I was born Meiji 20, August 12th, that means August 12, 1887, in Haneji village, Kunigami county, Okinawa. I was the second oldest son. The first son of the second wife. My father's first wife had three children, second wife had six children. Therefore, there were nine of us, three boys and six girls. My father was a farmer. Yeah, in those days he was pretty old, over 50 years old and did not till the soil. Maybe just weeding. He was good at working with his hands, like making mats, making baskets for fertilizer, and floor mats, tatami and goza, and fish nets. Also he could do carpentry. He was a very handy man. But I am not like him. I did not learn any of my father's skills. I enjoyed spending money. Mother went to the farm to work, but did not do much since there were two maids. Also at that time there were five workmen. At that time the staple of Okinawa was sweet potato. So she would bring sweet potatoes and cook them in a big pot for dinner. A pot full of potatoes! We do the same in the morning; therefore, she would get up early in the morning to cook potatoes. Workers would have that for breakfast and go to the farm. Then Mom would go to the yard for help. When there was a big rain and we couldn't go out to the fields, we would make rope from rice stalks and peel the potatoes. There were 300 bags or so of potatoes stocked in the storage room. So we would sell them or use them for our own use. We could survive because we had a big farm. We had a lot of land.

We planted the seed and harvested a thousand bundles of rice. When we seeded in January and February, the harvest was in June. After harvesting in June, we planted sweet potatoes. In September and October we harvested

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the potatoes. They were big and we could harvest hundreds of bags. Then we placed them in storage. In that area, we had the largest crop of both rice and potatoes.

**Independent at Sixteen**

I became independent at 16. Because my oldest brother was a half-brother, we thought it was best to divide the property while our parents were living. The property which my mother gave me was quite a bit, so my share of the property as younger son was just as big as my oldest half-brother's, although he felt he should be receiving more than me. He only received land from our father and not from my mother. To smooth things out, my uncle stepped in between us and told my brother that he actually had a larger share of our father's property than I did, and that my total share looked big only because it included my mother's property. Because mother's property was bought by her, it belonged to her to give to me. So my brother agreed.

At 16, I began supervising my father's property. Yeah! From then I took some pocket money . . .

Dad let me handle the work the way I wanted, since there were enough workers. There were five workers and myself which made six of us. We worked really hard and people used to watch how hard we worked. It was interesting. I would start early in the morning. Among the workers there was one who was about 40 years old. I would let him take a break to smoke for ten minutes and go to work. At ten o'clock we would take a break for ten minutes, then go back to work. Then at twelve noon we ate. When the maid brought lunch a bit late, I used to scold her so she would bring lunch promptly before noon. Then we would take a break for one hour. Then got to work until sunset. At 3 o'clock or 3:30 the maids would bring a snack since the men were hungry. During the harvesting of rice, the maids would bring *okayu* (soft rice) about 4 o'clock. We would eat *okayu* then go back to work. Our *kaukau* was very superior compared to the other farmers. Yeah, because I would treat them well, they worked hard. They loved to work for us because of the good *kaukau*. Yeah.

**Kaukau**

The poor people's *kaukau* was quite miserable. Potatoes were small, infested with bugs and soft. Other food consisted of vegetable soup with crab from the ocean and also something like *Pake somen* (Chinese noodles).

Those families who had some money and one or two farmhands would serve them different food. Workers ate poor *kaukau*. Farmers ate better *kaukau*. Yeah. They didn't eat together. At our house we served three different kinds of *kaukau*. My old man and mama had one kind, then, I had number two *kaukau*, and the farmhand had another kind. So we had three different kinds.

During the planting season, we would hire 20 to 30 people. At that time we served good food. We would have lots of good food. Relatives
would prepare and bring lots of food. At night we'd have a big feast. We would kill a pig and serve it at dinner. Also they would take home a box of rice—two go (cups) as a gift from us. We are the only house which would give such a fine feast. Later at night young people would get together, play shamisen and dance. We sang songs and danced and had fun. We were very busy on that day in the mountains as well as at home. Cooks had to cut the pork. We had about three men to prepare the dinner. I supervised the party as well as the planting. "You are planting too thin." "You are planting too thick," I would say.

Wahine
At age 17 or 18 my parents wanted me to get married to a classmate of mine. In those days parents arranged marriages. I did not care for her. I was interested in someone who was more attractive. My parents said, "No, no, that girl comes from a good family; the girl you like comes from a poor family, and she has no training. Whereas, the other girl is the daughter of a village head, so she has a good upbringing." I agreed then. They brought over some delicacies. When the family brings special delicacies that night you can sleep with the girl. Fortunately, the girl's mother came and told us the girl had a cold that night and if she could be excused. Since I did not care for her I was pleased. After that I virtually didn't have anything to do with her. There was an aikane of that girl—that aikane was a beauty. I ended up sleeping with her, so I was eventually all pau with my wahine.

No Like School
I only went to school for seven years. In Yagaji, they offered education only up to the fourth grade. If you wanted to continue your education all the way to the eighth grade, it would take a long time and you had to find a boarding place. At that time there was only one secondary school in each county and there were only three counties, namely Kunigami, Nakagami, Shimajiri and in each county there was only one school up to the eighth grade. You had to go to one of them and there were very few who went.

I had to board in order to go to school there. So I was the only one that went to school from Yagaji. There were many graduates. I boarded there and went to school during the second and third year. Then a school was established in Haneji. I went to junior high school in Haneji. Then one year later I no like the school and left. At that time parents did not encourage attending school. When you go to school they said you learn to take advantage of others. Because those people who received education through village support returned to the village to take advantage of others. They would build large houses. Because of that reason, parents would not encourage children to go to school before. When I talked to my half-brother that I was not going to school he would say, "okay" so I did not go to school. But my mother said, "You would regret bumbai. Since you are a smart child, I would like to see you go and get a higher education. You will really regret not going."
"I don't care," I said. "Do whatever you like," Mother said. Then I spent
whatever little money I had. Then I opened a savings account and made some money. I experienced good as well as bad.

**Why Don't You Be Reborn a Smart Person**

When I came to Hawaii, all my classmates who came from the same village had a better education and they would look down on me because I quit school after one year. After I quit school, I would borrow books from my cousin who was a schoolteacher and learned from him. So, I was able to attain the knowledge of a high school graduate. I knew I was smart. In Hawaii I would have arguments with well-educated friends but I would always win. I had a sharp tongue. I would tell the graduates, "With your education you really don't know much. Why don't you be reborn a smart person?" When I was in Yokohama, I bought an English-Japanese dictionary, and after I came to Hawaii I studied English. My friends could not beat me in English.

In Okinawa, we learned in grade school such things as writing, geography, history, reading, and Japanese language from mainland Japan.

**Okinawans Had Tails**

Education in Japan as well as Okinawa is under the same Ministry of Education so it's the same. The Japanese in Hawaii think in Okinawa there are only schools that teach in the Okinawan language and you do not learn Japanese. That's what they thought at the time. When I was a young boy (when I arrived in Hawaii), I was reading a newspaper in front of two or three wabines. This was after the Russo-Japanese War and since the articles were about the war they were very interested and I was reading it aloud to them. I was a little boy then, and they said, "That boy understands Japanese and the newspaper is in Japanese." Then they asked me if there were any schools in Okinawa. What's the sense of listening to stupid girls I thought so I answered them "yes" and they were all surprised. They thought that Okinawans were of a different race. They thought that the Okinawans had tails. There was a lady sitting in front of me and when I stood up she said, "Ay, Oru Same (All Same)." After, I realized they don't know what it was like in Okinawa. Men folks don't understand either because they did not go to school in Japan. They asked if we had a governor and schools. Of course every prefecture has a governor, also schools too. They looked down on Okinawans, therefore we had much hostility. Yeah, then when we wanted to marry with wabines from Japan they would not allow that. I had difficulty getting married to my Japanese Naichi wife, too. They would say Okinawans are just nothing. That was such a long time ago.

**Leaving Home**

I left Okinawa in 1906. I was told in Okinawa that we would make one thousand dollars in three years—daily rate of two dollars. They said when you make two dollars a day and multiply that by two will make four. If I work 25 days a month, there will be a savings of 50 dollars. That will make 50 in a month. If that is so in three years I will make $1000. Because of this I
was sure I would do well in Hawaii. In Okinawa, I had some money and I was making loans to villagers and was receiving interest. So I thought with $1000 in my hand I can make more money.

My mother stopped me from going away. She said, "You have enough to eat at home. You have a farm. You are living well. You don’t have to go to the other island." My father must have been happy for me to go away since I was a big spender. He must have thought I would spend a fortune away. My brother thought it was a good idea for me to go away since all the young men were leaving.

In those days, people immigrating to Hawaii borrowed money from an immigration company. The fare to Hawaii was sixty dollars. My father thought if he gave the fare to me I would never return it. Then my brother decided that it is better to borrow the money from the bank. In this way I would have a sense of responsibility. I came to Hawaii with seventy dollars which was my pocket money.

When I was in Yokohama I got into trouble. In Yokohama, we were at an inn. There were 14 to 15 Okinawans as well as others. I got into trouble over kaukau. For breakfast, they fed us leftover rice from the night before mixed with fresh rice. When Okinawans went to breakfast they would say, "No, no, no, not Okinawans’ turn. Japanese go first." The rice which was served to Japanese was fresh, but later servings were mixed with the last night’s rice. It was sour and we could not eat it. I told my fellow Okinawans: "Don’t eat it." The meals were included in the room rate. I stayed at Sasaki Inn in Yokohama. The headquarters were in Tsukue. I told them about what happened at the inn. Then, they said, "Go ahead and eat at the restaurant and they would pay for the meals." A man about sixty years old from Sasaki was quite upset when he heard that the people at the inn had segregated the Okinawans and fed us sour rice. "They should have thrown out the rice. How much money they getting?" he asked. I stayed three weeks in Japan. I was disliked because of this incident. When I passed the physical exam to come to Hawaii, I was delighted. However, I could not pass the eye exam.

Red Eyes

I had red eyes because I played at night with street girls. That’s how I ruined my eyes. On the third examination, the doctor gave me medicine. Five persons before my turn came, he told me secretly to put the drops in the eyes. So I passed the eye exam then. Just before reaching Hawaii I failed an exam on the boat. This time a woman doctor examined all of us men. She examined the penis and said you have a disease. When I landed I was sent to quarantine on Sand Island. For one week, I was taken care of by a male doctor. On May 7th, I arrived in Honolulu, and I went to Sand Island on the 13th of May. After that, I went to Lihue Plantation and worked there.

The Boat

The name of the boat was Manchuria. It was a big boat. Pake’s. There were only four or five men from Okinawa. The rest of the men were from
Japan. We ate beef everyday. Six people made a group at meals. So they brought six portions. But, most of them were seasick. Two or three of them ate meals. Three men ate six portions at times so it was double portions. When we had leftovers we would wrap them in newspaper, put it in our pockets and eat in between meals. I did not get seasick. I ate everything. I ate biscuits in between so we had excellent kaukau on the boat. Most of the time we slept. Sometimes we went up on the deck to watch the waves or wrestle or play gekken (fencing). It took about 11 to 12 days when I came.

**Lihue: No Time to Rest**

I went to Lihue because the plantation there did not have enough men. Inoshita, camp police, came to Honolulu in order to hire more men. There were just two of us, myself and another fellow who went to Lihue. His name was Ginoza. Two other fellows were there before I arrived, Kina and Zukemura. So, all together there were four. We four slept in one house. There was one parlor, we only slept there. There was a bachelor cook. We paid him five dollars a month for his service. We ate mostly iriko (dried fish), black beans, dried tofu, and noodles. But sometimes we had broiled fish, Aji. In those days fish was exceptionally cheap. It was five or ten cents a pound. It sure was nice.

We started work the next day. We got bango (numbers). For one week new men worked separately. Since we used knives, our hands were blistered. They sure hurt! Fourteen or fifteen of us. We worked together. When we got used to the work we worked among 200 kachi kane (cut cane) men.

It sure was hard work. We had no time to rest. We worked like machines. For 200 of us workers, there were seven or eight lunas and above them was a field boss on a horse. We were watched constantly. They would not give us good knives. After work they just threw the knives around. If I didn’t go to work early enough the good knives were all gone. Only small or dull knives were left. They were not sharp enough. In those days I was just 19 years old, healthy and strong.

At Lihue Plantation they were burning cane, and soot was all over my face. On my face. Yeah. We worked ten hours—from 6:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. When I returned, a Japanese mama said, ‘‘Your face is all black. You can even write letters on your face. And what was your name? Your face is so black.’’ Our faces were so sooty that she would say things like that. We had no time to rest. ‘‘Boy, your knife does not cut. Show it to me,’’ a luna would say and exchanged it with his sharpened knife. Even after going to the bathroom, I had to rush and catch up with them because the luna would say, ‘‘Go ahead, go ahead.’’

My number was 715, and we said in Japanese, ‘‘Shichihyakujugo.’’ We stayed in Lihue for three months in spite of hardship. Lihue Plantation was called onikochi.

**Makaweli, the Worst of Them All**

The hardest plantations to work for were Lihue and Makaweli. The others were not as bad. Makaweli was the worst of them all.
Makaweli had the *poho* ("out of luck") system. When you didn't cut well they would say, "You *poho*" and would subtract 50 cents. They would subtract the money each time from the wages with each of our numbers on. If the *poho* happened many times you lost out a lot. They were making a lot of money that way.

In cutting cane when you don't cut from the root the *luna* will come and say *poho*. When the *luna* saw that there was a little left of the cane or some weeds around, he would say *poho* again. They have even taken "Five dollars!" from me that way. When I was paid, I cried. My job at that time was picking the leftover cane. After my work was done, there was one cane left behind. The *luna* found that and said, "*You poho.*" I had seen that, but I did not cut it since it was too small. Since I could speak a bit of English, I told the *luna*, "Are you going to *poho* over such a minor thing?" I argued with him. Yeah. Then he said five dollars *poho*. Although *poho* is 50 cents the *luna* had taken five dollars from me. I was so angry that I wanted to knock him down, but I decided not to be foolish enough to fight over such small money. *Poho* here and *poho* there and I think the Portuguese boss must have had a lot of money. That was an awful place.

**Kealia**

Since the work was so hard I decided to go to the next plantation. I was the only one that went there. The others went to McBryde's in Lawai, and Ginoza and Zukemura went to Honolulu. All of us left about the same time. Kina went to McBryde's. I came here. When I came here to Kealia, there were about 74 to 75 Okinawans. There was only one big pipe and there were not enough toilets. Since there was one pipe there was a long line in the morning to wash our faces. Since this was so inconvenient, I decided to go to the officers to complain about the conditions at the camp. This is missing, that is missing.

Fortunately, a Japanese man by the name of Teisuke Hamamoto was working in the office. He had graduated from high school in Japan and was good in English. I told him, "I want to see the boss and I am here." "*It is kaukau* time, and he is not here," he said. When I told him the reason why I was here, he said he would tell it to the boss. Sunday was a holiday. Other days we worked until the sunset. On Sunday Mr. Hamamoto came. Since the boss could not come, he came instead. He said if we had any requests, he would handle it. "Those who understand Japanese come forward," he said. In those days there was no hall and we had our discussion outside. I went forward and said, "We need this and that. Hurry on our request. To make the holes for the toilet, it took two men to complete it in two hours. To put the pipe in is no trouble. Can you do it today or tomorrow?" He said "O.K." and did it for us. "Right just let me know," he said. There, the big *luna* was a Japanese.

He was a big man like *kanaka*. He was born in the first year of Meiji and came to Hawai'i. He had a *kanaka* wife, and he was a big *luna*. He taught us the work. He was a huge man rode on horseback, "*Boy, you show me your shovel.*" Me, I gave him the shovel, then he took it with his one hand; he
showed me how to use the shovel. Me, I needed the strength of both hands to handle it. That’s how he showed me the work. He would also show us how to weed.

In due time, meals, laundry, as well as purchases of the store were free for me. The cook sold wine and canned goods, such as salmon. *Kaukau* in those days was *shake-tin* (canned salmon). It was 15 cents and a delicacy. The cook sold all these things. There were 75 Okinawans living there. Because I introduced them to the storekeeper/cook, my meals and laundry were free. The store was owned by a man who was an Okinawan. I knew he was from Okinawa. He spoke Okinawa language very well. However, he claimed to be from Oshima in Kagoshima. I told him he speaks the language very well. He said that he was a policeman in Okinawa. That was a lie. I could tell. Since I took the customers’ orders, he gave goods from the store to me. Therefore I was able to keep all my wages. It was a terrific deal. So I was able to return $70 dollars I borrowed in Okinawa, with the wages I made in Lihue and here.

**Good Idea to Learn English**

Two of my friends from my home town visited me one day and I was telling them that while in Hawaii it is a good idea to learn English. Then they said they had begun learning from a girl named Oyama. In Makaweli there were some who arrived two years earlier than us in 1904. I thought at that time they could speak English fairly well. So three of us decided to visit them. We walked throughout one night in December and finally arrived there. On arrival we found out that there was a shortage of workers. They were working two hours over time. I said, “We thought you people were good in English . . . We also came to work.” Then he said, “What is the matter with you? You came to Hawaii to earn money and not learn the language. You have to go to school if you want to learn.” I was very disappointed.

The cook boss, at Kealia, said Makaweli was not a good place. There was much hard work. The water was reddish, and there was no pipe and it wasn’t sanitary. That was a bad plantation. However, we decided to go because we thought of the opportunity to learn English. Cook boss said, “If it is very bad come back here.” But of course we could not come back because it was too far. We left at 10:00 at night and arrived next morning at 5:00 a.m. on foot. Yeah. The road looks very nice now, but it was full of stones in those days.

We left at night so that it would not matter. We were free immigrants, but we did not want to explain our departure because it might mean a long explanation. Therefore we went from one plantation to another. We had no trouble getting jobs. They would immediately give us a *bango* (number) because of the shortage of workers. We went to Makaweli . . . yeah, *kachi kane*.

*Kachi kane* here was not as severe as Lihue. However here at Makaweli we could not leave the cane, not even a bit. It had to be cut from the root.
Yes, from the root. Had to be cut short. That was very severe. The reason I say they were severe was luna says "poho" easily. While I was cutting cane, luna came to me and brought me one inch cane and said, "You . . . in one day how many cane do you cut? Just add all the one inch cane together and see how long it gets. Sugar is produced from cane." This is how they explained to me. "Ah, yes," I said. Kachi kane men in Makaweli were all outstanding workers. At the other plantation they did not care even if the workers cut the cane long.

At Makaweli, I worked for ten hours a day, making 70 cents in one day. Ten hours for 70 cents.

I spent $5 to $5.50 for kaukau. The cook was a Japanese cook, but did not talk badly about the Okinawans. He served us good food. Sashimi, fish. He treated me well.

The houses for single men were for two to three men in one room. We'd line up like sardines and sleep like that. Later, because I was an aikane of the camp policeman, I stayed by myself in one room like the other men, those with wahine. There was one man with a wahine in a 4 by 6 room like a tool shed. I felt sorry for them and I offered to trade rooms. But the man didn't want to trade. The man knew that the woman would run away. She was a sukebe (loose) woman, and eventually they separated.

There were just about 400 people in Makaweli. A kachi kane man from Okinawa named Yabu, who had graduated from junior high school, opened a night school. So there was an English school. Just about 14 or 15 men learned English there at night. From seven thirty to about nine every week; from Monday to Saturday, everyday, yeah.

First there were two classes, "A,B,C" class and an advanced class. Two classes, so there were two rooms. Mr. Yabu taught both classes. Some others learned "A,B,C" and we learned from a reader, a second reader. I belonged to the advanced class.

Mr. Yabu taught grammar very well. All of us said we would teach English at elementary or junior high school when we went back to Okinawa. That was the dream of the young. But there were some hapaikos among the students who said they couldn't learn English while doing such hard work. They stopped learning halfway. They said English was too difficult. Their work was too hard. I learned much since then.

Then I learned mainly reading and writing. We read in English and Mr. Yabu translated it into Japanese. Mr. Yabu taught us the second reader. We bought it from the store: Baldwin Reader. He could teach as far as third reader. But he couldn't teach higher one, I didn't learn more.

What, Just a Bit of Rain

Among the workers at Makaweli were men from Kumamoto prefecture, Hiroshima prefecture, and Yamaguchi prefecture. They did not understand English; therefore, they could not fill out the paper which was necessary when sending money to Japan. I could do that for a long time. Mama (a woman in the camp), told everyone that I could write English when they
wanted to send money to Japan, so everyone asked me to do them a favor. I wrote in English and Japanese. I wrote on the pink and blue paper. They were all nice to me. I was 19 years old and full of pep and even when it rained I would just say, "What, just a bit of rain."

From Makaweli, I decided to go to America. From my homeland there were two who were there. While we were still in Okinawa, we discussed about my going away to America. They said after they are settled in America they would call me. One was Nakamura and the other was Matsuda. They went first to Ewa plantation and from there went to America. The fare to America was $33. It was not much. I had money, but they said they would send me... it didn’t matter. In 1907, I made arrangements to go to America. On March 20th there was a change in the law, and I was prohibited to go to America. It was written all over in the newspaper. We were planning to go on April 9th; however, the rule (Gentlemen’s Agreement) came on the 20th of March. So I could not go to America, and all my planning was pau. Then I came down with the disease beriberi.

They said I had better go for a change to cure my beriberi. So I went Kekaha. For about half a year I cooked for us three there. I cooked and ate there. Then I got better and I went back to Makaweli.

**The Shake Tin: Salmon Can**

After I went back to Makaweli, I didn’t work for three years because I couldn’t get along with only 70 cents a day. Anyhow I decided to learn English to get a better job and to earn more money. It would be impossible to save $1000, the amount of money I had planned to save when I left Okinawa, with only 70 cents a day. It would be just like a dream, I thought. I stopped working decidedly then. And I borrowed about $150. I told the chief cook about the reason and asked him to give me food. I promised him I would pay without fail. He understood me so he did.

Soon some folks came and asked, "As you lived a luxurious life in Okinawa, you can’t even pay for your food in Hawaii. Are you ill? How much did you borrow? We people from Yagaji will pay it off for you because you are a disgrace to our whole group." "Thank you," I said. They said, "... As you came to Hawaii to earn money, it is a disgrace that you do nothing..." And so on. Then the trouble came about the shake tin.

I went to the house of the cook/storekeeper often. As they were ignorant, I always did well for them, reading and writing letters. I did very well for them. They entertained me, inviting me for dinner and giving me food. There were several people cooking at that house. They sold shake tin, too. One day they found two shake tin missing after pau hana. They doubted me and asked me if I had stolen them because I had no work. It was just Sunday, and my English teacher was out, and I had no school. I ate two shake tin for lunch after I came back from an outing. I put the empty cans in the litter box. An old woman found them. She doubted me and said, "Tamashiro has eaten the shake tin. They are empty in the litter box." They doubted me and said, "Hey, Tamashiro, you go so far as to commit theft,
don’t you? We believed you were honest and you did so well for us. We treated you when we had good things to eat.” I answered, “What did you say? Are you imagining things? I never did steal anything from your house. Why do you say so?” They said, “You have eaten them.” I said, “Yes, I have. I ate what I bought from the Maeda store. Just go and ask them about it.” Still then they thought I had stolen. About half of over 400 people thought I had stolen because I was poor. The rest of them thought I hadn’t. Half and half. A man who lived in the same camp before came. He said, “You did not even pay for food and you went so far as to commit theft, didn’t you?” I said with a smile, “Don’t say so. You are joking. I have not stolen anything. You will soon find out my innocence.”

There was a man who heated the furo, a furotaki. He came from Niigata. His name was Watanabe. He told me that he had seen a Filipino take them from the house. He said the Filipino had stolen. Then we went to the Filipino’s. The Filipino was a very funny guy. He said, “Yeah, I take them two. How much I pay? You no stay so I take two.” The two shake tin cost about 15 or 30 cents.

They realized that I had not stolen. They said, “Now that you are proved to be innocent, you had better bring it to trial. You can sue for defamation of character.” Then I said, “Thank you . . . I would not want to sue.” The man and wife were very much ashamed. Whenever they saw me, they ran away. I had such an experience because I was poor.

**Writing Letters and Just Reading**

At that time there were many people who were uneducated. I wrote letters, read letters, and sent money for them to Okinawa. Sometimes ten, sometimes fifteen, and sometimes four or five brought me money to send. I put down the items of the account in a ledger one by one without omission, addressed letters, and brought them to the old woman at the post office. I walked all the way to the post office at that time. It took about thirty minutes. I put the change and the receipt of the money in an envelope one by one. I handed out the change and receipt at pau hana time. There were about 400 people working there. When they finished their work at 4:30 p.m. it was difficult for them to bring their money to the post office which was closed at 5:00 p.m. It was especially difficult in winter because it got dark soon. So they had to ask the store man or me to mail their money. That was my job. Almost everyday I did it.

When they wrote a letter, they mailed it by themselves. Sometimes they asked me to mail. One day I mailed money with a letter to Okinawa. It was one of my classmate’s. It took one month to receive an answer after they mailed a letter in those days. He, my classmate, did not get an answer for more than a month. He began to doubt me and thought that I had misappropriated his money for my own use. There was still no answer after two and a half months. He became more suspicious of me. I went to him and said, “Certainly I have sent the letter. Don’t be anxious about it. Wait for the answer with patience. I can assure you that you will soon get it. Upon my
word I have never misappropriated even one cent of your money.'" I showed him the ledger on which I wrote down the day and the amount of money I mailed. He said, "It is admirable of you to have done so for others." I recorded in detail. "Do you have a receipt?" "Yes, I do," I answered and showed him the receipt. "It is certain that I sent it. There may be some trouble in Japan." Then, three or four months later, he received the answer from Japan. He came to see me with a shake tin. He bought bean-jam buns for me and said, "You are a praiseworthy man. You are really well-spoken of because you are honest." I said, "I would never steal even if I were starved to death."

People from Okinawa didn’t always reciprocate for working for them. They didn’t bring much for me. They said that those who could afford to should do so. People from Shimajiri and Nakagami would often bring me something. They often brought me something such as pencils. I did not ask for them.

I lived on books. Since I became a Christian, there were all sorts of religious books. I learned English and read books which I borrowed from the church. I got up at about four in the morning and walked around the camp with a sage lampu (kerosene lamp). There was a woman who was the chief of 15 or 20 cooks. I woke her up when the morning came. Meanwhile I read books. Then I filled out papers to send money. That was my job: I read books. The woman cook often asked me to come for lunch. But usually that time was busy with my reading. So I always had only boiled rice for lunch. For a dish I had only dried chipped turnip (sengiri-daikon). I spent everyday in this way. Just reading and not doing much else to amuse myself.

**Sword Dance**

I learned a sword dance while I was at Pakala, at the lowest camp of Robinson in Makaweli. I saw one o-san performing a sword dance to commemorate a birthday. I thought it was joyous to do it. Kishimoto (who also enjoyed it) and I agreed to learn to do it. There was a man, Nomura, who was not a teacher, yet, but was a student. We asked him to teach us a sword dance. He said, "Then I’ll teach you whenever you like." As he lived in Waimea, he came to Pakala on foot to teach us. After he taught us a few days, he said, "You have become more skillful than the man who performed last time. We learned to perform two sword dances in one night. We learned to perform about 14 or 15 dances from him. A man, Imaoka, the teacher of a sword dance, came to perform sword dances with two men from Koloa. Kishimoto and I went to him and asked to join the play. He (Imaoka) asked us, "Who taught you?" We answered, "Mr. Nomura did." Mr. Nomura was one of his students. He asked, "Then why don’t you dance in front of me?" We two performed. He said, "Well, I need only one, not both of you. I need Tamashiro." Then I was to participate. I paid ten dollars and bought a sword, hakama (men’s skirt) and sensu (fan) and other accessories. I joined the play’s cast. For two months I learned sword dances day and night without working. As it was a kabuki play, there were some who
played the part of women. He said, "You play sword dances and others do another play." I practiced to play sword dances. In two months I had learned many sword dances, almost all the dances.

When we were going to perform the play, one of my relatives said, "Although you borrowed and charged for food for three years, it is ridiculous of you to perform a play and to go round the Kauai island. It's a shame. Get out of the cook's house. I'll write to Japan about it." Then I considered what he said to be true. I wrote a letter to tell that my father had died in Japan. I put the letter in an envelope which came from Japan. As a matter of fact my father was long dead then. I wrote to the teacher that I could not participate in the play because of my father's death and that my relatives would blame me if I did. He said, "It can't be helped; though, I taught you sword dances thinking you could do well." I told a lie to him. Then I returned to Waimea.

Trouble Maker

When I began to work again, there was work to plant seedlings of sugar cane. It was one dollar a day. I wanted at least $1.25 a day by all means. There were about 40 people. We could not get much by only one dollar a day. Our wages were too low.

I went to the plantation as a representative demanding they give us 12 or 13 cents per one bag by all means, for 9 cents per one bag was not enough. They answered me they wouldn't. I went back and told the people about it. Almost 40 people began striking and stopped working. Other people joined the strike one by one. Then about 100 people stopped working. The field boss came and asked why they stopped working. I answered, "It is because the company would not pay more money." He said, "I will try to raise your wages while you are working, so start working tomorrow." We resumed working, and I went to negotiate. They asked, "How much money do you want?" I said, "It is not an easy job, so we want $1.25 a day. We cannot get along only one dollar a day. We want at least 12 cents per bag." The big luna seemed to be amazed and said, "Is that so? Okay! I will pay you 12 cents if you pack more than 50 seedlings, nearly 60 seedlings in one bundle. It is not good that you often pack only 30 or 40 seedlings." I went back and told the others about the story. They were very glad. Then we got more money. As I often went to make a demand and to correct whenever their accounts were wrongly calculated, I was disliked by him. At last I was kicked out. The big luna said, "You can never come back to Makaweli Plantation again." So I was off.

When I moved to another place, a neighboring area, I heard we could get more money by cutting sugar cane; we could gain more than one and half dollar a day. There were over 200 people doing the work. They were all old. We were young. There were a few people from Okinawa. We did very well in cutting sugar cane. I was working there, and at last, I was found out by the big luna. He said, "God damn you, you've come back?" I said, "Yes, I am back." He went to the Pake boss and said, "Why do you hire
this man? He is a trouble maker. You should not employ such a man.''

The boss said, "No, it's not true. He is a good boy. He can do very well. I assure you I'll not allow him to do wrong things.''

Then the big luna was bribed with drink, and he said, "Okay." So I could stay in Makaweli.

**Pake Boss**

Yeah, the Chinese was a rich man. He was a boss of over 200 sugar cane workers. The boss backed me up and made me offer, saying: "If you are short of money, I'll lend you even $10 or $20. If people from Okinawa don't have enough money, I'll lend them $50 or $100, for they don't know how to borrow money from bank."

So the Chinese boss trusted me.

He was Ah Kop. Since I was a single man, I didn't need much money. People from Okinawa said they would call women from Japan. They needed more money so I borrowed a little money from the Chinese and accommodated them with money.

They did not need so much money to call women from Japan. The woman would pay the ship fare, and they would pay for the money to go to meet her as far as Honolulu and to bring her back. At that time the ship fare was about five dollars. They needed at least $50. When they had a party with tea and cakes after her arrival, they would need about $100. So I would borrow for them from the Chinese. One after another, they called women from Japan.

**Pakala**

Next, I went to Pakala. I did ho bana. It was a contract work. We were paid one cent or one cent half for one line of weeding. We could get about two dollars a day. A few hapaiko came from Makaweli and said they could get two dollars a day, and they also said that they could get more money here than what they got by doing hapaiko job. Everyday they were defeated by me in number. I could do 120 or 130, but they could do only 100. I could gain nearly two dollars a day, but they could get about the same as what they got by doing hapaiko job. They wondered why they were defeated. After work, they usually asked the boss how much they did. They said to the boss, "You favor Tamashiro. I wonder how such a small man get more." They were very big because they were hapaiko. The boss said, "No, no, I don't favor Tamashiro. I found the reason. Did you smoke while working? He does neither smoke nor drink water while he has a hoe. He is working hard all through the day. It is because of his patience and his hard work. You often stand still to smoke and to drink water, but he continues working all the way once he begins hoeing." They said, "I wonder." At last in a few days they left there, saying they could not earn much. One of them, named Goya, began to work early in the morning with a kerosene lamp. Even he could not defeat me.

One line was 30 feet. We got one and a half cent per one line. When we did 100, we got one dollar half. I always did 120 or 130. We got two dollars when we hoed the grassy field. The field was hundreds of acres.
There were a few people working so I could get much there. Not so many people there.

I did not stay long. I learned a sword dance. I stayed almost about a year.

**Waimea**

I left Pakala for Waimea. There was an English teacher in Waimea. I heard that there was a school, too. I went there to school with about ten young Japanese people. There was a man, Seitaro Shirai, who graduated from high school in Japan, and so he could speak English. We learned third reader here. We learned fourth reader from a young teacher who was half kanaka.

At Waimea I was a worker at the private plantation. It was made up of 40 or 50 Japanese. A man from Okinawa was one of the members of the company. The pay was better than that of other plantations. There the night school was closed. I studied under a kanaka teacher. I finished fourth reader, and I went back to Makaweli. I went to Camp Two. There was Minister Shirai, who was, I heard, good at English. I learned from him fifth and sixth readers. He said, "I can't translate fifth and sixth readers into Japanese anymore. It is too difficult for me. I can explain in Japanese about the rough meaning, but I can't translate them into Japanese precisely. Try to study by yourself with a dictionary. I can't teach you more." He graduated from high school in Japan and learned English from a white man who stayed at that house. He could send our request to the plantation and other appeals to the court for us. He was so good at English.

**Koloa: Tamashiro Go!**

I began to work in the mill in Koloa from the very night I got there. There were four people from Okinawa. One of them asked me, "Why don't you work here?" "They need workers in the mill." I said, "Is that so? Then I will try." He said that there was a job for me that night. I said, "I don't have any other clothes and underwear to change." He said, "No, no, as you and I are the same size, I'll lend you my shirts and pants." So I decided to begin working from that night. It was bad work; they gave me a bad job. It was work to remove sugar residue. There were four machines, so four workers were to do it. I did it by using a stick about six feet long. It was so hot with the steam in the mill that I became just like pupule (crazy). It was a very bad job. My friend said, "You need not work tonight. They will teach you how to work. Take it easy tonight." Later a man said, "Try to do it." I tried first and I found it was a bad job. It was too hot for me to work and I was afraid I might have my arms broken. He found that I could not do it. Then the workman got angry with me. He said, "This fellow from Okinawa is useless. He can't do anything." After this he did not say to me even a word. Next day, next night (for the work was night work), the night luna, a haole man, asked, "How is this boy?" He said, "He's nothing." I changed my work again. I was to work at number two machine. There were two men
working at one machine. There were four tanks and two men at one tank. At that time I quarreled with a luna.

There was one bad job of sugar sarashi (refining). We threw sugar away twice or three times a day. There were four tanks. A little sugar would always stay in the tank. We had to shovel it out. When they let sugar flow down, they would strike the pipe. After three or four moments when we heard ken-ken-ken (striking noise), we had to go up and shovel. We, two workers, did it by turns. I had to do it twice a day and sometimes once a day. I did this job daytime. One day when I had finished my work and was going out with my lunch box, a relief came. And at the same time I was going out, the noise ken-ken-ken was heard. The relief man was taking his shoes off and was going up. The luna came and said, “Hey, Tamashiro, go up! It’s you who is to go.” I said, “Why? The relief is here. I have finished my work.” He said, “No, you have to go by all means.” I put my lunch box down and said, “What, you damn guy, what did you say? You don’t even use that boy, Hayashi, and you make me do all the work.” “What you say? You ignoramus,” said he. Then I spoke both in Japanese and in English. The others stopped working and were surprised and said, “Oh, this man from Okinawa is awful.” Meanwhile the sugar boss, the haole man, came and asked, “What happened, Kinoshita?” The luna’s name was Kinoshita. I said, “Kinoshita did so and so, even when the relief came, he asked me to work.” He (haole man) said, “Kinoshita, you are wrong. Tamashiro, go!” Then I went out. Next day when I went to work, a man from Chiba said, “I’ll change your post.” Then I got a job of oiling machines. It was a very easy one. I had time to play around. The man working in the mill said, “Though this Okinawa boy has just come to work here, and we have been working here for 18 years, he has got an easier job.” They were all envious of me. That was owing to my English. As I learned English there, I could speak good.

Japanese-language School

There were 21 directors of the school. One of them died. Then I was asked in his place. I became a secretary for the board of directors. I was invited to meetings for plenty of food many times. I was suspicious about it because there was much food when I was invited. Later, I found that all the directors gathered together and ate when they got the left over donation money.

For example, to make restrooms, we needed $100 to $150. They asked for $300 or $400 to make them. They spent the left over money from the $300 or $400. They did not pay money back. Young fellows complained and asked to receive money back, and they blamed us. But there was no money left, for we spent all on eating food here and there. I found that I was treated by that money. Then the matter came into question.

The principal was wrong; he was not spoken well of. Going around each camp, I started a campaign to ask whether this principal was good or not. They said they didn’t like him. We asked the Japanese consul general
to come. They said he couldn’t come. Then we asked for the vice-consul general. The principal handed in his resignation to him with his head bowing. Then a new principal came. The problem of the school was settled.

In the meantime, I did various kinds of things. Some people made a campaign to fire me. I told about the matter to the boss in Koloa, with whom I was acquainted since we were in Makaweli. He said that I was good and on the contrary they were wrong. They said I was worthless and irresponsible. At last they began striking to fire me. In all about 30 sugar cane carriers knocked their work off. They said, ‘‘No, no, we would not work unless Tamashiro is fired. Drive him out!’’ I was called for by the boss. He asked, ‘‘Did you have any trouble about school? I have employed you as a worker. Why are you butting into school affairs?’’ I said, ‘‘The principal is not good, so fire him.’’ ‘‘Why is he wrong?’’ he asked. ‘‘It is because he always tells pupils about wars. I asked him not to tell them such stories.’’ The boss was a Japanese. He said, ‘‘I agree with you.’’ He went to see them and said, ‘‘Hey, you, sugar cane carriers who knocked off today, go away if you don’t come back to work tomorrow. I would not fire Tamashiro.’’ Everybody was astonished. So I was very proud then. Though I did various things like this, I was not dismissed. As I am a Christian and I have gathered my courage, I will die anytime for God. He will protect me.

Always Raining, Always Raining

It was always raining, always raining, in Kilauea. And at last I did not work for half a year. There I gambled. I stopped working and played for money. When I won, I would pay for my cook charge first of all. If not, I had to borrow money. I spent about half a year on gambling. Then I came back to Kapaa.

Kapaa

Before I became a contractor (ukeoishi) in Kapaa, I worked at a cooperative store. At that time, Seiho Hiyane owned the most stocks—$700 worth. I bought his stocks and then worked at the store for two years. I even went as far as Kilauea to take orders for the store.

We were making money, but the customers had large charge balances. We had a good lease on the store, and there would have been 30–40 percent profit if the cash payments flowed in at collection time. But the customer’s debts were large, so we couldn’t make a profit. It wasn’t fun. So I told them they could do whatever they wanted with the $700 stocks. I gave it to them in order to leave.

In Kapaa, unlike the plantation, there was no luna and I was in charge of the 100 workers. I made good money. After the kachi kane was over, I did some bo hana using 40–50 workers. That bo hana was done so that contracting was fairly profitable. All the workers used to buy their things from the Kealia store. Since there were a lot of workers, they bought $1400–$1500 worth of supplies. I used to order the things and the store would deliver them. I got a five percent commission, $75. Even when I was kachi kane,
during a good month I’d get orders from $500 to $600. Plus, the commission also came in. I worked there about eight to ten years and during that time made quite a bit. Also in Kapaa I was involved in tanomoshi (Japanese style loan co-op). There were about ten of these and in each I had to put in $20 a month. So altogether that was $200 a month. But if some amount was taken out, about $50 to $60 had to be put back in as interest. So if someone took out $20, he would have to put $5 back in. There were about six or seven borrowers. I made money from the interest. In fact I was making money here and there—quite a lot. There was Okinawan tanomoshi members, but mainly they were Naichi people, storekeepers, and so forth. As time went on the money accumulated. There’d be about $500 to $800 and this money in turn would multiply so all in all I made about $20,000 over a ten year period.

**I Guess I’m Going To Be Killed Today**

I was contracted by Makee Plantation. There were cane haulers, cutters, rail builders, and I was paid for them. That’s how I made money. There weren’t many Japanese. I contracted mainly the Filipinos. I was close to the Filipinos. A while back there was this incident; when they first came to Hawaii this happened in Makaweli. We used to call them putang inak, son-of-a-bitches. Those were bad words. Anyway, I called them putang inak, and 30 of them whipped out their knives and were going to kill me. The other Okinawans ran away, and I was all by myself. This was after work so I was dressed in a kimono, a nemaki. I thought to myself, well, I guess I’m going to be killed today. But I knew a little English so I said to them, “No! I’m half Filipino!” And they said, “What?! Aren’t you Okinawan?” “OK, OK, I’m Okinawan. And half Filipino.” “How can?” somebody asked. “My father was a business man and he had to take the Okinawa manager out drinking. At that time he got involved with a Filipino wahine and I’m their kid. So my mama is Filipino.” Neither of my parents were around so nobody could tell if I was telling the truth. “When I was about to be born, they went to Okinawa so I can’t speak any Filipino.” Then the boss of the group said, “Hey, wait, then this guy is Filipino!” and they all put away their knives and we shook hands all around. “I didn’t know what the word meant,” I told them. Anyway, since I said I was Filipino I got along well with the Kapaa Filipinos.

One time I hated kachi kane, but about 100 of us cane cutters were to start work at 6:00 a.m. We were told that because of the railroad schedule, we would have to go to work 15 minutes early. Everybody was going except this one Filipino guy. He said, “Why should I work when it’s not even 6:00 a.m. yet.” I asked, “You, aren’t you going to work?” He said, “No, I won’t.” When the boss came around in the morning, he said, “What’s that Filipino doing just sitting around? If he doesn’t listen to you, kill him, kill him.” The boss was that hot-tempered. Eventually that man went to work. But the man didn’t do much work. He was doing it provokingly slow. “Give me the knife,” I said. He gave it to me and I did the work real fast. When
they saw me do it they were really surprised. So the Filipinos, whatever I said, they listened. There was work left that was going to take about five men to finish so I talked with the Filipinos, “What do you think if we finish this work?” And everybody pitched in and we were done 30 minutes before pau hana.

Even with the cane haulers, when they were sick I’d encourage them to go to work even if they’d be a little late and when they said they didn’t have enough food, I said I’d bring it to them. They listened to me. There were few Japanese. Mainly Filipinos. During the season, if I had cheated them out of their wages, I would have been a rich man. The boss who did the hiring, a Portuguese, and I paid the men. I always paid more—I think he took a cut. So I had the reputation of being a good boss.

**Kapaa Strike, 1919**

The strike occurred in 1919. Everyone had to put up about ten to twelve dollars a month during the strike and nobody knew what for. They didn’t know what was happening in the strike, so everybody was hu hu (angry). I used to take the Japanese newspaper—I think it was the Hawaii Shim bun. It came once a month and it would have announcements for meetings. We’d have meetings in Kapaa concerning the strike. There were three people who hadn’t paid and I was one of them. So at a meeting the big boss said, “The three who haven’t paid yet, I’d like you to pay right now.” I said, “I’m not paying. You’re not the government and these aren’t taxes. If you want money, ask me personally and I’ll give it to you, but I don’t have to pay you.” The other two who hadn’t paid—they were Naichi (mainland Japanese)—said, “Well, if Tamashiro isn’t paying, neither are we. You can come and ask us, too.” I told the group, “I don’t know about you people, but I know that the money isn’t going toward the strike, but into the leaders’ pockets.” This was the truth—some of those guys in Kapaa were running off to Japan. Everybody was surprised. There were people who’d stolen about $5,000 to $7,000. All of the bosses stole money. The one from Koloa—Miura—he took money and went back to Japan. None of the money was used for the strike. It was because of this that I was opposed. That’s why I told them “I’m not paying you, but if you want me to personally give you money (help support you) come and ask me.” Nobody came.

**The Store, 1928**

In 1928 I started working at a foreigner’s store in Kapaa. His name was Aguiar. The elder brother didn’t want anything to do with the store so I was hired and the wife helped too. Since the guy I was working for went broke, I bought the store from him cheap. I had $10,000 and I put $5,000 into the store. I made money. When economic hard times came each person borrowed about $600–$700. But my balance of payments was better than even. During this time I started raising pigs. So, together with the pigs, I was making quite a bit of money. There was one year when there were six in the tanomoshi. It was $50 for one and I had six so that was $300. I left the
money in for a long time. Then, with this money my wife and I went back to Okinawa (this was the first time in 50 years) and after we got back we also used tanomoshi money to build this house.

I kept the grocery store till 1965 and I raised pigs till 1963. I usually killed one pig a week. The cane cutters would buy the meat. It cost about $40 to raise one pig. I’d sell it for three times as much so would make about $70 to $75 profit. You can make a lot of money off pigs if you kill them yourself. If you sell to a market you make over twice the cost of the pig. That’s good money.

Besides the store and the pigs, I and others started a pineapple mill in Kapaa in 1937. The mill enterprise, however, was not going too well and I eventually sold my shares. This was while I was running the store. When I think about it, I was overloaded with work.

**Kauai Okinawa Kenjin Rengo-Kai (The Kauai Okinawan Federation)**

There were plantations located in different areas. At the nine plantations there were Okinawan clubs; these clubs joined together and formed the Rengo-Kai. That started in 1922 or 1923. The president was Mr. Kina. I was vice president. The organization was very successful. It was quite popular, that club. At the time there were about 2,000 Okinawans living on Kauai and over 1,000 were members. The Kapaa group was the largest. Kapaa and Kekaha. Kapaa had 160 members, Kekaha and Kalalau each had 150, and the others had about 100 to 120 each; so altogether there were over 1,000 members. We had Ji no tenrankai (calligraphy exhibition) and onago no shugei no tenrankai (women’s embroidery exhibition). Also once a month we had various books (zasshi) on display . . . it was very successful. New Year’s parties were very popular. We had one in Kapaa, then one in Koloa, Makaweli, Kekaha . . . the place changed every year. They used to give lots of speeches at these things. As many as 20 people would give speeches. We also had bon dances. Around 1926, to raise money we held a sword dance show (kenbu show) and made about $1000. From Kapaa, Koloa, to Lihue . . . they performed all over. We charged a lot so we were able to make $1000. I was involved in the production, but did not receive money for it.

After WWII, the Federation immediately had a drive to send help to Okinawa. We sent money, clothes, goats, and pigs. I really worked hard at it.

Now on Kauai there is an organization called Hui Pono. I am a member. It was started in 1959 at the Green Garden Restaurant. We discussed the Federation (Rengo-Kai). I knew the most about it, so I gave a talk. The others said, “Yes, you’ve worked hard.”

“Oh, Heck, Tamashiro, Why Don’t You Get Married Already!”

In the old days it was pretty bad. The Naichi people looked down on the Okinawans and frowned on Naichi-Okinawan marriages. My wife is
Naichi. We were married in 1924. I talked to my wife's elder sister. "Why do you people look down on the Okinawans?" I had asked her. There are rich as well as poor Okinawans, right? She had to agree. The father was a real hard-head. Since he was from Hiroshima, he wanted his daughter's husband to be from Hiroshima. Yamaguchi wouldn't do—he was that stubborn. The mother, too. Actually, I had originally wanted to marry the elder sister, but she died young. She was only 20 or 21 when she passed away. I started getting interested in the younger sister and gradually her mother started changing her mind about me. I finally said to her that I would like to marry her daughter and she said, "Well, if you love her, go ahead." In the beginning they didn't want to have anything to do with me, but as we got to know each other, they changed their minds. So we were to marry.

When she was young, my wife was very pretty. If it were at all possible, her mother still preferred a Hiroshima man to marry her daughter. A matchmaker came and said that there was a really good man from Makaweli who wanted to marry her daughter, so a date was set for an o-miai (marriage interview). But the o-miai was cancelled because they did not trust the matchmaker. I remarked to my wife-to-be that this was a little strange. In the end, it fell through, and we finally got married. Many Okinawans thought that my wife would run away. But my wife was a good girl and stayed.

We had six living children. I just wanted to send them through school and after that they could do anything they wanted. I had no particular plans for them. Three went through college and three stayed with the store. Three, later, (after one year of working at the store) went to business or vocational school. All of them now have good jobs. I taught my children Okinawan tradition and culture only if they asked me. One of my children said that I was namaiki (affected, pretentious), so I didn't talk about it much. My children can't speak Okinawan. My wife can't either, but she can understand most of it.

**Faith**

While I was living in Okinawa I was rather bad. Anyway people considered me to be a bad guy. I met Christians for the first time when I came to Hawaii. They said that no matter how bad I was before, if I became a Christian everything would be forgiven. So I started going to Bible classes. I had only just begun studying the Bible when 11 people were going to be baptized. I said I wanted to be baptized, too. "You still don't understand the Bible so it's too early." My English teacher said, "Wait till next week." The minister, however, said that if I wanted to be baptized right then, it was all right. So I joined the 11 and after that I worked hard at becoming a true Christian. Others considered Christians to be a cut above the average person. In fact, there was a birthday party given for a child and the 12 baptized Christians were made to sit on a stage above the other people at the party. Christians thought of themselves as God's children and, for that reason, were kind of arrogant. They had few friends because they mingled only with other Christians. When I think about it, I feel that God really
helped me. It was because of my belief that I was able to bear all the hardship. I had faith that no matter how bad things got, God would help me.

**Kazaguruma, Windmill**

I’ve lived here for 74 years and I think to myself, you did a lot of bad things but you also did some good things and the good, I think, outweighs the bad. I’ve taken care of my children’s education and, although I was put down and made fun of in the beginning, I’ve built a house and become the head of a household. So I’m very grateful. I wrote back to the folks in Okinawa that I haven’t become rich but I’ve made enough money to keep us eating and I’ve educated my children so in that way I’ve laid down the foundation. My children and grandchildren will carry on after I die. I consider my life to have been a success. If I had stayed in Okinawa, it wouldn’t have turned out this good. I had a sister in Okinawa and she was about to pass away (go to heaven) so I wrote her a letter. She lived till the age of 92. There were nine children in my family and three of us are still living. There’s me, my brother in Brazil, and my sister in Okinawa. Three of us are left. The one in Brazil will be 85 this year (passed away June 17, 1980 at age 85) and the one in Okinawa will be 83. All of us are long-lived. My father died at 72 or 73, and my mother died at 85. I am the oldest—93.

I’ve already celebrated *bejju* (88th birthday). Ninety is *sotsu*. Then 94 is *hakuju* and after that is the last celebration—*gajimaya*, 96. It is also called *kazaguruma* (windmill). I’ve got three more years to go till then. It is a return to childhood. Children at the celebration receive a windmill. I have never been to such a celebration. I would like to celebrate mine.