces and went out to the ocean. Some of the children were picked up from the ocean by helicopter and were saved. There's still litigation on that, yet. It's not through yet. So I don't now what is going to happen, but that was the biggest flood we ever had. So far. Prior to that was in nineteen...thirty-two. That was the biggest. Before that, we never did, you know. Because if the dam didn't break, I think, we'd never have that kind of a problem. But...

PN: In '32? What kind of flood was that?
SN: That was ordinary flood, but, oh, that was a big one. It rained so many days....

PN: Did anybody get hurt?
SN: And then this bridge got clogged. You see, a big lumber clogged it so, naturally, the water didn't go through, and backed up. And that's the reason why. That's what happened, this time, too. You can see lot of debris still on that bridge, yet.

PN: Did anybody get hurt in the '32 flood?
SN: Yes, one Chinese man died. But the last one in 1974; good thing it happened during the day time. If it was night time, more damage, I think. It started about 9 o'clock a.m. and it lasted almost till 11 o'clock. Good thing it was day time. The children that went to school were lucky, because they were not involved in that, but fellow who stayed back with the parents, stayed in the quonset hut, the quonset started to move out in the river. They couldn't do anything.

PN: Oh, yeah, yeah. Whew! Going back to your small, childhood time, do you remember what your parents used to cook? Food, like that?
SN: Well, in olden days, all Japanese style of cooking, so naturally, they used to have miso, and miso shiru, and then, nishime. You know that nishime is all made up of....daikon and ninjin, hasu, all those, and potatoes, and seasoned with àji---oh, we didn't have ajinomoto at that time. With shoyu, sugar, and salt. Of course, I didn't do too much cooking, so I don't know much, but, anyway....

PN: Your mother did all the cooking?
SN: Yeah, my mother was doing all the cooking. And after, my wife started
to do it. But when I was small kid, well, my mother used to do that. We used to have a kitchen underneath here. You know, the old style, it's not old stove, it's made of stove on two sides and iron placed in the...stone kind of, you know, middle so we could place the kettle on the iron bar. The olden, old crude stoves. Made-at-home stove.

PN: What was that like? I mean, hichirin kind style?

SN: No, no. You just put lot of stone on the side a cemented and put two bars, you know, with center and then cook what do you call...

PN: Fireplace kind?

SN: Fireplace. That's the kind, yeah. That used to be the olden days. Because the fire department wasn't too strict at that time, but, the kerosene stove came after that, I think. We had a kerosene stove after that. But prior to that my mother used to cook in that olden style. Cook rice in that, too. Yeah, I remember...no, I don't know how old I was. I used to see my mother making dango, you know, that patties. Dango. You know, dumplings.

PN: Yeah.

SN: Well, Japanese call 'em dango, just like, you know. Well, I used to see my mother getting some flour and some what do you call that baking powder. Put in that, and I used to mix that, and I used to make my own dango and used to feed myself. (Laughs) So hungry sometime. Yeah. But in the olden style in Japanese, they don't like the man to be in the kitchen, so I never learned how to cook.

PN: She used to serve Japanese style, like serve...

SN: Yeah. The father (my father).

PN: ...father first.

SN: Yeah, yeah, no, well, they set 'em on the table, you see, but usually it goes to the father first. That's customary in Japanese style. Even after my wife started to cook when I got married, well, same thing. Parents first.

PN: And what about laundry? Where did you folks do your laundry?

SN: Laundry, well they used to have pipes, so...they used to do laundry down there. Underneath this house.

PN: By the stream?

SN: No, no. Right here. We used to do laundry underneath. We used to have pipes, so....

PN: The toilet was what? Outside, or....
SN: This toilet is about fifty years old.

PN: Oh yeah? It was always inside the house?

SN: Yeah, yeah. Like this.

PN: Before, I guess, some other kind of houses was outside...

SN: Yeah, we had a toilet outside. It's about, oh, a good fifty feet away from here.

PN: Still standing?

SN: No, no. They don't allow those things; no such things. That was gone long time ago.

PN: Do you remember when they brought in electricity to this area?

SN: Yeah. This, all is old. You know, that side there.

PN: All original wiring?

SN: Yeah. That one is not original, but that was the first one. I don't know when was that, but, must be in 1920's, eh, I think. 1920--'21 about, I think. Quite some time. Before that, prior to that in the store we used to--burn gasoline. You know the mantle. The bag. Coleman. The type--you know, the Coleman type. You know, the mantle there. That's what we used to burn then. Prior to that, my father used to use kerosene. About 1915. Night time. He used to work sometimes in the evening, but it was pretty hard on the eyes. You know, not easy. So, with only the kerosene. Yeah. Those were the days.

PN: You know, during that time, I guess, there was this---did you ever hear of this Seinen Kai?

SN: Oh yeah--they used to have a Seinen Kai, you know, Young Men's Association--they used to have in Waialua. When I went to Honolulu school, they called us one year. So we came back on a bus. And....some of the members had to make speech, I think. Of the life in Honolulu, what not, so, they entertained us. I didn't. We were freshmen. I remember that, and in this district, we used to have Haleiwa Seinen Kai. I don't know when they started, but, anyway, quite some time. It was an independent Young Man's Association. No affiliation with churches....

PN: You didn't belong to any of this?

SN: No, I did.

PN: What organizations?

SN: Haleiwa Young Man's Association. Well---everybody took turn in being the president. I was president for one year anyway. So, I know what happened when I was president. I know, they brought in judo and kendo.
So... judo and then kendo came into Haleiwa Seinen Kai.

PN: Exhibitions?

SN: No, no. We started the...

PN: As form of sports, like that?

SN: Sports for every week. And they used to have a practice.

PN: Oh, you guys used to participate in it?

SN: The teacher used to come from Honolulu. And... during the winter months the Seinen Kai used to have a patrol. From ten in the evening to about five in the morning.

PN: Patrolling....

SN: Patrolling the Haleiwa district. The stores.

PN: Oh, but, it's something like a police?

SN: So, some of them had special police badge. We applied for it. They gave it to us. Special police badges.

PN: Oh yeah? Were there a lot of burglaries around this area?

SN: There were burglaries going on, so we---they called them yakei or in other words, the night patrol. And used to have about two groups going around Haleiwa. And the best part of it is about 1 o'clock in the morning. So, you know, that's some long hours. That lasted for couple of years, but after that, they told us to abandon it.

PN: Why did it only go on during the winter months?

SN: That was the worst time when they had burglaries. Steal chicken, and, you know, those days, not many chickens and what not.

PN: What? All of you guys would get together and make hekka, like that? In the evenings?

SN: Yeah. About 12:30, 1 o'clock. Then we...

PN: Did you have to wear any special kind of uniform?

SN: No, no. No uniform. Just to get by with the mosquito, you have to wear long pants, anyway. We used flash lights.

(PN chuckles)

SN: Yeah, that was one of the....chores we did for the Seinen Kai. For the Young Men Association.

PN: You guys would get up and go school next day, everything like that?
SN: No, we were already working. Well, from about twenty years up. Mostly 18 up. Not the young one going to the school. They didn't belong to the organization. All fellow were either married, or single; all fellow working. Young Man Associations. Not going to school. All male members.

PN: Did you remember the 1920 Filipino-Japanese strike?

SN: I do. At that time, well, that's the time, see, all the Japanese congregated into—now they call it, you know, the YM—Japanese—we were just saying the Seinen Kai. Lot of them stayed in that house, there. Because they had to come out from the camps. And lot of them had a place in Haleiwa. They had a tent house. They used to live in there.

PN: Where was this tent house?

SN: Oh....well, they cannot stay in the plantation camps, so they had to... evacuate...

PN: Oh, they were kicked out of the plantation camp?

SN: Get out from plantation until....just bring their belongings and.... they didn't bring the whole things, but, anyway, they came out.

PN: Where did they set up these tents, like that?

SN: Well, in those days, there used to be---have lot of big yards, you know.

PN: Oh. Just in people's yards, like that?

SN: I don't know to whom it belonged, but, anyway, they made a tent around there. And then, every evening, you know, the officials used to come around and make speech. "Don't give up. Don't give up." They had headquarters, so those who did not have enough to eat were given food to supplement their kaukau. But, you know, Filipinos gave up too quick, so Japanese were getting hard time. Very hard time. And then, some of the Japanese fellow strike-breakers who went back to the plantation were called dogs. Inu until....so many years, they didn't associate with that kind guy. Because, you know, strike-breakers. They were just ostracized form the community, cause they don't want that kind of guys. So even the kids were having a hard time.

PN: The kids of the strike-breakers?

SN: Right. Because they say, "Ah, this guy dog. You know, cannot be trusted." That's what happened at that time. And lot of them didn't go back to the plantation after that. They just stayed back and then, found some other job. After the strike was over, they didn't go back. That happened to my father-in-law. He was a luna at one of the camps there, but he ended up being a farmer.

PN: He didn't like the plantation? Did you remember the epidemic they had then?
SN: Yeah. At that time, you know, at that Seinen Kai, same place, they had the--oh, I don't know. Lot of couples in there, but they got the....they call 'em Spanish influenza. Boy, everyday somebody was dying. It was like a hospital.

PN: Where did they treat these people? Or did they...

SN: Inside there, but nothing they can do. Well, I got the flu myself, too, so about one week, couldn't do anything. Well, they just get the ice, and put 'em on the head. That's it. (Put his hand to his forehead.)

PN: Cold pack on your head?

SN: Yeah, that's it. And then, I notice that...

PN: No medical....no doctor, like that?

SN: No. Doctor cannot. And everyday, so many guys are dying, so, you know, what they had to do was get a plantation truck and just dump the body. Dump 'em in.

PN: Where? Dump 'em where? (Chuckles)

SN: Well, put 'em in the graveyard. That's all. I don't know where. They cannot make a decent funeral. So many guys were dying at that time. I notice a place where the mother and a son died together. They had to bury 'em together. So, that epidemic was terrific. I can remember. So many guys died. After that, I don't see that kind of epidemic, but at that time....well, in the plantations, too, they were having a hard time.

PN: What effect did that strike have on your father's business?

SN: Well....I don't know much about it. But after the strike, the prices boom and then the store start to boom. Get bonuses. Filipinos were getting about one hundred fifty percent bonus. So, if you earn about twenty dollar, hundred fifty percent of that, you get big money, eh. You get lot of spending money, so....after that, I notice my father did pretty good business. Yeah, the sugar price went just zoom. Hundred percent would be about two hundred dollars. They were getting about two hundred dollars, I think, at that time. Good pay.

So fellow who got in the strike were the losers at that time. But merchants made money, I know, after the strike, because their prices zoom.

PN: During the strike, did your father support or....

SN: Yeah, they did. You have to contribute some donation like rice, money what not, you see, to the striking organization. Contribute to them. I think everybody did.

PN: They come out and ask you for donations?
SN: Mmm, some were asking, but lot of them voluntarily just donated from the...

PN: From their own side?

SN: Yeah. Yeah, those were the days when lot of these families were having hard time. Somehow no casualty in my family, so...kept on going, but otherwise, lot of them died.

PN: I guess, going back to McKinley, what was your reaction being from the country, going to Honolulu? Like what....

SN: Well, since not too many students were going to Honolulu school, well....you try to make a good grade otherwise, you know, it will reflect on the guys who represent them and go to school. If you go to school and you flunk out, they say he spent lot of money for nothing, so, you know, you got a black mark on you, but, somehow I managed to finish. (Chuckles)

PN: What was your impression of Honolulu, being from the country? You know, the big town, I guess?

SN: Well, well. You know, lot of things that we didn't see down here, especially like sports and football, we didn't know what was going on. I knew we used to go to Punahou field to see the football game. I didn't know what was going on. I just knew that they were carrying the ball. Back and forth, but nobody explained to you, so by going to the game so many times you start to understand, so, you like to see the game, but. Same as basketball. Never have basketball down here. No football game. In the country, no, naturally, you don't know anything about it. You don't know what's the rules. You don't even know how much one score---one point---what do you call, you know, when they score how many point. 'Cause you don't have the games here. I used to go to the swimming meets. Used to see the football game at Kamehameha School, the old Kamehameha School and at Punahou. And basketball was at the old National Guard Gym. You know, you remember, right by the....it's right by the Capitol ground now. They used to have an old gym there. And....the one YMCA. The old one, you know, it used to be on that Nuuanu Street. And let's see....I never did go to Punahou, so I don't know if they had any, but....so McKinley and St. Louis played at the National Guard. That was about it, I think.

PN: So you liked watching the sports? Anything, you know, in the big town, that you didn't like?

SN: Didn't like? Well....I don't think I had any, what do you call, dislikes or likes about town. Just living there. Just like ordinary guys. Because latter part of the year I was---living near Aala Park. So I used to go and eat at Palama Restaurant they were saying there were lot of hoodlums, but I never did see one. So I don't know.

PN: Well, during school, did you folks date and stuff like that?
SN: No, no. No such thing. Some of them were dating, because they had enough money to spend. If you did not have money, you cannot go far. Need money to date. Because those days, very few, I notice, boys and girls go together. I never did see too many. But other nationalities, I know, some of them, boys and girls walking together, but Japanese, I don't know. Not too many, I think. Not like now.

PN: When did you get married?

SN: After school.

PN: Graduation?

SN: Yeah.

PN: How did you meet your wife?

SN: Well, my... wife was working at my shop, my father's shop. And I used to know her when we used to go to Japanese--Taisho School when she was a young one.

PN: She's from over here, Haleiwa, too?

SN: Well, born in one of the plantation camps.

PN: I see. And what kind of wedding did you have?

SN: Regular Japanese style.

PN: Did you have to, like, go and see her parents?

SN: No.

PN: Wasn't the Japanese way of...

SN: Well, there's a middle man that took care of everything. We didn't have to do that.

PN: What did the middle man do?

SN: To go to the parents of the bride and asked for approval.

PN: Could you maybe...cause I don't know what it was like, could you describe how the wedding went?

SN: Well, same as now. Only thing is that, you...what do you call that... give them the dowry. So many hundred dollars, so that she can prepare for the wedding like buying a [kimono].

PN: How much was your dowry?

SN: I don't know. My father took care of all that. I don't know how much he gave, but then, the wedding date was set. We had a party in here.
Small party. Family party. Not too big a party, but, you know...and those days, not like now days. There were no catering places, so you have to make your own delicacy. Everything had to be made at home. There were very few paper plates, so you have to get your own plates. Borrow and then buy some. It wasn't easy. Now, you can go to a teahouse and everything prepared, so not so bad. Olden days, you have to make all the food. You have to cook at home. So, some of the ladies, instead of going to work, they come to help, you see. Rest a day from work, and then help you in cooking, prepare for the wedding party. Now you don't see that thing anymore. Well, the olden days, used to be all same all over. No catering place, so naturally, they used to cook at their home. And everybody used to pitch in, help. Somebody make sushi. Some make nishime. Some make chicken. All different departments. Same as funeral. When my mother died—that was fifty years ago. She died in Queen's Hospital, but we brought her back, and we had a wake for her here. We had to make preparations here. They call 'em detach. In other words, when you going out, well, they make kaukau for those going to the funeral. So everything was done at home.

PN: Could you tell me again about your mother? What did she die from?

SN: She had a tumor. Well, she was recuperating from a cold. She wasn't recovering fast enough, so we asked the doctor, "Say, I think I'd like to take her to town." So we took her Dr. Milnor. He was the best...physician for ladies in town. So then we ask him, he said, oh, she has a tumor. Say, "What are the chances?" "Fifty-fifty." So I asked my mother, say, "What are you going to do? He say it's fifty-fifty." She said, "Might as well cut 'em up and take the chances." So we had an operation at Queen's Hospital, and she lasted one day and she died next day.

PN: Where was the tumor?

SN: Stomach.

PN: Oh. Stomach tumor. Who was treating her down here?

SN: Well, there was a Japanese doctor. Dr. Itchinohe. My mother complained there was some kind of a big thing. Something big in her stomach. But she didn't realize that was a tumor in the stomach. It was big. At Queen's...I asked the doctor to let me see what kind of a thing is a tumor. It's a big thing. Something like a head. And I don't know. It had hair and what not, and, oh, awful looking thing. But I asked the doctor, "What happened?" He says, "The operation was successful, but on account of a shock, she couldn't pull through." So she was about forty something.

PN: What kind of medical care was people given during those times? Just doctors? You go to any doctor around here?

SN: Either they went to a plantation doctor or a Japanese physicians.

PN: He was the only doctor around here during that time? And what was he giving?
SN: They give you medicine. Something to drink, but couldn't recover, so....

PN: Did everybody go to this doctor here?

SN: Yeah.

PN: For childbirth, also?

SN: Everything. Childbirth, well, no. We used to have a midwife. All my kids were born with the midwife assisting. No doctors.

PN: Is there any midwife still living here?

SN: Not one...

PN: Have they all moved out, or....

SN: No, they are all dead. The medical department is very strict in giving licenses to the midwife. So they couldn't pass the test. Olden days, I don't know how they got their license, but, anyway, had about two down here. Maybe they had a permit. They're all dead. If they're living, they'd be over hundred years.

PN: (Chuckles) Oh, I see. So, could you describe more about, like, what was a common practice for funerals?

SN: Well, funeral, those days, they had....I don't know if they had Hosoi, but Kukui was the only one for the country people. Down here. And... they used to prepare. And from here they take 'em in town. They take 'em in town, first, and bring the body back again.

PN: Where was the funeral held? Services held?

SN: At Hongwanji. Waialua Hongwanji. In those days, we used to have a procession of cars. Cars used to line up on the traffic highway with the traffic cops leading the procession till Kukui Mortuary. And then cremate it down there. Cremated. I buried her urn at Mililani this April. Together with my father's. One burial plot can put two inside.

PN: Where did people usually get buried around here?

SN: Well, they used to have a cemetery down here called Puuiki Cemetary. That used to be only one those days. And that was getting too full, so they started to cremate. Some put their urn at the Japanese churches. Hongwanji Church. That's where they still have it today. Formerly, instead of burning, they used to bury the body. So, a lot of them is still in Puuiki cemetery.

PN: Do you remember the Myles Fukunaga case?

SN: I do.

PN: Did you know the family?
SN: Myles Fukunaga. Well, he was born in a place called Takeyama Camp (pineapple camp). About five, six miles over up this hill here from my place (Haleiwa). He used to go to Waialua Elementary School. Very bright student. And he also went to Taisho Japanese School.

Eventually, the family moved to Honolulu. I don't know what was the place, but anyway, someplace near Punchbowl. And then, there, they were renting house from the Bishop Trust, I think. One of the officers was Mr. Jamieson. Well, he, this Myles Fukunaga was working at Moana Hotel, I think. Then he disguised himself as a messenger boy and brought a message to the school. He went to Punahou School and got the boy out of the school, saying that the parents want to see him, so he's going to take him home. He took the boy to Moana Hotel side. In the meantime, the boy being about 12, 13, he's pretty big for a Caucasian. And Myles was a small boy, about five-two maybe. Not too big, because he cannot control him, so I think he had to kill him and bury him.

In the meantime, he wrote a ransom letter to Jamieson and demanding ten thousand dollars ransom money. He was a very bright student so he took some excerpts from some of the magazines and he copied that ransom letter and sent it to the Jamiesons to leave the money at the new McKinley High School. The paper was signed K.K.K. Near McKinley High School, there were many vacant lots around there those days. Anyway, he contacted Mr. Jamieson at the promised time (evening) and then the Jamiesons delivered the money. I don't think he collected the full ten thousand. Five thousand maybe. He was so excited that he ran away with the money.

Then from that day on, the ransom paper were signed Three Kings, K.K.K. So now that story came out in the paper, that they must be gangsters. Three Kings, so they didn't know that Myles was a lone guy that was working by himself and doing all the letter writing. Then when the funeral came for the boy to be buried in Nuuanu, he sent flowers to Jamieson saying K.K.K. again in that card. And in the meantime the papers and the community was giving ransom for the identification of the guys who were taking part. So lot of the guys that were suspicious were picked up and grilled. And they couldn't find one.

But one day, this fellow Myles came to Waialua on the train. He spent that money that he got from the ransom. At the train station, he came to Yamada's store, spent some money there. Went to Sea View Inn, spent some money there, too. Then he went back. Now they started to trace that money. And then one of the guys found out that, well, in his talk--he said he came to see his old classmate, Waialua Elementary School classmate. So they found out that he was looking for a certain guy.

END OF SIDE TWO. BEGINNING OF TAPE 1-33-1-76, SIDE ONE.

SN: I don't know, but somebody had a picture of the graduating class and picked Fukunaga out of the photo. The detective got the whole story on suspicion of murder and kidnapping Jamieson boy. While Myles was coming out from the Princess Theatre, the detectives surrounded him. And he was captured without struggle. He confess that he was the Three Kings. Lone eagle that was doing all the work. Then the public sentiment was such that they wanted him to be executed right away. You know, now, well, you can't do it; you will have to go to court after court until the final verdict. It didn't take too long to convict Myles. And then he was condemned. Hung.
PN: Do you think there was a lot of anti-Japanese sentiment at that time?

SN: Oh, yes. At that time, I think the feeling was very bad, because you know, the Japanese doing such a cruel thing as that. They didn't like Japanese too much.

PN: Do you think that had something to do with the reason that Japanese were striking during the '20s?

SN: No. What the boy didn't like was the oppression from the rich guys to the poor guys, you know. They're trying to oppress them, and... whatever they do, it's their power. They have the power. That, he didn't like. But, he asked for postponement of payments of rents for the parents. They didn't give him the postponements. Because they were having hard time trying to pay rental, they ask for postponement for maybe one month. I don't know if the word is right, postponement, but anyway, delay for a month. But they didn't give him, so he got so mad and tried to... well, retribution, I think, maybe, he was trying to get some money and then with that money trying to pay, he did all by himself, but the public sentiment was that Japanese community said the trial was too fast and they shouldn't have condemned him so fast, you know. In within about one or two weeks, he was hung.

PN: Why do you think there was so much Japanese resentment at that time?

SN: Well, you know, whatever Japanese do, they're persistent. They're hard working guys. And the other guys, molawa (lazy), so they don't work, so, naturally, Japanese would advance. Up and up. So, they didn't like the idea. But nothing they can do, because Japanese is such nationality that they're industrious, and then try to make a go no matter how hard a time they have, so, they didn't like the idea, I think.

PN: What was the Waialua-Haleiwa sentiment about...

SN: Well, see, now, coming back to that, since he came to Waialua, I think it was Star Bulletin or Advertiser, I don't know, but anyway, the community and then the Bishop Trust gave some money. Some ransom money, and then the ransom money ran to about so many thousand, I think. And this fellow, Yamada got some ransom money. Sato got two thousand, and the ticket agent in...Waialua got some money. I don't know how much, but anyway, at that time, we had such a club that's called Waialua Japanese Civic Club. So, the fellows who got that money donated that to the Waialua Japanese Civic Club, I was one of the officers of the Waialua Japanese Civic Club at that time. We had meetings after meetings whether to accept that money or not, but finally, we accepted it, because the person that gave the lead to that detectives, like Sato, Yamada, were given that ransom money. Two thousand, or, I don't know, two, thousands, anyway, altogether. And that was donated to the Waialua Civic Club. But we cannot use that money, because we don't know how to use it. So, when the War broke out, the Club became defunct.
Some money was donated to the Waialua Lion's Club. That money, you see. That money is today used as a scholarship fund. Whatever the interest or dividend that was derived from was all taken into the scholarship fund so we that we can give to students who are unable to go to University. Scholarship so that money cannot be touched, because it's invested. So, from what derived, we make use of it.

PN: So, all that time, since the murder to the War, the money wasn't used at all?

SN: They didn't use that. They didn't use that money, because, how can you use that money? You don't know how to use it. You cannot use for your own enjoyment or recreation or what not.

PN: I thought somebody said that they used that money to build this gym over here?

SN: No, no. This gym was... because I was involved in this one, too, because Mr. Frank Midkiff (Bishop Estate) came down. He was with the Bishop Estate at that time. And then, they donated the land there. Then they asked for donation from the Haleiwa community. We all donated. $25, $50, $100. That wasn't "blood money." They got donations from Bishop Estate.

PN: That's how they got the money to build the gym?

SN: Yeah, yeah. This was the first Community Association building in the whole state---territory at that time. This is the oldest.

PN: Most of the money came from donations?

SN: Right. Donations. And must have been Bishop Estate, I think. I don't know where the money came from.

PN: Who originated, I mean, that idea to build the gym.

SN: Oh, this fellow, Mr. Frank Midkiff. He's still alive yet.

PN: The brother? Going back to the Fukunaga case, how come these guys, Yamada and Sato got---oh, I guess the ticket agent, too because he...

SN: Gave information. You see why. Because he spent the money at their restaurants. It's an evidence, because they got the number, serial number. That was presented to the detectives.

PN: So who's Yamada and Sato?

SN: There's still a Sea View Inn. You know, that Sea View Inn caters to parties what do you call? Restaurant there, in by this beach. Well, the first owner was Ikuzo Sato, I. Sato, they call him. He was instrumental in getting the information. And that boy came to his restaurant to eat. That's the reason why they found out.
PN: And Yamada was who?

SN: There is still a restaurant right next to the Haleiwa Elementary School. There's still a restaurant there. So, all those places are very, you know...familiar to him and...what do you call the word? Nostalgic? You know, so he wanted to see for the last time, maybe. That's the reason why. If he didn't spend that money, nobody would have known. Because he spent that money with all the numbers on it, so they found out.

PN: So, they get the serial numbers?

SN: Yeah. Because they were looking for gangs. He was the lone eagle that was doing all that things, and still, in the public he used to write letters signed K.K.K. He was a gutsy guy. He used to be a gutsy guy, and brainy guy, too. He reads and he doesn't forget.

PN: What about the Japanese sentiment, like that? Were they ashamed that a Japanese had committed the crime?

SN: Oh, yes! Old folks especially. You know, old folks, you know, like they take so much pride in their name, and then, shame. In everything, they tell, oh, haji (shame) they call 'em, eh.

PN: Haji?

SN: Japanese call shame "haji."Anything, say, "Don't do that. Don't do this, because it will be the shame or the haji for the family." So, you were instructed not to do this, not to do that in Japanese family. But now, we don't do that, It's all Americanized.

(Laughter)

SN: Those days are gone. But, you know, if you have old folks, at least they are disciplined, because they'll listen to whatever parent will say. But lot of them, they don't, because, "Ah, your style, old style." But there are many things that you should listen to them, you know, because it won't hurt. If you listen to the old folks, they're glad, you know, because they think at least you are listening to them. And trying to obey. Well, they have good points to that, because they been through all the long years and sufferings and what not, so, it's time that they can give some advice to them, but too bad, they're all gone, now. Very few left. But, more of them are senile now, so, you know, cannot do anything. Now the niseis are getting senile, too.

(Laughter)

PN: I don't think so.

SN: No. You know, there's some niseis who are seventy, eighty, years old. I'm amazed....I know a fellow who's about 82, you see. Nisei, born in Hawaii. I said, "No. You not born in Hawaii. My gosh!" I tell 'em. Can't believe it, but still....So you know, I've noticed,
my family, well, my wife died about 16 years ago. During that time, I had my father, so naturally, my kids, you know, is still under the influence of my old man, so, they cannot be too free like some ordinary guys. Yeah, because he just give 'em the word and he'll tell 'em. So, at least they were lucky. But, in one way, they didn't get much freedom. But by having an old man, I think was a credit to them, I think. (Laughs)

PN: Was there any other cases like this Myles Fukunaga case?

SN: Down here?

PN: Yeah, down here.

SN: No, I don't remember the big cases like that down here. No, no. I don't know. Because that was the biggest event, anyway, down here. And lot of ransom money, too, eh.

PN: Was there any other crimes that you remember in this area?

SN: No. I don't know any crime that was committed around here at that time. But, anyway, the old days, you know, they didn't have too much recreation, so, used to get horse races, bicycle racing.

PN: Where?

SN: Well, on this road. Not too much traffic, so, they used to go right around here (Haleiwa) to race. And, well, the winner gets one tire, or one seat and what not, you know. And then, they used to have... I know that. I went one time to see the horse racing. Straightway. Mokuleia side. Two horse run together. And then, here, they're betting on that, so....

PN: Oh yeah?

SN: Yeah. I've seen that.

PN: When was it?

SN: Oh, that was about sixty years ago, I think. Yeah, I was small kid, yet. I remember. So, and then, during the July... Tencho setsu, they call 'em. You know, the emperor's holiday, the birthday, we used to have sumo all the time down here. Wrestling. You know, because, the issei used to wrestle quite a bit. They used to get prizes from all over and then they compete for that. And then, even that---for the start, they make the small boys wrestle, give them prizes.

PN: Where was this held?

SN: Oh, in the camp. Plantation camp. And then, plantation used to let them rest one day before during those days, you see. They allowed them to rest. To participate in those programs. Not any more, but those days.
PN: Emperor's birthday?

SN: Yeah. Yeah, and then, not too much recreation, so, naturally, down here near the water, so lots of them go fishing. Night torching. Throwing net there when lots of fish down here olden days. But not any more. You don't see too many. But those days, they used to go fishing. And...let's see, some of them used to go hunting, too. Not too many. Used to have lot of pheasants up here in the pineapple field. The pineapple field wasn't cultivated like now. The top part was all lantanas. But later, about 35, 30 years, they started to expand all that place. But prior to that, was all sisals and stones and lantanas in the olden days. But now, as I told you earlier the water is getting bigger and bigger now, because, you know, for cultivation, they make a big flume, furrows so the water can go in the gulch easily. Big water goes in, see.

PN: So, it doesn't soak in the ground?

SN: No, no. No soak. There's no conservation, now.

PN: You said after you graduated, you applied for a job at Bank of Hawaii?

SN: I filed in my application, was almost ready, by couldn't make it. My mother died.

PN: Your mother died, so you came to help your father?

SN: Yes. And I started my tailoring. I didn't know anything about tailoring. My father's pattern cutting was old style, so I had to take a correspondence school course from the Mitchell Tailoring Designing School. And it was rough, because I didn't know what I was drafting at first. But eventually, I got on it. I'm using the system now, I mastered that, so.

PN: Your father went to school in Honolulu to learn how to cut?

SN: Not school, but from the friends who had his tailor shop in Honolulu. And then he learned to cut the coat, pants, vest, and I think that was all. That's it. I think if you have that much, that's enough. More than enough.

PN: Did he belong to this Tailors' Association?

SN: No, not in Honolulu. Country, we didn't have. We used to have it, but. We used to have such a thing called Waialua Merchants' Association, but comprised mostly by the merchants in Waialua. Or the meeting we discussed mostly about credit. We have to give credit. So, naturally, when we get together once a month. We have to get together and exchange ideas. "How's this guy?" Say, "Oh, this is bad guy. Don't give credit too much, this guy." "How's this guy?" "This guy's good." And some, well, they don't want to divulge their, good customers, because they don't want to lose their customers.

(PN laughs)
SN: So naturally, they don't. But the bad ones are known to everybody. "Oh, don't give to this guy. If that guy should ever borrow from you, he'll never pay." Because those days, pay day was once a month. Everytime, when you go to their home, look at their envelope, zero. Nothing in there. So you cannot collect. No matter how many months you wait, you cannot. The only think you can do is garnishee them.

PN: That was harder to do? Garnishee?

SN: Well, garnishee, yeah. At least you get so many percent. But takes longer, but you can get it back.

PN: When was this Merchants' Association formed?

SN: Oh, long time ago. That was about 1928, about. But didn't last too long.

PN: Oh. And in Honolulu, they had their own...

SN: Oh, yeah. Honolulu, they used to have a Tailors' Association. Used to be thirty, forty tailors there. Now, hardly any. Because it's not a very lucrative profession. You don't make much money. Just keep on going. I wish I went to some other business. I think I would have made more money. It is too late now.

(PN laughs)

SN: But, at least, I sent all my kids to town, to school, so that much consolation. (laughs)

PN: That's good.

SN: Yeah. See, in order to give them educa---send all of them to town--some board 'em in town. Only my last girl commuted from here, because my wife was sick, so...she was going to University, taking teacher's college. She had to commute from here. Six in the morning, come back, six in the evening and after that, she looked after (my wife). But during the day, I had to take care of her. Well, she was just an invalid, so can't do anything.

PN: How many boys and girls?

SN: I have two boys and four girls, and, well, they're doing all well; they have their own homes and enough children so nothing to worry.

PN: Yeah. So you got lot of grandchildren?

SN: Yeah. You know, the older ones are University graduates.

PN: What is all these baseball trophies?
SN: That's my son's; he was in a junior league. He was a pitcher, and he used to be pretty good. So, everytime he played for different leagues, he would have valuable player or best pitcher trophy. When he first joined the rural county leagues he was the best pitcher and he also took the best rookie. He got two trophies from that country league. Then, after that, he joined the Red Sox. You remember the team? You don't, eh. Was run by a Mr. "Peanut" Kunihsa. Used to play in the stadium. Well, he was the owner and then my son was picked from that team. He was still going to high school. He was going to high school, and community college, and he was pitching for Red Sox. The other big trophy is my daughter's. You know, that picture on the top there? In 1951, she was selected as the Kapalapala Queen, Japanese Queen.

PN: That's your daughter?

SN: Yes, my daughter. Mrs. Fukunaga. At that Servco Pacific.

PN: Servco Pacific?

SN: She's married to that Motor Import Bus, you know, sells all the Toyotas.

PN: So, can we end it here, and then, maybe next time I can talk to you about your...

SN: Internment?

PN: ...tailoring and your internment. I want to know about your internment.

END OF INTERVIEW
PN: This is a second interview with Mr. Sam Nishimura on July 22nd, 1976 at his home in Haleiwa. Mr. Nishimura, going back to 1920 strike, you said that people were kicked off the plantation. Do you know who kicked these people off the plantation?

SN: Well, they were not kick out, but anyway, I think, the plantation gave an order that all the strikers have to leave their homes, so, naturally, they were not able to stay at their place or in the camps. So, everybody had to come out from the camps. And they were living at different places and the Young Men's Association had a building, so, naturally, they made that available for them, and they had mess cooking. The Young Men's Association had a two story building, so, naturally, some were living underneath and some was living upstairs. Some of them were living in the camp. I'm not too sure, because I was rather young yet, but, anyway....I used to see them congregate in a building near the beach. Near Taisho School and once in every week, well, they had someone address the congregation speaking in Japanese "to fight until the end." They had the mess cooking. They had to eat, so lot of these stores in Haleiwa and Waialua donated sugar, rice, and...somen and what not, so they were able to live with that for a while, I think. But, later, the Filipinos who were together striking, broke the strike and went back to the camps. So, naturally, the...plantations were getting a little stronger now because the laborers were coming back to work. And there were some Japanese who were in the higher class unions who were receiving good salaries and went back to their job. And these people were ostracized by the old strikers. Because, in other words, they were strike breakers. They are not supposed to break the strike. But after the strike, I've noticed that they were being ostracized by the whole community. They told them they were dogs and what not. Even the kids were affected by that, I think. I don't know how long the strike lasted, but lot of them didn't have enough money. Some were alright, some were not, depending on the family size. So, they had donations and I believe the union was helping them out. Other unions that were not on strike and other communities helped them to keep the strike going.

PN: Do you know who originated the strike?

SN: Oh, that I don't know.
PN: What about the 1924 strike?

SN: 1924 strike? Chee, I can't remember that. Did they have one at that....

PN: Yeah, that was when only Filipino workers went on strike.

SN: That, I don't know. They must have had it but I don't remember. Oh, I was still at school in Honolulu, so I don't remember that.

PN: Yeah, that's right. Could you tell me about the Depression?

SN: Well, the Depression...in 1929, the stock market fell, and everything just went down and down. We had one hui down here. And I invested about three hundred dollars worth. When the stock market crashed, our club was also affected. That thing just went broke. I notice some people around here playing the stock market, and lot of them went broke--but fortunately, nobody committed suicide down here. Not like in the Mainland. So many investments, thousands and thousands of dollars went out. I know a fellow who was playing quite a bit stock, but he didn't go broke. But, anyway, he was hard-up for sometime. During that time, I was running the store already, so, just to get orders, I had to go from camp to camp to take orders. But, you know, you cannot take orders that are expensive. You have to go and take orders for the denim pants or khaki pants and working pants and working shirts. Their income was very low. We had a very hard time in trying to make ends meet, but, somehow, we survived the Depression. I had about two girls working at my place. And I used to pay them about $25 a month. So, wasn't too easy, because, you know, you have to pay them, and you have to make a living. And so, at that time, the pay was cheap. Still, I had to pay that to keep the girls working. I used to go from camps like Waimea, Opaekua, Helemano, Mokuleia. All the places was pretty far away, but I had to go around, to take orders. Otherwise, the girls that I had had no job.

PN: Could you tell me little bit more about this hui you had? What did you invest in?

SN: Oh, yeah. Well, we invested in stock because the market was very good. The buyer was a haole who was working for a company in Honolulu. He was quite capable of buying and selling stocks at that time. He was one of the wholesalers that used to come to Haleiwa and Waialua. And the hui started by the employees of Waialua Plantation. And one of my friends asked me if I wanted to join. One share was one hundred dollars. And we just let the buyer to buy and sell. It was going alright until the Depression. We didn't go broke. But when we finally dissolved that club, one share was worth about twelve dollars. (Laughs) So, we took a big beating in that.

PN: What was the money invested in?

SN: Oh, just to make money.

PN: No, in what kind of companies was it...
SN: Well, no, not companies. The fellow used to play the stock market.
You know, you just play the stock market. Buying and selling. So
investors were not only here but there were members from Maui, Kauai,
all over the place.

PN: He came around to solicit...

SN: I didn't buy from him, but one of the friends who was in that club
bought for me. He must have been a German fellow, I think. But,
very smart in buying. But at that time, no matter how smart you were,
just went broke, that's all to it.

PN: What kind of people were in the hui?

SN: Oh, a lot of Japanese and other nationalities. At 1929, the stock
market was so high that some of them, maybe, drew the savings and
bought shares by thousands of dollars. Two thousands. Imagine, you
get two thousand dollars and you get out about how much? About
$125. That's all.

PN: Wasn't a hundred dollars a share a lot of money at that time?

SN: Oh, yes! Those days, hundred dollar is pretty big money, because,
still, I think, they were paying about dollar a day, yet, to
laborers. So, you can imagine.

PN: How did you get that three hundred dollars?

SN: Well, three hundred dollars...I had a savings, so I just took
out from my saving and gave it to my friend to invest. 'Course, it's
not easy money to get at that time. Money was in dollar a day, so,
you know, you work 25 days, $25. That's all.

PN: Going back, you said that you went out and took orders.

SN: Yeah.

PN: How did you travel from camp to camp?

SN: Well, from camp....I used to have a Model T Ford. Used to go around
with that from camp to camp. And in 1931, well, I had a Chevrolet.
So I went around with that. Had to go from camp to camp with a car.
That's take order with samples. And after you finish the order, you
have to deliver that. At that time, the denim pants cost only two
dollars. You can imagine how cheap. So, you won't get your expenses
if you don't take too much orders. And then, we go down there. We
cannot collect all the money. We have to give them credit, so,
extime, when you go, collect that. So...it wasn't very easy.
Really rough. And I had how many kid at that time? About three,
I think. Yeah, those days gone now, but, really, all the merchants
down here, same situation. Like the...they had to go from camp to camp
take orders, deliver the goods and give them credit. And then....
for next payday, they go up to the camp to take order and then later
deliver them there. So, some of the big stores here had a credit of
a thousand dollars a person. I don't know how they collected all that money. The merchants expected to collect the money from cane contract by payday. The cane contract for one crop took year and a half or two years. When they had a big payday, they use to reimburse whatever they had. But wasn't enough. For the contract pay, they collected about three hundred fifty dollars, so two hundred fifty. It was not enough to pay for all their debts, so their debts are always going up and up. I've noticed some of the stores down here gave as much as thousand dollars credit.

PN: For one customer?

SN: For one customer. That was Fujioka Store. Still running yet. Their father used to run that. I don't know if he collected all the credit; that's what I heard.

PN: How did people keep track of who owed money?

SN: What do you mean?

PN: If you ran up a credit on one person, you wrote it down in a book or something?

SN: Oh, yeah, they had a bookkeeper, so they had one style of bookkeeping for every account.

PN: Did you have a bookkeeper?

SN: No, no. Kept my own. Well, like my case, not like the groceries. You don't give that much credit. You won't be able to stand, otherwise. You have to buy the materials and then, you have to pay for it, but I don't know how they managed to do it, but the groceries stores, lot of them gave them credit. And then just pay whenever they were able to pay. But, it's not easy, so lot of them had that problem. I told you the other time, when we had a Waialua Merchant's Association, we used to gather once a month and then talked about the fellow who had a lot of credit and was not able to pay. So, we just get together and "How's this fellow?" Supposing Domingo. And he say, "He has an account. He's not a good payer." And the other guy say, "We better cut out that kind guy. We better not give him any more credit, because he won't be able to pay for it." So, that's the reason we had our association. To find out to whom we are giving credit that were no good. Guys who had credit who were not able to pay, they'll buy lot of things. They don't care, because their idea is not to pay. Just buy, buy, buy. And when it come big payday--you know when they had big contract--not enough to pay for the whole thing. Because all the merchants are waiting at the plantation door. And when he got his pay, everybody there is trying to collect, but nothing there, sometime. All empty.

PN: How they got their food if they couldn't pay the credit?

SN: Well, that's what I mean. They say they have a contract for two years. "And when the contract is over, I'll pay you." Well, that assumption the store lends to them (many grocery stores). But if the
crop is good, it's alright. But if the crop is bad, too bad. You won't be able to get anything.

PN: What kind of stores belonged to this Merchant's Association?

SN: Well, at that time, grocery stores, the dry good stores. Practically all of them in Haleiwa, Waialua.

PN: And how much did that number?

SN: Oh, good fifteen, twenty at that time. Lot of stores, you know; there were many grocery stores and dry good stores. So maybe one fellow might buy from four stores. Get credit from all these stores, because, well, that kind of fellow is a good buyer. They don't pay. He is a good buyer. So that he's a good customer. When you start to give it to them, they don't pay, so you won't be able to collect and you have a debt account. (Laughs) That happens. Not now, because we don't give credit too much. Only to good customers. Those days, ten dollars takes you about, oh, six months before you even finish pay because they not earning too much. They give you two dollars, one dollar. Once a month payday and when you look at their envelope, hardly anything. What are you going to do? You cannot collect. If it's some kind of appliances, not so bad, but like ours, you wear, you cannot bring back pants that been used.

PN: What happened to the Merchant's Association?

SN: Just gradually went defunct. That's all to it.

PN: How come?

SN: No interest. Not too much interest afterwards.

PN: So the main reason was to just check out credit ratings on each customer?

SN: Yeah.

PN: Did you say that there was a tailor association here also?

SN: No. Merchant Association, that took care of the whole thing. No tailor's association.

PN: Going back to the Depression again, do you remember paper money with a stamp on it? Hawaii stamp or something like that?

SN: Well, that stamp money was used during the War.

PN: During the War? Not during the De...

SN: No, no. They call it moratorium at that time. Bank was all close. Not close, but, they didn't....what was that anyway? They issued their paper money, you know. I don't remember what kind, but it was a flimsy kind of money, anyway. Printed by the government, but it wasn't a good money at all.

PN: Do you know why they put this stamp on it?
SN: Well, moratorium was world wide—not world wide. The order came from
the United States. It's not local; it's from United States and
President Roosevelt made the moratorium on account of Depression
and what not, I think.

PN: What were you doing on December 7th?

SN: Well, December 7th...let's see. I was eating about 6:30, breakfast.
I'm a fast eater, so naturally, I came out early to the store.
And hence, about 7 o'clock, the National Guard was station right in
front of my place. And he was looking up. He was looking at the
sky. And I said, "What happened?" You see, he was all excited.
I told him, "What happened?" He said, "Oh, this is a real McCoy."
"What do you mean, real McCoy?" "Look at the top," he say. When
I look at the top, there was a Japanese plane with that big, round
red ball flying about our head. "Eh, that's a Japanese plane."
"Yeah." Then, he shoot at that plane. And when he shot at the plane,
I notice the pilot retaliate by pressing his trigger for the machine
gun and I could hear that. Was way down.

PN: Plane shot back.

SN: Shot not at him. Because right under, you cannot shoot. So, some
of the buildings on the west side was strafed but no damage.

PN: Where's the west side?

SN: You know, that side. That side is west. So, he was going toward
that way, toward Kahuku side. So, he shot way down. Naturally,
he cannot shoot underneath. He had to shoot sideways, so...this
house near Haleiwa Shingo Mission, just beyond that, some doors were
knicked with that bullet.

PN: What was the National Guard doing?

SN: Well, the National Guard were alerted all time should anything happen,
so on the bridge on this side (Twin Bridge) and the over there bridge--
two side—they had guard. Constantly watching. And in the middle
of that bridge, they used to have a small camp there. For the
National Guard to rest.

PN: How long this camp had been here, National Guard camp?

SN: Well, I can't remember. But anyway, not too long though. Maybe about
one month prior to the War, I think.

PN: What was your reaction to seeing Japanese planes?

SN: You see, I can't believe it. I say, can't believe that Japanese....
you know, that plane was so big and clumsy looking. How can that
thing fly? I didn't think they flew from that plane, from the carriers.
Big stuff, anyway. Not small plane. It was a big plane. And flimsy
looking stuff. But still, they were able to fly. I don't know.
And then, at that time, you know, at Kawai'ala, they used to have an
airstrip there. One plane was just coming up and up and up. And before
I know, I think, these two planes were shooting at each other by
Koolau mountain. I seen that. But my neighbor, he used to deliver
ice those days in Wahiawa. But when he came opposite Wheeler Field,
he noticed all the planes were in flames, you see. So, he said,
"Eh, what are they doing anyway? They burning all the planes."
He didn't know it was war, see. So, he stood up on his ice truck.
He was watching what was happening. Can see that plane coming down
and strafing the American airplane. He wasn't afraid, but when they
say, "Eh, this is war!" he started to come back. He said he didn't
want to get hurt.

PN: What was the other people in Waialua and Haleiwa doing at the same
time?

SN: Oh, same thing. They didn't know it was war. We had radio, so we
put on the radio. And then, here on KGMB, well, this fellow Murata
was saying this is a war between Japan and America, so, you better
not go out from the house. We were caution not to get out from the
house. Anything can happen. Prior to that time, we were notified
by the government to have a bomb shelter---what do you call...you
know, we dug a shelter. Bomb shelter, yeah. We dug a bomb shelter.
Down here, we cannot, because my place is about only four feet above
sea level. So if I should dig four feet, it's water. So, we had to
borrow a place, our neighbor's higher place, and we dug a shelter
there. So, we had to evacuate down the other side if we had to.

PN: How big was this bomb shelter?

SN: Well...we dug about six feet, and...good about four feet. Just
to stay in there. Not to live, so, wasn't too big.

PN: Just to hold your family?

SN: Yeah.

PN: What was your father's reaction to the Japanese attack?

SN: Well, he was reading the paper and I think, his reaction was that
it was coming. He was pointing toward the---you know, the Japanese
papers saying so much about America stopping this, and the oil,
and then, passenger liner and what not, so I think, he say, it
must have been coming.

PN: Was he pro-Japanese or pro-American?

SN: Well, he didn't say much, anyway. We didn't discuss about it too
much at home, so...naturally, being from Japan, he must have been
pro-Japanese regardless what I might say. Because he came as youngster
from Japan, but still...been here a long time, but maybe, he's
Japanese, so, I think he must have been...all the isseis must have been
all pro-Japanese. You cannot help it. Because regardless of what you
say, that's their own country. But like, niseis who have never been to
Japan, well, that's something different again. You might have been instilled by your father that Japan and this and that. But, still then, you are born as an American of Japanese ancestry. But I notice a lot of them resented the fact that lot of these National Guards--niseis, especially--were kicked out from the Army and Reserve. Niseis. They say it was not fair. You know, they trying to do their best for the country, and why should they take only the Japanese out. Why don't they take the other nationality out, too? Like Germans and Italians, but they didn't. So that's the reaction they had, but well, when the...War broke out. And about four month later, I was interned, so I wasn't involved in getting the volunteers for the 442nd because I didn't know anything about it. I just read that in the camp, so....but, prior to that....I don't know. Forgot, anyway. (Laughs)

PN: Can ask you about your father little bit? Why did he come to Hawaii?

SN: Well, you know, my grandfather died when he was 42 years old of a stroke. So naturally, he being the only son, and his grandfather was a drinker. He sold lot of the lands. So he wanted to buy back all the lands that my father's grandfather sold and put into as collateral. He tried to get the land back. So he told his mother that he was going to Hawaii for three years and try save enough money to buy back the land that father put in as a collateral for borrowing money.

PN: Oh, your father's grandfather?

SN: Right, right. My father's grandfather. Not mine, you see, his grandfather. Well, so he came to Hawaii at the age of 21, I think, but I don't know. His mother must have been a very strong lady to let go her only son go many thousand miles away. So he came. And the first thing he did was--you know, those days, they had tanomoshi. You remember tanomoshi? Do you know tanomoshi? Yeah. Well, they had about 15 members. And every month, everybody chip in five dollars. So in other word, if you have ten members, you have fifty dollars. And they draw that money according to lottery or by pulling lucky numbers. And fellow who got lucky, well, got that money first. And without paying an interest. So, what he did was--he was lucky enough after joining the tanomoshi, he got that money. So he sent back that $45 to Japan right away. Now in Japan, repercussion from that money he sent, "There must be lot of money in Hawaii." Because my father, only one or two months after coming to Hawaii and sending $45 from Hawaii to Japan. (Chuckles) So lot of them in that village in that prefecture came to Hawaii. They thought lot of money was in Hawaii, but, no. They didn't realize they had a lotter-oy tanomoshi, and from that, he sent. So if it had ten members, he was the first or second one. Eight months, he was to reimburse all that money, you see. Until all is finished. So he sent that money. And with that money, the mother bought back some of the land. The farming land. That's the reason why he came to Hawaii.

PN: He wanted to go back to Japan eventually?
SN: Well, eventually, he wanted, because he came as three years contract labor to Hawaii. But after so many years, well, you get stuck already. You don't want to go back. Want to only visit. He went back in 1921, but only for about one month. And he came back again. Then he went in 1940 again after so many years. By that time, his mother died. No, oh, she wasn't dead. She died during the War. She lived till about 87, I think. And my father lived till 92. So in spite of coming as an immigrant boy, he lived 93 years. That's a long time to live. Because from what he says, life wasn't easy at that time when he came as an immigrant. You had to eat only flour. You know, they buy a sack of flour. From that, they make dango or cake. Take that to work. Come back again. Eat the same thing. They had to save money. He wanted to go back. Oh, their intention at first was going back to Japan and save some money. So if they had about three hundred dollars, that was big money for them. Lot of them went back. They didn't come back no more. To save the three hundred dollars---you know, you getting about twelve dollars and a half one month. With that you got to eat, save and send money to Japan. So it wasn't very easy for him. That's what he used to tell me, anyway.

PN: Could you tell me about the trucks that they were sending back to...

SN: Oh yeah. Well, you know in nineteen---I don't remember the years. But anyway, it was prior to the War. This fellow, Mr. K. Tanaka, was the fellow used to meddle in getting the public in Haleiwa, Kawaiola interested in sending seven trucks to the Japanese Red Cross. Not the Army, you know. He wanted to send them to the Red Cross. So the public sentiment was that if you are going to send them to the Red Cross, I think it might be alright. So he went around the camps and got the leaders for Kawaiola and Haleiwa. In other words who took care of the donations. So coming to Haleiwa, there were two here. My father was one, I think. And then went to Kamaloa. The place got one, so we had seven of them. Now every month, maybe, five dollars. You subscribe, maybe, $25 installment. You pay $25 in five months. So that's what they did. And then, I don't know how much the truck cost. Maybe five, six hundred dollars, one truck. So he had enough deposit to borrow the first money. So one evening, we used to open those days in the evening to about 8 o'clock. Mr. Tanaka came to the shop and he said he wanted me to sign the bank note. "What bank note?" I said, "I don't know anything about a note." He say, "No, we're going to borrow money." But, "I think I'm not the one that should sign that, because I'm a nisei and those involved in sending a truck to Japan are all issei." I refused at first. But he convinced me, saying that, well, it's not wartime now. They sent a truck. I didn't think anything was wrong. I was afraid if anything complex should happen...I'd be involved, but he said my father was retired already from business, so he didn't have an account at First National Bank. At that time, we used to call it Bishop National Bank, Bishop Bank. So I signed that paper. And I didn't know who had endorsed that note. I just signed the note and let it go.

In October of 1941, we were questioned by Mr. Midkiff of Waialua
Plantation. And I went in as an interpreter for Mr. Tanaka to the plantation office. And he ask question like, "Do you know where the truck that you have sent is being used for?" He said he sent that to the Red Cross, but beyond that, he doesn't know. He doesn't know what department is using that. He was asked that question. That's what he answered. They were investigating already at that time, because I went to the immigration station. I told them I must have helped them sign that note, but it's been sent to the Red Cross. Red Cross is for all the people, not for the Army. The Army, Navy fellows told me that--"Do you know what in Japan the Red Cross is connected with?" I say, "I don't know, because I have never been to Japan. I don't know what is what."

PN: What they said the Red Cross was connected with?

SN: The Army and Navy. So in other words, we sent that truck for the War. That's what they didn't like, I think. But I didn't know anything about it. I told them, "Red Cross, like in American Red Cross, you helping all the people. And at the same time, well, if there's any help needed, like here, well, the Red Cross is involved in the Army and Navy, too. Same thing as down here, so I don't think anything wrong with it." But he said, "You know that that being used by the Army and Navy in Japan?" I say, "I don't know, because I didn't go to Japan. I don't know what happened down there."

PN: This is Mr. Midkiff questioning you? Who questioned you?

SN: No, no. The one I'm just saying, questioned by FBI. When I went to hearing in Honolulu. They ask me to come there. Came to pick me up. You know, the ruler that I showed you, that has all the record. Maybe I should bring that here.

PN: Okay.

(SN goes to get ruler.)

PN: Do you know why Mr. Midkiff questioned you first?

SN: I really don't know. From what I know, he was a good friend of General Short. He was the commander of the Army in Hawaii. Probably, he must have asked him, I don't know.

PN: And how did they pick you up and take you to Mr. Midkiff? Was there police?

SN: No, no. Because Mr. Tanaka...they call me, say they want me and Tanaka to go to the office. So probably, they knew already that I have signed that paper and they got all evidence, so they were questioning me. Because they knew they had all the evidence that I have signed the note with some other group, fellows. So I was involved already.

PN: The paper you signed was for....
SN: For borrowing money from the bank to purchase the trucks.

PN: And most of the money they got was from Japanese?

SN: All. All from Japanese.

PN: Issei or nisei?

SN: Isseis, mostly isseis.

PN: And the Japanese population at that time was what? How big?

SN: Well, had quite a bit of Japanese. I don't know how many Japanese people are living here, but quite a bit and at all different camps. So that was enough to support that. Before, they segregate into one place, they used to have camps in Kawaiola. So many hundred people there, so you can imagine. If been ten percent, maybe, forty, fifty, sixty. Used to have Opaicula pineapple camps. Down here used to have Takeyama Camp. Way up. Down here Halemano. All over used to have camps, but now, they segregate (consolidate) into one place. That time, well, that's the reason why the stores was pretty good. Because they have population all over the camps. Down here was their main place where they can buy things. But now, you don't have no camps in this Waialua Plantation. It's just like pineapple. One segregate (consolidate) to one place.

Going back to the War, I was investigated April 11, 1942. Well, in the morning, about 10, 11 o'clock, I think, fellow came to my shop and presented his credentials. "I'm from FBI." Say, "I want to speak to Samuel Nishimura." Showed me the paper. I said, "I'm Samuel Nishimura." He said, "I want you to open your safe." So I opened the safe and they found my Red Cross badge. Japanese Red Cross badge. Mine, my father's, my wife's. I didn't buy that. My father-in-law who is dead now bought that for me. At that time, it cost about twelve dollars, I think. Twelve to ten dollars, I don't know. Wasn't too expensive. At any rate, he took that one. I didn't have anything in that safe, so... took that and some other papers, I think. Very insignificant, anyway. They took it. Say, "You better come along." So I say, "Going to be long?" He said, "No, I don't think so." So we went to the Dillingham Building where the FBI was situated. And there were lot of people still waiting there, but they were being questioned at that time by them. They question me. The first thing was, "Do you remember borrowing money from the bank?" "I don't remember borrowing money from the bank." Because actually, I didn't borrow. I signed the paper. I didn't go to the bank to get that money. Mr. Tanaka did all that transactions. So I told them I didn't borrow. I said, "I don't remember." "But do you know that you signed a paper?" I said, "Yes, I do. But probably I borrowed that for my business." 'Cause I wasn't sure. But anyway, I was telling a lie at that time because I didn't have to borrow money at that time. So I said, (Chuckles) "Probably I borrowed." "But do you know for what purpose?" I said, "I don't know." Just kept saying, "I don't know anything about it." So they released me at that time. So I came back. That was on Saturday, yeah.
So on Monday, I went to the bank right away and asked them, "What did I do? Did I sign a note? I was endorser." Said, "No, you are the maker of the note." Oh! That's different again. So they came to get me on April 15, 1942.

SN: Well, on April 15, a fellow from the FBI came and said they would like to further investigate me, so they say I should come along. And I ask him, "How long you going to...." He said, "Oh, couple days." So I wasn't prepared. I didn't bring anything. But when they took me to immigration station, I was put in the immigration station. And when I went there, there were thirty, forty people in there already. And they told me, "Did you bring anything for sleeping?" I say, 'No. But they told me only about one, two days, you see." "No, I think you going to be detained here. So you might as well write a letter home." And I wrote letter to my wife saying that I would like to have my pajamas and my living clothes and what not. So it reached quite fast. My brother-in-law brought all the suitcase to the immigration station. About a week later, I had a hearing at the immigration station. At that immigration station, their court was composed of Army, Navy, and civilians. They were the judges there, and they were there for the hearing. And for witnesses, I had Mr. John Midkiff, the manager of Waialua Plantation, and Mr. Andrew Anderson, manager of the Waialua Bank of Hawaii. They came in as my character witness, because I knew them prior to the War quite well. They were good enough to come to my hearing and testify for my case.

Well, they ask the same question about the money. That was the most important point, I suppose. And other things were not asked too much. So at that time, I told him, straight to him, "I borrowed that money, but as far as transactions, I don't know, because Mr. Tanaka took care of everything. And that was to be used by the Red Cross. But beyond that, "I said, "I don't know. I told the fact, because when I came back, I knew that I borrowed the money. I had to tell the truth, so I gave the whole truth. And they ask me questions about, "If the Japanese should land here, what would your reaction be?" 'Well, naturally, being American citizen, never been to Japan, whatever thing I can do for U.S., I'll do it. But beyond that, I cannot say it.'"

And I waited about couple of days. And on April 26, I was taken with about six other detainees there to Sand Island on a boat. And at Sand Island, there was a guard there. And the commander who was in charge of the internment camp. At that time, they used to call it detention camp, not internment camp. They used to call it Sand Island Detention Camp, and we were physically check up and they examine if we had any weapons to be used and what not. So then we went into the camp. Now, when I went to the camp, it was 12 o'clock, so everybody was having lunch there. "My gosh, this must be all fishermen," because they look all black. They wore only shorts, no undershirt. They just roam around in that fashion, so (Chuckles) they all black already. So they been in there a couple of months. So I thought they were all fishermen. But no, come to find out,
there were lot of "big shots" in there. And then, as soon as we got into the camp...yes?

PN: I can ask you where was this immigration station?

SN: Right by Pier 2. Same place. It hasn't changed yet.

PN: Could you tell me a little about what did Mr. Midkiff and Mr. Anderson had to say?

SN: Well, they were asking him, "How do you know him?" "Well, we live in the same place." Comes to my shop quite often. I go to Mr. Midkiff's office quite often. And I used to go to his home whenever the high priest from Japan used to come from Jōdō Mission. I used to go as an interpreter and help them. That's how he knew me. The merchants were called by the plantation quite often to attend their dinner meetings. We were invited there, and so we got to know him. They were asking him what kind of man he is. And this and that. Well, they gave a good account of me, anyway. Both of them. How...

PN: How did you know Mr. Anderson?

SN: Well, met Anderson prior to the War. We used to go the different places where the brushes were thick. We used to go down there and cut all the brushes. They were all getting ready for that, I think. But anyway, we used to go down cut and then, after the War started--December--I was still here yet, so we used to go to different places, cut kiawes and what not. As far as the bank was concerning, he's a manager Bank of Hawaii. So I didn't do business with him. But anyway, I knew him. And through politics, too. Yeah, he was a Republican. At that time, I used to fool around with Republican side. But today, I'm neutral.

PN: I wanted to ask, too, about what was your father's reaction to you being investigated and interned.

SN: Shōganai. Can't help it. It's one of those things. Can't do anything.

PN: Did he know that he was the one who was going out getting the money and then you just so happened to sign the paper?

SN: He didn't say. I didn't ask those questions. He didn't say anything.

PN: What about your wife and children?

SN: Well, they were shocked. They were really shock that I was being interned...and my kids were not at home. Some of them went to the movies, and what not. When I came back, well, not there. Didn't meet them, so I miss all of them. Nobody saw me going with them. But my youngest daughter at that time was two and a half years old, so I used to tell my wife, "Whenever they ask me where I went,
I went to the mountain to hunt for pig. You tell them that."
So they believe that I was in the mountain.

PN: Why did you tell them that?

SN: No, no. Well, otherwise, they think I'm in the calaboose.

PN: (Chuckles) In jail, you mean?

SN: Yeah, in jail. I didn't want them to let them know I was in there. Well, he's in detention camp, so it's much better than jail, more freedoms. But even at that, the word of been interned is something very ugly.

PN: Can you describe what the Sand Island detention camp look like?

SN: Well, the camp was all barb-wired. I don't know how big it was. Pretty big compound. And had about, let's see. Four...buildings there. Dormitories, just like. Up and down. You can live up and down. And there were a good hundred fifty at that time when I was in there. The place was run just like an army. They had a captain and sergeant like fellow for all different barracks. And they used to take care of all of our everyday needs. They used to go to the office. And whatever request we put to them, they went to get the request from the office.

PN: What kind of request?

SN: Well, you want to borrow this and you want to do that and all kind. Because at that time, nothing was there in our barracks. Even for shaving, you had to go and borrow through the office. They give you the razor blades, otherwise, you cannot shave. Because nothing in there. When you want to write a letter, no papers, no pencil. That has to be borrowed from the office. All kind of needs. And then, the family sent some money through the mail; it's censored, so you cannot get money, anyway. Because all our mail was censored. So whenever if there is a money in there, well, they've been confiscated and then, put in your account. You had your own accounts.

PN: There was a store to purchase things?

SN: Well, at first, we didn't have, but...I don't know when was that, but maybe, about July, they started to have a PX in Sand Island, where I was working. We had barbershop, tailor shop, PX. That three lined up in one place. And my place, tailor shop, was there to take care of the repairs for the internees. And I used to have sometimes Italians and German internees come to my shop for repairs. Like shortening their pajamas sleeves. And sometime, well, they used to bring their coat sleeve to be shorten. Pants to be shorten. And I didn't make any new things. 'Cause to start with, there were no rulers. Nothing there to...even the square which we use for drafting pattern. Nothing there, so couldn't do anything.

PN: You couldn't order it?
SN: No, there were not. Because we're not there to make anything new. So, the only thing we had was the tape measure. From that, we have to make everything what we want. So I didn't have shorts, so I found some sheets there, so I made a shorts for myself right away. Short pants anyway. But no square, no nothing. But sometime, the guards would ask me, "If you make anything." 'No, I'm not here to make anything new. I'm here to do the repair work." So I didn't do anything that...to making any new things. Making uniform and what not. They asked me, but I just didn't do it.

PN: They assigned you to the tailor shop to work there?

SN: No. When I came in, I worked couple days as KP, kitchen police. Washing dishes, taking care of the tables and what not. But after the tailor, who was an Italian, left, there was no professional tailor in there, so I was the only professional tailor at that time. So I was taken in as the tailor. But my boss at that time was Reverend Shiritori. He is now a resident reverend of Haleiwa Jodo Mission. He's still here yet. So, until he was sent to the Mainland, he was my boss and I was his assistant. After he left, I was in charge until I came out from the internment camp. I took care of the Sand Island detention camp. And then Honouliuli Internment Camp. Sand Island was called a detention camp. When we moved to Honouliuli, well, that was Honouliuli Internment Camp. That was the difference.

PN: How many German and Italian prisoners?

SN: Not too many, though. But there were not too many. I don't know how many. Maybe about altogether twenty Italian and Germans combined together.

PN: What was the total population for the whole camp?

SN: Oh, for our side? Over hundred fifty, I think.

PN: What do you mean when you say "your side"?

SN: Our side is all Japanese. We are segregated into Japanese and Italian, Germans in one compound. So whenever they want to come to tailor shop, they have to ask the guard they want to go to the tailor shop. Sometimes, they ask me to make pajamas for them, the pants. They used to bring sheets, so I used to make pants for them. So in return, they used to bring some cookies for me. (Laughs) Yeah.

I was in there April, and in about middle or latter part of May, most of the first generations were sent to the Mainland. So we had only about fifty left over at our camp in Sand Island. Most of them were sent to the Mainland internment. And so, with a small group there, gradually, people started to come in again, and until March 3rd. Well, prior to that---the story go back.
After the third contingent in May, on June 6, we had our first family meeting. We were allowed to meet with our family. And, you know, this was, too, right after the third contingent that went to the Mainland, they told us that next month we are able to meet your wives or father or mother. So we sent our notices. And then, June 6th, yeah, they came to our camp...on a boat from Pier --- not Pier 2, but from...you know that....they used to have a Hawaii Hochi? Well, now it is---there's a big parking lot, eh. City and County. Right by the police station, isn't there a.....from there, they rode on that boat and came to the Sand Island. From there, had to walk about half mile to come to our compound. And here we met for the first time. And well, lasted about one hour, our meeting. And thereafter, twice a month, we had meetings.

PN: Did you have to talk behind screens?

SN: No, no, no. There were guards there. Your wife would sit in the front and you stay opposite way. They didn't care where you sat. They were not very fussy about it, but only latter part of the meetings, I've noticed that they were getting very strict. The rule was that you must speak in English---not in Japanese. So, all these isseis who cannot speak English, well, cannot just converse with their wife. 'Course, what we did was niseis used to group in one place and told them the guard is away now. You speak in Japanese and we speak in English, so they won't notice. That's what we used to do. We used to let them talk. Otherwise, all the time wasted, coming there to see their husband. Yeah, for a time, it was rough, but that was eliminated afterwards.

PN: Why was that done?

SN: When the American loses a big battle and the going is rough that is when they gave all the internees a rough time, too. That's what we think, but I don't know.

PN: You didn't get any news about the War?

SN: No, we were not able to read papers for the first seven months. One of the internees went outside to work and then he brought back a old paper. Newspaper. We found out later that after so many weeks, that the Midway battle was going on at the time we were having a meeting. That was June 5th or 6th, you know. They were having Midway battle. We didn't know. And then, at that time, according to the Japanese paper, they said they won, but, you know, come to find out, American was very superior in that battle. What happened was that the American people were able to decode the Japanese secret code. So, in other words, they knew first hand what was happening. That's what I heard after the War was over. They just decoded the whole thing. Even prior to the War, you look in the movie, they have a decoding machine, and whatever they're sending, they know what's going on in Japan, because they have a machine whereby they can break all their mission codes. So that's what happen. When they say, "Tora, tora, tora!" they knew what was happening.
No, that was the first one, but the Midway one, they knew, yeah. So even when the Admiral Yamamoto was killed, ambushed, they were just waiting for him. Couldn't do anything. He was just shot down.

PN: Were there any women interned at Sand Island?

SN: Yeah, there were some educators and ladies connected with the Goddess Temple. What do you call that Konkōkyō and some other.... not Shintoism or followers of Shinto. In other words, Shinto.

PN: How many women?

SN: Not too many. I think all in all, about ten. That's all about.

PN: They were in what part of the compound?

SN: Well, they had their own compound near the Italians and the Germans.

PN: What were the Italian-Germans' occupation?

SN: Nothing.

PN: Why were they picked up?

SN: They were enemy alien, anyway.

PN: Were they on a ship, or....

SN: No, no. They are all local persons. All big shots.

PN: They're in big business?

SN: Von Hamm Young and some other big stores. Von Hamm is definitely German.

(SN has been coughing frequently throughout this and a previous interview.)

SN: My goodness. Can't get rid of my cough. Much better than the other time, though.

PN: Yeah.

SN: I know a fellow who used to come to my shop. I used to deal with him. He was a German. He's a big shot anyway.

PN: What were the general feelings of the people who were interned?

SN: Well....since they were not going to be released, they must keep themselves healthy. And then try to withstand their hardship, that's all to it. Even they were interned, might as well make the best of it. Because they were not going to be released.

PN: You had a job to do to occupy your time?

SN: Yeah.
PN: What did other people do?

SN: Well, most of them didn't have jobs, so naturally, they used to play chess, read, play go. And fellow who didn't have anything to do were just miserable.

PN: They were only allowed to read certain type of books?

SN: Well, they didn't have enough books, so a lot of them were just telling stories. Foolish stories and what not. All kinds. And come evening, well, Japanese, they get engekai (entertainment). You know that---what do you call? The show, anyway. All people get together to perform. You don't know....

PN: Could you explain?

SN: You know, like in Japanese, you go to the party, some of them sing and some of them entertain themselves. In other words, they used to have a show in my barracks, it was all blackout, so they used to get a phrase. And they call on certain guy to sing. Being in a dark place, they won't be able to see your face, so naturally, they're not afraid to sing. They sing. And then, if he's through, and then the next guy, he'll call the next guy to sing again. See, that's how we used to entertain ourselves.

PN: What kind of songs? Japanese songs?

SN: Japanese songs. Naturally, Japanese songs. So you know, if it's day time, can see your face. But being in the dark, they won't be able to see your face, so you can just sing. It's alright. No harm.

PN: (Laughs) Was there good entertainment?

SN: Oh, yeah. I used to sing myself, too. In the dark, so little mistake, never mind.

PN: What kind of songs?

SN: Oh, old Japanese songs. And popular songs. Young guys were singing lot of popular songs. Like us, we don't know.

PN: The guards would allow that to go on?

SN: Oh yeah. Get nothing to do when we in the barracks. They all on the outside.

PN: The religious people, were they allowed to practice their religion?

SN: Well, Sundays, I notice some of them used to go to church. I don't know where, but. Christian, Buddhist. While I was there, I never did even go to one service, so I don't know what happened.

PN: Was there Buddhist ceremonies or Shinto ceremonies?

SN: No, no, no.
PN: They weren't allowed?

SN: I don't know. Nothing was there. Only thing I've noticed they were reading this Seicho no Ie's teachings. Still, the church is in ....Metcalf Street in Honolulu....

PN: What is...

SN: Seicho no Ie. You never heard of that? That's belief in God. It says that you are God yourself. Whatever you do, you are responsible for your own health. Is that kind of teaching, so they used to like that Seicho no Ie. And they call it "Warewa kamino konari." In other words, you are descendant of the God. See, that's the kind of teaching.

PN: So you only heard about that and Christian ceremony?

SN: Once in a while, I think, they had. They used to have a minister who come on weekdays. English minister come to give a lecture---in Japanese. Haole fellow used to come in, give a seminar in English and Japanese in Christianity. They used to, but we rather stay back and sleep. (laughs) Because, well, there was no hope, anyway. Just stay in there. Just wasting your time. Because you get no future. You don't know whether you are going to be released. What you're going to do is you have to make the most of yourself to keep yourself healthy. Just don't lose your mind. That's all to it. So we were telling to ourself, "Try and do something so that you won't get stale and you won't lose your mind." That's the main thing. You don't know how long you going to be in here, so you might as well make the best of it, so when we went to Honouliuli, that's where we started to make lot of things.

I used to make airplane. I used to make rings. Monkeypod. You know, used to make all those things. And we send them out to our family during our visitations and....we have something to do to keep our mind occupied. Otherwise, we just get stale and anything can happen.

Honouliuli was much better. Just like family type internment, so wasn't too bad. In our barracks, we had nine guys. One barracks. Little bigger than this in one room. And double bunk. We had five bunks. And so it was just like a family. Nine guys is just like one family in there. So what we used to do, lot of the fellow in our room were working in the kitchen. So naturally, they bring back some pastries. So in the evening, they got some coffees, too, so we used to drink that before lights went out at 9 o'clock. Some of them get nervous breakdown. They won't be able to sleep at all. But if you are occupied, doing something, you will be able to withstand the agony.

Whenever they didn't have enough men at play softball, they used to call me, "Eh, Tailorsan, come over!" So I used to go down, play with them baseball---softball, rather. Keep myself occupied. Do
something, anyway.

PN: They would supply you with all the baseballs?

SN: Oh, yeah. They have everything. They give you everything, but.... Honouliuli Internment Camp wasn't too bad, but....many things were made there. I made one monkeypod bowl.

(SN gets up to get it.)

PN: So they gave you all the equipment to shape the bowls?

SN: No, no. This one, we have to request all from outside.

PN: It's nice. Request what?

SN: The lumber. (Monkeypod wood)

PN: How did you dig it out and...

SN: Well, we used to have a tool in there, latter part. And in the evening, they had to just put it back again. Formerly, they didn't allow that, but Honouliuli, they used to allow you to use the saw but in the evening you have to put it back. So you won't be able to reach it. Daytime, they allow us to. And there were a lot of good artist in there, so they drew the design. Then we are able to work on the bowl.

PN: Yeah. Somebody else taught you how to make this bowl?

SN: Yeah, they made the shape first. Then we started to dig that. Wherever was not good, they used to help us out. And we had our sandpaper. And then they used to varnish it. This bowl was made in '43. 33 years old.

PN: Yeah.

(Laughter)

SN: You not that old yet. (Laughs)

(SN gets up to get something else.)

SN: See, all of these things. We used to make these rings. This was made on Mainland, while they were all interned.

PN: Oh, they sent that back to you?

SN: Yeah, yeah. This was made by me. This is made from toothbrush.

PN: Toothbrush?

SN: Yeah. This is all toothbrush.
PN: Oh. You glued it together and....

SN: Yeah, you have to. See, this one, we cut the strip with the hacksaw and then put in the hot water. Get a round pole, put 'em on top and make a shape. Then we had to get a sandpaper to grind it on. All this was done by file, too. All kind designs.

PN: Terrific. (Laughs)

SN: Yeah, I made this. We used to send 'em up. This is a Samoan shell.

PN: Yeah, you picked that up in the camp?

SN: No, somebody gave it to me, this one. That's souvenir. Thirty years. This doesn't last too long, not too good. Yeah, well, so you can see that fellow who were talented were making all kind stuffs inside here.

PN: Yeah. What about health care? Did they have any doctors?

SN: Oh, yeah. There was a full-fledged doctor from outside, internee. Let's see....I forgot the name. He's dead now, anyway. He was an eye specialist. There were doctors in there. Masseurs.

PN: Masseurs, too. What about---was there any crime within the camps?

SN: Hardly any. Because you don't have anything. No money.

PN: Oh. What about restrictions, like, you said you go to sleep at nine. Do you have to wake up at a certain time?

SN: Right. Just like the Army. You wake up with the bugle. Sleep with the bugle.

PN: Then what do you do?

SN: Well, after we wake up, we just like the Army. We have to keep our bed in ship-shape. Anytime they can come up, you know. You have to fix your bed. Stretch 'em out and no dust and what not. Clean your room. Get ready for your kaukau, morning chow. Morning chow, we line up for inspection and if any sick person that is in the barracks, the captain or the sergeant in our barracks will report that certain guy is sick. So they know how many guys are going to eat. And every member has to be accounted for, so they have to take a roll every morning. Morning and evening. We have to line up and check up who's there, otherwise if they find some member short, maybe he might be hiding or he might be sick or what not. And everybody has to be accounted for. So that has to be reported by the men; one fellow was in charge of a barrack. So that wasn't a problem. Same as in Sand Island. That was same thing. You know, just like Army style. Everything has to be accounted for.

PN: Was there a segregation of the Germans, Japanese....
SN: Right. We had a barb-wire, whereby Germans...and there were some ladies Japanese internees. Let's see, they had about five, only at that time. Japanese girls. Ladies, yeah. Mrs. Harada who's famous from the island of Lanai---not Lanai, but Niiau incident. You know, Japanese plane fell down. That lady was there. Mrs. Tsuda, too. Only about four, I think, were Japanese. And Germans, Italians, only about half a dozen, I think, that's all. At that Honolulu.

PN: And how many...

SN: Japanese? Oh, quite a bit. They had about twenty barracks in there.

PN: So nine or ten to a barracks.

SN: Eight.

PN: What kind of food did they feed you?

SN: Regular American food. American food. And we had cooks that came from all over Honolulu. City Grill, Shinonome, Smile Cafe, and all over, so they prepare pretty good food with whatever they supplied. We had no complaint about the food. What do you call that? Mutton. Not mutton, but...

PN: Lamb?

SN: Lamb, yeah. I didn't like that. We used to have lamb once a month. Fish. Mainland fish. And we used to have jello. Oh, everything. Japanese food. But Japanese food, like miso, shoyu, we had to buy them because the Army won't supply that. We have to use our own money to buy that. But not too much. You buy by the quantities. So many guys in there. Even fifty cents a piece account for quite a bit. So shoyu and miso, we had to pay our own. When we first went to Sand Island, didn't have. Morning breakfast we had mush with milk and rice in it. Hoo, boy, not used to that kind kaukau. But Sand Island, we used to get misosiru sometimes. Not bad....so used to have miso soup. They used to have a garden there. Used to have daikon, radish, onions and what not, so was alright.

PN: Who tended the garden?

SN: Well, they used to have a internee that takes care; they call 'em yasaibutai, or the vegetable battalion to take care of all the greens. Whenever they had enough daikon, they used to make that into pickles. And the next morning, we had that what do you call that? Chagai. You know chagai? What ken are you, anyway?

PN: Yamaguchi-ken.

SN: Oh, Hiroshima, Yamaguchi are famous for that. Chagai. You know, they put the rice and the tea and then they boil it.

PN: Oh, ocha?
SN: Ochagai, they call 'em. When they get chagai, we got to get daikon or radish. You know. That's what we had. Once a month.

PN: What other kind vegetables they used to grow?


PN: Cabbage?

SN: Mustard cabbage.

PN: Mustard cabbage kind, yeah.

SN: But it's different kind. It's not a mustard, but....

PN: White? Big cabbage?

SN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Japanese call it mokino or Chinese cabbage. That na. And radish, the red kind. That's about it, I think.

PN: You know when you folks had gripes or grievances with the guards or anything, how did you solve those?

SN: Well, that's what I say, we had a company commander. He takes care of all the gripes and what not to the office. There it will be....

PN: You mean the company commander from one of the internees?

SN: Well, we have one commander, you know. Our commander at that time was James Murakami. He used to be the City and County Auditor. He's dead now. He used to be our commander. Anything gripes come in from different groups, well, we give the gripes to our barracks guy. And he in turn goes and report all that to Murakami. Murakami get all the gripes and took it to the office. So he is the one spokesman for our group.

PN: What kind of gripes came out?

SN: Well, some wanted to see their wives more often. (Chuckles) And some complain about the foods. All kinds. You know, not everybody is the same. Some are willing to cooperate, but some not compatible. They just hardheaded, that's all to it.

PN: What about from your barracks?

SN: Our barracks, well, everybody's good. Nobody complain about the kaukau. But we didn't have delicacy, we don't expect to have, anyway. But whenever they had the lamb, I just didn't like it. So I used to go for vegetable. I just don't like that. So what they were doing was they preparing that into teriyaki and then all kinds, but still, I just don't like it. I think, not too many
gripes. Well, I was there until January 1944, but beyond that, I don't know. The fellow who were left in the last part were all guys, pretty hard to take. You know, they were just like renegades. Rough guys. They didn't want to cooperate too much, some of them. But there were no jail or no nothing in there, so you were just confined in there. We didn't have jail in there, so no place for you to put in the dark. Prison or what not. But the only thing... if you lose your mind, they take out you from the compound and take you either to hospital or to Kaneohe. That's all to it.

END OF SIDE ONE; TAPE #1-47-2-76

SIDE TWO.

PN: How many people you knew that lost their minds?

SN: Not too many. Definitely, I knew about three. They just came not normal. And one of them, I noticed he had a four-inch diameter square looking rock. Everyday he's found rolling that. And finally, it became a perfect baseball. Just like a round ball. He was just doing that everyday. Until that thing just came a round ball. He was just nuts already. He lost his mind. Said, "What you going to do with that?" He said, "Well, I'm going give this to my sweetheart." Just going at it everyday. Nothing else. Nobody talked to him.

And the other guy was that he came to the commander and said he wanted see his sweetheart, so he wanted to be released. And commander told him, "You cannot be released from here. Everybody same. You are in here. You cannot go just to see your girlfriend, 'cause you're interned here." But still, he say he wants to see the friend. But the request was denied, anyway. He was, anyway, funny. And I notice one fellow came from Hawaii. And he was sitting in front his barracks every morning. Just sitting down doing nothing. Holding his hands, sitting down. So I used to say to some of the guys, "Hey, you guys go down there and talk to him. Otherwise he's going to be a nuts, 'cause nobody to talk to him." One week later, they say, no more. Gone. I didn't see him, so he must have gone to Kaneohe or either to a hospital. Because if you are quiet fellow, it's no good. You have to be able to make friends, talk to people. Then you won't lose your mind, but if you're not able to make friends, too bad. That kind of life; it's not easy. Yeah, it was pitiful for some of them.

PN: Could you tell me more about these renegades or rough guys?

SN: Rough guys, well, most of them came from Japan, so naturally, they're kinda like Hawaiian boys. They want to have their own ways. In other words, all kind of request they make, but denied. And they were asked if you are released, are you going to serve in the American Army. They say, "No. No matter what." They not going to serve. They just don't want to. Because of the treatment they had, they said they don't like it. Because lot of these young kids came from Japan, and just because they were raised in Japan, without
reason, lot of them were taken in. They don't know why they were taken. I ask them, just because they were in Japan. Went to middle school or chugakkō, and had some military training, I think. That's the reason why they say... so, no matter what, they say, they're not going to serve in the United States Army. That's the reason why a lot of them was sent to Tule Lake. The criteria at that time of release was whether you are going to serve if you are called by the Army. If no, they send you to the Mainland. You say, "Yes, I'll serve," if you are conscripted or called by the Army, they'll be willing to serve, then, you are released. Parole, in other words.

PN: That's what they asked you when you...

SN: Yeah. That's what they asked me. That's the criteria. (Laughs) If you will be paroled or not. That's what later I found out. I didn't know at that time. But they asked me the same question. Yeah, they asked me the same question. "If you are released from here, if you are called by the Army, are you willing to serve?" I say, "Well." I rather hesitated at first, "You know, being here two years makes you change your mind. But if I'm called, sure, I'm willing to serve anytime." That was the criteria, I think that...

PN: How many of these people....

SN: Quite a bit went.

PN: Into the Army?

SN: No, no, no. Not into the Army, some of them volunteered after they came out. Interpreters. Went to Japan.

PN: And lot of them went to the Mainland?

SN: That, I don't know. Not the young ones, no.

PN: The young ones, they went...

SN: They went to Tule Lake. In other words, sent to the Mainland. If I was outside, I would have volunteered for the Occupation troop as an interpreter. Yeah. I would have, because I can make use of my Japanese language. But I wasn't young at that time. I was thirty something, 35, 36, that's why. But still, a lot of them were volunteering at that time.

PN: How many would you estimate were renegades or....

SN: Ah, that I don't know. No.

PN: You also said you wanted to be transferred to the Mainland?

SN: Yes, I did. When I was in Sand Island, I didn't see Mainland. For curiosity, I used to ask my sergeant, "How about transferring
me to the Mainland?" Said, "No, no. You cannot go, because you're married." Niseis were not supposed to be sent to the Mainland. Intern in Mainland.

PN: Oh yeah? Why not?

SN: I think that's a regulation. But if you're going to be evacuated, that's something different. While interned, you cannot. Because the first group that went from Sand Island to the Mainland, there were about nineteen niseis who were born in Hawaii, but were connected with the various Japanese organizations. Well, they went to the Mainland. And they were sent back again to the Sand Island, because niseis were not supposed to be interned. Like Sumidas. He served in the Japanese army. But he's a nisei, born and raised here. But he was sent back here, because he's a nisei. But like them, they had a definite reason why they were interned. Serving the army. And some of them born and raised here, but just because they were representative of the Japanese Consulate, they were interned, too.

PN: Do you feel that you were interned for a just reason?

SN: I don't think so. I think they made a big mistake. If I stayed out, I could have been more useful, but you know the time wasted there, it's just terrible. And then, the idea that we are not supposed to sue the government. It's wrong, I think again when we were released. They made us sign that paper saying that, if we don't sign this paper saying that you won't sue the government, you won't be released which is wrong. Lot of them were going to sue the government. But we signed a paper saying that we won't sue the government when we are released. So we were stuck. Before being released, you go to the immigration station, they'll give you two long papers to read. I told them I don't want to read. "You just tell me the contents. And whatever, I'll sign it." They had two papers. One was for I don't remember. One I just told you that, no matter what, you won't sue the government. I don't know what was the other one, but I signed two papers. I remember. So I told, when I came back, oh, after the War, they said, "Oh, you can get some reparations." But too bad we signed the paper saying that we won't sue the government. But I don't know. But the people in the Mainland is now fighting for the civil rights. More or less we were covered or something like that. They signed the papers. I told 'em, "If I don't sign, what happens?" He say, "Well, the only thing you have to do is go back to the camp." So I told 'em, "Well, if that is the reason, I'll sign it."

PN: Did this experience change your outlook on the American government?

SN: No. You know, as far as they're concerned, I think, they were looking ahead on their side. Like us, well, we were so many in there. Our only thought was to get out no matter what happened. Just to get out from that compound. So we didn't care about reparation or what.

PN: How does that reflect on the American justice?
SN: Well, I think that was not right. They should have left that place just open. But that's what I told you. They are very smart. They don't want so many hundred internees putting up litigation to fight the case. So nobody tried to---we had some attorney in there, but they didn't even try. Like this fellow, Thomas Sakakibara, he's a representative. He didn't even make a fight for it, so in other words, he signed the paper saying that he won't sue the government. Until today, nothing's been done. Even if you want to fight it; it's a losing case. I don't know, the Mainland groups are trying to fight for the Hawaiian people, too, but this, I doubt.

PN: What did people say to you when you came back out of...

SN: They were afraid to speak to me because even during the War while I was interned, very few friends came to see my wife. They are afraid. If somebody was interned....well, they think somebody's watching and going to report that certain guys came to his home. So, nobody would want to come. My wife told me that only about two persons came to see her. Ninomiya, school teacher. He just come to her, ask how we're making. And Dr. Miyasaki.

PN: How did it affect your tailor business?

SN: Well, to tell you the fact, it did not affect too much. My business mostly Filipino. Even today. If no Filipinos, I just quit. My trade about 99 percent Filipinos. But my store was almost empty because we were ready to evacuate to the Mainland. They were preparing to go to the Mainland together with me. That was about March, 1943. They went to the immigration station or the FBI saying that they wanted to be evacuated with the husband. But the answer was that your case indefinitely postpone. So we didn't go. So, almost the sewing materials were gone. After I came back, I have to buy again to start again.

PN: When did the people's reactions change towards you?

SN: Well, after the War ended. I came back in '44. World War was still going on.

PN: After the War ended, they began talking to you?

SN: They were afraid. Because--I don't blame them, because, at that time, there were lot of Japanese were hysterical, too; 'cause they don't know what was going to happen. So they don't want to go to place where a person has been interned. They might be suspected. Which is no good, anyway, so I don't blame them. But my wife went to one of the stores to buy some gums. Say, "I want to send this to my husband. So I want you to give me." But she (Refers to store clerk) won't sell it to her. So she was very much disappointed. Some were like that. You can just imagine. But I went in not for myself. That's for the whole public. You know, that truck was for the whole public. Not for myself. I was just like the scapegoat.
PN: The other people contributing lot of money to buy the truck?

SN: Yeah, they did contribute, but nobody mention that and no evidence to show that they paid that money.

PN: Did your wife tell you anything about having trouble buying food or....

SN: No, I don't think she had any trouble. As far as that was concerned, I think she was alright with neighbors. But some of my friends, well, they just separate anyway.

PN: What about the Filipino customers? Did they....

SN: No. They didn't know I was interned. They thought I was on the Mainland. They didn't question too much about it. And so after I came back, they say, "Oh, where were you?" "Honolulu." Oh, I told 'em "Honouliuli." Say, "No. I thought you went on Mainland." "I wish I were," I told 'em. But they didn't send me anyway. So all in all, I think that was a good experience for me. Should anything happen again, like that, I think I'll be able to withstand all those cruelty or anything that may come out, because after all, as long as you keep your mind straight and get along together along with the other guys, you just get along. Otherwise, if you just stubborn, don't get along with people--not compatible, in other words, you be the loser in that kind of place. You have to just get along with the other guys. All in all, I think I was in the tailor shop, so it wasn't too bad for me, internment life. And being able to speak English was an asset to me, too, 'cause lot of them were not able to speak so naturally, whatever they wanted to, they cannot say anything. And by doing that, I have a good friend who was interned together with me in Honouliuli. Today we're still getting along fine.

PN: Who is that?

SN: Henry Tanaka of Waimea, Kauai. I didn't know him at all, but when I saw him at Sand Island with a long pants and a long-sleeve shirts, always sitting down and doing nothing. I told 'em, "Eh, this guy is someday going to crack up." So I said, "Eh, come on. Come to my shop." So I called him in. And he's a electronic expert. Told 'em, "Eh, you better try and sew this." So he started to use the machine. Making straps. Make some repairs. So by the time the day gone, so he was satisfied, very satisfied. When he went to the Honouliuli, he was very good in English so naturally, he should teach grammars and English to this internees. So that kept him busy. That kind of life, you have to keep yourself busy. Otherwise, you'll just snap. That's the main thing. And, well, at the same time, you have to just play ball with them. That's the only thing. Lot of them, they come around and ask me for a favor. Willingly, I accept whatever they wanted me.... I'll do it for them. And I don't just play hardhead. I just play ball with them. But at the same time, if I know that fellow has a profession, "I'll do this for you, you do this for me." Yeah, they do it for me. So I have one drawer there. He had one khaki cloth that was
brought from outside. He told me that he want me to make a pants. "Okay. Well, since you're a carpenter, you make one drawer for me." Tansu, in other words. You have so many place to put in. What do you call that? Drawer, eh? He made a cabinet. And in turn, I didn't have the measurement, but I figured out one and I made a pants for him. That was a exchange. (Laughs) Yeah, was a good experience.

Now, if I reminisce about my internment I feel I survived that ordeal, anyway. (Laughs) Yeah. So whenever I go to town, walk around in town, they don't know my name Nishimura. They call me, "Eh, Tailorsan!" Yeah. They call me "Tailorsan," so I look back. "Eh, your face is familiar." "Yeah. I used to belong to certain barracks." "Oh, that's right!" But I kind of forgot their name. And they used to call me---my good friends used to call me "Chu." You know, I look more Chinese so Fu Manchu, they put the name "Chu." So, "Eh, Chu!" They used to call me "Chu" all the time. Some of the friends still call me "Chu," yet. (Laughs) And then we were not given razor at that time. So we used to raise whiskers. So when my two and a half year old daughter came to see me first time, said she didn't want to come to me, because I had all (Laughs) whiskers hanging. So after that, I shave 'em all off.

(Laughter)

SN: Yeah, she's a school teacher now, you know. She was two and half years old, but she's been teaching about fourteen, fifteen years. That was my last daughter anyway.

PN: How much were you folks getting paid then?

SN: Well, when we went to Honouliuli, we were told that we're going to be paid ten cents an hour. So all the fellow who had profession, who were working--regardless whether it be a doctor, dentist, barber, tailor, cook, plumber--all ten cents an hour.

PN: And the government paid you folks?

SN: They paid me. When I came back, I had check for about hundred fifty dollars.

PN: Two years?

SN: No, no. Not two years. The time I spend in Sand Island wasn't paid. When I transferred to the internment camp, then they paid me. Before that, I don't think they paid me. We were told that it going to be ten cents an hour, so we put in eight hours a day, full day. So that's eighty cents. Six times eight...$4.80 a week. Not bad.

(PN laughs)

SN: Doing nothing. Yeah. So every month, I get about $17, $18, I think. That just accumulated. So they sent me a check when I came back. Ah! I told 'em, "They not going pay me." But, sure enough, they sent
me the check, so (Coughs) they kept their promise. And you know, even
the doctors were paid ten cents an hour. Ridiculous price, but, still
then (Laughs) what're you going to do? Yeah, you know, that kind
of life, fellow who wants to drink, funny thing, you know. That
was in January 1943. The sergeant blew whistle three times.
"Peep,peep,peep!" That means assembly. Eh, look out! This going to
be something! So we had weapon. We had to hide all that. Well,
like razor--not razor blade, but hacksaw, jigsaw, what not. You
not supposed to hold that. Then we were taken to the mess hall,
the whole group. Assemble and then...when we came back, we look
out at our barracks, all our bags are upside down. They checked
everything. They confiscated about 24 gallons of swipe. The main
purpose was to get the swipe. In our barracks, nobody drinks,
so we didn't have any.

PN: Where did they make....

SN: From what I heard, they used to get the pineapple juice, brown
sugar. Put 'em in a jar. Let 'em ferment for about one week.
That'll make a nice swipe. Lot of them were doing it. Some were
pretty good, because one of the guards got drunk. That's the reason
why they found out that we had some booze in the compound. They
fed one of the guards, I think. Young guard. So it must have had
a pretty strong one in there. And then lot of them were complaining
about sore stomach. 'Cause it's not a good stuff, anyway. And I
went to the office, and asked how many gallons? 24 gallons.
My gosh, 24 gallons. We didn't have any at that time. Some of
the barracks must have had two, three, I think. Yeah, they used
to drink. You know a fellow who wants to drink, they do anything
to drink. You drink?


SN: Oh, I cannot just take....when I was young, I used to try, but I
just can't take it. Can't smoke. So those things were out in the
camp, so was very good for me. Lot of them used to smoke, smoke,
smoke, smoke.

PN: They didn't allow you to smoke in camp?

SN: They were allowed but I don't smoke. They used to give us Bull
Durham. That was free anyway.

PN: What about gambling?

SN: Yeah, they used to do. We used to get three dollar coupon every
month. My gosh, those guys used to play hanafuda, play mahjong.
And some were gambling. I don't know. I haven't seen them, but
they say, "I owe you so much," this and that, so must be gambling.

PN: Three-dollar coupon was for what?

SN: Every internee is allowed three-dollar coupon. International
regulation. Every internee has three dollars allowance. To
buy some drinks and some things that you need. Not too much to
spend, but three dollars you are allowed. Every internee.
PN: They also allowed you to have money on your own?

SN: No, no.

PN: So you only get allowance of three dollars a month?

SN: Coupon. But if you want to buy anything, you have to go through that office. And request. That's all to it. But otherwise, no money. No money transacted in there. Didn't see money for long time. Even I used to do lot of work for these soldiers, repairing their shirts, pants, and they used to ask me, "How much?" I say, "We're not allowed to take money." So the only thing I used to request is "Bring me some soda water." Case of soda. That's all. Was cheap for them, 'as why. (Laughs) Yeah.

PN: Can we talk about your tailor business? I'd like to know how your father started off in business.

SN: Well, at first, he was working for the plantation anyway, but my mother wanted to learn some sewing, so she went to one of the tailors in Hālēiwa, and ask them she wanted to learn. The name of the tailor was Kitaoka. Anyway, she went there and asked the man if she could be an apprentice. Well, my father figured out if she's going to learn, he might as well learn together. So he left the plantation. And then we lived in Hālēiwa. We had to leave the plantation camp. Then came to Hālēiwa. And for a time, we lived at the Hālēiwa Theater. They used to have a room in there, so we stayed in there. And my father became an apprentice. Learned to sew. And I don't know how long, but I was about seven or eight years old, I think. And finally, he went to town to learn drafting. The Kitaoka man didn't teach him all the drafting, so he had to learn drafting in town. I don't know from whom he learned, but anyway, he learned drafting there. About 1915, this place was a very small place, but he rented this place and started the tailor shop. And then.... 1920 strike time, the Filipinos, strikebreakers, started to get big money. They used to get bonus. They earn about thirty dollars a month. They used to get about a hundred fifty dollars bonus, so the tailor shop was very prosperous about 1920. He made money during that time, I notice. That's how he started to run the business. And after I came back from school, I took over his place. That's all.

PN: What was required to open up a tailor shop?

SN: Well, tailor shop, at that time, you didn't have to have license to open a tailor shop. Only thing was required to have a license is for merchandise. In other words, you don't sell only tailor goods. You have some dry goods in your store, too, so naturally, used to charge $25 a year for the license. Merchandise license. They didn't specify at that time whether it be tailor or others, what not. They didn't specify. Only dry goods and merchandise.

PN: So where did he get all his materials?

SN: Well, at that time, he used to buy from T.H. Davies, American Factors. They were the one that was supplying all the goods, the material from town. They used to bring the samples down here.
Open up the samples and they used to take the orders. You know, formerly, the wholesalers used to come down with their automobile and the sold to the merchants package. And whatever you need, you just buy from them. But latter part of the year, they didn't come around. You had to go and buy in town.

PN: When did they stop coming around?

SN: Early part. 1920, they were coming down to bring samples. Bring samples and whatever you want, you buy from them. Oh, they used to have one more store. Armond Weil in Kaahumanu Street. Yeah. There were lot of these importers, you know, they used to come around. They bring samples. Buy from the sample. They import from the Mainland. They don't have the goods there. They send it from Mainland. Yeah. Quite a bit of importers used to come around. And my tailor shop now, I have one importer coming from Mainland. They come to bring their samples. They take order and they send me through the post office. He is still coming.

PN: But at first, you said, they used to come down to your shop. But when did they stop coming?

SN: Oh, just before Depression, I think.

PN: Why was that?

SN: I don't know. Not too much business. Doesn't pay.

PN: So your father had to go to town?

SN: We had to go. Well, I was back at that time, so I had to go in town and whatever we need, we used to buy. Yeah, the big stores didn't come too much. The small Japanese stores were coming. Dry goods. But like materials like that, we had to go in town and select our own. I used to go to Von Hamm Young, and whatever kind of cloth, we used to go and buy and bring 'em back and show it to the customer. That's all to it. No other way. Like now, we have samples, so it's easy. Just buy from the samples. But those days, you had to buy ten yards or fifteen yards and, well, was not too expensive, not like now. But we had to do that.

PN: What was the price then?

SN: Oh, price, it's about one-third cheaper that time.

PN: Than now?

SN: Oh, yeah. You can imagine. The denim pants used to cost dollar a pair. Two dollars rather. One pair. Now cost about twenty dollars. Fifteen, twenty dollar, made to order.

PN: What kind other material you folks carried?
SN: We used to carry this denim, khaki, and...colored cotton material. Black, blues and greys and what not. Mostly cotton material. And we had woolen goods, mostly navy blues, greys. Not too many fancies, those days. Mostly staple. About same kind because, then you don't go wrong. But, like now, they have so many fancy goods. But those days, mostly staple kind.

PN: What about palaka?

SN: Well, we had palaka at that time. Was only about dollar quarter a shirt. Cheap. Only about fifteen, twenty cents a yard. You can imagine. And the labor is cheap, so you don't charge too much. Good you get fifty cents for one shirt, sewing.

PN: What kind of equipment did your father use to sew?

SN: Well, some of the machines, I'm still using yet. My father used to use that. So Singer Sewing Machine. And I think we had some White Sewing Machine. But it was too noisy, so my father didn't like it. So we used to get all Singer Sewing Machines.

PN: You used to sew by machines?

SN: Well, that time, you didn't have motor, so foot pedal. Now, you have all motor. But at that time, you have to use a foot pedal to sew.

PN: How did that work?

SN: Well, you can imagine, you know. RPM is very slow.

PN: Oh, you pump with your feet?

SN: Oh yes.

PN: When did that end?

SN: Well, after we started to have electricity, we started to put in motor.

PN: You don't know what year that was?

SN: Oh, it must have been after---I think about 1921. '20, I think.

PN: What about irons?

SN: Same thing. Before that, I've noticed, they used to use that charcoal iron. You put in charcoal, make that hot and use that. But we used to have some of that, but chee, would have been a very good antique. (Chuckles) But I don't have any.

PN: Did the Singer representative come out here and show you the machine?
SN: Yes, they used to have Singer Sewing Machine and White Sewing Machine representatives here. Take orders and pay by installments. So it was rather easy to buy anything.

PN: Do you remember how much it cost?

SN: Oh, that I don't know. Maybe forty dollars, I think, at that time. Regular home sewing machine. Not too much. Forty to fifty at that time. But now, so expensive.

PN: So there were only two or three big companies and couple small dry good stores that supplied you with materials?

SN: Right. Yeah. Some of them didn't come to my store. They used to come to some of the other stores. They used to have this hotel down here. So they stayed overnight. And then, sell it next day. And then, they go back because they didn't have cars, automobiles. Some of them didn't have...some came on a train. We used to have a train those days. Because transportation was very cheap. Excuse me.

(Customer enters. SN goes to wait on her.)

PN: Waiting on a customer. This is an end to the session two of Sam Nishimura's tape.

END OF INTERVIEW
PN: This is a third interview with Mr. Sam Nishimura on September 2nd, 1976. Could we talk about your tailor business, and how much rent you folks paid for this place when your father started the business?

SN: I don't recall how much he was paying rent at that time, because he was only running the shop himself. I was going to elementary school, so, probably, must have been very cheap. About hundred dollars. Around $125 a half year. Two (hundred) fifty for one year lease.

PN: And what about when you began working for him, the lease...

SN: Formerly, this lease was for Mr. Ishimoto. It expired. Then we got it direct from Waialua Sugar Company. I don't recall how much I was paying, but it was very reasonable. Not too high.

PN: How much do you pay now?

SN: We pay seven (hundred) fifty, the lease. One year. We paid in January and July. Twice a year. We pay all the taxes, too. The leasor pays everything. Pay the lease, pay the tax. On top of that, you have to carry the fire insurance. That's required.

PN: The type of materials you said you folks carried was denim, cotton, and khaki. Woolen materials, too. What about silk?

SN: We had silk, too, for making shirts. Ponji. That's silk. It's a rough silk. Pure silk for making shirts or pants or suit. It came from China and Japan at that time. But you don't see them anymore.

PN: When did that stop coming out?

SN: I don't remember.

PN: Do you remember how much the materials cost?

SN: Oh, was very cheap. Must have been about two dollars a yard.

PN: And would be same for all the different types of material?
SN: Oh, well, different type material cost about $3.50, $4.50, $5.50 for woolen material.

PN: Woolen would be the most expensive?

SN: Yeah, more expensive.

PN: And what would be the cheapest material?

SN: Cheapest material, well, cotton. But woolen material, depends on the grade, how it is woven. Anything that came from England, that's very expensive. That's an import material so it's very expensive. Even today, anything that you import from England or Australia is very expensive. One yard cost about thirty dollars. (Laughs) Whereas the materials down here cost from about $4.50 to about twelve dollars. Domestic. So if you going to make a English suit, you have to charge about two (hundred) fifty up.

PN: Two hundred fifty dollar? How much of the material during the old days was imported?

SN: Well, not too much. There were some material, but, mostly domestic. Made in America.

PN: Those that were made into suits were usually the woolen material?

SN: Yeah.

PN: Was the suit considered a luxury?

SN: Yeah. Well, a suit used to cost about fifteen dollars to thirty dollars.

PN: This was in what time period?

SN: About 1915 to about '20, '25.

PN: That would be about a month's pay, I guess. How many people ordered suits?

SN: Well, what they used to do is that they used to pay in three payments. So they were able to buy one. But buying cash, just pay rough, because you are earning about $25 a month. So, they pay by installment.

PN: A lot of people bought suits?

SN: No, not too many. Mostly ahinas and khakis. They used to make pants, though, trousers. Quite a bit. Trousers cost less than ten dollars. Whereas ahinas cost about dollar, dollar and a half.

PN: What is that?

SN: Denim. Used to cost about dollar to dollar and half a pair.
PN: You called denim pants what?


PN: What kind word is that?

SN: Well, that's Hawaiian word, I think. Ahinahina is "kind of faded." That's what it means, I think. We call 'em ahina.

Well, they used to go to parties with ahina pants or denim pants, khaki pants. As they started to get more money, we started to make woolen pants. Go to parties with that. Prior to that, they couldn't afford to make too good stuff. Mostly ahinas, so you can imagine cannot make too much money. Very cheap. The material cost about thirty cents a yard and so very cheap.

On the other hand, the denim cost about three to four dollars a yard to today. That's the difference now. So, it cost about twenty dollars or more, if you should make a denim trousers now, made to order.

PN: How long would it take to make, let's say, denim trousers?

SN: Well, they make about three, four a day. It's rough work. You don't put too much time like in the woolen material. Woolen material, you have a lot of handwork. On the other hand, for making denim, sew it all by machine. Just keep on going with the machine, so if you don't sew three, four, five a day, it's not too lucrative. You don't make the profit there. But it's going to be a rough work. It's not a neat work. Just like a ready-made. Just keep on going. Boom. Just turning them out, so that's the way. Olden days, maybe, good if they ever do two pair of pants.

PN: And like a suit?

SN: Suit, about one week, 'cause you have to try 'em on. You have to cut it up and then you have to try on before you make the suit. Whether fits or not. Cannot just cut it up and finish it. Maybe the sleeve is too long. Maybe the pant is too long. So what I do today is same thing. I make a skeleton of the coat, and then I try it on the customer before I finish. Otherwise, he may have a sleeve too long. You know, after it's all completed, it's lot of work, so you might as well have it done before that. The length, side. So that's what I do. Make a skeleton model right then. Try it on. Then it fits him well, go according to that, to what you have made.

You know, formerly, they used to have lot of tailors, but, now, not any. In fact, I'm the only one left, I think, now.

PN: Along here?

SN: All gone.

PN: What kind of people used to...

SN: Well, we used to have people that came from Japan. And lot of
Filipinos. Filipinos are pretty good in making suits and pants. They're pretty good in handiwork. Hand work. So, let's see. How many tailors were there? One, two... about four tailors were here. All defunct today.

PN: How big were their shops?

SN: Not too big a shop. But still, they had enough trade to keep on going because we do lot of work by samples. We don't have to stock in the material. We get a sample from Honolulu, like from Pacific Woolen. They send you the sample. We take an order. Telephone them, they send it to you.

PN: So what happened to these Filipino....

SN: Oh, they getting old. And some just quit to work for a place where they can get more money.

PN: Was there any other nationalities tailoring also?

SN: Yeah. Early part, they had a Korean. I don't know Chinese. I know it was a Korean. He was affiliated with the plantation company. Waialua Sugar Company used to have a store, and they used to have a tailors in together in there. Way before my father's time, long time ago.

PN: During your time, what? How many other tailors were around here in the Haleiwa-Waialua area?

SN: Oh, let's see, Haleiwa, we had....I would say, good seven or eight.

PN: When did they stop their tailoring business?

SN: Well, lot of them quit after the World War II 'cause they couldn't get materials. So they went to defense work; Filipinos, especially. Some kept on going, but very few. One or two left. And they gave up. Getting too old.

PN: The last one went out of business when?

SN: Oh, maybe couple of years ago because he was too old to keep on going. He didn't have enough material, so he used to come and buy small things like hooks and needles and threads and buttons from my place. He didn't have any supply at all. After all, you have to have some supplies to keep on going. Otherwise, if it's in the demand right away, well, you cannot meet the demand.

PN: Out of the seven people who are around here, was there any shop that was big, or....

SN: No. Maybe two or three work in there. So when they want...

PN: So they would hire people?

SN: Family.
PN: All family? They would operate the same way as you operate? Go out and get customers?

SN: Right. Same thing. You have to go around to get orders. Otherwise, very inconvenient for them to come down here, see. They live in the camp couple of miles away, so you have to approach them and then show them the samples. They would want to buy by installment, okay.

PN: How often would you go out to take orders?

SN: Maybe once a week.

PN: And you'd get about how many orders?

SN: Oh, sometime lot of order. Sometime nothing.

PN: You just knock on people's doors and talk to them?

SN: Well, some customers repeat orders. So wasn't too bad. But if you just going to start and going to new camp, you don't know anybody, naturally, it's not easy. If you know somebody, he'll take you around to the camp and to the laborers there. Then at least, you can get some order. (Laughs) It's not easy. Now, I just stay down here and they come in and order. Too bad.

PN: When did that change? Like when did you stop going out?

SN: Not too long ago. Maybe couple of years. They started to come in, take order, make their pants. I used to go around this plantation camps, but after the War, no. I didn't go around.

PN: Oh, you stopped after the War? How did you get your order?

SN: They usually come in.

PN: Why did that change come about?

SN: You know, the union came in. They started getting more money. Formerly, when they used to get payday, nothing in the envelopes. Hardly anything. But now, every week or twice a month payday, they have money, so they can spend.

And then, you tell them you can pay by installment which is easier for them to order. Otherwise, if you charge--I charge a pants about thirty dollars--impossible for them to pay one time. So, "Pay 'em two months, or three months. That's alright." If I know him well, if his credit okay, they come around and pay. We don't have to chase 'em around like old days. Yeah, they come and pay, that's all.

I've noticed I get lot of retired people come in to order. Well, they have the social security, naturally, they have more money so same thing. By installment, they order.
I have quite a bit of order. Enough to take easy part of month to sew ahead of time, you know. Formerly, day by day, but now, I get lot of orders, so they have to wait about a month before they can get it.

PN: You know, when the union came around, people had more money. Did they start to buy clothes from department stores or someplace else?

SN: Yes, they did. When they use to come to my store to buy and they say it's too high. Well, I tell them to go to department store and buy. No use of wasting time here. 'Cause no use of trying to do business and they can't afford to pay. So I tell them, "You go and buy ready-made. Doesn't fit you well, bring 'em down. I fix it for you." They used to do that. Even today, I notice some of them come to order, but compare to the ready-mades, made-to-order is expensive. So they rather buy ready-made.

PN: You said some of them used to buy suits through tanomoshi, But not from your shop? How come?

SN: I notice one tailor in Haleiwa, he use to do that. He goes around from camp to camp and make a tanomoshi.

PN: Oh, he would do that?

SN: Yeah. Ask a fellow down there to solicit for members. Maybe five guys. So maybe the coat'll cost about fifty dollars. Everybody chip in ten dollars a month. And then by the lot or by necessity, you might need early, or if you don't want it, you get it last.

PN: That's how he use to run his tailor business?

SN: Yeah.

PN: Most of his customers was through tanomoshi?

SN: Well, he use to do that, because that's sure that he has a job. Once in a month.

PN: How come you didn't do that? Too much trouble?

SN: I didn't go around. You have to get all the Japanese old folks. That man was an old Japanese fellow, so was easy for him to do.

Yeah, lot of them used to that. Even in Honolulu, they used to do that. From yōkoku tanomoshi, tailoring lottery. Even the watches, you know, cost about two hundred dollars. In the camp, they used to do that, by lot. Tanomoshi. Usually about ten guys. Maybe ten or fifteen guys. Ten dollars a month. You can draw. You can get one in ten months. Easy. I don't see that anymore. Maybe that's illegal. (Chuckles) I don't know.
PN: When you take orders from customers, how did they select the pattern or the style?

SN: You know they have their own style of pattern. They like their own style. Sometime I say, "Oh, this thing looks ugly." But to them, it's nice. I don't discourage them. If you want that, go ahead.

PN: Did they tell you how they want their pants?

SN: Yeah. They tell me, you know. I don't tell them what to make. You just give me the measurement. What you want in the bottom, what you want in the knee. And then, if you want to loose waist or loose on the crotches or not, just give me that and I just make it. So depends on the customers. Some are very particular. They know their measurements. So you have to go according to that, cut the pattern.

PN: You know, in pants, before they have...

SN: They call it "flare." It's bell-bottom. Well, for example, mostly bell-bottom about seventeen and a half (inches) on the knees and about 22 or twenty on the bottom. That's about bottom flare.

PN: When did that pattern or style come about?

SN: Oh...many years ago. In Waialua, too. Long time ago.

PN: They would change style often?

SN: Oh yeah! They'll come around and they say they like bell-bottom. They want the balloon style. 26 (inches) in the bottom, 25 in the knee. They give me their measurements, you see. So according to that.

I've noticed that lot of them are bringing back their pants to be repaired. Some of the bottoms are so big. I have to cut 'em up. And some of them, they bring their pleated pants. Want to take out their pleats. But that's expensive. We have to take everything out. So, I tell them, "If the material's good, go ahead. But if the material is no good, don't do it'cause very expensive job." You have to take everything out. Pockets, front pleats.

PN: You know, how did people find out about the changes in styles?

SN: Well, I think by looking at the guys in the street walking. And some of them are very style conscious. Not every one of them, but some of young ones, they want to change their style.

PN: What about women's clothes? Did you folks make any?

SN: We never did specialize in that.

PN: Did any of the tailors specialize in women's clothes?

SN: No. Only dressmakers. Dressmakers are the only one that make dresses.
PN: How many dressmakers were there around here?

SN: Not too many. Good two, three, I think. That's all.

PN: That's all? Was that, you know, good business, or.....

SN: No money because everybody can sew at home.

PN: You said that your shop early in the business was opened at night.

SN: Yeah, till about 7, 8 o'clock. At that time, I notice my father use a kerosene lantern. Lamp, not lantern to sew. Very hard on the eye, but I don't know how he managed to sew. It's not easy.

PN: Why was this?

SN: Too busy.

PN: Took too many orders or something?

SN: Cannot meet the demand, because....my father sewed only the suit. My mother made the pants and shirts. That's all. We didn't have any employees. But afterwards, I've noticed....my father had some apprentice, teach them how to sew pants. So, beyond that, well, you have to make your own.

PN: When did you stop, you know, opening at night? Before the War?

SN: Yeah. Well, before the War, I was already taking care of the tailor shop. So must have been about 1925.

PN: Did many businesses around here open at night?

SN: Yeah. Why they use to open? Because on the upper hill, there use to be plantation camps. They use to come around in the evening to shop around. But that camp, the plantation took it away and central-ize into one place in Waialua. Nobody living in the camp, so no use of opening in the evening.

On all these higher hills, there were camps. All over. Halemano, Opaekula, Kawailoa. But the plantation change their management to make it easier for them to carry out all of these....firewood, kerosene; they have centralized into Waialua. That's the reason why stores didn't open in the evening because nobody comes around anymore.

PN: When did they take away these camps? '30s?

SN: In the '30, yeah. Before the War, anyway.

So we have a theatre here. Use to be very good. These people use to come from couple of miles here. Walk down, but now, nobody, eh. No camps around here.
Formerly, the plantation used to have ten acres contract for one person. But now, one guy takes care of about two hundred acres. See, that's the difference. All the style of production is different altogether now. All modern way of doing. So, not like the olden days. There about two hundred fifty acres, two hundred. Formerly, only about ten acres per person. They used to take care of the old plantation field. But now, one guy takes care of two hundred fifty. He sees to it that it's watered. It's a big job, but still, I don't know how they are doing, but I guess they get pretty good money.

PN: You said that your customers now are mostly Filipino?

SN: That's right. I call it 99 percent Filipino.

PN: Was it always like this?

SN: Yeah. If we don't have Filipino customers, most of these tailors will be defunct. They're the one that keeping up the tailor jobs.

PN: Even during your father's time?

SN: Right.

PN: Did you have trouble communicating with them?

SN: No. They use pidgin English. Easy. His (father's) time was, they had lot of these old folks, so-called issei, so used to get lot of trade from them, too. Quite a bit. Not only Filipinos. But came to my time, 99 percent Filipino. His time, well, wasn't too bad because he had his old friends in Japanese camp. Japanese old friends to come and order.

PN: What about the other tailors then? The seven other tailors?

SN: Same thing.

PN: They would rely heavily on the Filipinos as customers?

SN: Right. They are the best customers in tailor. (Laughs) Even today. But I've notice the young ones don't patronize too much in tailor. I don't know why. They bring lot of these trousers from homeland. Made in Philippines. Very few come to order, newcomers; so-called immigrants. Mostly all oldtimer trade that I have today.

PN: You know that sailor moku pants? How you spell that?


PN: What is moku?

SN: M-O-K-U. That's Hawaiian. I don't know. Sailor_moku_. (From_kelamoku.)

PN: What's that?

SN: It's just like, you know, the sailor's pants?

PN: Bell-bottom type?
SN: Yeah, yeah. Sailor moku.

PN: That used to be a popular pants?

SN: Very popular. But I hardly made that kind because ready-made was cheaper. Yeah, you can get it very cheap. But if it's tailor-made, cost money. So they don't order.

PN: Before, what? Mostly your sales was in work clothes?

SN: Well, work clothes and woolen pants and woolen shirts. So about half and half. But if you're a tailor and if you're going to make only working pants, you never make a go. Because the profits not there. Small profits in the working pants. You have to make suits, woolen pants. Otherwise, you'll never make a go. Even today, if I should only get a hinas and khakis, I rather close down. I rather close my shop than working. But if you should make polyester, well, the profit is there. So even it takes one day to make a pants, still, the profit is there.

PN: What about da kine silkie shirts like that?

SN: Very seldom I do make shirt. If it's a pants and shirt, I'll make, but only shirt, I don't make.

PN: Oh. But you know when people talk about silkies, like now days, who used to make da kine shirt?

SN: Well, the ladies used to. They used to have ladies take care of working pants and shirts. They're the one that use to sew all that. Not anymore, but use to be couple of them around here. Ladies used to make all the shirts. So whatever style--the shirt, puff-sleeve--they make all kind then.

PN: Oh, so use to have one shop for dressmakers?

SN: Yeah.

PN: And then one shop for shirts?

SN: No, at the same time, you had all kind of a general merchandise. Not only sewing. Use to have everything. Shoes and all kinds of stuffs to make a go with that, see. You have to have. Otherwise, if it is only sewing, pretty hard to make a go at that time. All the Japanese stores in the wholesale business use to come down here to sell their goods. They were selling practically everything.

PN: What about futon or....

SN: Futon, well, that one was specialize in the department stores like Esmond. But these small stores never handle. I know we use to order blanket from Mainland. You know, import. And futon, no, we use to order comforters and some woolen blankets. They use to sell that. Importers use to come around. We place
the order through them and have them send by air mail or postal.

PN: But futon, what?

SN: Futon, no. That was made by Japanese lady. Not everybody can make futon.

PN: Same thing for kimonos and....

SN: Kimonos, anything, yeah.

PN: Nobody use to go around try sell kimonos?

SN: No, no. Kimonos, well, they use to have some stores in Honolulu. They ordered from Japan. And you call the....toweling. Made of towels. Kimonos, you know. So that they can use after taking bath.

PN: Oh yeah?

SN: You never did see one?

PN: No. You said you were an interpreter for the plantation when the high priest from Japan came down?

SN: Well, no, not exactly. But whenever the priest from a certain church use to come, I use to go to the church; they use to ask me to interpret for them, because very few of them spoke two languages at that time. So it was difficult for me, but somehow I managed.

PN: How often would these priests come?

SN: Maybe once a year.

PN: And they'd visit the whole island?

SN: Well, the whole island. Then if they come down here, they go to the plantation manager. Naturally, I follow them. They cannot speak, so I had to interpret. Whenever they went to the plantation manager and ask all kind questions.

PN: What would they talk about? The priest and the manager?


PN: Did the plantations make contributions to the churches?

SN: Oh, yeah, they use to do. But I don't know. They use to help quite a bit. If you go and ask them, the plantation use to help.

PN: Would there be any special ceremonies for the high priest?

SN: No, not specially, but they come to see how all the churches are doing. They come around once a year. So, nothing special.
PN: Have you ever heard of this, they call, masquerading during New Year's where they put on mask and they'd go to people's houses?

SN: No, I don't remember seeing them. But only thing... similar to the masquerading was at bon dance time. Japanese bon dance. The men would put lot of powders and disguise as a lady and dance among the groups.

PN: Dance like one lady?

SN: Yeah, yeah. But outside of that, never had occasion to see them (masquerading).

PN: What about this shibai theatre like that?

SN: Well, shibai, formerly, they use to come from Japan, all the actors. And they use to have a shibai in the theatre from about 6 to about 12 (o'clock) in the evening. What they would do is from the camps -- I notice. I use to come from the camp -- they use to bring hibachi, and cook in that theatre.

PN: Haleiwa Theatre?

SN: Not before. The old theatre. Then make a hekka in there.

PN: Oh, and stay all night?

SN: Yeah, till about 12 o'clock. See, when they have the intermission, they start to cook. They have a pot here, some pot there. Eating all that. Amazing. Yeah. That's what they use to do. And they use to have a store in there, so naturally, sell watermelons and what not. Use to come around and sell.

PN: Plenty people use to go?

SN: Oh yeah!

PN: When would they hold this theatre? Once a year or something?

SN: Oh, maybe once a year or twice a year.

PN: What would go on on the stage?

SN: Regular shibai. Acting.

PN: About what?

SN: Well, like Chūshingura or the 47 Faithfuls.

PN: Oh. 47 samurai? This would be profession actors or something?

SN: Right. (Refers now to his coughing.) Terrible. If I don't say anything, I'll never cough.

END OF SIDE ONE; TAPE #1-74-3-76.
PN: What other things would they come up with?

SN: Oh, that used to be kabuki kind, but. They used to have a shimpa. In other words, the modern version of these stories that happened in the public. See, whenever they had some kind of a happening in Hawaii, like suicide, they imitate that and put that to shibai. That used to attract quite an audience. For instance, a murder or....you know, or kidnapping and what not and all that type. Well, they use to make the script and then show that at the movie theatre. Not movie theatre. But a theatre.

PN: So people would have to pay to go and see?

SN: Oh, yeah.

PN: How much would it cost?

SN: Maybe fifty cents. That's about a half day's work. One dollar a day.

PN: They used to come around about what years was this?

SN: Oh, usually about summer time. They had to walk ten miles to the theatre, you know. They have to walk from the camps.

By the time they go home it was so late that they get hard time getting up to work next day. So what they use to do, they slept in the canefield after lunch next day. Nobody knows.

PN: You mean, when they're supposed to be working, they sleep in the canefield? (Laughs)

SN: Otherwise cannot. So many hours, they are watching the shibai, eating and enjoying.

PN: When was the shibai theatres around? In the '20's, '30's or....

SN: Oh, from '15 to '20.

PN: And then it stopped about the '20's? Why?

SN: They used to have a shibai, but not any more of those eating in the theatre. That stopped altogether. The Board of Health. Just like in Japan. That was typical in Japan.

PN: It ended in the '20's?

SN: Yeah. Before the '20's.

PN: Why? How come?

SN: I don't know. Maybe....they didn't allow that, after all.

PN: You said you used to go around in a car, taking orders. What kind car was this?
SN: I had a Model T.
PN: How much that cost you?
SN: Cost me about five hundred dollars.
PN: And this was about when?
SN: 1924 or '25. Brand new Model T.
PN: What other kind car?
SN: Then I drove a Chevrolet and mostly the Chevy.
PN: You used to go around everytime in cars or what else?
SN: We had the Model T to go to town. You know, we used to drive that car to town to buy materials and come back.
PN: How often you would go to town?
SN: Maybe about once a month.
PN: And you'd buy enough materials for the whole month?
SN: Yeah. We place an order and then the truck used to bring it for us. Truck service.
PN: This is after the salesmen stopped coming around?
SN: Yeah.
PN: So you'd go into town just for buy material? You don't shop or...
SN: I do shopping, take my kids along. Those days, Kress was the biggest attraction, eh.
PN: Kress Store? Why was that?
SN: Well, that was a five cent, ten cent store. Never had that kind store. So everybody used to go in Kress Store. You know, right by the Fort Street Mall? That's what it is. That used to be the only store.
PN: What other attractions had in town?
SN: Well....used to have a fair. Sometime, I used to go with the Model T. I used to take them to the fair. That was held in Ala Wai side. Yeah. We made good use of that Model T.
PN: How was the gas?
SN: Gas was about 25¢ a gallon. 18, 20¢. Was very cheap, so nothing to crab about it. Very cheap. Today, you had to pay about seventy cents, eh.
PN: Yeah. About there. What about the telephone and stuff like that? You folks had telephone?

SN: Yeah, we use to have a telephone. The olden style.

PN: When did you folks get telephone?

SN: Oh, 1914, I think.

PN: That's when this whole area got phones?

SN: When we used to call in town, we ring the ringer, and ask the operator for the number. They connect if for you. From that time, so many minute, well, they charge you, toll.

PN: Oh, they used to charge you toll? Not like now days. And how would you pay the bill?

SN: Oh, they send a bill. Same thing as now. There's no difference.

PN: Did you folks use the telephone for business calls?

SN: Well, in town, we used to call business, but locally, who we have to ask the operator. As far as you call my neighbor, I had to call the operator with the number, and they'll connect you.

PN: Did you talk business with your customers, too, over the phone?

SN: Oh, yes. Sometime.

PN: Did that become your means of taking orders?

SN: No. Just for convenience.

PN: What about radio like that?

SN: Radio, no. Radio, I remember just before the War. I got one radio. Before never had one. That was in 1940s.

PN: What did you listen to?

SN: Well, local. And that one had shortwave so we used to try catch Japan, but didn't come in too good. So, mostly local station.

PN: No Japanese music station?

SN: No, only Japanese music. Had some. Very few. Certain hours, that's all.

PN: Did they take the radio away after you were interned? They just took it away? They didn't give you any receipt or anything?

SN: No, the order came saying that all the Japanese had to bring their radio to a certain place. So we just brought that radio to certain place, that's all, with the name and place, and everything.
PN: Did they return it to you after the War?

SN: They did. They returned everything. I notice lot of camera got lost. Yeah, because too small, the thing. Too small, so couldn't trace it. And those days, maybe, fellow were in charge didn't do good work, so lot of them got lost.

PN: What about the newspapers?

SN: We had...Hawaii Times and Nippu Jiji---no, Hawaii Hochi. Two Japanese paper.

PN: That's what you used to read? When did they stop?

SN: I don't know.

PN: When did you start reading the newspaper?

SN: Well, maybe when I was about seventh or eight grade. Seventh grade, because they had the bilingual at that time. English and Japanese together. Now, let's see. I think, the Star Bulletin and the Advertiser was coming, but I didn't subscribe to it, so I don't know.

PN: You said your kids were born through midwife? Did you help with them?

SN: No, not one.

PN: Where did she have the babies?

SN: In the home. This home.

PN: Only your wife and the midwife?

SN: Right. She (midwife) took care of everything.

PN: And how long would it take?

SN: Oh....the whole night, I think, sometimes. Sometime not too long. At that time there was two midwives. One was a Mrs. Mukai. Mrs. Arao and Mrs. Kishinami.

They all dead now, anyway. Mrs. Kishinami came from Japan as a midwife. I think she got a license down here. I don't know. You had to get a license to be a midwife.

PN: Did your wife have any complications?

SN: No, no. Not once.

PN: How much did it cost?

SN: Like in Japanese style, we used to call orei, appreciation. We used to bring some cloth, Tanimono, you know, Japanese cloth and then about $25 to $30 in money. 25 to 50 (dollars) anyway. That's all.
PN: What you call that Japanese cloth?

SN: Tanimono. It is a material that could be made into kimono. You can get it by going to a Japanese material store.

PN: That's what they used to charge?

SN: No. They didn't charge you.

PN: Oh, was a gift from your own side?

SN: You give orei. Appreciation. Thanks, you know.

PN: You showed me last time your picture of your mother's funeral. What kind of service was it?

SN: You know, that's a Buddhist service. And at that time--in 1927 very few people had cars. Mostly Model T. So, not like now. Everybody go to funerals by their own car. But lot of this people didn't have car, so naturally, we had to hire six taxis so that they can go to the funeral in town.

PN: How much would that cost?

SN: That time was about $15 a car. So they took 'em in town and then had a service at Kalahi Mortuary. They call 'em Kukui Mortuary. That's the same thing. Then they used to cremate. We used to wait for the ashes and bring it back to Waialua.

PN: How much did the funeral cost?

SN: I don't know how much.

PN: Was that the usual procedure?

SN: Well, if you go to town, that was the usual procedure, but a lot of these folks, plantation folks used to bury them at Puuiklki Cemetery. That used to be a plantation cemetery. So instead of cremating, they used to bury them. Not any more, I think. Most of them are taken to Mililani now.

PN: Maybe we should stop, eh. Continue next time?

SN: (Referring to his coughing) Nothing is wrong with my chest, you know. Only my neck. That's all. Itchy. I think allergy or something.

PN: Is that everytime when they start harvesting the cane?

SN: No. Everytime I started to talk.

PN: Only talk?

SN: When I'm resting, I'm just sitting there and I don't cough. I notice there's another lady has same thing with me. She coughs when she starts talking.
PN: What about the Japanese customs like that? Obon or Boy's, Girl's Day?

SN: Well, used to be very Japanese like. Obon or be it Girl's Day or Boy's Day used to be very much like in Japan. They used to observe that quite seriously, but now I notice not too many. Olden days, when you have a first son born, well, they used to bring you all kind of gifts. And then the first birthday, elaborate birthday party. But not any more. They used to call neighbors and celebrate. But now, it's mostly family.

PN: Did you do this for your children?

SN: Only for my eldest son. I don't know if they have same custom. See, they give you gift. Then to pay them back, you buy like cups or some kind of dishes to show your appreciation.

PN: Like what was the common kind gifts to give the first born?

SN: That's what I said, cup. Sara. Plate. They in turn give you cloth for making kimono. Give you fruits, give you fish.

PN: And the cups and plates like that, you would give back to them?

SN: For the appreciation. But now, only letter of thanks.

(PN laughs)

PN: What other kind customs you used to practice?

SN: Well...that one. New Year's, they were very strict. Not strict, but regular Japanese style of New Year's.

PN: You eat the somen?

SN: Yeah, somen and clean your house. Pounding of mochi. And then, the next day, the wife have to cook, so guys would come and call on you and wish you "Happy New Year." When they come in, you have to feed them. So, you had to get prepared. Now that custom are gone.

(Laughter)

SN: You don't have to prepare. Cost you lot of money now. Those days, well...you have to get ready with sake and everything, so you know they come from house to house. Every house. "Happy New Year!" "Happy New Year!" You come in. You got to feed them. New Year, Obon. Birthday parties.

PN: Do you dance in the obon like that?

SN: No, I never did.

PN: The unions came around 1945? What were your reactions to the union formation?
SN: I thought that would never last too long.

PN: Why?

SN: Well, some are in favor. Some are not in favor. And then at that time, well, they put the union together with the Communist. That's the whole trouble. I got that understanding that most unions are Communist. They know better, so. Thought two never last, but they are alright. They were demanding—and getting what they want, so they are way ahead, today.

PN: Do you think the workers wouldn't be where they are now without the union?

SN: Oh yeah, sure! And they are very glad that union came in. Otherwise, still, wage will be way down and the employers would suppress them. Now, there's no such thing because it's federal law. Can't do anything.

PN: What did you think of that linking the union with Communist?

SN: That's what I thought at first. Their thinking is almost like Communist way of running everything. If a guy make too much money, take the money from him and give to the other guy. The attitude is that way. Say, "Why one guy should make all the money? He should distribute to everybody." But on the other hand, the employer should make some money because if they want to improve their business, well, naturally, they have to get money to do that. But the union way of thinking was that whatever they make, well, they should distribute among the laborers. So that's what I thought at first. You know, because we don't know too much what the union was trying to do.

So I think it's a good thing that union came to Hawaii. But sometime, they go too far. You know, more than what they should be asking. They have more than enough, but still, they are asking. And lot of times, if you're an employer, you cannot give out certain amount because you need that money to improve your business. But, no, they don't take it that way, because whatever the money they (employers) have, they (union) want to get some more money from them. But I think it's a good thing that union came to Hawaii.

PN: What did you think of the Smith Act trials? Where they put seven men on trial?

SN: Oh, that trial. Well....you know, they were thinking that the Communist were infiltrating in Hawaii and would wreck all the sugar plantations. But their ideas are altogether different, again, I think. I didn't follow that too much, so I don't know too much of that case.

PN: You said you dabbled in Republican Party for little while?
SN: Well, yeah. When I first started, naturally, running a business here, we had to tie in with plantation. We had to go in and out of the plantation. So naturally, we have to play a little hoomalimali with them. So I used to play politics in Republicans. Then gradually, I just came independent.

PN: What you mean by "hoomalimali?"

SN: "Hoomalimali." Play together with them. Don't aggravate them. You know, whatever they say, follow them. That's all to it.

PN: What you mean? In terms of voting....

SN: They'd tell you to vote for certain guys. They used to be good for the industry. And if the industry is good, they make more money; naturally, money going to come to us. But, if you go to Democratic side, you don't have that much money, so you not going get anything. But if it's plantation benefit, all those merchants going get a little more money from them. So that's the reason why lot of them used to play at Republican at first. But when Burns started to run the Democratic Party, they changed altogether.

PN: When were you a Republican? During what years?

SN: Oh, during about 1930s.

PN: So you guys would listen to what the plantations...

SN: Yeah. What the plantation say. I used to go, too, sometime over there to their meeting. Hear what they want to say.

PN: Are this the dinner meetings they hold for the merchants?

SN: No, no, not merchants. That's just for the precinct. Democratic (?) precinct.

PN: So after unionization, you became independent?

SN: Independent. I didn't want to affiliate with either side because lot of times, the plantation laborers are Democrats. And if you're a Republican, you know, only that, we might lose business trade. They don't come to buy at their store. "Oh, that guy's a Republican." So they don't buy. To play it safe be an independent and no trouble at all.

PN: Could you go into little about the growth of Haleiwa? How did it grow over the years?

SN: Well, at first, Waialua-Haleiwa was in the North Shore, so naturally to come from Honolulu, they had to come either on the buggies or automobile. Not too many automobile at that time. Or by train.

All the honeymooners used to come on the train and stop at the
Haleiwa Hotel. They stay about one week, swimming, golfing, horseback riding in those days. Lot of tourists used to come into Haleiwa by train. Honeymooners.

Automobile started to come out; the taxi at that time cost $1.50 one way. So in other words three dollars round trip. Which was very expensive. But still, lot of them used to go in town. Like in our case, maybe once a year. That's all. We used to go in town. You cannot afford to pay three dollars for the trip just to play.

There were maybe about six of them running taxis at that time. And they were making pretty good money, I think. I don't know.

PN: When was this? What years?

SN: About the '20s. And then, gradually, the people didn't ride on the trains too much to go to town. So they didn't get the business, and train business was getting slow. That, I do not know, but anyway, probably that was the reason why the Dillingham started to fade out in the train business.

Then, down here used to be quiet and good place to take a rest, so, people used to come to Haleiwa and just take it easy. It started to grow when plantation started to expand all of the fields. They took lot of these fields. Then they needed more people down here. So people started to come to Haleiwa and Waialua.

PN: What kind of people used to stay at Haleiwa Hotel?

SN: Haoles. Mostly Caucasian.

PN: Rich?

SN: Rich. Yeah, I don't know how many rooms they had, but was a pretty big and nice hotel. Every Saturday evening, they used to have dancing down there.

PN: What about the fishing industry here? Was there an industry here?

SN: Not at that time. They used to have a lot of these _sampan_, small. Japanese fishing men used to go catch _akule, aji_. Fifty cents a bunch in one dozen.

PN: That's how they used to make their money? How many fishermen had?

SN: Maybe had about half a dozen.

PN: And what happened to them?

SN: Just fade away. Couldn't make a go.

PN: This was about what period of time?

SN: Oh, prior to just before the War. Just very few fishermen. Now
the part-time fisherman start to come in. Working plantation and then they buy their own boat and then go fishing.

PN: **Sampan fishermans, were they interned during the War?**

SN: No. Only I remember one fellow. But he wasn't active in fishing. I don't know why he was interned.

PN: Who was that?

SN: Kikawa, I think. That was his name, Kikawa. He's dead, though, anyway.

PN: Didn't the fishing industry stop when they started the War? And they stopped these Japanese fishermen from...

SN: Yeah. No fishermen were here at that time. They were not allowed to go fishing.

PN: What about the military around this area?

SN: I don't know too much about it, because I was interned during that time. I don't know where they were stationed at all.

PN: But they were here prior to the War.

SN: They were here and the tailors were making good money by putting on their chevrons, cutting down their clothes, you know. Cutting it too big and then. They were making pretty good money.

PN: This is regular Army?

SN: Army, right.

PN: When did they come into this area?

SN: Well, we had a National Guard prior to the War. Stationed right here by the bridge where they were watching on both sides of the bridge. And...they were living right in the center of this bridge. They used to have small shack there.

PN: What were they doing?

SN: They were guarding the bridge.

PN: This bridge right here?

SN: Two bridge. Yeah, two side. No other way of going any place. If you close this.

PN: They were here in the '30's or '40's?

SN: Prior to the War anyway. I don't know much about that. After all, I was interned 1942.
PN: What do you expect the future of Haleiwa-Waialua to be?

SN: Well, what the people are trying to do is preserve... to keep the town as it is, you know. Don't change it at all. Don't break down the old houses. Just leave 'em as it is. Well, there are a lot of movements, you know, going. Like these hippies are trying to keep all these places intact as an old town. And I think they had a meeting yesterday in regard to that, but I don't know. I didn't go to the meeting. Anyway, down here, maybe couple more years hence, they're going to make a new super highway in the back of this Haleiwa town. That's a proposal, make a new road. And keep this road and town as it is. 'Cause the bridge down in Anahulu—that's on the North Shore side—it's too narrow, so you have to have a new bridge to take care of the traffic.

As far as business, I don't think Waialua will grow too much, because the populations are scattered. So you cannot cater to certain business company. In order to have a big business, you have to have a lot of population in surrounding areas way down here. The only place you have a population is the plantation camp. And not too many. Whereas if you have—like Wahiawa, they have a big places where they have a subdivision—all those places, well, then you can make a go. Make a big building. But down here, I don't see how they can survive by paying big rent down here.

PN: Do you think Haleiwa can stay like this?

SN: I think it will stay like this. They'll never grow too much.

PN: Why?

SN: It's what I told you. No population. Not too much buying power, and you need population to keep the business going. But you see, on the weekends, they have business. But from Monday to about Friday, poor business. You don't have people coming to buy. Only weekends they come to buy supplies and that's the reason why. But if you have lot of population, everyday, you have some business.

PN: You said also that lot of this lands around here are lease lands.

SN: One of the reason why is lease land. You don't want to make a building on the leases land. After it expires, it reverts to the owner. And lot of this Bishop Estate owns the land down here. Very few fee simple land.

END OF SIDE TWO; TAPE #1-64-3-76.
SIDE ONE; TAPE #1-79-3-76.

PN: What happen if the plantation shut down?

SN: Well, to begin with, the plantation is a big outfit. The annual payroll is so many million dollars so everybody depend on the payroll.
If the plantation will give away, the only place that money is coming will be from Schofield. Some be working in town, but lot of them are working Schofield and in Wahiawa. But as far as the young ones are going, if there's no plantation, they'll be moving out to some other places.

PN: Would you like to see this area develop?

SN: I don't know how they can develop, but. I doubt it.

PN: What if they do develop it?

SN: Well and good. Good for the community. Because no housing around here. No population. I think at the most, we get about seven, eight thousand now. That's all.

PN: So, if there was a lot of population, then you think the businesses could survive?

SN: Oh yeah! And provided they got a job. That's the main thing. Even population, if you don't have a job, only welfare. No use.

PN: If you didn't become a tailor, what kind of job do you think you would have gone into?

SN: Maybe insurance.

PN: Why did you remain in your tailor business so long?

SN: Well, you know, doing your own business, if you stay in your business too long, you get stale. You don't want to work for somebody else. So easy. Not too much money, but you can make a go by...doing tailoring. And I don't think you starve.

PN: You must make pretty good money if you can travel a lot, eh?

SN: No, not that. Whatever I make, I keep that money. I don't spend 'em. If I should spend everything, well, I'll never be able to travel. So whatever I make, I try to conserve it, put 'em in the bank, or keep it by myself. Then spend 'em whenever I need 'em. 'Cause I don't smoke, I don't drink. That alone helps quite a bit.

PN: How did you get into traveling?

SN: Well, I wanted to travel, before. My wife was alive, but she was an invalid. And everybody says travel when you're young, which I wasn't able to do because my wife was too weak. She was almost invalid for four years. Two years solid, but almost four years. So, the best time of my life was gone. So if I don't travel now, I'll be too old so (I) started to travel.

PN: What happened to your wife?
SN: She was an invalid. She couldn't move.

PN: Was it because of a stroke or something?

SN: The doctor doesn't know. I took her to specialist all the way in town, but nothing could improve her so I had to carry her all over the place. Take to the lav, take her to her shower. And we had to take a bath together, otherwise, she never be able to. So I used to take her in town for massage once a month. Nothing helped. But according to the doctor, it's the softening of the brain. I don't know what the meaning of that is. But anyway, that was the cause of her sickness. She couldn't talk at all. My last daughter Doris was going to University of Hawaii to be a school teacher. She helped me quite a bit. Otherwise, would have been rough. She finished University year before my wife died. So she died in 1960. She (Doris) became a school teacher in '61. But, anyway, I don't know. She really suffered.

Yeah, I've traveled so far for the past six years. Japan, Hong Kong, Okinawa, Taiwan, Las Vegas, Mexico City, Florida, New York, Washington, Toronto, Niagara Falls, and Edmonton, Calgary, Vancouver, and the Busch (Buchart) Garden. And then, following year, I went to.... Europe. So traveled about eleven countries in Europe.

After I came back from Europe, that's when I got sick. I got a terrific gout. Two side of my leg, I couldn't walk. And then, at the same time, I started to cough. I don't know what's happened. Something wrong.

PN: Could you compare your life now with your life forty years ago, let's say?

SN: No comparison. I'm enjoying my life now. Because forty years now, well, I had to take care of like giving my daughters some schooling, so I had to work hard. I had to send all my kids to town to get a proper education. Wasn't easy. You know, it seems as though tailor is making a lot of money, but it's really rough. Somehow they managed to finish University and business school, so not too bad for me now. If it's now, I don't know if I can send them to schools.

PN: Why is that?

SN: Well, just loafing now.

Let's see, of my six kids, I have two school teachers, two secretaries, one postal worker, one management analyst. So they are doing alright. They all got their own homes. That's one of the things you don't have to worry about.

PN: Do you think this area--Haleiwa-Waialua--was a good place to raise your children?

SN: Well, thinking over now, I think was alright, because they treated
me alright. And I've done lot of community work. That's the reason why I was interned. (Laughs) Yeah, as a whole, was alright because I participated in quite a bit of community work, school work, PTA work, and athletic side, too. So I think it was, as a whole, alright.

END OF TAPE #1-79-3-76; SIDE ONE. END OF INTERVIEW.
PN: Translated excerpts from the notebooks which Sam Nishimura kept while interned at Sand Island and Honouliuli. October 21st, 1976.

SN: ....it's nothing, because, well, whenever you leave a camp and you did some chores for them, well, they appreciate that. That's why in departing, they write all those things. This is another one. He's dead now. But he was a famous Hawaii Times writer. Sportswriter.

PN: Could you just...

SN: "Sunajima no tsukiyo ka?!...oh, this is one of the songs.

PN: What does it say?

SN: "Uki o hanareta Sunajima ni"---Japanese alright?

PN: No, English. (Laughs)

SN: Well, "We are separated from the world, and we are living in Sand Island. The moon that we looked at in Sand Island is something different then. I've forgotten the image of my sweetheart. And I've forgotten her. But if you look at the moon, you start to think about her."

Something like that. (Laughs) That's the gist of it.

PN: Could you read the whole thing?

SN: (Referring to tape recorder) Is it on now?

PN: Yeah.

SN: You might as well take it off for a while.

(Tape recorder turned off. Taping resumes.)

SN: "Moonlight over Sand Island." That's the first part of the....
"Mukashi koishiku omoujyanaiga"....

"I'm not thinking about the old days but a"....

"Tsuma orottomo"....

"With wife and all the kids at back porch of our yard.
   We look at this moon.
   And laugh and praise the moon.
   But now, I'm all alone in this Sand Island.
Looking back, I was one of the immigrant's son.
   And the parents came to Hawaii to make a foundation.
   And how come that I am now interned in this Sand Island?"

That's it, gist of the whole thing....(Laughs)

PN: How about the whole song? Cannot translate the whole song?

SN: "Sayonara, Sunajima." This is "Goodbye, Sand Island." "Onaji sadame no harakara ga, tomo ni kuro wo wakeatta. Naku komo damaru (Tape garbled) Sunajima ni"....

"We who have been interned in Sand Island are the same situation"....

"Tomo ni kuro wo wakeatta"....

"We have shared all our hardships
And in Sand Island, even the cry baby stops when they hear about Sand Island.
Today, we are leaving this Sand Island.
The friends who are leaving for the Mainland,
   We have departed on the wide space with our tears coming down, singing 'Aloha Oe' in a sad voice.
   We have sung in that old barracks."

"Kuruma no hashiru kuruma no atoni san"....(To Perry) You better stop for a while.

PN: Okay.

(Taping resumes)

SN: "After the car has left, we're reminiscing about the good old days.
   Forgot to close our door.
   And the door is moving with the wind.
   In the day time, we live together with the cat."

Or I might say that

"We are riding on that car to a new location.
The sunshine is high
And the cat which together on the car has been shaking.
We don't know where we are going.
And the sun is shining above our head."
"Machi ni matta"....

"Today is our visitation day, and there are many things we have to talk about.
The small child is asking for the father to return.
The father is touching the head of the son and his tears is coming out.
We are all in a barb-wired camp.
And the work that we are not used to, we do our best, and at the same time, laugh together with the others.
What fate is this?
In the valley, the koa trees is now at the blossom time.
The birds are singing.
When are we going to be released?
When we look up at the sky, the sky looks so small and narrow."

(Tape stops and then resumes)

SN: "In the mornings, the revelies and the trumpet sound.
Sometimes the peace will come,
And the trumpet will be sounded in this valley.
So we must bear the hardship and live together."

That's about it. (Laughs)

(Tape turned off. SN begins on new poem.)

SN: "Ura no tamana ni tsuyu hikari. Kowa no shinme no aokikoto"....
This is the scene in the Honouliuli camps. The valley life in there.

PN: Oh.

SN: First time I ever read this, you know. (Laughs)

PN: Oh yeah?

SN: Yeah.

PN: Good that you kept all this.

SN: This is the poem written by Kawazoe Kempu. It's about the Honouliuli camp. "Kotori no koe ni yo ga akete"....

PN: Wait, wait. Try start all over.

SN: This is the poem or song written by Kawazoe Kempu at the Honouliuli internment camp. First part.

"I woke up in the morning with the sounding of the birds.
I can hear the man clapping his hand"....
That's the traditional clapping to the god in the morning, the Japanese.
You know this. You heard some of them clap their hands. That's what it is. So old folks were there.

"And then in the backyard, the dews are falling over the cabbage. The new shoots of the koa has become green."

Number two.

"The long bridge that has been"....

"Kakeru." What do you call.

"The long bridge over the valley. The sound of the karakara sound of the geta."

It says "karakara."

PN: Yeah, okay.

SN: "Looking at the mountain far above in the morning and in the evening. Looking at the star angers me. Nearby there is a Sendan."

Inia, you know, that green... we call it Sendan, anyway. You know that Inia tree. You know, Inia. There's a fruit that hangs. You know, in the roadside sometimes, you have lot of plants, fruit--well, berries, green berries hanging. You know what they call that? You don't see that too many. Sometime, around on this road here, berries. But in that camp there, they had lot of this Sendan. Anyway, Japanese...(Coughs)

(Tape turned off and then resumed)

SN: "In the backyard, there were many of these Inia or Sendan trees, And the flowers were purple. We sit on the stone and reminisce about the good old days."

"Hitokage".... "The valley is very quiet in the afternoon. The moonlight is so nice and you can hear the footstep of the guard. Look above the barb-wire. How many times did we see the blue moon?"

That's the verse of Mr. Kawazoe.

PN: Who wrote the other one? The first.

SN: Oh, Mr. Kawazoe.

PN: Both of 'em?

SN: Yeah. Look here. (Shows PN the notebook.) Kawazoe
PN: Oh, cannot read Japanese.

SN: You generally write in English.

PN: Could you explain and go over again what is this?

SN: This was written in Kilauea camp. It was a temporary internment camp for the internees in the island of Hawaii. I don't know who wrote this, but this was given to me when I was in Sand Island. It goes this way in Japanese:

"Itsumade tsuzuku kankinzo.

Jyu roku man no migawari de
Kiritachi komoru Kilauea."

Niban.

"Tobira ni orosu tetsunojyo.

Kenmejyu to ni kakomarete tsutanaki hey a no sabishiikana."

Number three.

"Sasayaku koe mo taehatete

Tetsuno no hitoni usu zabuton.

Yume wa kooya okakemeguru."

Four.

"Sude ni takegi no tataretai

Irorino hai no gorogoro to

Ugetsu no keiga moretekuru

Wadachi no ato ni midare saku

Hasatsoya fukaku tsukimiso

Kurikaeshimiru yobe no yume

Haha no tsutanai yokomoji mo

Toko doko wa kiritorare

Magoto futari de ujito nomi."

Shichi wa.

"Muchi ni owarete hara kara no kaitan

Koko ni gojuu nen kibi ni nokoru iminuka

Koko de hateru no kuni no tame

Jyu satsu nanzo koro (Tape garbled) domo

Zairyu minno ikinezio."

Kuban.

"Mawari afuru hi ga aru naraha

Hakko ichiu no rukuen ni

Tewo toriattede takushibeshi."

Owari. That's all.
PN: Roughly translated, what does this....

SN: Well, roughly translated, it means that:

"How long will the internment last?
We are representing the hundred sixty thousand Japanese and
we are now interned in the Kilauea camp.
We are interned in the camp where the iron bars that put us
in a very cold place.
Our stories are getting slower and slower"

Not slower and slower, but anyway, it's getting thinner and thinner....
how do you call it?

PN: Fading away?

SN: Yeah, well, you could hardly hear what we were talking in that camp?

PN: Distance?

SN: Yeah, distance.

"And the futon is rather wet with the surrounding being iron.
The camp fire has gone down.
And the room is very cold.
Mother has wrote in a very meager English, and has been clipped off
with a scissors from place to place.
And she says that they are with the grandchild.
They are healthy and well.
Since the immigrant has came to Hawaii, they have worked in
the cane field.
Fifty year has pass by, and the only remains, it remains for
the immigrant is the sugar cane.
Although we may die in this camp here, maybe die here or in
Colorado,
We will zaïryûyûmin as a lot of Japanese, we try to do our
best.
If we should get together again, I hope we will be able to
meet in this peaceful paradise."

Something like that anyway. (laughs)

PN: And this side is what?

SN: This side is....

PN: Can you just read it? Japanese....

SN: "Kochira wa Hawaii umareno mainajima
Mieko yagiri ni itawashi ya
Tsunoru koe no kankan wa tare no tsukiyama toga iyayara
Chijû ni midareru omoi sugishi tsukihi no itoguruma."
Utau kokoro no melody ni beni wa sashitemo hareni keri.
Nureta ato waza no nukumôrîmo.
Yonaku kayou satono yume
Ai no shigeshi lehua gai kaze
Yume ni tsumetaku kayo nomi
Halemaumau no tsumuji kaze
Kutsu ga fumi yaku jyarino to
Tsukikage kooru shigaramini
Yumiya tooru mi ga naketekuru."

Well, this is life same as in the camp. And expressing what he thinks about life and also life in the camp. That's the gist of it.

END OF TAPE #1-50-4-76
Manabu Nonaka, Japanese, was born in Honolulu, June 4, 1915. His father came from Kumamoto, Japan. His mother was from the same area and came as a picture bride. His father was a harnessman in Honolulu and a taxi driver in Waialua. He passed away in 1922. Manabu's mother remarried several years later. She ran a little store. His stepfather was a pump man for the Haleiwa Hotel.

Manabu attended Waialua Elementary, Andrew Cox (Junior) High School, and Leilehua High School in Wahiawa. After high school, he helped with his stepfather's trucking business, which he later took over when his stepfather was paralyzed. He had the trucking business for over twenty years (1934-57). His other experiences included work for the pineapple company during the Depression years, Civilian Conservation Corps work, and soda fountain work. Manabu sold the trucking business and worked over 18 years with the Board of Water Supply.

He and his wife and children live in Haleiwa.
Tape No. 1-28-1-76

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Manabu Nonaka (MN)

July 5, 1976

Haleiwa, Hawaii

BY: Howard Nonaka (HN)

HN: Tell me something about your family.

MN: Oh, my family came from Kumamoto, Japan. That was my father, and later, his wife, which is my mother. She also came from Kumamoto, Japan as a picture bride. That's all I know about that time.

HN: Do you know when they came?

MN: Not exactly when, but it's somewhere in the 1890s.

HN: And what about your mother?

MN: My mother came somewhere in the early 1900s.

HN: Do you know anything about that?

MN: No.

HN: Okay. Tell me how many in your family?

MN: Oh, in the Nonaka family had two boys. Actually, we had three boys, but one died. And two girls. And I had a stepfather. That was Takabuki. My mother had two child from him so we have two half brothers. And also, we have a step brother, which was Takabuki.

HN: Step brother? One other one besides the two?

MN: That is correct. We have a child of my stepfather, and nothing to do with our mother.

HN: Who's that?

MN: That was Isamu Takabuki. He was born in Japan. He didn't have citizenship, but he operated business in Honolulu. He had a jewelry shop, and later on, he went into clothing. I think he did very well. Of course, I don't know, because I never had any part of his money.

HN: Something about early life? What was a typical day?
MN: Well, early life, we didn't have too much money, so we had to look around for something sweet. We picked dates during the season, plum during the season, mountain apple during the season, and also, sugar cane. In those days, sugar cane was hauled by train, so we had to wait for the train to go by and pick from the sidecar, and that's how we had our sugar cane. That was part of our candy.

HN: Where was the trees? You know, the date trees, and...you used to go all over Waialua for pick 'em or used to be just one place?

MN: Well, the date tree was close by. We usually get up early in the morning. We had to work for the birds to knock it down, because that tree was so tall. And, you know, the date tree you cannot climb because it has a lot of thorns. So we have to go early in the morning in order to be first. We had to get up about 5:30. The season is sometime in the summer, so it wasn't too bad. But we had to get out at break of dawn and be the first to be there, see. We can get enough for ourself.

HN: What about the plums and mountain apple?

MN: Well, the plum and mountain apple was seasonal, too. Well, there was no rush in that, because we had to climb the tree and get it. Mountain apple usually come during the summer, also. But, the mountain apple, we had to go into the valley, which was about five miles. But we went as a group.

HN: All walk?

MN: Yeah. All walk. No cars those days and hardly any bicycles, so we had to walk. But we had a lot of fun. And sometime we fall down from the tree, boy, we make sure we stay low. And also, we used to pick mangos, too. And mangos were a delicacy those days. We didn't have no Hayden mango like we have today. And also, I remember those days that Haleiwa used to be a tourist town, because they had the Haleiwa Hotel, and we used to ask the tourist to drop a nickel. That means to throw money in the water, and we used to dive for 'em. They used to throw five cents, ten cents, 25¢. Sometime, half a dollar, but very rarely dollar. And we used to pick up pretty good. Those days money was something. You pick up twenty, 25¢; that's a hell of a lot of money compared to today.

HN: What you used to do with the money?

MN: Of course, that money was our money, so we spent it whatever we wanted to.

HN: And what you guys used to do with it?

MN: Well, they had a candy store. Actually, they had one, but things were so cheap. Anyway, moneys was worth so much before. You know, a can of sardine used to cost maybe four cents, which today I think you can buy for 25¢. And also, devil meat. We used to pick 'em for two, three cents. Today, I guess you have to pay twenty cents for it.
HN: That's the kind of stuff you used to buy with your 25¢? Buy candy, eh?

MN: No. We used to buy candy, and also, sometime when we had quite a bit of money, we used to go to the restaurant, order sandwich and take it up.

HN: That used to be delicacy? Ordering sandwich?

MN: Well, that's a real occasion.

HN: Whose idea was to go dive for the money?

MN: Well, no matter (where) you go, where you find tourist, you find kids asking for money. Naturally the tourist oblige.

HN: So you guys was swimming in the water?

MN: 'As right. You got to dive for the money.

HN: Yeah. That's in Anahulu Stream?

MN: That's right. They used to have a bridge going across Haleiwa Hotel. Tourist used to come by the train, and they have to go across the beach to get to the Haleiwa Hotel. So then, we stay in the water. We tell 'em, "Drop a nickel." And you know the deep place was about ten, 15 feet. Sometime we can't go down to get the money. But the older boys was good enough. They go way down to get the money. And, you know, the good divers, they make quite a bit of money, too. Some people used to make two dollars, three dollars.

And in those days, two dollars, three dollars was hell of a lot of money. You know, we used to work in the cane field when we was very young. Say, about ten years old, we used to only get 25¢, 35¢ for the whole day.

HN: Okay. What other recreation did you guys have those days?

MN: Well, recreation was very limited those days, and we had to make our own recreation. So what we used to do was we had Anahulu Stream right close by. And we used to make akakai boat. Akakai those days used to come so tall. Used to come better than eight feet. So, we bundle 'em up together, and we tie it up and shape it like a boat, and we used to ride on it. We go fishing, and go joy riding up and down the Anahulu Stream.

HN: What is that? The akakai?

MN: Well, that's a weed. I still see it growing, but it doesn't grow as tall as it used to. It's a weed growing in the water that float if you cut it and bundle it together.

HN: How did the river look then?
MN: Well, the river, then, was not as much polluted as today, and it was much shallower than what it is now, because those days was doing natural; no digging was done by any mechanical equipment.

HN: No boats, then, in the river?

MN: There used to be some fishermen. Very few, but the fishing boat used to be more close to the ocean, the mouth of the river.

HN: Those days, what did your father do?

MN: Let's see, my real father I don't remember too much, but I know he used to be a taxi driver when he was in Waialua. But, before that, in Honolulu, he used to be a harnessman. He used to make the harness for the horses. And at Waialua, he was taxi (man). He was one of the few people that own a automobile. And those days, road to Kahuku was nothing but dirt road, so, you can see people didn't have money to take the taxi to go far places.

HN: What about your other father?

MN: Well, my stepfather, he used to be the pump man for the Haleiwa Hotel. The pump was right near the Anahulu Bridge. I don't know, close by to the hotel. Let's say, two, three hundred yards. And that pump used to furnish electricity and water to the Haleiwa Hotel. Haleiwa Hotel was big outfit, then. Haleiwa used to be one of the biggest tourist town. Because they used to come from train, eh. From town. And those days, like I said, then, did not have too much cars, so transportation was mostly from train.

HN: Can you remember how big the hotel was?

MN: Oh, it was big hotel. In those days, let's say 1920, it was comparable to Royal Hawaiian, because Haleiwa used to be a tourist town.

HN: Anything else about the hotel? You remember how used to look?

MN: Well, not exactly because we were not allowed to go in. Only we could see from far, but you could tell that it was a tourist place, because only the rich people could go in there and eat there.

HN: When did your first father die?

MN: My first father died somewhere in 1922 to '23 anyway.

HN: And your mother got remarried when?

MN: Well, my mother remarried about seven, eight years later again. So that's how I get my two half brothers.

HN: And how did you guys live between then?
MN: Well, we had a store, so we made a living. Barely, but we lived alright.

HN: What store?

MN: Well, we had one of the few stores in Haleiwa.

My first father intention was to go back Japan, so, you know, the old people, they all think about to go back Japan, so he lease that land and make the building on there. Today he looks so foolish, but, those days, Japanese thought nothing but going back to Japan. They didn't want to invest too much in Hawaii.

HN: What did you guys sell at the store?

MN: Well, we sell general merchandise. You name it, we got it. We had candy, dry goods, hardware. We had everything.

HN: Where was that located?

MN: Right in the heart of Haleiwa. It's close to...M. Yoshida store, now, which is still standing. That is 66-150 Kam Highway.

HN: So, actually, you guys lived there for real long time? When did you guys move there, across the street?

MN: Yeah, we had to move there, because the party that lease the place to us said he was going make subdivision in there, so we had to move out from there. That was about 15, twenty years back.

HN: What do you mean, 15, twenty years back?

MN: 1939. Somewhere around there.

HN: Then you guys moved across the street? Is that it?

MN: The last remember we moved to here.

HN: And what about the place where you have your trucking next to Sato Barbershop? What about that place?

MN: No, our truckers operated from the place that we had the store, because I used to put my truck inside that garage, remember? And that truck, all of us went in the back of that place. So, I think, we lived there thirty to forty years. My lifetime.

HN: You can describe that place little bit?

MN: Well, that place was right on Kam Highway. In those days, our store was pretty big. And later on, when I went into trucking business, we made that as a garage. The place was kind of big compared to the other places that the other people had.

HN: How many bedrooms, like...
MN: Well, we had three bedroom. Of course, lot of the kids had to sleep together.

HN: What do you remember about kitchen stuff, anything like appliances?

MN: Well, in the early days, we had electricity, but we had no stove. We used to have kerosene stove, and our kitchen was on the ground floor; our living quarters was one step above.

HN: Kerosene stove, what? You can describe that?

MN: Well, depend on the family. We had a three burner, because we had quite a big family. And in those days, kerosene was so cheap, too. I remember it was maybe ten cents. Compared to today where you have to pay about a dollar for a gallon.

HN: How did that work?

MN: Well, it work similar like a gas stove. The only thing, it wasn't too dangerous because kerosene doesn't explode. That's the only reason why they went into kerosene stove.

HN: Was one of those pump things, then?

MN: No. You don't have to pump. The thing automatically flow into the outlet. I mean, they have a pipe going down and you have the control valve, and you could light any valve that you wanted to.

HN: What about icebox?

MN: Well, icebox was something that we didn't have. Those days, icemen, they make quite a bit of business, because they used to go in town, go get the ice, and deliver it to nearly all the houses, because icebox was a delicacy those days—not delicacy. I mean, very few people could afford an icebox. And also, my stepfather used to do. Because he invested so much in real estate and he needed some money, he used to be in the ice business, too. He used to get up in the morning about, maybe, 1 o'clock, go in town get the ice, and then, deliver house to house. And usually, people took about....fifty pound was a big amount. Usually 25 pound, 15 pound. Very few people took fifty pound.

HN: Okay. Nothing else? What kind food do you remember eating then? What was the main diet?

MN: Well, our main diet was mostly fish, because fish used to be cheap, those days. The fishermen used to catch the fish, and the wife used to peddle the fish. So you could get a bunch of akule which was maybe five, six pound for 25¢. And because was near the ocean and river, fish was kind of....we eat plenty fish. Meat was very expensive, so.....not expensive, but compared to those days, was expensive. We only made about one dollar one day for ten hours work.
HN: What about chicken and eggs, like that?

MN: Chicken, we used to have our own. Everybody used to raise their own chicken so they can get their own eggs. So whenever we had an occasion, we had to kill the rooster or hen, whichever it was to have, you know, party. And this is one of the delicacy, chicken hekka. Today is common, but those days was delicacy.

HN: You used to cook 'em in big woks? That's how you used to cook?

MN: No, not exactly. Those days we didn't have wok too much, but, well, we used to have that cast-iron big frying pan. So that's what we used for cook over the stove.

HN: Okay, what you fed the chicken?

MN: Those days, like anything else, chicken feed was cheap so at least we could afford chicken feed. At that time, we were selling chicken feed, so it wasn't too bad. But other people had to buy it from the store, but for few cents a pound.

HN: What about fishing? You used to go fishing all the time, eh?

MN: Well, my younger days, I used to be crazy about fishing and those days, they had so many fish. I'm talking about something when I was a teenager, you know. 1920s. We used to go the river or the mouth and we used to hook papio, holehole. During the season, papio, I used to hook about hundred, hundred fifty. And holehole...holehole was smart fish, then. Still is today. During the season, we used to have the baby moi and we hook lot of ooama, too. And we used to catch lot of shrimp. And that shrimp, we used to eat. We use it for okazu, too, just like aside for the rice. And we used to pick some seaweed, but some of the vegetable, we used to raise, so we didn't have to buy too many things.

HN: What kind vegetables you remember you eat a lot?

MN: Well, vegetable, like anything else, green onion is the most common. And we used to raise our own. So we used to raise, like radish, lettuce, and karasena. But those days wasn't too bad because we didn't have to buy insecticide, because there wasn't too much insect then. All we had to worry about was watering the plant.

HN: What was your favorite dish, then?

MN: I like seafood. I still like my seafood, so, mostly, I used to catch my seafood, like the small papios which measure about two, three inches. Today it's illegal, but those days, wasn't illegal. And shrimp, which we fry it, and which you could cook in soyu. And vegetable, too. Cook it. Some (vegetable) we could afford (to buy).

HN: What about tako? Who taught you how to look for tako?
IVIN: Well, tako came naturally to me, because I follow this one person. Well, I had to learn. As long as you follow anybody, you just watch how he catch stuff so you can catch.

I used to love my tako, and I used to catch enough tako right around the Haleiwa area from, let's say, the Haleiwa Park to the Waialua Park today. And those days, at least you know when you go squidding, you know you catch tako. But today, you got to be very lucky to catch one tako.

HN: That's 'cause you don't go diving anymore there.

MN: Well, I do go. Very seldom, but...you know, when you go pick ogo, then, maybe, sometime you lucky. You see one tako. You see one, mostly likely you'll catch it because tako is not that smart.

HN: (Laughs) What about stuff like opihi and ogo, like that? Used to have more before?

MN: Well, opihi was something we had to go Waimea Bay to get, and we wasn't that good a swimmer so, that was left up to the bigger boys who pick some opihi. But today, I don't think we have any there already.

HN: And used to be big kind opihi or small?

MN: No. It wasn't big. Waimea Bay maybe, had. Yeah, they might still have some, but used to be always small.

HN: What about ogo?

MN: Ogo, you find plenty in Haleiwa Bay. It wasn't dirty like it is today, but there was plenty from before.

HN: And what about before Haleiwa Bay, you know, they built the breaker. How did that look?

MN: Well, the breaker, in a way, I think it was good, because it protect—the main purpose of the breaker was to protect the fishermen. Fishing boats. and I think it did work, but it kind of changed. Like I say, I used to go squidding. It kind of changed the way the squid go, too, because certain area used to be clean, but after they make the breakwater, it differ. You get dirty. And the water don't go out until you get a big rough then you get it clean, but, how often do you have a big rough like that?

HN: How did the beach (Haleiwa park) look then?

MN: Well, not many people used to use the beach, so it was clean. And the water was really clean. I remember before going into...right in front Gerry's, looking for tako and those days you can see the bottom from the top just clear. Today you go there, you hardly can see the bottom.

HN: What about education?
MN: Well, I had the education up to twelfth grade. We had only Waialua Elementary School then, so, our younger days was spent in Waialua. And Andrew Cox (School) was located in Waialua. Andrew Cox used to have till eighth, so from ninth grade we had to go Leilehua High School which was in Wahiawa.

HN: How did you guys get to Wahiawa?

MN: Well, wherever, we had to pay our ride there, so we had somebody taking cars up there. Well, we paid him so much a month. Let's say, about four dollars a month. Yeah, four dollar a month. Those days, gasoline, everything was so cheap, so four dollar—the party, as long as you had the four or five customer, you can make a go of it.

HN: Is that kind of unusual when you were going to high school?

MN: Yeah. Well, those days, not many people had a opportunity for high school, but I was fortunate.

HN: How was schooling then? Strict?

MN: Yeah. Those days, especially the elementary days, I remember getting spanking coming home, but today you no find that. But I think this was good, because the teachers can control the kids, especially in elementary school. Well, I can't say that much for high school, but elementary school, I think, should be like that.

HN: What kind of rules did they enforce?

MN: Well, you can't get out of line. Today I see the parents come in and they get out of line, too, but those days...I guess the parents were brought up different, too, because...they expect the kid to get spank. So that anything you do naughty or you don't pay attention or anything like that, you get spank for it.

HN: What stuff you learned, then? Do you remember elementary?

MN: Well, I would think what is today and what is before hadn't differed too much because you still have American history, English, and you have the verb, noun. I guess they don't stress too much another thing, except today you have more opportunity for trade school. Those days, we didn't have that too much.

HN: What did you think the purpose of school was when you was going?

MN: Well, in those days like today, I guess. It's the same thing that you have to go school to learn. In those days was harder because we had walk to school. No such thing as riding in bus. So we have to walk to Waialua Elementary. But intermediate, we used to go with a bus. But those days, they didn't used to charge that much.
HN: How's about describing a typical school day.

MN: Elementary?

HN: Anything that you remember.

MN: Well, elementary wise, I don't remember too much, but I remember having fun, because we used to play hookey a lot.

HN: What did you do when you played hookey?

MN: Well, we come back. We didn't go home, but we went home when school was pau. Make believe that we went to school.

I had a friend with me. He and I always used to get together, say, "Eh, let's not go school." So, we didn't go to school too much and still then we made out alright.

(Windchimes in background.)

MN: We had to ride a bus to go intermediate, but, of course, those days parents stressed quite a bit on education, so we had to study some. In intermediate and high school.

HN: Remember about playing hookey? Where did you guys go?

MN: Well, we went down to the beach like anything else. We go fishing, we wade in the water. That's about all we did.

HN: Do you remember any adventures that you had when you did that?

MN: No, was fortunate we got out of trouble. We had no narrow escape that I can think of.

HN: Okay. What kind of people were in school then? Mostly Japanese?

MN: Yeah, those days, you found mostly Japanese, because like this community used to be most Japanese and Filipino then. Today you find the ratio different, because you find more Filipino than Japanese. In those days, Japanese was more than the Filipino. The people working in the plantation used to be more Japanese, and Haleiwa-Waialua was a plantation town, so you find that the people that worked here...Japanese or Filipino. Few Hawaiians. Very, very few haoles. Hardly, I would say.

HN: Where did the haoles---they sent their kids up to Punahou or something?

MN: Well, they used to send up Wahiawa, like Leilehua. They used to have school in Wahiawa, too. The rich one, of course, they used to go Punahou.

HN: Okay. How did you get along with the other kids those days?

MN: Thinking back, we used to play marble quite a bit, and I used to be pretty good in marbles. So we used to fight a lot, but we played good,
I think. Fight, but you can just patch it up fast.

I used to be good in marbles, so what I used to do was I used to play with them. I win all the marbles, agates, and I used to sell 'em back to them. Say, those days I used to sell hundred marble, five cents, and agates, I don't remember. Well, I'd say maybe 25 for a nickel.

HN: What other games were popular then?

MN: Football was popular then, but we had no field, so we used to go back and play. But actually, those days we had to make our own or find our own places to play. Like, for instance, basketball court. There were no basketball courts, so we had to make our own basketball court and play. Football was the same. Today the kids are fortunate. At least, they get basketball court, and at least they can play tennis. Our days no such thing as tennis.

HN: No ethnic games you remember?

MN: Ethnic? You talking about Japanese game? No. Nothing in particular. The Filipino old man used to play....I used to remember them playing the kickball with that squareballs, eh. That's the only thing I remember, but the Japanese—aside for card game like hanafuda, like that. And we used to see them play their specialty.

HN: What kind of community stuff did you remember? Any parades or community get-togethers?

MN: Well, those days community was very small. I remember when we had a big occasion, we used to go with train. We ride the train at Haleiwa Hotel, and we used to go Kaena Point to go picnic. This was one of the few times that we had an opportunity to ride the train. We used to have picnic there, and we used to enjoy this, because there was very few picnic then, because money was concerned.

HN: How much is the train then?

MN: I really don't know, because we didn't have the chance to ride because we didn't have money to ride the train. The only time we did was like that occasion that I just talk about. That time, well, either it was free or it was cheap and our parents pay for it.

HN: How was that train sectioned? What kind seats? You had first class, second class?

MN: I guess they did have, but I don't remember too good, because like I say, I hardly rode train. Train was most important those days, and the train went up to....if I remember correctly, went up to Kawela Bay. And people depended on the train more than anything else, because, I guess this is one of the cheapest transportation. And the kids from Pupukea side used to come by train to go to Waialua Elementary. As far as tourist, I think they had the special coach for that. That train went from Haleiwa Hotel all the way to town, which is now at King Street.
and Aala Street. That was the main station in town.

HN: Okay. Let me go into your jobs. Right after high school, you...

MN: Well, during the high school days, I used to play baseball, too.

HN: You used to get paid for doing that?

MN: No. I used to help my stepfather. He had an express business, so right after I do anything, after high school or after I played baseball, I had to help my stepfather, because he never had any helper. He used to be in the trucking business, which I later took over.

And right after high school, I came out in the Depression days of 1933. So those days was really the Depression years. So, we had no job opportunity to... they had an opening at Hawaiian Pine for us which pay $1.40 for ten hours of work. I worked in the pineapple field two years. I used to do all kind of job. Trucking. I mean, we used to pack the pineapple, we used to pick the pineapple, and we used to insecticide the pineapple. We used to cut the top of the pineapple, also. Those days, they used to cut the top. They don't do that anymore but at that time....

After two years, because of this Depression, the government made the Civilian Conservation Program (CCC) which paid two dollars for six hours of work. So my luna didn't want me to go because I used to be in the planting gang in the pineapple, and he like me, but I said, "Chee. No way, because I can get two dollars for six hour work where I was getting $1.40 for ten hour work."

HN: You can describe, maybe, picking and packing little bit more? Like, I know not like it is today, right?

MN: Yeah, picking pineapple those days....well, the same thing. You know, those days, pineapple was pick because, I guess, they used to sell so good. They used to plant the pineapple in the hills. I mean we used to call that pali. And we had to go in that line, pick it up on our....bag that is made for picking pine. And we used to put full in there. We used to come out and those days the luna was strict. They really was pushing. It's just like it wasn't compulsory, but they push you, so you have to make so much load. And you do this for ten hours. 'As a lot of work.

HN: How many pounds was one load?

MN: I'll say we used to take about forty to fifty pound easily. Sometime more than that, because the good guys, you be surprised. They could carry about 75 to hundred pounds. But they got to really pack it good. Not anybody can do that now.

HN: Tell me about spraying and about packing.

MN: Spraying those days was funny. They used to spray tobacco dust. You don't believe this, but they used to put tobacco dust on the pineapple.
Those days, I think, scientifically it wasn't too good, so they used to put even nail in the pineapple. And we used to do that. Tobacco dust and we do that, we had to put something over our nose, because that thing is strong.

HN: What was the nail in the pineapple for?

MN: I actually don't know.

HN: In the pineapple plant?

MN: Yeah, right on top of the pineapple. One nail.

HN: Just pound nail on every one?

MN: No, no. Just drop a nail. I guess, maybe for iron. I don't know. But those days, maybe I was in the experiment gang. They were trying everything. They try anything.

HN: What kind stuff do you remember trying?

MN: Oh, otherwise than that, I don't remember too much, but I always think, "Gee, what these guys doing this for?" But I was there to work, not to think. I was getting paid $1.40.

HN: Ten hours?

MN: Ten hours. But in those days, we used to board at the camp where all the men stay. So, the house was free, but you had to pay for your food which is prepared for you three meals a day. And those days, we pay only eight dollar half for one month. That was three meals a day. And you pay eight dollar half. That was cheap, but our pay was cheap, too.

HN: Who used to provide food?

MN: Well, that, they had certain people who used to...that used to be their bread and butter. In other words, they make money out of us by charging us that much which we thought was reasonable. They make money so much.

HN: Was just camp cooks?

MN: Yeah, something like that. Well, they had permission from the pineapple company to go in there to feed the people. Those days, they deduct everything. They could deduct directly from the payroll. They had that much power. They had permission to (Tape garbled).

HN: You remember getting any benefits or they had any health plans?

MN: No benefits whatsoever. But fortunately, I didn't get hurt, so I didn't find out if you get hurt, so much, but, actually, those days, the people had no benefit. Because they had no union then. So, even us, even we were below 18 (years of age) we used to work ten hours. No labor law, I guess.
HN: Maybe we should go into conservation...

MN: Oh, yeah, the CCC was very exciting, because, well, the government make that because it was Depression year, and we were different from these people that was in the camp...

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

MN: ...paid better than them, because we had to pay for our own kaukau. In other words, we was getting paid two dollar a day, five days a week. But when we were nearby, like, say the trail was maybe two, three miles, we used to go back and forth. But after the trail got further in, we had to camp in the forest so that we can go to the road nearby. And, you know, Civilian Conservative Corp, our job was to plant trees, but mainly was to make trail. The trail was not for car but was for the individual.

HN: What did they think was for? Hikers?

MN: Actually, I don't know what it was for. But I think it was because of Depression they had to make some work for us, and this was the purpose. Those days the average worker like myself used to be somewhere about 18 to 22, 23 (years old) was about the oldest, I think. And the oldest people in there was 26, 27 who was the boss. And when we go into the mountain, then we had to pay for our food. So naturally, everybody put up so much money, and the company provide the cook. The company pay for the cook, too, and all the utensil came from the Civilian Conservative Corp which is something like the Army. And the cook was paid by them. I remember one occasion, because we never like the way the cook was cooking and was feeding us---he only give us a set menu. Like, for instance, say, Monday, stew. Tuesday, maybe, give us sardine, and.... Wednesday, he give corn beef cabbage. This are the thing he used to do, and we know he was getting paid way better than us, so we sign a petition to throw him out. And they accepted this. And they threw him out alright, but they didn't give us another cook. So unfortunately, I was in the position that I was helping him, so I had to be the chief cook. But they didn't pay me the chief cook pay. They gave me the same amount of money and I had to get up early in the morning, 3:30, 4:30 in the morning to cook pancake and biscuit for the boys that are working there. They promise cook, but didn't come, so I had to do that for....I think was six months. But they never give me a cook pay. They just give me two dollar a day. So they made out. They was lucky. I was the unlucky guy.

HN: How many people in one gang you used to cook for?

MN: We used to have about 35 people in that gang. Our main business was to make trail, plant tree sometime.

But, you know, those days was all young people, so, the foreman was smart enough to make hukipau. I mean by hukipau, they gave us so many pin to make finish. They give maybe three boys to one gang, they say, "Okay,
you fellow take these three pin. That's all for the day. That's all you fellow going do. You fellow pau that, you fellow go home or you fellow can go back to the camp, whichever it was... so you know, the three pin. If it were left up to us to, like I say, day work, we wouldn't finish the three pin. But because it was three pin hukipau, we finish that maybe in two hours, and then we had to--- we was fortunate. We can go home. Of course, the job was more kapulu, but 'as what we used to do.

The trail was... something to remember because (Coughs) today I don't think we can go up there, because the trail was terrific. We used to take short cut and used to be so steep. On our way back, we used to jump down. Today I go up there, I look at it, I say, "No way. Can't do it no more."

HN: How you used to clear the trail?

MN: We were provided saw, axe, and they had a surveyor that put the pin as he go by. So, he tell you, "You going to cut this much."

I remember one day we was working on the steep place. We had to have rope around our back because it was too steep, eh. And one of the boys was facing toward the gulch. Anyway, he was a peewee anyway. He was taking a leak. And this stone came down unexpectedly. He just roll down. And he roll down like a log. We thought he was dead. But when we went down there, he was alright.

Another thing about the CCC was, you see, we had two or three dogs there. And there were a lot of mountain pig up there, so, everyday the dog go after the pig. So if the dog go after the pig, the man got to go after the dog. So let's say they catch the pig maybe 8:30 in the morning. By the time they come back was 4 or 5 o'clock in the evening. Around that time. And we used to do lot of things with the pig. But the pig was hard to eat because it was smelly. You know, the mountain then Maile Kanoa hole trail, Koolau mountain. The pig over there smell like hell, and you can't do nothing about it, because we make sausage out of it, but it still smell. We make kalua pig out of it, you can't eat it, because it smell too much. Not all mountain pig smell like that, but I think get something to do with what they eat. And we used to catch pig everyday. Just about. Very few days that we miss a pig.

HN: Somebody had special job to go hunt the pig?

MN: Well, yeah. The foreman, he like hunting pig so he had two or three people with him. And everytime the dog go, they had to go, too, because they have the dog loose. There's no way. They like their dog, they got to go for the pig. They always bring back a pig, even-- but, no, sometime they don't. They just cut 'em up. When they catch the mountain pig, the first thing they had to do was skin the thing because it gets stink, eh. So they had to skin 'em first, and take out the balls, eh, or not the thing come smelly. Well, unfortunately, they bring 'em back, but we can't do anything about it.
HN: So you shoot the pig?
MN: Yeah. They had guns so they could shoot the pig.
HN: Okay. Going back to the CCC, what kind of trees you guys planted?
MN: All kind of trees, but mostly paper trees. I remember planting paper tree. This was to keep the dirt there.
HN: Do you remember any other types at all?
MN: No, I don't, because we very seldom planted trees. I think on only two occasion I remembered planting trees. Our main job was to make trail. That trail was about six feet wide.
HN: That's big trail.
MN: Yeah. This was mainly for hiking, or....but not for cars anyway.
HN: Okay. What about free time. After huki, what you guys used to do?
MN: After we finish early, well, if we were not camping up in the mountain, then we had to come back. So we come back to the truck. And we had to wait for the rest of the boys to come down.

When we was in the mountain, up there, the weather was so cold, you take jello, for instance. You put 'em in a bottle, you put 'em in the water, the thing freeze. So even how much work you do, how much sweat you got in your body, you still can't sleep, because it was so cold out there. We sleep in a tent and we had the Army cot.

In the free times, we play cards. Not too much gambling because not enough money anyway. That was about all the recreation we had, because we were in mountain. We can't do anything.
HN: What about your shell collection, then?
MN: Oh, yeah, I remember the shells we used to pick up. When making the trail, on certain kind of trees, you find this shell. Live shell. We used to collect those things. Today I don't know if can find any, but they were all different colors. And as you go from place to place, you look for the certain kind of trees that has these shells and mostly you find it. Some were big and some were small. But never two the same color. I mean, they were identical, but marking was never the same for any of the two shell.
HN: Where were the shells on the trees?
MN: It was below the leaves. I think they live on that certain kind of tree's leaves. I had a collection, but somehow I misplace it and I can't find it any more. But most of the boys that worked there, they made a collection of it, too.
HN: How long do you remember working over there?

MN: Well, I worked there practically two years. We worked five days a week, thirty hours a week. And every payday, we went into town to get our paycheck. We were paid two dollars, so, naturally, we were getting paid about once every two weeks. So, we used to get twenty some odd dollars every two weeks.

HN: When did you start this (CCC job)? What year?

MN: Well, this was in somewhere around 1935. This was in Depression year.

I remember one instance, we had a forest fire. Pupukea Forest fire. Called out the Army. They called out the WPA gang, and we were the last to call out. But fortunately, our foreman knew about forest fires. He made a windbreak and somehow we quenched the fire. But the fire was terrific. We were very scared of it, because there were lot of dry ferns. So we stick near the valley where there was water. And the thing about forest fire which was dangerous was the sparks that flew from one tree to another tree. This is what we had to stop. It was a scary incident, but everything turned out alright.

HN: What was the WPA?

MN: The WPA (Works Progress Administration) was something like the Civilian Conservative Corp. During the Depression year, the government formed this WPA to give job to the old people. The CCC was consisted of younger people. And the WPA men are older than the CCC.

HN: You know, this job, did it go on for more than two years?

MN: If I remember correctly, it went on for nearly four years, but within that two years I quit the job. But, I think it helps the younger people that came out from school and the younger people that didn't have a job. I think this help them quite a bit.

HN: What did you do after that?

MN: Well, after that, fortunately, I had a job at the Post Exchange. There was an opening there, and their pay was little better. I started at sixty dollar a month. And we work eight hours a day for six days. The place was open seven days a week, so some people had to work on Sundays also.

And at Post Exchange--it was for the servicemen; all our customers were servicemen. Officers, officers' wife, and soldiers. We were there to serve the military people. And it was a soda fountain and a sandwich shop. So what I mainly did was jerk soda. I learn soda fountain business and also how to make sandwich. I remember those days was five cents for one tuna fish sandwich. Lettuce and tomato is five cents. Cheese sandwich, five cents. Today I don't know what it costs to buy those sandwich.
HN: How long did you work there?

MN: Well, I was there for about two years. And after the fountain, I went back in the kitchen. I learn how to cook little bit and make sandwich. And those days, we had to slice the bread, because the soldier used to make the bread, but in order to make the sandwich we had to slice. We were a busy Exchange, so we used to slice about hundred fifty to two hundred loaves bread. And in order to do that, you had to learn how to slice, use the knife. And many instance I took off quite a bit of my skin, too, instead of learn how to use knife.

HN: This was just before the War, yeah?

MN: It was in 1935 to 1938. '37 or '38. Somewhere around there.

HN: Remember any racial discrimination on the Post?

MN: No, at that time, it wasn't too much, because, mainly the people who were working there was Orientals. And, of course, you didn't find too many haoles working that kind of job. As far as discrimination, it wasn't too much, because it was before the War.

HN: Right after that, didn't they get all---Japanese get kicked off the Post?

MN: Well, I don't remember that, because after '37, my stepfather had paralysis on the job. He had a trucking business. So I had to quit right there and then and take over his job.

HN: So that's when you started trucking then?

MN: Yeah. I started trucking from somewhere in 1937, '38, like that. I did that business for twenty years. And during the War, just as the War started, the 442 (Infantry) were organized. I volunteered for that 442, but, unfortunately, my job was essential for the store, so I was left back. I didn't go to the 442. I did my trucking business for twenty years.

And during the War since really was essential, we had all the gas we needed from whoever was giving a gas coupon. Fortunately, we did make money those days, because we had to take out vegetables to the wholesalers, and on our way back, we brought merchandise to the stores. So, as far as the hauling was concerned from Honolulu to Waialua, we were the only ones. When I say we, we had about six other truckers besides myself, and we were the only ones that was doing this kind of job. So we were the only ones getting the gas, because it was essential for the population in Waialua-Wahiawa. And I remember working long hours in '43, '44 because the farmers---we used to have lot of part time farmers.

These plantation people went into farming, and they raise all kind of vegetables. These vegetable had to be brought to one essential point where they distribute these vegetable. The part time farmers were very lucky, because they was making real good money. And, of course, in those
days, whatever we raise here had to be sold here. Because not too many things was coming from the Mainland, anything the farmers raise, they make good money on it. Fortunately, in those days, we didn't have too much insects, so, whatever they raise, tomato, celery... cabbage, and all those things, they didn't have to use too much insecticide.

HN: So everyday, you used to go into town, then?

MN: Yeah, that's right. We used to go six days a week. And we had to haul what the farmers raised, because this what (we) was getting the gas for. They didn't limit our gas. We didn't have enough coupon, we go ahead and ask for more, and they gave it to us. This is why we couldn't refuse hauling anything.

We put in long hours, because after delivering the vegetable, we had to pick up the merchandise, come back to the stores, and we had to unload. And after we unload, we had to go pick up vegetables to make ready for go in the next day.

HN: What kind vegetables, mostly, you remember hauling?

MN: Well, the vegetables was all kind vegetables. Like stringbeans, cabbage, celery, tomato. Of course hasu wasn't essential. Not too many part time hasu planters. But, seldom banana. Not too much fruits. Carrots. You name it and we had to haul it.

HN: Where were most of the farms at that time?

MN: During those days, the plantation open up some fields for their men to go into part time farming. This was their plantation workers' part time. I think they made more money out of the farm than they was making at the plantation.

HN: Where were the fields?

MN: Oh, the field were located where they used to raise sugar cane. Where the sugar company thought they could give to this farmers.

HN: But you don't know where they are now? You know, what location?

MN: Well, the location was somewhere around in Waialua area where the two road is by Achiu Place. There was quite a bit out there and somewhere around the high school. It was scattered in there, but fortunately, plantation released some of the land for the part time farmers.

HN: What about Kamaloa? I heard Kamaloa was a big farm community.

MN: Yeah, Kamaloa was farm, but they always had been farm. Just lately, the place is not a farm place, but, those areas, there's always been a farm place. They raise commodities like green onions, swiss chard, and cabbage. They didn't go into anything big like tomatoes or celery. They went into everyday crop, like white cabbage, eggplant, and....like I say,
HN: Every morning six trucks used to go out?

MN: Yeah, there was more six trucks. I say about six truck, but probably used to be more. But this truck service, Waialua alone had three trucks, so Wahiawa had more than that. We service Wahiawa and Waialua, and because of the gas, we couldn't say no to anybody.

HN: You mean anybody would call you up and say pick something up, you have to go there?

MN: That is right. If it was essential, we had to, because we had the gas.

HN: What did you guys bring down, mostly?

MN: Well, Waialua being Oriental, Filipinos, the main concern was rice. And during those days, we had to pick this up from...the government. Because the government used to issue all this items. Everything was ration, so whatever the government issue to the stores---of course, the stores put in their request. The request was forwarded to the government, and, I guess, they got their just share. But some instance, it wasn't fair, but, I guess, many instance like this happen.

HN: Do you remember any of those?

MN: Rice was the main commodity, but, like anything else....they had fruits. I mean canned fruits. There were no fresh fruits those days, because you can't get space from the Mainland to Hawaii for fresh fruits, because of the War. So they had lot of canned goods, fruits. They had corn beef, and anything else the government issue, but the brand was all altogether different because those days, big companies had to make it for the government, and the government issued the foods out.

HN: How expensive was the merchandise coming in wartime?

MN: I think the government was very fair. And what they did was they set a price ceiling, so that people don't get cheated. So, they set a price that the people had to sell.

But unfortunately, sometime, it didn't work out that way. Especially, during the later part of the year when they are allowed to bring in fruits, like oranges and apple and some other pears and fresh fruit. And these fresh fruits, certain time came in spoiled which we had to sell anyway, because they issue it to you. In order to do this....the wholesaler had to attach something good to the bad. Of course, this wasn't fair, but they had to get rid of the product they got from the government. The government didn't allow this, but nothing they can do, because they issuing the items to the wholesalers.

We had the stores that we had to haul for. You know our stores that we used to haul before. And they used to issue everything under one name. Like, for myself, I used to be on the Takabuki Express. So, issue
their certain item, like, candy or gum, or some candies that came in. If it wasn't too much, they put under my name, and they want me to distribute to the stores. So, I had to use my judgement, and try to be fair and give the right proportion that I think was fair.

HN: Those days....what did you spend your money on since there wasn't too much to buy?

MN: Yeah, those days, you made money, but you can't spend on it, because as I say, we used to work from early in the morning, say 5:30 in the morning till maybe 10 o'clock in the night. After you eat and sleep, you have to go back to work again.

So, the only recreation we had was, probably, on Sunday, Saturday night. I used to go play cards. Of course, this was War days, so blackout. So whenever we went, we had to come home the next morning, because of the blackout. I remember that was pretty hard to drive with that blackout lights, because it was covered and had the small spot. So that instead of get into accident, we always used to stay at the house till morning time. Then we used to come back.

HN: Remember anything else about blackouts and stuff?

MN: Yeah. I remember, too, we made lot of money. Oh shit, I don't know how we spent it, but I know we didn't save too much.

All the people, they were in the right place, they made money. Like I said, this plantation people that went into part time farming, they made more money on the farm than they made on the plantation. Whatever vegetable they raised, no matter how bad it was, they got some money for it, because there was always market for it. All this product went to one central location, and the government issue the thing.

HN: Besides blackout, no other hardships during the War?

MN: Fortunately, after the first Pearl Harbor attack, we had quite a bit of siren going on, but nothing happen here. Of course, they were strict. Like I say, you had to save money, because you can't go out. You can't go to a show. And those days, no TV.

HN: No shows, even? They cancelled all that?

MN: I don't remember that but I can (remember) only that we have no time for show. So, maybe, later, about two years later, they had some kind of show, but, before that definitely no show.

HN: How did the blackout work?

MN: Well, the blackout was....oh, yeah, first of all, we were forced to make bomb shelter, too, so we had to go in the back and dig a hole and put whatever things we had on the top to try to keep the thing safe. But blackout was considered working, too, because, I guess, not too much trouble that I heard of.
HN: Weren't there Army people all over the place like that?

MN: Well, no. The Army people was too busy, I guess, watching for the invasion to come in, so, as far as the houses was concerned, there were not too many Army people around. Of course, the Army people were near the shoreline.

I remember a fisherman. Those days, it was a long time before they let 'em go fishing, see. And when they do go fishing---of course, the aliens was all pick up and sent to concentration camp, but the citizen were allowed during the War to go out and fish. But when they did go out, they had to have soldiers with them. They came back, and they was watching how they sell the fish.

The fish was so expensive, but, you know, everybody had money, so price (didn't) mean anything, so there were offers. All different kind of price. Of course, they had to go by---they always set a price to sell, too.

But lot of this fish was sold by the Army people. And they didn't want money. They want whiskey. We had permit to buy one quart whiskey a week. So, naturally, everybody that was allowed to buy whiskey, we bought whiskey. But that whiskey we bought, there was no good whiskey. Nothing that was from the Mainland. All was made here during the War, and, you know, the distillers here, they had no experiences whatsoever in making whiskey. So it was just something they put together so fast. So it was pretty hard to drink. But this is what we had to get to buy the fish, because they didn't want money. They want whiskey. Either one quart whiskey, or maybe, two quart. But whatever they ask, we had to give it to them, because otherwise how we going eat fish? We couldn't go fishing anyway. And all the soldiers around the shoreline.

HN: You couldn't even go handpole fishing, like that?

MN: No. We wasn't even allowed to do that during the early part of the War. Well, later part, it got kind of relax, but you couldn't go to the ocean. Soldiers all around there. But I think the soldiers made out, because whatever fishing---there was plentiful fish, because during the time they didn't go fishing, and those days Waialua had quite a bit of fish.

You go out trolling, you could easily catch mahimahi or some other kind fish, like kahala; oh, everything like that. Today, 'as different story again, because you be lucky to catch any fish like that.

HN: So you want to go into your Board of Water Supply job?

MN: Oh, yeah. After twenty years of trucking business, well, I had operation so I had to sell my business. I sold my business, and I went into Board of Water Supply. Fortunate for me, they had an opening. I was 42 years old, then. So, I got the job.

Before that, I had an incident during the trucking business. I had burn. I bought a surplus truck and I had it at this garage. Unfor-
tunately, I was standing right near the gas tank where they had gas inside to wash their hand. The guy threw a match in there, so the thing inflame me from bottom....I caught fire. And I was on fire all the way. 'As funny thing. Human being, oh, boy, you sure can burn! My pants got all burned up and the skin all curl up, and I roll around on the grass. You can't put out the fire. Fortunately, one guy had sense enough to cover me with the blanket. That night somebody took me to Wahiawa Hospital, but I walk in. That night I had pneumonia. I had the chills. I was lucky to come out alive, and go into the Board of Water Supply.

I work there for 18 years. And it was a very interesting job, because you find out how we get our water. I used to work for Board of Water Supply, central district. This is in Wahiawa. We take care the area within Wahiawa, Waipio, Mililani Town, and up to Kuilima. It was a big area, but not too much services.

At first, we used to have Wahiawa water was coming through the tunnel in the mountains. We had 36 tunnels in the mountains. And this was very interesting, because whenever we didn't have enough job, we had to go up to the tunnel. Some place was very weary and it was very scary, because you couldn't see from one end to the other. Here and there, you find cave-in.

By the way, this tunnel was all man-made. In other words, it was all pick and shovel job. And it was six feet high. It was made like a half circle and the width was somewhere about 12 feet. Six feet high and about 12 feet width. And the water used to come through this tunnel. You see, this tunnel run through so many valleys and go to the main source of water, which was about....two and half mile inside when we start walking.

We used to have lot of fun here, because there was lot of banana. Of course, some mountain pig, but we didn't have no dogs or anything, so we didn't go after mountain pig. But we took lot of ferns, kakuma, and we used to bring this home to eat.

Whenever we were slack or whenever the inlet was plug--you don't have water coming out--we have to hike in the mountain two and a half mile. We have to see what was holding the water up. Many time we found cave-in, and many times the entrance was plugged, so we have to unplug it. When I say plug, it was plug by the logs. After a big flood or a big rain like that, lot of logs come into the inlet. So we had to take this out and make the water come to the reservoir which was right at the end of California Avenue.

This was an open reservoir. We had lot of fishing there. Talapia, we had koi, we had funa, too. But those days, because the thing was open reservoir, of course, it was chlorinated. But because of the situation, like open reservoir it was, we couldn't control the cleanliness of the water. Some day it was dirty, because when it rains it get dirty. Because if it rain too much, we had a place to throw this water out. We let the water go instead of putting it to the reservoir, we let it go out. If we think clean enough, then we let it go back into the reservoir. This is the water that Wahiawa
people used to use. So, during the rainy season, quite a bit of time that they had kind of murky water or dirty water. You could tell this by the toilet bowl, or when you take a shower, and you know, when you wash clothes is—when they had interruption in the service, of course, they activate that thing, so, you make the water real dirty. And those days, just like dirt water used to come out, so you had to clean this water out by just letting the water run. But today it's different again, because they abandon the reservoir, and we are going to deep well.

So all the water Wahiawa, Waialua is all deep well water. In other words, you see, it's not even chlorinated. The only time we chlorinate this water is when we find bugs in this water. How can we tell when it get bugs? Well, we have a division to check this. They take sample of water from here and there. And if find they have all bugs in the water, then they had to go and chlorinate it.

Had an incident up Pupukea, Sunset Beach, where some kids or I don't know. We didn't catch the people, but they just open the steel tank reservoir which was about three hundred fifty thousand, and they swam in there. So what they had to do, they just put two gallon Clorox from the top right into the reservoir. This is what we do. Of course, when you drink it, it's diluted so much. One tenth to so many millions gallons of water, so you cannot even smell the reservoir. But this is what they do when they find any bugs or in case anybody complain that something like the incident happen. Then, we have to go and throw Clorox in the water. Otherwise, no chlorination or no fluoridation.

HN: How's about your community organization?

MN: Well, the first club I join was the Waimea. Those days I was very young, and we had a clubhouse which is located behind Haleiwa's Courthouse. I don't know how they got that property and the house, but they had a pool table in there. They had a place for people to stay, too. So this place was a commu...