NARRATOR: ABE
INTERVIEWER: EVELYN TAYLOR
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ET: Today is Thursday, November 12th and this is an interview with Morris and Terri Abe, A-b-e. Take one. Now Morris, please tell me about your parents and their eventual location in the United States.

MA: My parents, my father emigrated from Japan and came by ship to Seattle, Washington in 1908. My mother came over in about ten years, eight years later with her mother and they lived in Seattle. My father opened up a clothing store for men and children who came from Japan primarily because when they came from Japan they were in their native clothes and they do business through him to sell their clothes. He did very well until I believe in 1923, they closed the immigration from Japan to the United States. So, that cut off all that business that he had. And so, he opened up a store in Portland, Oregon and was doing pretty well over there.

My oldest brother Paul was born in 1914 and my other, second brother was born in 1916, and I was born in 1918. And then, I had a sister, two sisters and a brother a bit older.

ET: My goodness, a big family.

MA: Yes, it was a big.

ET: And, and what was your, your last brother and your sister's names?

MA: My oldest brother is Paul.

ET: Okay.

MA: Second brother is Harry and I'm the third, number three boy and number four was a sister. Her name was Rose.

CA: And Dave.

MA: And Dave, my next brother, younger brother. He was born in 1923 and then I have a, had a sister born in 1925. Her name was May.

ET: Now how did your parents? Well what prompted your parents to come over here?

MA: Well, my father had a business education in Japan and graduated Waseda University in Tokyo.

ET: What was the name of that university?

MA: Waseda.

ET: Waseda okay.

MA: It's almost like wasabi, isn't it?

ET: (Laughs)

MA: He went to Waseda University and he graduated and his parents coaxed him to come to the United States of America, which he did in 1908.

ET: And when did your parents meet for the first time?

MA: They met, well I would say about 1912.

ET: Okay.

MA: Because they got married around 1912.

ET: About how old were they at that time?

MA: I'll have to get my calculator out.

ET: Maybe twenties, in their twenties?

MA: Yes.

ET: In their twenties?

MA: In their early twenties I would say.

ET: Now how did your father meet your mother?

MA: I didn't ask him that.

ET: But they met in Seattle?

MA: Yes, they met in Seattle and she was, she was put in milliner and clothing. So she, she had, I have some pictures of her. She made hats for women and dresses of course and children's clothing. And, they had a nice store on King Street in Seattle, which every time we go to Seattle we look back and say, "That's where my father had his store."

ET: Now Terri, what about your parents? Who, who came over first to America? Was it your grandparents or your parents?

CA: No, no, no grandparents, just my father came first.

ET: And what was your father's name?

CA: Sadatoshi.

ET: Could you spell that for me?

CA: Sadatoshi, S-a-d-a-t-o-s-h-i.

ET: Okay, and the last name.

CA: Gozawa

ET: You need to spell that one too.

CA: G-o-z-a-w-a.

ET: Okay, thank you, thank you.

CA: Tozawa.

ET: And, and when did, and your father came over to America about when do you think?

CA: I don't know.

ET: In the twenties maybe?

CA: We didn't talk about it. But he was young. He didn't know too much English, so he went to school with I think maybe junior high or high school level. You know I mean just learn English, you know he was already grown up.

ET: Okay.

CA: So that's how he picked up his English.

ET: Good for him. And so, now he came over here and he went to school. What occupation did he eventually find?

CA: He was in San Francisco he worked for a newspaper, Japanese newspaper and some, some they have an English section to I guess. And mostly he, later after he got through or quit that, then he was in a cab business. He had group cabs and that was part of his business. But, eventually he went into business.

ET: A diff, a different kind of business?

CA: Yeah.

ET: What did he become after a cab driver?

CA: Oh I don't know. I didn't live with him that long. I mean my brother and I. We were tossed around.

ET: So it's kind of hard to say?

CA: Yeah, in Japan and back and forth and so forth. It's complicated.

ET: Well, that's okay.

CA: Eventually he did get into a produce company.

ET: Okay.

CA: He ran a produce company, shipping vegetables and fruits. He managed that, yeah.

ET: Now how did he met your mother?

TA I think that was in San Francisco, I would imagine. I have no idea how they met but she, she, but she was also in the same section you know from Japan.

ET: And how many children did they have?

CA: Just us, my brother and I.

ET: And what's your brother's name?

CA: Jimmy.

ET: Jimmy? And is Jimmy older, older than you?

CA: No, younger than I.

ET: Younger? Okay, and what year were you born?

CA: He's about three years younger than I am.

ET: Are you—

CA: He passed away but.

ET: Are you going to give up your age here?

CA: Oh, it's not secret. Over there is my eightieth birthday.

ET: Oh my, goodness.

CA: So I'm eighty-nine.

ET: Oh my, goodness, oh my. And Morris, I didn't ask how old you are? When were you born?

MA: I was born in 1918, January 1, 1918.

ET: Okay.

MA: So I'm eighty-six.

ET: My goodness.

MA: I will be, I'm eighty-five now.

ET: Well, now you mentioned with your family you mentioned that you didn't see your father too much. Did you primarily live with your mother?

CA: Sometimes yes.

ET: And then you went back to Japan?

CA: Family difficulty, you know, so we were sort of tossed around.

ET: Between relatives?

CA: To Japan.

ET: Okay.

CA: I was going to Japan twice as a child.

ET: Okay.

CA: So, maybe lived with my aunt and my grandmother while she was still alive. But in between I was…I was sent to another, my father's cousin I believe and stayed there for a year.

ET: Okay.

CA: And to my aunts and so forth.

ET: Now, so you had schooling in Japan and also in what San Francisco? You went to school in San Francisco?

CA: Oh San Francisco, yeah well, yeah, I went to school there I think first grade, second grade or something.

ET: Okay, okay.

CA: But before that, I was in Japan.

ET: You were in Japan, okay. And then, when you went to school first and second grade, what happened with third, fourth and fifth? That was all, was that in Japan or did you move somewhere else?

CA: Well, see, I went to first and second grade I believe in Japan.

ET: Okay.

CA: And we were brought back and then, I had to start English first and second grade over.

ET: Okay.

CA: And then, I went back.

ET: Okay.

CA: And then, I of course should start with the third grade because I had that, but in Japan evidently they go by your age, so you know what I mean, be older than other, you start with the fourth grade, so I had to skip the third and start with the fourth grade.

ET: Was that hard on you?

CA: Well I caught up I guess, fourth and fifth grade I was there.

ET: Wow, now Morris let's talk about your education. Did you go to school in Seattle?

MA: I went to kindergarten in Seattle and first grade. And then, the family moved to Portland and I went to the grade school in Portland, high school in Corvallis, Oregon and I went to the University of Washington in 1937 and graduated in 1941 with a BA, BA degree.

ET: Very good. What was your major?

MA: Foreign trade.

ET: Wow!

MA: My father wanted me to learn the business. Well actually, our relatives in Japan were industrialists and he wanted me to get educated in America and go to Japan for trade with

Japan. So, I was, I graduated with a degree in foreign trade and that was in June of 1941. And you know what happened in December of '41? I was working with my brother in the grocery store in Portland and Pearl Harbor Day.

ET: December 7th.

MA: December 7th, it was a Sunday. We had just finished playing basketball for the team and on the way home on the radio, "Pearl Harbor bombed." And that was the beginning of another, another life actually.

ET: Now Terri, where were you, how did you end up in LA or did you end up in LA during that because you're not, you're pretty close to Morris age. So where were you about this time period?

CA: You mean now in working?

ET: Uh-huh.

CA: I was in San Francisco at the time.

ET: Okay.

CA: There was you know—

ET: And what were you doing?

CA: My brother used, was there, lived there and after I got through the junior college in Sacramento I went there because my dad finds something to do there. But there wasn't anything that I you know I could get into so, I think so my brother said, "Well maybe you had better go and join them." My family was in Los Angeles then. So, I went there to see because I was interested in dress designing. I had a friend there and she knew a, she went there herself to get her accounting education, but this is school. Also, I had a designing, dress designing school, but it's one of those schools that it's very inexpensive.

They had a very long waiting list. And I was interested in two, two years working in the homes and waiting to see if I could get in. But it didn't work out.

So I went back to San Francisco and that's where I found this-it was known to mostly Japanese people, Italian maybe and German people both, a school that taught, designing, panel making, sewing and all that, so I was able to get in there. So I finished that and-uh I was, then, they didn't hire Japanese, you know, people in those days readily for anything. Except by chance, we heard that some department store will hire you as a seamstress, you know, for alteration in the department. So most, a lot of us applied for that, but it was very difficult to get in. I think there was one Japanese woman who worked in one of the stores, but nothing happened. But then, the war came, while I was in San Francisco.

ET: But, you know you brought up a really good point and I should probably ask Morris this as well. You weren't in Southern California at the time. You were San Francisco and Seattle and the Seattle area. Did you-was there an anti-Japanese sentiment that was working in, in the West at that period of time?

MA: I was, yeah, there was always discrimination between Caucasian and Japanese. It wasn't bad, but there were worse things to come actually. Like my mother, her English was much better than average Japanese, so she, she was employed in one of the bigger department stores in Portland called _____. It was a big department store, because of her ability to speak English. She had very good handwriting. Her English was very exceptional, I would say.

ET: So she was able to find a job? Now when you, you were in college and, and then the war hit, so you really didn't have a chance to find work outside of college?

MA: No.

ET: Not really anything substantial?

MA: Actually, I was working in a supermarket in Portland, Oregon because the supermarket was owned by Japanese. And so it happened, he was influential in Portland business and he was picked up by the FBI and scooted away. I don't know what happened, Montana or Texas somewhere.

CA: They had a special camp for them yeah, separate camp there, another location.

ET: Well then we have, then we have Pearl Harbor happening. And life really changes for both of you.

CA: Oh yes.

ET: Was that? Was that right, was it so close after the day? Was it almost immediate? Did you know something was up or something was going to happen?

MA: Oh we had curfew.

ET: That happened immediately.

MA: Yeah.

CA: Almost I would say yeah, we couldn't travel beyond certain, you couldn't go to San Francisco unless you had a permit or something. It was very difficult.

MA: Eight o'clock you had to be home. Not me though. I, we had a car. I had a car, so I even drove up to Seattle to take care of my father had a small business up there and, but, but I had a lot of Chinese friends. And, Chinese you can't tell between Japanese and Chinese facial similarities. So some of my Chinese friends had a button, I am Chinese, a big button like this.

CA: Yes.

ET: Now how did they get those? Were they given those by the government?

CA: I don't know, but they had them. And they all wore them.

ET: Did they lend you any?

CA: (Laughs)

MA: (Laughs)

CA: We hadn't even thought of that huh (laughs).

ET: What so now what happened? Now you were back in San Francisco, Cherry? So what happened with you after that period of time?

CA: I was working in a home-that was thing to do in those days. You couldn't get any kind of job, so you worked in a home, which provided you with a place to stay and you get paid a little bit, enough to buy you know things for the school or whatever you know school books and so forth you can buy. You had a living quarter where you could depend on you know and I was fortunately with, there were, they were Germans I think the couple, elderly couple with a son. And, they were very good to me, I mean even before the war you know when I worked there.

And so, when the Pearl Harbor came, soon after she said, the people that I worked for said that maybe it's a good idea if you went and took some kind of a course, whatever, to resuscitate people, you know and all that. So she sent me—

ET: Like First Aid?

CA: Uh-huh, yeah. And-uh, I went to First Aid you know. And I stayed there until the evacuation. It was-you worked there as you know-you helped clean the house and cook and things like that and I always did that; a lot of people did that in order to go to school and so forth.

ET: And now, so now what happened when you got the word that they were going to relocate? How did that come about? How did you know that this was affecting you?

MA: In 1942, President Roosevelt signed a proclamation, an emergency thing that all Japanese had to be evacuated and we had to, we had a deadline to be at a temporary camp. They had those all over, all over California. Being in Portland we had, we had-what do they call that?

CA: Assembly Center.

MA: Assembly Center-where all the people from the Portland area had to be in this stockyard or a big arena, where they had the mess hall, and we had temporary living quarters, over the places where all the sheep and the pigs and horses and cows.

ET: That must have smelled really nice?

MA: Oh yeah, it was just terrible.

ET: Now I have a question. When you got the word, did you, what were you told to do with your businesses or your personal belongings or your house or your money?

CA: Nothing.

ET: What could you bring with you?

MA: Sell them or put them in storage. My parents had a home in Portland, Oregon; it was a house, a three-bedroom house. And, it had a basement. I went to the lumberyard and got a bunch of lumber and closed the rooms, bordered the rooms up.

CA: And closed an area.

MA: And put locks on it. We put all our expensive silverware, dishes, glasses, clothes, whatever we wanted to-

CA: Preserve you know.

MA: Because we didn't know when we were going to come back. We put it in there anyway and locked it up and rented the house to children that we grew up with and we had been there for several years. Rented the house to them for twenty-five dollars a month just to, just to watch the house.

ET: Was that? Did that prove to be a good idea?

MA: No. My parents came back after I think, three years. They were in camp for three years.

ET: Your parents?

MA: Uh-huh, my parents and my sister, my sister was still in high school age. When they came back, everything was all, all the valuable stuff was gone.

CA: Gone, they had broken in.

MA: And couldn't find anything, didn't know where our friends were, so-called friends were.

CA: They had stolen.

ET: Yeah, with friends like that who needs enemies huh?

MA: That's right.

ET: Were they, were they Anglo? Were they Caucasian?

MA: Yes, they're Caucasians, Catholics if you please.

ET: Oh my, goodness. Wow! So now you bring up another story. Your parents were how old when they were interned?

MA: They were in their forties.

ET: And they were interned with your younger sister. Now where did they go?

MA: Well of course they went home; they were able to stay in the house. The house was vacated, so they stayed in the house.

ET: Well, I mean, where did they go when they were interned? What, what camp?

MA: Oh okay. After in the Assembly Center for two months, May of 1942, let's see. We were put into the Assembly Center, I think April, April or May.

ET: All of you? So you all got to stay together?

MA: Yes.

ET: Okay, okay.

MA: My mother and father, myself and my sister.

ET: Okay, good.

MA: The four of us.

ET: So you all got to stay in the same unit.

MA: We had a room about the size of this living room.

ET: Which is pretty good size.

CA: The whole family.

ET: Okay.

MA: And we had, we had a—

ET: The size of a doublewide okay, trailer.

MA: a cot or a mattress.

CA: An Army cot.

MA: And—

ET: And that was temporary? You said that was temporary.

MA: Yes.

ET: Did it turn out to be temporary?

MA: Yes, because about a month after, two months after we were in the Assembly Center they said they wanted volunteers to go, go to a permanent camp.

CA: Another location.

MA: They didn't know where or when exactly when. But you had to go, but they wanted five hundred volunteers.

ET: What happened to the rest who didn't volunteer?

MA: They stayed in the camp, until their permanent camp was completed.

ET: Okay.

MA: So I volunteered.

ET: Okay.

MA: My parents said no, they want to stay with their friends and, and they didn't want to go.

ET: They wanted to stay in, in the Oregon area?

MA: So I said all right, then I'll go and hopefully we'll be together later. So anyway, they changed their mind and they said we'll go with you. So we got on a train that loaded us at the assembly center and away we went. We didn't know where we were going.

CA: And the shades down.

MA: The train was so full of five hundred people, but we stayed on and we wound up in Tule Lake, which is just farthest north of California. It was like a desert. There used to be a lake, there I guess.

ET: The key word being "used" to be.

MA: I think it was an Indian reservation. Most of those ten camps that were changed to a relocation camp were Indian reservations or land owned by Indians.

ET: Okay, Federal government.

MA: And we went to that camp—

ET: There were about ten camps all together?

CA: I think, anyway the Assembly Center is just a temporary place where they gather up the people and have them wait around, until the relocation centers were completed with all the bungalows and what, what have you.

ET: Where did you end up, when you were relocated? Did you go with any family members at all or just you?

CA: No, I went with, it turned out to be Morris sister. She happened to be in the camp. And we, and just before the war, we had gotten acquainted through another friend who had a dress shop, ran a dress shop and, and I had finished you know the sewing school. So, I was helping her, when she got orders for a dress or whatever to make. She would ask me to make it and I would, you know, get a percentage of the sale, yeah, that was my job at the time. And then, there was another man with his daughter that we got acquainted through this same-that owned the dress shop, I believe.

So when the time came to evacuate, we got together, four of us, as a family, because we were all scattered too and that's how I ended up with these other three into the Assembly Center.

ET: Not the same one that Morris was in?

MA: No, a different camp.

CA: No.

ET: A different camp?

CA: Different camp_____.

ET: Oh that's right, sure.

MA: She was in Utah.

ET: So you went to Utah?

CA: Yeah, Topaz, Utah.

MA: Topaz, Utah.

CA: It was a relocation, so I ended up there.

ET: And did you, were you able to bring anything with you, suitcases, personal items?

CA: We were only allowed one suitcase from our home where we lived, whatever you could carry in your suitcase. That's it and the clothes you had on.

MA: And of course, some couldn't get by with one suitcase so you had two suitcases.

ET: Did they allow that?

CA: Allow what?

ET: If you came in with two suitcases?

MA: Sure they would.

ET: Okay.

CA: Well as long as you carry it, I guess. But you know, how can you carry more than one big suitcase and maybe a little handbag or something like that you know. So and you couldn't carry much. And then, you couldn't bring big scissors or knives or any of that, so camera, no camera.

MA: No knives or—

CA: No, not even big scissors. I worked for this guy who owned a cutlery shop in San Francisco. And, he had given me a knife, a cloth cutting scissors, because I was in that school. He knew I needed it. I had gotten that for my birthday. I had to leave all that with the house.

ET: Did you ever go back to see the German family after?

CA: Yeah, Morris. They lived in San Francisco.

ET: I bet they were very glad to see you?

CA: You know yeah, but by that time though, I think the Mister was gone you know and only the mother was there.

ET: So now—

CA: (mumbling-cannot understand)

ET: What was her last name?

CA: Gertrude.

ET: Gertrude, so now, well let's go back to Morris. You were at Tule Lake.

MA: Here's the map I drew.

ET: Here's the map of Tule Lake. Now, you have a baseball field.

MA: A what?

ET: It shows you have a baseball field.

MA: Oh yeah.

ET: And it looks like a camp. It looks like a summer camp.

MA: Oh yeah.

ET: Look at all these cute little pictures.

MA: Sure.

ET: There's a football field.

MA: Hospital.

ET: There's the high school and the only way that you would know that this wasn't a summer camp was because it had guard tower.

MA: Yes.

ET: And it has warden's office.

CA: And a wired fence.

MA: Barbed wire all around the fence.

CA: And the corners were the guards.

ET: Now did the guards have weapons?

CA: Oh yeah.

MA: Weapons gun.

CA: Absolutely, they all had guns.

MA: They were told to shoot anybody who is trying to run away.

CA: Can you imagine trying to get out of—

ET: And where would you go anyway?

CA: Yeah, in a desert.

MA: I think there were two or three that were killed or injured.

ET: Really?

MA: But, but the camp was organized by an administration, administration staff, all Caucasians of course.

ET: Okay.

MA: And, and they had an employment office where they employed people for working to cook, cook kitchen, truck, on the_____.

ET: These were in, interns, internees that they employed?

MA: Pardon?

ET: These were internees who they employed or these were regular?

CA: Internees weren't they? People that lived in the camp to pull the people, that these people that were hired?

MA: They lived in the camp yeah.

ET: They were okay, they lived there though?

MA: Yeah.

ET: Now did they get paid?

MA: Oh yes, first it was.

CA: Yeah, tell them how much.

MA: And then, oh the internees you mean?

ET: Uh-huh.

MA: You had three classifications, the professional. They got nineteen dollars a month. Then the second one was sixteen, clerical. And, the lower, lower one was twelve wasn't it?

CA: I think something like that.

MA: That was sixteen and nineteen. I think toward the end, they had a clothing allowance made.

CA: Yeah a month. Was it Sears and Roebuck or Montgomery Ward?

MA: But-uh I was in, in the camp for a little over a year. Anybody that was cleared by the Army would be eligible to leave the camp with a permit.

ET: What did you do at the camp? What were you assigned to do?

MA: I was working for the transportation and tool department and that's all.

ET: What did your father do?

MA: He was what they called, for each of the squares or block, block manager.

ET: Okay.

MA: So he was a block manager for the younger fifteen that we lived in.

ET: Now did you have to—did you volunteer for these jobs or did they pretty much assign them to you?

MA: Volunteered.

ET: Okay.

MA: Volunteered but you were encouraged to work.

ET: Yeah, now did you develop any friends or friendships while you were there?

MA: Oh yes, we had a lot of friends. They loved baseball and most of them worked; you had to work, if you wanted pin money.

ET: They supplied you with what food and, and some clothing?

MA: We had one mess hall within the block. And, you had the laundry room, latrine, showers.

ET: One for the whole camp?

MA: No, one for each block.

CA: You know.

ET: Okay. And, how was your family holding up during this period of time? Was this really hard on them?

MA: No, I don't think so. I mean other than being—

CA: We were serving our country.

MA: --our lifestyle, it wasn't our lifestyle.

ET: Was it hard on them emotionally?

MA: I don't think so. I mean, I never really questioned.

ET: Especially being older.

CA: Yeah, but thing was they were all in the same boat so to speak. It wasn't-you know-any better situated.

ET: Did they ever say what was happening? Did anybody ever talk to you and tell you what was going on?

MA: Of course there were people who were pro-Japanese and they said, "Oh, Japan's going to win." But, a lot of them-most of them are born and raised in America and never been to Japan. I was never in Japan at that age.

ET: I'm sure that didn't go over real well with the officials.

MA: No, they wouldn't release you, unless you pledge loyalty to your country.

ET: Oh, so now you could be released after a certain period of time, if you pledged loyalty?

MA: If you, if you were cleared by the Army.

ET: Were you the only one in your family who was cleared?

MA: My older brother was in the Army at that time. He had to sign up for that right?

ET: Okay.

MA: But when I took my physical, I was 1C, because of my eyes. I didn't pass my eye exam.

ET: They wanted to intern you and draft you?

CA: Well they drafted—

MA: When I got into the camp, they reclassified me and I became what they call a 4C, which is an alien and I never got A; I no longer had my citizenship.

ET: That would have been with everybody that went to the camp?

CA: No.

ET: Only you?

MA: No, not only me. One of my friends was in that draft age-you had to have a draft card.

ET: My goodness.

CA: So he didn't qualify. If you were 4C, then you didn't get drafted into the Army. At the same time, I guess you're not a citizen. I don't know about that part. But anyway—

ET: What happened with, with your time here at the camp?

CA: I was in-you know-an Assembly Center, which is a horse stall. We were all put in a horse stall, though they said they cleaned up and painted it, but it was horse stall, you know and that's where we, they put us.

ET: That was permanent?

CA: That is where you lived in the Assembly Center. So anyway, when I came out, I was angry for the whole situation. I was really mad at somebody and it was just a total stranger, a young fellow, he said, "Don't be angry." He said, "Everybody's in the same situation. And, it's not good for anybody to see you angry." I said well that makes sense you know. And then they set up—

MA: More or less for transportation.

ET: Okay, so this is the DSS Form 57, Notice of Classification with your name and it says, "In class 4C, this law requires you to keep in touch with the local board, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. I've never seen this. And ,you did not receive one of these cards?

MA: No, no because she doesn't have—

ET: Because you weren't going to the draft?

CA: No.

ET: So now you are in this, in this camp?

CA: Yeah, Assembly Center.

ET: Assembly Center, now were you, were you able to stay with the people that you came with?

CA: Yeah, we lived in the same bungalow or whatever you want to call it, stall.

ET: Okay.

CA: And there was a hospital and nurses, the RN's, you know the registered nurses, got together and they kind of set-up a school to train nurse's aides, because they were short of nurses. I said to myself, I might as well make myself useful, because there was nothing to do you know. So I, some of us, took that course. I think it went on for, I don't know how many weeks, maybe six weeks. I don't know. And then, when that was done, they called for volunteers to help in the hospital, to help in the hospital in the relocation center. So, of course, I went and I was by myself. I worked in a hospital.

ET: Now—

CA: Even before.

ET: Now and that was located in what city, the relocation hospital, the hospital? St. Mary's, the same camp?

CA: Oh yeah or one of the—they all had a little hospital.

ET: Okay, you didn't get to go to another city? You had to stay right at that one on that land?

CA: On no, you couldn't set a foot out of there, so yeah, I worked in the hospital there at the location center hospital.

MA: Tule Lake.

ET: "United States War Relocation Authority" (reading from paper) and you're in your cap and gown?

MA: Yeah.

ET: April 15, 1943 (reading from paper) Tule, Tule Lake. I'll be darn.

CA: He's a great saver. He saves everything when I get.

ET: That's wonderful. Oh, this is wonderful.

CA: Yeah, he got all these.

ET: He looks so young there in this photo. Now, so now how long, Cherry, how long were you at the—

CA: Relocation?

ET: --relocation center?

CA: I was there about a year, you know. I just said I had to get out. There's, you know, not, not anything normal really. The whole thing was not normal, I felt. So fortunately, I used to belong to a church in Sacramento and this Baptist church always has like, you know like a missionary used to come and help on all the activities in that Baptist Church.

I had kept track with her. She was in Colorado, Denver I think. You have to have a place to go or somebody that can you know, a house you or have a job. Fortunately, I also had a friend in New York, which she's been there for a long time. She said she has a place for me to stay and work-like a school girl place-I used to do, when I was going to school.

When I left, I was able to go to Denver and stay with this missionary friend; I don't know, just maybe a couple of days or so. And then, I went to New York and of course, my friend had already met me and I had to go on the school girl job, you know, you live in the house and take your things and you live there and you get pillow money for it as well. So, then of course, I started going to school. I went to summer school and I don't know what all I did.

And then, so that was summer. In the fall, I was able to get into Pratt Institute of New York. It's a college and they have a very good dress designing school, course. I

was able to get into that so and then they said, "Well we can't teach you this." I had already gone to school. It was only maybe six, seven months, but it was a very well organized little sewing school. I had learned a tremendous amount of stuff there. Then, they said we can't teach you anymore.

So, if you could get a certificate or some kind of a proof that you had finished this sewing school in San Francisco, they said we'll give you the two year certificate or whatever they give regular for this particular course. But, when I did write back to my instructor in San Francisco, they had either moved or something. I never got an answer. It didn't matter how I got- I got the job anyway from there on so.

ET: Now when you went to-okay there seems to be a contradiction in the way the government handled this in that they interned you, but then, you were allowed to go hopscotching across the United States.

CA: Yeah East, East.

ET: Was that one of the conditions that as long as you asked for the East?

CA: I don't think you could have gone back.

ET: You-you're okay, can go?

CA: No.

MA: No, you could not go back to your original San Francisco or Seattle.

CA: Yeah, on the West Coast.

ET: But they'll take you back East?

CA: They said they were still at war you know. They were afraid.

MA: After the war was over, then, then you can go to the West Coast….

ET: They were worried that, that San Francisco might be bombed or the West Coast might be bombed? Is that it? Is that the problem?

CA: Yeah.

MA: For your own safety.

CA: That's how they were terrible. That's not really the reason. They were afraid we would side with Japan and so forth.

MA: You can imagine like today with Iraq and all that problems that still exist-that there is a real war going on yet. I can't imagine the Japanese would do anything like that....

CA: But, we were aware that the same thing could happen to the Iraq people here who are citizens here possibly and we don't want the same thing to happen to them that happened to us. We are very aware of that at JCL you know.

ET: Now, you went to New York. We'll come back to Morris, but I'm kind of curious about this. So you went to New York, to the school, but, you couldn't get your certificate. You mentioned that they said something about that they couldn't teach you anymore. Is that because you knew too much and you were....

CA: It was because I had all those courses in San Francisco.

ET: Okay.

ET: You were just over-qualified?

CA: Yeah, well they said, there's nothing we can teach you anymore.

ET: And so now, then what happened? You weren't able to get your response back from the other school. You mentioned that you got a job?

CA: You see, in the garment industry, you don't need any—

ET: Degrees and certificates?

CA: --degrees and things like that. They are more interested in the experience you have. That's what counts to them. You have to know and actually gone through the process of doing things, rather than the schooling.

ET: So now, where did you end up working?

CA: Well, there were two women that lived in the apartment that were associated with some Christian organization that they worked at. At any rate, I worked for them and she, or one of them, said, "Why don't you go to summer school?" Because it was June or the school wouldn't start until September. They knew what school I could go to – to learn to type or shorthand or some of whatever_____.

But then, during the summer, I got into another job in the lingerie-making establishment; I was doing some sewing and stuff like that. That was just for the summer. I had met someone there or on another job-this girl who had worked for a doll company-making clothes for the dolls-she said, "Do you want to?" And I said, "Sure, you know, I need a little experience." So, I was given the doll; making an outfit for her. And she said, "Oh boy!" You know and they give me a basic pattern, so I don't know the size. I figured this is my chance!

I made a coat. I made a coat and a tam, you know, but better than what they wanted. They wanted frilly little things-you know party dresses-like they used to have.

ET: Sure.

CA: She said, "You know, you do fine, but that's not what we want." So then, I don't know how I graduated, but I got into the garment center on Seventh Avenue. No first, I worked for a private establishment there. There was a couple who hired me to do the sewing and tailoring men. This was a small private establishment. We had to make a gown and put

it on a model. We used to have small shows and stuff like that. That's where I learned how to put things together. They were getting a little tired of running the thing and designing and so they hired themselves to another big company on Seventh Avenue. So they asked me, "Well, do you want to come with us?" I said, "Sure, but, I said I don't want to go as a sample maker or finisher (they used to call it)." The one that just does a lot of framework. I said, "I will go as an assistant designer." She said, "Oh, okay." So that's how I got into it.

ET: Good for you. Now you were still in New York?

CA: Yes, still in New York.

ET: And how old were you when all of this was happening?

CA: Oh, I was old enough. I was twenty-eight, twenty-nine, so I'm there already. I was old. I was twenty, when I went in the camp. That's how I started. But, before this private couple, I had worked for Elizabeth Arden and they had a designing department, dress designing. They had a well-known designer there at the time. But, most of us just went in as a seamstress, not like sample maker.

You learn how to make do all the same thing; making certain kind of shoulder pads or how to put them in and all that. How to take the hem and all that-small things. But, during the war of course, they got short of hands at the Elizabeth Arden cosmetic factory. So they then appealed, would you mind going-all of you-going to the manufacturing plant to help us?

ET: Yeah, because that's really what she's known for is her makeup.

CA: Yeah, all the makeup, so we said sure. We get paid just like we were sewing. We went there and packed cream of perfume or whatever in the box and things like. And I did that for a little while.

ET: Now, did New Yorkers treat you differently than West Coast? Were they suspicious of you? Were they pretty just accepting of you?

CA: No, no different, because they're so far apart you know.

ET: So they would pretty much welcome you?

CA: Yeah, so it would just be—

MA: Discrimination?

CA: There was very little of that going, especially in any kind of workplace like that. There is no, nothing actually happened.

ET: Now Morris, going back to you. So you weren't able to go into the military, because of your eyesight?

MA: That's right. When I went to camp, I became 4C, which is enemy alien.

ET: Now why would they call you an enemy alien, simply because of your eyesight and the fact that you can't serve?

MA: No, no because—

CA: We're at war with Japan, so—

MA: Japanese-American. But, once I got out from Tule Lake and got a job in Chicago….

ET: You then went back East?

MA: Sure.

ET: Okay.

MA: I had to report, report my change of address was-------

ET: Okay.

MA: And so I got, got a card saying_____

ET: Where in Chicago?

MA: When?

ET: You went to the—

MA: Forty-three.

ET: You went into the Army and then you went to Chicago?

MA: No, no.

ET: You went to Chicago first?

MA: First, I was working.

ET: Okay, you got-

MA: And then, the Army reclassified me to 1A.

ET: Oh. Well my goodness, your eyesight certainly improved didn't it?

MA: Oh yeah, yeah.

CA: (Laughs)

ET: Isn't it amazing what a little change in scenery can do?

MA: April 2, 1945, I was in the Army.

ET: You were drafted?

MA: I was drafted.

ET: Now where did you go?

MA: I went to Fort Meade.

ET: Which is where?

MA: Maryland.

ET: Okay.

MA: And I went to New Orleans for basic training.

ET: I wouldn't mind that, okay.

CA: Yeah, he talks about New Orleans a lot.

MA: They had good bars down there.

ET: (Laughs)

MA: And I wound up in Baltimore CIC Center.

ET: What's the CIC mean?

MA: CIC is Counter Intelligence.

ET: So you went from being an alien to a spy?

MA: Yep.

CA: (Laughs)

MA: And I went through the whole school.

ET: Boy, you definitely moved up in the world there. My goodness.

MA: And I served eighteen months in the Army. I was separated from the Honorable Discharge Area.

ET: Wow! So now what did you do? You were Counter Intelligent Corp. What did you do in there, that you can actually talk to us about?

MA: Oh, I learn how to pick locks, use a compass, now I forgot how.

ET: SOS signals? Did they send you anywhere or you just stayed primarily in the United States?

MA: Yeah, I was in Baltimore for eighteen, no about six months, before they said you can go home.

ET: Okay.

MA: I served eighteen months.

ET: And that was it.

MA: They said okay.

ET: Now, did you find it ironic that you were one minute in an internment camp on one coast and then in the Army on the other coast?

MA: Isn't it amazing that could happen?

CA: The same country.

ET: See, well in the same, and really kind of the same concept in a way.

MA: Well actually, I was glad because I didn't have to go overseas. Now my other brother, Harry, the older than me, two years older. He, he was in the famous Japanese-American 442, have you heard that?

ET: Is that Air Force?

CA: No.

MA: No, that's Army.

ET: Okay Army.

MA: Army.

ET: No, I don't know about them.

MA: Well they—

CA: They made quite a name for themselves, most decorated unit and—

ET: Really wow! Was that, now were they in, in Germany?

MA: Germany yes, yes, they went to Italy, Germany, France, Germany.

ET: Now did he come back alive?

MA: Yes, he and he became a doctor, M.D. and he's retired now in Long Island, New York.

ET: Now, you have other brothers. What, what happened to your other brothers? Were they drafted as well?

MA: No, my oldest brother was in Washington D.C. And, ironically he was working for the Japanese Embassy, because some.

CA: So nothing happened to him.

MA: He went to Oregon State College, when he got this offer from Washington D.C. I think possibly through my father's influence with some friends.

ET: Now this brings up a good point too. You, we have your family. And after the intern camps, they released everybody. Your family went back to Oregon?

MA: Yes.

ET: Now,did everybody go or outside of a couple of your brothers who went overseas and then your other brother? Everybody else went home?

MA: And my sister. My one sister.

ET: Okay.

MA: I have one sister; the other sister was together.

CA: Yeah, they turned out to be.

ET: You were still friends at this time too, all through your New York experience you were friends with Morrey's sister?

CA: Yeah, yes in San Francisco yes.

ET: Okay, we got. So that's a story we're going to have to get into here pretty soon.

MA: They happened to meet in New York.

ET: Okay so let's. So let's go to that. Now you, your parents went back to Oregon.

MA: Oregon.

ET: And we talked about how that your, the house had been dis—broken, broken into and everything. Did they eventually go back there and settle in there anyway?

MA: Did they what?

ET: Did they go back and settle in their old house anyway?

MA: Yes, yes, yes they did.

ET: Okay, okay.

MA: And eventually because if you're older and all the kids were out in the East Coast. So they sold the house in Portland and stayed with, they stayed with us.

CA: For a while, you know they—

ET: When you were married?

CA: Yeah.

ET: So now when did you both meet? We obviously know how, who introduced you? When did you? You met in New York, right Morris?

MA: Yes.

ET: Now what year did you meet? Did you first meet?

MA: It must have been forty, forty-six because I got out of the Army in October of 1946 and—

CA: His sister Rose _____.

ET: That was your friend?

CA: Yeah, that, I had met. And she, she had left_____

MA: The camp.

CA: Yeah, and, and she kind of lost track of him and all the other brothers and so, he was. She was always on the lookout you know. So that's how she found out in New York. She found out about you.

ET: She tracked you down?

CA: More or less I think right?

MA: Yeah, she and my sister were, were in the same apartment right?

CA: Yeah, yeah, right, right along and, and yeah.

MA: In New York, in New York City.

CA: That's right, in New York.

ET: Okay.

CA: And then we were both working. I got her into Elizabeth Arden at that time.

MA: She developed leukemia and passed away.

CA: Yeah, yeah in New York.

ET: How long? When was this? How old was she?

CA: She was a little, because she was, she's a couple of years older than Morris.

ET: Okay, and this is the one that was your roommate?

CA: Yeah.

ET: Yeah, how did you? Well how did she introduce you both? She found. She found Morrey.

CA: Yeah, well before that Dave, the one, the younger one who was in the Army and he, he had come to New York.

MA: Yeah, that's so long ago now. I have to think back.

CA: Yeah, I think they more or less kept in touch.

MA: He kept in touch with Rose.

CA: You know yeah, so that both of them and where her older brother?

ET: Right, right.

MA: Anyway-and we got together.

CA: Eventually yeah.

MA: We got married in 1952.

CA: And then, the older brother also was in New York, right?

MA: Paul.

CA: Yeah, Paul his older brother, was also in New York. So eventually—

MA: That's when my parents moved out from the West Coast to the East Coast.

ET: That makes sense.

CA: Yeah, for a while, for a while.

ET: So now, when you met Terri did you decide to move out to New York?

MA: No, I was working.

CA: No we didn't. We didn't need to. We were in New York.

ET: Okay, so you were working in New York. What were you doing in New York?

MA: I was working, oh, when I got discharged from the Army I went, they were in New York and I went to New York and I put an ad in the paper or I looked up in the Yellow Pages, export, export companies.

ET: Right, that makes sense because that was your degree?

MA: And so, I sent letters out and I got one answer. It turned out that I was going in for an interview and I went to the 82nd floor of the Empire State Building.

CA: And he hates heights (laughs).

MA: And, and I interviewed and got the job. And, I worked for that same company for thirty years.

ET: My goodness.

CA: Don and_____.

ET: What was it called the company?

CA: Don and_____.

MA: No, this actually was American Pacific Enterprises.

CA: Oh yes, to begin with it, wasn't Don and_____?

ET: Wow!

MA: And this, my boss knew somebody in Ohio and they wanted him to set up an international division. So, I stayed there and stayed there for thirty years and retired in 1980.

ET: Oh my, goodness.

CA: And, we were transferred to Ohio.

MA: I started work there. I worked for him from 1950-1980, thirty years.

ET: My goodness! You must have liked it?

MA: Yes, I did a lot of traveling.

ET: Where? Basically to the Pacific or did you get to travel other places as well?

MA: Pacific, South America, not Europe, but South America.

CA: Australia.

MA: And the Far East, a lot of Far East, Japan, Korea, Taiwan.

CA: Hong Kong.

MA: Singapore.

ET: Are you bilingual? Do you—

MA: Yeah, I can speak Japanese just--

CA: Nothing.

MA: Conversational.

ET: Okay.

MA: So that happened.

ET: That had, yeah that had to come in handy. Are you bilingual, Cherry?

MA: She is.

CA: Why I speak—

MA: More so than me.

CA: --fluent because I went to school in Japan so, so.

ET: Did you ever? Were you ever to reunite with any of your other family in New York? Did you ever, were you ever able to locate your—

CA: Oh yeah sure. Well their friend yeah, yeah. The family stayed in California.

ET: Now, so now you were married and what was the year '58?

MA: Fifty-two.

ET: Fifty-two. And so now you, do you have children? You don't? You don't have children?

CA: No.

ET: Okay, so now in '52, you both were in New York. Now when did you move to Ohio?

MA: The corporate office that I worked for, the corporate office was in Cleveland and the international division office was in New York.

CA: New York.

MA: Because of the proximity to all the export companies. And so they, one day they just said, "We're going to move the international division to Cleveland." So—

ET: Okay.

MA: --we arranged, sold our house in New Jersey.

ET: Okay, so you lived in New Jersey? Okay, how did you like New Jersey?

CA: Oh, we were there about nineteen years I guess.

MA: We bought a house for—

CA: You wouldn't believe.

MA: --twelve thousand-five hundred.

CA: Can you imagine that?

MA: And mortgage and that was four percent interest. We stayed there nineteen years?

CA: Nineteen years, and nine years in Ohio.

MA: We bought our condominium on a golf course in Cleveland.

CA: Tanglewood, yeah, townhouse yeah. They were cheap in those days.

ET: Which did you like better Ohio or New York?

MA: Ohio.

ET: Really why?

MA: The people are nice.

CA: Very friendly people.

ET: They have real grassroots that might be why. A lot of Amish and very humble, humble people.

CA: We felt very comfortable.

MA: This, this year we spent a few days. We had our sort of a mini reunion on the East Coast, so on our way back instead of coming directly, we chose Southwest Air and we wanted to get off at Cleveland and see some friends.

CA: Yeah, our next door neighbor. They're still there so, so we went to see them and stay overnight there.

MA: We bought this condominium.

CA: Caucasian friends, yeah.

MA: Tanglewood Lake. It's in Chagrin Falls, if you know Ohio. Chagrin Falls is a terrific place.

CA: Yeah, that's a nice little house.

MA: And Tanglewood Lake was a golf course; PGA golf course.

ET: Okay.

MA: And—

ET: Do you golf? Both of you golf?

CA: No, he used to.

ET: Okay.

MA: We bought this—

ET: You just run out and jump on the golf course huh?

MA: Yeah, we had a—

CA: Or I just you know (laughs), play around—

ET: Wow! So now, were you, what, were you still working at your own career during this period of time?

CA: No.

MA: She retired in '71.

CA: No, he says enough. He said, you can stay home (laughs) so that's what I did.

ET: Now.

MA: I bought her a car. She learned how to drive.

ET: Oh—

CA: No, I was driving.

MA: Oh yeah, you was driving.

CA: Yeah, I was driving.

ET: Okay.

CA: But I had my own car then. Yeah, so I was a little, join the bowling league and exercise (laughs).

ET: That sounds like a—

CA: They had a clubhouse attached to the golf course area. But, they, while we were there, this shopping area came up so, there was all kind of stuff, all kinds of stores and restaurants and clothes for exercise and all that stuff so.

ET: Now something that I wanted to ask you but, I didn't get a chance. I forgot to ask you when we were talking about the relocation centers. I wanted to ask you a little bit about the actual habitat? I mean, outside of the fact that it probably smelled. Did, were they, were you in brick houses or wood houses or-

CA: Brick huh.

MA: Tule Lake?

ET: Tule Lake or—

CA: They was bungalows. They were all papers--

MA: Wood.

CA: --and pieces of wood.

ET: Oh okay.

MA: Wood and for awhile they didn't even have sheetrock inside.

CA: They call it winterizing or something.

MA: Then eventually, then they had one potbelly stove in the middle of the room.

CA: That's it.

ET: It must have got awfully cold?

CA: It is.

MA: Oh yeah, we had, we had pants on.

CA: We had to live with snow.

MA: And get coal and lumber to keep the fire running. It was pretty rough living.

ET: And the same with Topaz?

CA: Oh yeah.

MA: That was more like a desert there.

CA: It was. It was the whole place was like the bottom of the lake. It was clayish dust.

MA: Tule Lake.

CA: Very fine dust.

ET: And red?

CA: And we used to—no, it was beigey color.

ET: Okay.

CA: But patients in the hospital with inadequate building-you know all the dust and ice would dampen cloth all over their face, because all the dust would—

MA: She worked in the hospital.

CA: Yeah, so—

ET: My goodness! So you really didn't have any protection, not a whole lot of protection from the elements really?

CA: No.

ET: Or at least to make you comfortable, neither one of you, they really didn't go overboard on the air conditioning or the heating system here.

CA: The thing-it wasn't completed when we moved into it. They used to call it winterization or something, the final piece of paper or whatever goes on the outside, top paper or something?

MA: Oh yeah.

CA: Yeah, so when I went there you could, you know where the two lumber would meet you know? There would be a space. I used to buy scotch tape and I used to—

ET: And they never finished it. It wasn't complete but they did eventually they did.

CA: Yeah, eventually they did. But _____to make us as comfortable as possible.

ET: Now, did you feel as, as you know as bad as the circumstances were, did they, did the administrators there attempt to sort of help you out as much as they could? Were they, were they sort of friendly or they pretty much didn't do anything like let you alone?

MA: They had, they had rules and regulations you had to live by.

ET: Okay.

MA: Most of them were good people.

ET: They pretty much let you govern yourselves then kind of?

CA: More or less I guess. But he probably was more—

MA: What they did was—

CA: --exposed to that.

MA: --as soon as, as soon as we had gone, there were volunteers from Sacramento, five hundred from Sacramento and different places. So we had enough to start a community, like a, like a city.

CA: Yeah, run like a city.

MA: We, we had a—

ET: Did you have your own town, like a town council?

MA: Town council and I so happened to be elected or called upon for being the secretary.

ET: Okay.

MA: So I was the secretary for the whole year. Once a week just like they have meetings over here.

ET: At the, at the City Hall with the JAL (Japanese America League). And so, now what did they talk about at the meetings?

MA: Complaints mostly.

ET: And was there, did those complaints go to somebody in the administration?

MA: Oh yes, oh yes.

ET: Okay.

MA: That's what the council-their duty was to refer to the administration to the different if the problem in the mess hall if the kitchen was dirty.

ET: Okay.

MA: Or they had enough food.

ET: Now speaking, that's a really good point too, is that you know you're talking about food and it's like, you are in the middle of nowhere. Where did this food come from? It must have been trucked for miles and miles and miles.

MA: Oh yes.

ET: Did you have fresh dairy? Did you have pretty much everything that you could have?

MA: Well we could have, there were many things that we couldn't have because of the rations.

CA: You ate in mess halls. You don't cook your own meals at all?

ET: Okay.

CA: You just ate whatever they served.

ET: And what did they serve a lot of times?

CA: Well mainly-

MA: Army food.

CA: Those were all like Army food yeah.

ET: Okay, so you didn't get steak and lobster?

MA: No (laughs).

CA: No, you just go to this huge dining room.

MA: All the canned stuff.

ET: Oh really.

CA: A dining room building, mess hall I guess.

ET: No real fresh fruits or vegetables or that sort of thing?

MA: They raised a lot among all those different camps that were on—

CA: Yeah cabbage and even--

MA: And so they shipped onions or potatoes or whatever at other camps.

ET: You had your own little gardens? And they went and they shipped them.

CA: Yes, they did.

MA: And they had—

CA: Tule Lake.

MA: Yes farmers, laborers, trucks attached to them, veggies then. Oh, it was like a regular city.

ET: Did they have cattle or_____.

MA: No, we didn't have their own cattle. They had to buy the meat, but even then, was regulated because of the Army.

ET: Did you have like a store?

MA: We had a community store like a Co-op.

CA: Well yeah.

MA: They sold clothing and cigarettes and candy.

CA: No clothing though. We had to order our clothing, Montgomery Ward. How much, tell her what kind of salary we had.

MA: Yeah, we did, nineteen-sixteen a month. And-uh—

ET: It didn't get you far. What did that? What could that buy you?

CA: Oh, not much. You could save it and order a piece of clothing or something from what was it, Sears and Roebuck or Montgomery Ward or one of those you know if you want it.

MA: Montgomery Ward.

ET: What about personal items like soap, et cetera? Did they supply that for you?

MA: I think they did didn't they?

CA: I think they must have, because we never ran out, because I worked in the hospital where they would have had whatever. That's where a lot of people wanted to work- in the hospital. But to get better food you know?

MA: Soda?

ET: I'm fine, thank you. Now you were too old for education, but they did provide schooling for the children?

MA: Oh they had grade schools.

CA: They had schools.

MA: They had grade schools, high school.

CA: They even had high school I understand.

MA: My sister graduated high school in the camp. And, of course there was many, many babies born every day in camp.

CA: I should know. I worked in the hospital (laughs) yeah.

ET: Now, so really there wasn't any distinction made if you were born here in America, you were still interned, if you were Japanese?

CA: Oh yeah. Most of us were born here yeah.

ET: And they didn't—

CA: I mean Nisei were of course.

ET: Now what's Nisei?

CA: Nisei is the second generation.

ET: Nisei, okay.

CA: Nisei.

ET: Is second generation.

MA: A Japan person from Japan.

CA: Issei, Issei.

MA: Are called Issei.

ET: Oh okay.

MA: And the children born from those parents were second generation, so they called Nisei.

CA: We're the Nisei. Then, our children would be just Sansei, third generation and so, and so on.

ET: Okay, now have you ever been able to keep in contact, have you been able to keep in contact with anybody else who outside of family who, who spent time with you at the internment camps?

MA: Well, we corresponded through the U.S. mail. We had a post office. We had anything the city had, jail. We had a, we had—

CA: Police_____.

MA: We had lawyers, regular, regular—

ET: Okay, it was really like a city?

CA: Yeah, fire departments, ambulance from the hospital and all that stuff.

ET: Now how big in square footage would you say your areas were or is it hard to estimate?

CA: For the bungalows?

ET: No, the actual, the whole entire center?

CA: Oh, the size of a—

ET: Like Camarillo or smaller.

CA: No a hundred thousand.

MA: No.

CA: How many about a hundred thousand?

MA: Tule Lake, the most they had I think was twelve thousand or something like that.

ET: Okay.

CA: Well, but the whole relocation center.

MA: And a hundred and all the Japanese.

ET: Oh the total-

CA: Yeah, about—

MA: And the center about a hundred, I think it's closer to a hundred and twenty thousand.

CA: Yeah, so that's just you know in this one big spot.

MA: No, no, ten camps.

CA: Oh that's ten camps?

MA: Ten camps, Tule Lake and Topaz probably had nine thousand.

CA: That's right, there around ten thousand, yeah that's right.

ET: Now did you have, were the showers facilities located in your little blocks or did you have to go somewhere else for them?

MA: One in every block.

ET: One in every block.

MA: Right.

CA: What they call, that means so many groups of bungalows—

MA: How many?

CA: --and there would be a mess hall.

MA: How many showerheads were there in--?

CA: How many what?

MA: Shower?

CA: I don't know.

MA: Were you never one who took a shower?

CA: Oh yeah (laughs).

MA: (Laughs)

CA: Sure did. There was no curtain or nothing you know?

ET: Oh really?

CA: Yeah, I mean they just like they come over where the commodes were, it's just stalls you know and some women had some curtain on it. But it's just open.

ET: Really?

CA: Oh yes, they were very crude.

ET: It wasn't like a cement building?

CA: Huh?

ET: It wasn't like in a, wasn't it in some kind of a building per say?

MA: Yeah, a building of its own.

CA: It's just like a bungalow, like any other bungalow. I mean, it just housed the area there. The rows of basins or something, like the steel things.

MA: They smelled too.

ET: They what?

MA: They smelled too.

ET: Oh I bet.

CA: And so they were open, just stalls and the shower was sort of open.

MA: And you go up the highways like 101 or 5, they have houses and rest areas in between? Well lately they've been renovated, but they used to be, ten, fifteen years ago when you stopped at one of those places you knew you were in a---

ET: You could smell it on the way?

MA: Yeah (laughs), that's the way it was in camp.

CA: People are a little more fussier now.

ET: Well, did you have real plumbing or outhouse, this wasn't an outhouse? It was real plumbing right?

CA: Yeah.

MA: A big like—

CA: I mean there is no bathroom in the bungalow, no running water.

MA: --for the men's room, but they had—typical just a hole in the, where you sit. After that, I don't know how, how they cleaned it or anything.

ET: I was going to say. Who cleaned? Who cleaned the mess hall and the—

MA: They had. They had crews.

ET: Okay.

CA: There were volunteers people_____.

ET: That would be the job that I would sign up for- to clean the toilets. (Laughs) oh my, goodness.

MA: And they had a fire department of course.

ET: That were all volunteer?

MA: Yeah.

CA: Oh yeah, everything.

MA: Police department.

ET: Is this volunteer?

MA: Yes, warden's, they had wardens.

ET: Now who? Who? What did the Anglo's and the Caucasians, what did they do there? Did they teach?

MA: Supervise.

ET: They just supervised? Okay.

MA: They handled all the complaints, all the problems.

ET: Did they seem uncomfortable with their situation? Were you ever able to—

MA: There, there was, I would say it was handled very properly. I don't know if there was any other race that under the same conditions like, like the lower echelon, how they would have behaved under the same circumstances that we had. I mean—

ET: Yeah, you didn't do anything.

MA: --would there be more thieves, more murders.

ET: _____or other issues? Uh-huh.

MA: But I don't know. I was on the judiciary also and we had, we had trials. Most of the problems were from people gambling, playing poker, you know causing trouble.

ET: Any alcohol allowed on the base, I mean in the camp?

CA: Oh it wasn't allowed, I don't think.

MA: I remember we spotted somebody made it.

CA: Yeah.

MA: But I was never into alcohol at that young age. I, I was only twenty, let's see. How old was I? Forty-two, twenty, twenty-four, about twenty-four? After I graduated from college.

CA: Yeah, that's right.

ET: Now have you ever, outside of the JAL that you're in now, have you been able to correspond with any other people who have been in situations, have also been in the internment centers? Did you find that the experiences are very similar from different, sounds like you sort of had similar circumstances or you know situations?

CA: They are, because they were all built the same way. They were all set up in the same kind of area. So more or less they were all I would say—

ET: But also emotional?

CA: --you know, I mean.

ET: You seem emotionally that or at least temperament-wise as being that; that you both had a similar environment you know where, where you pretty much governed your own selves and it wasn't. There didn't seem like there was a whole lot of internal problems or any internal conflict.

MA: You know what Evelyn? I would give a lot of credit to our parents. I mean their upbringing us the way they brought us up is how we're going to behave in public. If we. If we were conniving—

CA: Troublemakers.

MA: --making problems or anything like that it would have shown up in.

ET: So now, you ended up in New York and to Ohio. And then, you ended up in California. How did that happen?

MA: 1980 was my thirtieth year at the company I worked for. So before then, I had decided I was, I would only be sixty-two then, but I would take an early retirement. And so, in 1980, my thirtieth year I said "Good-bye".

CA: And we had come out here before to look for_____, he has two sisters out here in California.

ET: Southern California?

CA: Yeah.

MA: We were already bought our house.

CA: Yeah, by May, we looked at it.

ET: Oh really.

CA: In Ventura.

ET: Oh okay, you went to Ventura?

CA: At first.

MA: We bought a house.

ET: Okay.

CA: So when Johnson.

MA: Johnson Drive.

CA: You get off at Johnson.

MA: Mulholland Drive, and there's a, there's a single story corner house.

CA: We had a big yard, corner big yard.

MA: Big yard.

CA: Corner, right in the corner.

MA: And close to my fishing peers. I used to go fishing every, about three times a week.

ET: Wow! You enjoyed that?

MA: Yeah, I caught an albacore, a mackerel, yeah.

ET: Now what brought you to Camarillo?

CA: But the weather now where we were—

ET: In Ventura?

CA: --yeah, because this is near the ocean you know, it's close enough. The fog used to come rolling down the street. And I said, "Oh boy, this is more like a San Francisco you know?" Besides there was no walking places.

MA: No shopping.

CA: For shopping, no grocery stores, no drug store, nothing you could walk to.

MA: There was 7 11.

CA: Camarillo where we were before you know, you can walk to any places. Anyway, that wasn't very attractive for us. You get stuck in the house all day long.

MA: 1982, we bought the townhouse in Camarillo on Ponderosa and Fulton-you know where the Bank of America is?

CA: K-Mart you know that around there, across the street like?

ET: Plenty of shopping there.

CA: Yeah, I used to walk all around it and go shopping.

MA: But the upstairs, because she has, she has problems. She had a quadruple bypass in 1998.

CA: Yeah, yeah.

MA: 1998. Show her your scar.

ET: Oh my, goodness.

MA: I had a hernia the same, same week.

ET: Really?

CA: Yeah, I guess he did.

ET: Did you both plan that, so you could end up in the hospital together?

MA: No.

ET: Or watch each other out, watch each other.

CA: He didn't have to be in the hospital.

ET: Okay.

CA: For that.

ET: So now then, you actually weren't too far from here really.

MA: Two or three miles.

ET: But now, what brought you into where you are living now?

CA: The group of the two story house that we lived in.

ET: Okay.

CA: Everybody is-you know you are staring just one long. It's pretty steep. It's that, you're not getting any younger (laughs). It is dangerous. It's hurt a lot of people; older people have moved out you know.

ET: I'm sure you tripped.

MA: After she came back from the hospital, we had to have the bedroom downstairs.

CA: Yeah, we had a hospital, rented a hospital bed and put it in the living room. At least there was a powder room there.

ET: Right.

CA: And, gradually a nurse came and I was finally able to climb the stairs with help.

ET: You recuperated really well and you look great.

CA: I did yeah.

ET: Wow!

CA: I did I think.

ET: So now you, I think I noticed on one of the documents that you gave me-that you joined the JAL.

MA: JTL.

ET: JTL, JTL excuse me in, was it 1940 something?

MA: Nineteen forty-two.

ET: Nineteen forty-two? Now, was that a requirement or that was voluntary correct?

MA: Voluntary yes.

CA: Well, we would just—

ET: It's a community, more or less a community or civic league?

CA: It's a JC or Japanese American Citizens League.

ET: And that's one of the oldest?

CA: It is and it's nationwide. It's all over.

ET: So it's been around since 1929?

MA: Yes.

CA: Before the war_____.

ET: And now, what brought you to that conclusion that you wanted to join?

MA: I wanted to help.

CA: Did somebody invite us there-I don't know how we got into that.

MA: We had a newspaper, a PC.

CA: Yeah, we used to get that.

ET: Now, you had mentioned, I think Cherry, about the kind of current situation that we're in now and how that you want to watch and make sure that this doesn't happen again to another group. Is that really kind of one of the motivating factors right now for this organization or and kind of maybe what motivated you to, to join in the first place really.

MA: Yes, yes.

ET: And to—

CA: Well, the, the JCL was in existence, before the war anyway.

MA: Sure.

CA: Right? But, we didn't really join in New York or anything.

ET: It's a pretty active. You have a fairly active unit here in Ventura County it seems to me.

CA: Yes, I think we do yeah.

ET: And what are some of the focuses that they have?

MA: The what?

ET: Some of the focuses?

MA: Focuses?

ET: Accomplishments or objectives?

MA: Anti, Anti-racial.

CA: Yeah.

ET: And I think George had mentioned that he goes to different schools and talks about, about these types of issues and I think he mentioned that there was a, a cook-off or something was it last year or—

MA: Barbeque.

ET: Barbeque right, for part of the community.

MA: A couple nights ago, it's annual. We have Cultural Day too.

CA: Yeah, we have that, don't we?

MA: About thirteen, fourteen years.

CA: Yeah, third Sunday of October we have it. The whole things Japanese, Japanese food samples, Japanese dancing-?

MA: Did you do go?

ET: I did not. But, I might have to do this (laughs).

MA: All right.

ET: I love Japanese food, so that's a good motivation for me.

CA: We opened our JCL to everybody, Caucasian. We have a Chinese member now. We have a lot of Caucasian people and Korean.

MA: So you're welcome to join.

ET: I think I just might have to do this.

CA: Yeah, at least come to a meeting.

ET: Well the chocolate-covered strawberries would bring me back.

CA: Yeah (laughs).

MA: Fifty dollars a year.

CA: Yeah third, third Thursday, every third Thursday of the month. So this coming Thursday or next week I guess.

MA: Next week.

CA: We'll be going and I'm going to invite Linda, the buyer of our other house, a single woman you know bought our house, a big house so.

ET: Now looking back on your lives….

ET: Now what are you doing now? You are retired and you're really, it seems to me, you're enjoying life a lot. But, a difficult past in some ways. Do you feel that you've grown from this, from the internment camp experience?

MA: Yes.

ET: You kind of, it seems like you kind of just moved on and you didn't let it impinge you in any way or hold you back either emotionally of physically. Do you think that's true for most people? It seems to me that that's not true of a lot of people who were in your situation.

MA: I accomplished what I started to do. I took up foreign trade in college.

ET: Got a job.

MA: Spent many years in setting up our organization, retired and traveled to all the different places.

MA: South America, Far East. She enjoyed part of it too.

ET: Did you get to travel with him?

CA: Oh yeah, I mean not in the business end. But, we traveled.

MA: _____like going down to Mexico on a boat.

CA: Oh yeah, we, we did cruises yeah, yeah.

ET: That sounds like fun.

MA: We went on a boat.

CA: Go to Bogotá.

MA: On a freighter.

CA: And then, Jamaica, we've gone a couple times.

ET: You were older, when you were interned and I'm wondering if-do you think that was easier on you or harder on you than if you had been a child?

MA: It was educational for me.

CA: I think it's easier, if you're older. I think it might have been very upsetting with the younger teenagers.

MA: I think if you were like a teenager, I think you missed out a lot.

CA: A drastic change for them, you know?

ET: Yeah, and, and doing the review, you had children, excuse me, you had siblings who, your sister like you, grew up-basically grew up and graduated in the camp. Do you, did she ever talk to you about that experience and was she kind of even upset that she didn't get to go to the prom or—

CA: She didn't share with me.

ET: Mentioned anyway?

CA: My sister.

MA: She's a darling too. She's a real nice girl.

CA: She's a teacher. She became a teacher.

MA: Yeah.

CA: School teacher, unfortunately she passed away.

ET: So she has children?

MA: In Japan, I think, the oldest daughter is supposed to take care of the mother. And, my mother stayed with my sister the longest and she was always close to selling and living in Portland.

ET: You had a really close family it sounds to me even though you were dispersed. You seem to maintain your bearings.

CA: It was getting a little too much for, it's getting too much for May to take your both parents, you know. So then, she said, we'll take turns. So she spent three months at the doctor's brother's place and then, three months in Baltimore, younger brother and then three months with us (laughs).

ET: So a change of scenery?

CA: Yeah that worked out.

ET: Have I- have we covered pretty much everything that you think we should, we should cover? Any situations or, or circumstances or instances that you want to bring up? Everything pretty much, you think I should know?

CA: I think; I think we covered pretty well don't you?

MA: I would like to see the generation that's coming behind us-

CA: To be aware, you know about the camp.

MA: About their parents and their parents. Like I give a lot of credit to our parents for—

ET: Helping you get through, teaching you how to get through this survival really of a very disruptive state.

MA: In the prime years of their life too, when this happened.

ET: Sure and they lead by example really.

MA: Yes.

ET: Did your parents ever talk about it after they left?

MA: Sometimes. I even kept letters that my father had written to the boys. You could tell it was emotional and desire. It was really amazing how and he probably inherited that from his parents.

ET: And passed it down to you? So is the will to go on, really.

CA: Yeah.

ET: We were talking about the redress issues.

MA: All those people who were interned in camp were applying for redress and that Civil Rights bill was passed in 1988. And we, each person, got $20,000 and a letter of apology from the President. And so, she got twenty and I got twenty and it's all gone.

CA: I don't know where it went.

MA: But, but it was....

ET: Taxes.

CA: Well, yeah.

MA: But it was.

ET: Was that money taxed?

CA: I don't think so.

MA: Was it what?

CA: Taxed.

MA: Taxed, no, no.

CA: It wasn't taxed.

MA: No, it wasn't taxable.

ET: And it didn't have to do with how long you were interned?

CA: No, no.

MA: No.

ET: Or how old you were?

CA: No.

MA: But you had to be alive.

ET: In order to collect?

MA: In order to collect.

ET: That makes sense. Now that's another reason an heir could not collect?

MA: A what?

ET: An heir could not collect, a relative of a dead internee?

MA: Oh no.

ET: Could not collect?

CA: I don't think so.

ET: Now what do you think about that? Was it a good gesture or--?

MA: Yes, it was a good gesture.

ET: A big thing too.

MA: And, admission of wrong being done to us.

ET: Well, it was clear that you weren't a threat if they allowed you to travel and go back East. I mean obviously, what do you think? What, why did this occur? What was going on that somebody all of a sudden decided that, or was it more than one person? Obviously it must have been. But what, what, why did this happen?

MA: Because it was against our Constitution of being interned without—

CA: A trial.

ET: Why did this internment happen anyway? Why the fact that they felt that the West Coast was under attack or that it was for your best--?

CA: No, that we would turn against probably, but become spies or something I would imagine.

ET: Do you think? Do you think that was true?

MA: Sure, sure, they said that there was a military necessity.

CA: Yeah.

MA: And there was not. There was no sabotage or, or—

CA: Never was that true.

MA: Never, no—

ET: So do you think there were underlying factors here or has anything ever happened, came out about this and said that there was another reason for this?

MA: Oh yes. Well not another reason but why was it done? Why weren't we allowed to redeem ourselves? They couldn't prove us guilty. There was no, no, no one _____of sabotage or—

CA: That we would side with you know our parent's country. There were so many of us on the West Coast you know.

ET: Were there? Were there Japanese-Americans, was there another concentration of Japanese-Americans say in the, on the East Coast or in the Midwest? This is pretty much where everybody came at first and stayed.

CA: Yeah, most from the West Coast area yeah.

ET: Okay

CA: So those who were living out east, they were not bothered with anything like that. There were no restrictions in any way.

MA: The Tule Lake camp was towards the end, before it was just dismantled. It had a lot of the Japanese-Americans who were anti-America, and they were, they were allowed to go back to Japan.

ET: Oh okay.

MA: And, they were put on a boat and shipped to Japan. And some of them who were born in the United States who didn't know any better—

CA: And some didn't who were-who were raised in Japan—

MA: Educated in Japan.

CA: --and born here but raised in Japan and they were more pro-Japan.

ET: Okay, so they went back to Japan?

CA: Some of them did.

ET: And how did they fair?

MA: Not so good. So many of them have, have their, what do you call it? When they lost, regained their citizenship.

ET: Oh, here they did?

MA: Yes.

ET: They came back?

MA: Yes.

ET: Probably they were very—I would say that they were probably very emotional and very angry that this would happen. I'm thinking and fine then, I'm going to go back there.

MA: Well, they were allowed to what is it- and because they were asked two questions.

CA: You have to sign that—

MA: No, no or yes, yes.

CA: Yeah, everybody had to sign.

MA: If you did it one way, you wouldn't be able to get out of camp. But if you said yes, you are, you are to bear arms for your country. If you said no to that, then you, then you were going to stay in camp, stay under guard. So, what was the other question?

ET: Do you swear an oath of allegiance, allegiance or something to that affect maybe?

MA: No-the Pledge Allegiance?

ET: How many people do you think entered going back to Japan from Tule Lake?

MA: Ten thousand.

ET: Oh really? That many?

MA: There were, there were figures on that too.

ET: Wow!

MA: But some of them they were going because of, of not because they are using their heads.

ET: They were just angry?

MA: And they just wanted to get out, if you can.

ET: Now did Japan have a draft over there?

MA: Oh yes.

ET: Okay, so I'm wondering if they maybe people that went back there were automatically drafted?

MA: Oh yes, and there were many cases were the brothers over here and—

CA: Yeah, that's right.

MA: ---fighting for America and brothers in Japan were fighting against America.

ET: So like the Civil War?

MA: Many, many families.

CA: Either they got stuck there or you know? Went back a few days so.

ET: Okay.

CA: They tried to run the place as smoothly as possible.

ET: The camp? That was an educational experience?

CA: Yeah, entertainment you know.

ET: You did all help each other?

CA: Oh yeah, there were all kinds of things. There were art classes and all that stuff yeah.

MA: You had your churches or religions.

ET: What about pets? Were you allowed to have any pets?

MA: We what?

ET: Pets.

CA: Pets, dogs and cats?

ET: Dogs and cats?

CA: No.

MA: No, I don't think so.

CA: Not in our camp.

MA: I forgot about that. I mean I—

ET: I just thought of that question.

CA: I don't think none of them had any or, or allowed. I don't think so. I don't ever remember seeing a dog running around or anything out in the camp. No, I don't think so. I'm sure there were more things to take care of, I mean when we were in the camp. You

know they have some of the restrictions like they have here now in these mobile home place. You can't have big dogs. They have to be so many pounds. They have all kinds of restrictions here. So you can imagine having all kinds of animals running around or in you have it in those small bungalows. I mean it's crowded.

(TAPE SUDDENLY ENDS)

EDITOR'S NOTE: TAPE FAULTY

END OF INTERVIEW