

CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON

Japanese American Oral History Project

An Oral History with IZUMI TANIGUCHI

Interviewed

By

Jay Thompson

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NARRATOR: IZUMI TANIGUCHI
INTERVIEWER: Jay Thompson
DATE: December 7, 2003
LOCATION: Half Moon Bay, California
PROJECT: Japanese American

JT: This is an interview with Dr. Izumi Taniguchi by Jay Thompson for the Japanese American Project of the oral history project at California State University at Fullerton. The interview is being held in Fresno on November 8, 1992 at approximately 1:42 in the afternoon. Dr. Taniguchi, can you tell me about your family and your childhood?

IT: I was born in Stockton, California, which is the nearest large city to a small community where we lived, Brentwood, California, east Contra Costa County. My father was a farmer, truck farmer, growing all sorts of different vegetables. In the 1930s, the Depression period caused the hardship of the produce market, and he organized the produce association called Brentwood Produce Association consisting of six farmers and they not only packed and shipped their own produce but also packed produce for other non-member farmers. By the time of World War II, we had made it into a fairly successful association, however, with outbreak of war, he lost all of the business.

JT: What was your neighborhood like during the thirties? I understand it's an agricultural community, but who were your nearest neighbors? What would you see if you looked out from the front porch?

IT: Being a farming community, farm houses were a mile, two miles apart so we did not have close neighbors. However, during the 1930s, because of the government's effort to create access to the market by farmers, all the roads were paved so it's not so inconvenient to get to neighbors. The community was a fairly well-integrated community so far as communities are concerned. We had very few African Americans in the community, about fourteen Japanese families, two or three Chinese families, quite a few Mexican families, and all the rest were Caucasians. And as far as the schools were concerned, we were quite well integrated. We participated fully in everything, except there was some discrimination such as some of the private parks

- did not admit Japanese. And we had a few scholarships that were closed to Asians. Other than that, it would have been difficult to identify any gross racism.
- JT: Do you remember what the communities feelings were about the events in Europe and Asia during this time? About Hitler's rise to power in Germany and the Japanese-Chinese war during the late thirties?
- IT: There were a number of German families and Italian families. We traded at a grocery store owned by Germans, the two brothers named Fritz and Herman, and they clearly showed favoritism to German successes in Europe. Also, when Mussolini made some gains, some Italian families were quite proud of that also. As well as when Japan went to war with China, some Japanese immigrants—we refer to them as Issei—felt quite proud about their military successes in China.
- JT: Sometimes key events make for really vivid memories. For me, I remember small details about being in a phys ed class and hearing that President Kennedy was shot. Do you remember what you were doing on December 7, 1941?
- IT: Yes. I was driving a tractor on the farm, discing the land after the crops had been harvested. And, during the lunch hour, one of the employees at the farm came to relieve me for lunch and told me about the bombing of Pearl Harbor.
- JT: And working on the farm, was it just on your father's farm—were there just Japanese working on the farm, or did he also employ Mexicans or whatever labor force was available?
- IT: My father employed mainly Filipinos and Mexicans, and we always had two or three Japanese.
- JT: Can you remember what the community's mood, within the Japanese community, mood and feels were as the war began hearing about the bombing of Pearl Harbor?
- IT: Well, I think they were kind of shocked and surprised. They thought it was kind of dumb for Japan to attack the United States. It was a very large county compared to Japan, and they knew that Japan had very little resources. I might quote (Japanese phrase), which means they did a real dumb thing. (laughs)
- JT: Thank you! After Pearl Harbor, was your father arrested by the FBI? Did they come out or what transpired? Were you directed for relocation or—
- IT: Well, we heard about many of my father's friends being picked up by the FBI, and so my father expected the FBI to at his door at any time. He had his suitcase packed, however they did not come until March 7, 1942.
- JT: Do you remember who came? Do you remember them being at the door? Who it was?

IT: Yes, there were two FBI agents. One seemed to be a senior rank and one was a junior agent and a local constable came. It seemed the constable was very embarrassed about what was going on since we were good friends.

JT: Do you remember the constable's name?

IT: Yes, his name was Charles Barkley.

JT: After your father was arrested, what happened to the remainder of your family, your mother, yourself—I forgot to ask also, did you have brothers and sisters?

IT: I have one brother who was attending the University of California, Berkeley, and, after he was interned, he had to return home to look after the farm and take care of things as I was a sixteen year old and still in high school.

JT: So, he left Berkeley, was interned, and then allowed out to help on the farm.

IT: No, this was before we went to camp. This is right after Pearl Harbor.

JT: What happened to you, your brother, and your mother?

IT: Well, as I said, my father was picked up by the FBI on March seventh, and we were already hearing stories about the mass evacuation because the Executive Order was signed back in February eighteenth I believe. And therefore we were beginning to bring the farm equipment and things, some leased land, back to our home where the property belonged to us.

[00:10:12]

JT: And then, you were given what, a notice that you would be relocated?

IT: Actually, the notice gave us about two weeks, although we had been hearing that such an order would be coming out but the actual order came out about two weeks before we were told to assemble at a certain place, which was Byron, California, and that the buses would take us to the camps. We would arrive there with only our personal belongings we could carry.

JT: What did you do with the remainder of your property and that?

IT: We gave our neighbor, James A. Mayo, a power of attorney to look after our property and storage. We packed up many of our personal things into one of the bunkhouses and boarded it all up. In the meantime, another farmer came by, by the name of August Labanino and offered to look after our farm while we were gone, but we had to go to a attorney and make up a lease agreement.

JT: This was a Caucasian attorney in the town?

- IT: Yes. And in that agreement, due to ignorance, it said that Mr. Labanino would look after our farm in our absence for the duration of the war and that he would not pay any cash rent but that he would see that property taxes were paid for us so that we would not defacto _____ (inaudible). That was kind of unfortunate in that, when we came back from camp, the term duration of the war interrupted until the peace treaty was signed so Mr. Labanino said he did not have to leave, vacate the premises, and held us to it and we had to buy him out again. And it is our impression related to us by our neighbors that Mr. Labanino did very well during the war because he didn't have to pay any rent on the property, but it did create a severe hardship for us to pay \$2,500 in cash to get him out.
- JT: Being relocated to Byron for assembly, from Byron you went where?
- IT: To the Turlock Assembly Center on the Stanislaus County Fairgrounds.
- JT: And then, from there?
- IT: To Gila, Arizona, the relocation camp in Gila, Arizona.
- JT: Your father was—
- IT: He was picked up and detained at the _____ (inaudible) Dentation Center near San Francisco, and then he was sent off to Santa Fe, New Mexico. And then he was transferred to Lordsburg. Then back to Santa Fe and back to Lordsburg and then to Crystal City, Texas.
- JT: Did he ever talk about Lordsburg or Santa Fe?
- IT: Yes, but not in much detail. But, he talked about some of the adversities. One unfortunate event was when some of the internees were being transferred, I believe from one of the Montana camps to Lordsburg, and when the bus pulled up at the gate, having been on the bus for some time, some of them got off the bus and stretched their legs, And, as they approached the fence of the compound, a guard from the tower yelled for them to get away from the fence, but, when they did not hear properly or they were kind of slow to leave the fence, they were fired upon, and two of them were killed.
- JT: I believe that it was Isomura and another gentleman [Toshiro Kobata]—I don't seem to have his name—were killed at the camp. Did he ever talk about Naval prisoners at Lordsburg, ever meeting any Japanese prisoners?
- IT: He did talk about them. I think he mentioned Sakamaki, but I didn't know if it was Lordsburg or Crystal City, the earlier part of Crystal City.

- JT: I understand that at Lordsburg there were both Naval personnel, from I believe the carrier *Hiryu*, were mistakenly admitted to Lordsburg for a short duration before going onto El Paso or somewhere else.
- IT: I've heard that one of the Naval personnel was one they captured out of a two-man submarine.
- JT: That's interesting. So, your father was transferred back and forth between Lordsburg and Santa Fe.
- IT: Yes.
- JT: Did he ever say why or did you ever know?
- IT: No, I don't know why.
- JT: You went to Gila Bend and can you tell me a little about the camp there, what you remember about your first day entering through the gates?
- IT: Well, in Gila, there are two camps, one was referred to as camp one, or canal camp and the other was camp two or butte camp. We were taken to camp one, canal camp, but the camp was not quite finished as far as construction was concerned. There were lots of trenches for the utility pipes to be put in, and we were temporarily in canal camp. I can remember when we got up in the morning and we looked into these trenches, there were all kinds of snakes and lizards and sidewinder rattlesnakes and kangaroo rats and so on that had fallen into these trenches. I recall that. (laughs)
- JT: As a child you used to find that as amusing or fun?
- IT: Yeah, but then we were cautioned about those rattlesnakes and scorpions.
- JT: The trip to Gila Bend, how did they transport you?
- IT: By train. It was a very hot and long trip from Turlock to Gila.
- JT: And was there anything special about the train that you can remember? Incidents either on the train or the train itself?
- IT: No real incidents, just that we always had to pull off to the side and wait for the troop trains to go by so the trip took extra-long.
- JT: Basically being low priority, I guess.
- IT: Right. And this was in July, and we were going through the Mohave Desert, the Arizona desert. It was pretty hot.

JT: Could you see out the windows?

IT: Oh, yes. I remember one siding was down there around Palm Desert. It was the first time I saw palm trees with dates hanging on them.

JT: How were you fed on the train? Did they have stewards or something feed you?

IT: I really don't remember, but I kind of have a vague recollection there were just sandwiches passed out and an apple or fruit or something like that.

JT: If I were to stand at the barracks door where you lived at Gila Bend and look inside, look at the room, what would I see?

IT: It was just an open square roof—I can't recall, it must have been twelve or fifteen feet square. Because we lived on a room at the end of the barrack, and in order to—well, since my father was interned by the FBI, there was just three of us, my mother, my brother, and myself. But then, a close friend of my fathers—they were just a couple. Their two daughters had gone to Japan for schooling and were caught back there so there were just two of them. And Mr. Makami was interned by the FBI also, so Mrs. Makami was all alone. So, we took her in to our family in camp so that there were four of us in that room.

[00:20:24]

JT: Was that an unusual occurrence or did that happen quite often, that you can recall, that families, would extend themselves out to individuals that had no place to go?

IT: I think it was common place. And then, in terms of space in the barracks that we were housed in, when you have a certain number of people that was an advantage or if you had other numbers, that would be a disadvantage. It was an advantage to have four rather than three.

JT: For space? The room itself, obviously there's very little privacy. As it evolved, did you divide up the room?

IT: Yes. The camp was still under construction so they had a lot of wood piles with scrap lumber, wire, things like that thrown up on the aisle. We used to scrounge around and pick-up scrap lumber and wire. We got this wire and strung it across the top and hung blankets on it to create partitions.

JT: You mentioned that obviously the desert weather was a little bit warm during the summer. What was the weather generally like when you were there? Did it go from one extreme to the other?

IT: Well, during the summer, we'll say from May through September, it was steady hot, except, occasionally, we would get a dust storm. And with the barracks like they are,

- they're not well insulated and all that, and a dust storm went by, everything was covered with dust.
- JT: What was your daily routine or your family's daily routine like?
- IT: Well, as I said, we arrived at Gila in July, and it took us a couple months to settle down. But in September the camp life began to settle down, and they opened a school, first grade through high school. And, since I had not completed my high school, I went one semester in Gila to complete my credits for graduation, so most of the time was spent going to school. I also worked part-time. Before going to school, I helped deliver milk and ice to the mess halls early in the morning, 6:00-7:00, 6:00-7:30 and then went to school at 8:30. After school, which was about 3:00, we'd all gather and organize sports events. In fact, several leagues were organized to compete with the blocks or groups of blocks by residents in the blocks.
- JT: The meals were what, taken communally by the block?
- IT: Each block had a mess hall. And we went into the mess hall, picked up these partitioned metal trays, and were served and would sit down at the table. Beverages were usually on the tables in pitchers, water or tea.
- JT: Were you paid for delivering milk and ice?
- IT: Yes, we were paid \$16 a month. I think the rates were \$16, \$19, and \$22. I guess that would be the same way as skilled professionals.
- JT: Did your mother work?
- IT: No, my mother did not work. My brother did. We did the same thing. He worked at delivering milk and ice also. Then I took a job as a timekeeper at the mess hall. As timekeeper, we kept track of the hours worked by the cooks and helpers and then we also had to check people's credentials to see that the right people are in the mess hall. In other words, people from outside our block could not eat in our mess halls unless they were guests of members of our block.
- JT: I'd heard a story about cake in one of the camps. When one mess hall would have cake, everybody would decide to go over to that mess hall.
- IT: Well, more than that, the mess halls all had reputations, some of them good and others them bad. The ones with good reputations, people would try to sneak into those so we had to resort to passing out meal tickets and things like that.
- JT: When you delivered milk and ice, you used a truck? Did somebody drive?
- IT: Yeah, there were Army trucks that were used, and somebody drove. In other words, some of us were authorized to drive.

- JT: During this time, did you ever receive letters from your father or communicate?
- IT: Yes. However, when we received letters from my father at Lordsburg, each one always had little holes in it cut out. They were censored in what he could say about the camp.
- JT: Inside Gila itself, other than those that were interned or relocated shall we say, inside the camp, were there ever a number of guards or visitors or workman come into the camp that you'd see from the outside?
- IT: No, not really. I think there was just once in a while administrative personnel surveying the camp, observing things. Other than that, most of the work within the camp was done by the internees.
- JT: Do you remember many of the administrative personnel from the WRA [Wartime Relocation Authority]?
- IT: No, not in the WRA.
- JT: And who, for you, yourself, who was the most memorable person you can remember from Gila? If you think back to somebody that really just springs into your mind and why?
- IT: Among the internees? Well, as I pointed out, coming from a small farming community, all of the Japanese people were friends. Not only that, in Brentwood, California, we did have a Japanese Language School that we all went to on Saturdays, and, as a result we socialized after we got into camp. And then, in the camps, people tend to group according to where they came from, and it was just because we were familiar with each other. But more so, the rural people, the people from farming communities were quite naive in terms of living together in close quarters, whereas the people from Los Angeles and larger cities, I guess, had a harder time rubbing against each other. As a result, there were some gang type organizations that were created and rivalries and so on. And those of us from the rural communities kind of feared those from Los Angeles, what we referred to as Zoot Suiters, but, in the end, we got along quite well because we didn't have any hostile feelings toward anybody. As long as they didn't bother us, we didn't bother them. I think, as a whole, people from our community got along pretty well.
- JT: The block number—do you remember the block number you were in, in Gila?
- IT: Block number? Yes. It was Block 66.
- JT: So, most of the other people from your area were also in Block 66?
- IT: We were in 66, 65, and 55, and since after we went to the Turlock Assembly Center, we were kind of mixed around, but most of us were in those three blocks.

[00:30:08]

JT: You mentioned earlier you used to do sports after school and that kind of thing, baseball. Did you play with different rival teams within camp or was there a possibility to play outside teams from say the town outside?

IT: It was mostly within the camp, although in baseball, we played a game with a team from outside. It was in Arizona so Chandler or Mesa. For example, we had a team in Block 66, and there was a team from Block 28 and other teams were from where they came from like Suisun, Vacaville, Sacramento.

JT: You'd play them also?

IT: Yes.

JT: Were you ever allowed outside the camp? Could you go outside the camp? Was that allowed?

IT: There was a time—for example, when I was going to high school in Butte camp, the high school was called Butte High School and the other one was Canal High School. We went to the other camp to play high school football, so we had to travel between the two camps.

JT: About how far between the two camps?

IT: Three or four miles I would guess.

JT: On a bus?

IT: Yes. And then, as far as the camp boundaries, it wasn't too strict. We were able to walk out of the camp, although we had to get some sort of permission. I remember going out into the desert looking for ironwood and also captured rodents for pets, things that some people—in fact, one time we had a badger for a pet. (laughs) Then others had caught snakes as pets and Gila monsters and Chuckwalla lizards. So, we used to go out into the desert. Packed a lunch and took it to the desert looking for things.

JT: The ironwood, what did you use the ironwood for?

IT: Sculpturing. Some people made small pieces of sculptures.

JT: The fence around the camp, do you remember what it looked like?

IT: It was just a barbed wire fence.

JT: Barbed wire as in six foot tall and lots of barbed wire, three strands?

- IT: No, it wasn't a very secure fence at all. I was just about to show you that this is boundary line of the camp, and you could walk right through it.
- JT: As young boys, we heard at Manzanar, it was not uncommon for them to, in the evening, skip out under the wire down to the creek or go courting in one of the little valleys. Did that sort of thing happen, the boys play with the wire as boys will do?
- IT: Well, as I recall, the fence was not really substantial. In places the wire was down. It was more like barbed wire with two or three strands.
- JT: Were there guard towers?
- IT: There just guard towers in the corners of the camp.
- JT: With lights shining through the camp at night?
- IT: I don't recall that. In fact, we used to walk down to the Indian reservation, and the Indians used to sell us tamales. (laughs)
- JT: So, it was an interaction. Did the camp have a canteen that you could buy goods from or did you mail order them in?
- IT: Both. We had a canteen where we could buy soft drinks and snack items and magazines and things like that. A few clothing items. As far as clothing, most if it we did by mail order.
- JT: Who took your order? Did you give it to somebody and they take it and mail it in, or did you actually mail it in?
- IT: We just mailed it in. We sent in for a catalog, Montgomery Ward and Sears Roebuck, and they had return envelopes with order blanks, so we'd just mail in a check.
- JT: The check would come from which account? I understand that local accounts were basically frozen, at your home, wherever it was, at your bank there. Was this through the camp and what you earned in the camp?
- IT: What we earned in the camp because—well, not all accounts were frozen. Some of them were frozen. I think it depended on where you came from. Like in Brentwood, I don't recall that our accounts were frozen because the relationship in a very small town where you knew the banker, the constable, the county sheriff—
- JT: Now you interacted you said, with the Indians on the reservation, I guess for meal times and snack times. Were there any other times that groups may have interacted with them?

- IT: No, I just recall us walking down there and they would try to sell us things. We brought back tamales.
- JT: You were transferred from Gila to where?
- IT: We were transferred to Crystal City, Texas. Actually, just my mother and I went to Crystal City, Texas. My brother decided he didn't want to go. He wanted to leave camp and started proceedings to go to school and get a job outside of camp. However, things got delayed because of the loyalty questionnaire.
- JT: Did he ever go to school back east? Was he accepted back east to go?
- IT: It took him about ten months to finally get clearance, and he ended up in Detroit, Michigan.
- JT: Going to school and working?
- IT: He went to school and worked at the same time for Detroit city and went to school at Detroit Tech.
- JT: You brought up the WRA form, the loyalty questionnaire. Question twenty-seven and twenty-eight. How did that questionnaire go over in the camp? Obviously, in some of the camps, it did not go over well.
- IT: It created a lot of hard feelings because some people were saying don't answer yes-yes. Others say, We have to go out and prove our loyalty therefore this is an opportunity for us to, and they got into a lot of hassles over that. The camp was split into two camps, two groups. As far as my personal feelings, I was insulted being a native born American citizen, why is it that it is necessary to ask us this type of question because, as I pointed out, Brentwood was a fairly integrated community, and I was already a member of the civil air spotters. We used to try to identify aircraft in the event an enemy aircraft—
- JT: Civil Observer Corps or something?
- IT: Yeah, something like that. And then, even after Pearl Harbor, many of my friends talked about joining the Army or Marine Corps, Navy or whatever. So, I thought I was doing that also but then came the evacuation. And then, we also—well, the Selective Service started back I think in 1939, and many of our older friends had already been drafted. They were all in the Army. And we were well aware that the the Navy and the Army Air Corps was not accepting us. The only place we could go was the Army.
- [00:40:46]
- JT: Your bother, was he registered for Selective Service? Do you remember?

IT: Yeah, I think he was.

JT: So, you were moved from one camp, Crystal City. Do you know if your father requested that or do you know exactly how that came about?

IT: Yeah, he requested the family to join him and learned about the opportunity. They were building Crystal City camp, and, in fact, I think he was one of those who volunteered to go there early to help do the finishing touches on the camp. It was originally a labor camp, and they had to build some of the additional units. So, while in Crystal City, he was the head carpenter.

JT: He had other people working for him?

IT: Yes.

JT: I have here *My Six Years of Internment* by Yoshiaki Fukuda, and inside, on page eighty-three, from the Crystal City Association, there's a little drawing of the camp itself. It was done in 1988 for one of the association's reunions. If you look at it, does this bring back a whole lot of memories?

IT: Yes. I can identify the location of everything.

JT: Do you remember what block you were in?

IT: It's not called blocks there. It was divided into the duplex section, the triplex section, and the quadruplex section. So, the duplex was known as D Section, triplex, T Section and quadruplex, Q Section. I lived in the T, triplex section.

JT: And that's just you and your mother now? Your father?

IT: We lived in one part. It's called triplex because there's three families in each unit. My mother, father, and I had one unit, the three of us, and then there was one single lady in the other part. And then, a family of four.

JT: How did you get transferred physically? I mean, did you ride the train from Arizona to Texas or, um—

IT: We went by train, yes.

JT: Did they basically take you to the station, or did they send you on your way? Do you remember how they—

IT: Yes, I recall they took us by bus to the Chandler train station. From there a train took us, I think to Uvalde, and then a bus from Uvalde to Crystal City. Crystal City is south of Uvalde.

JT: Was it just you and your mother or were there a number of other people?

IT: Well, in the family, just my mother and I, but all of those who went from Gila to Crystal City went all together.

JT: How did the camp in Crystal City basically differ from Gila Bend?

IT: Well, primarily in that we did not have a mess hall. We lived in a small apartment. My mother did the cooking, and we ate as a family, whereas at the relocation camp, everyone had to go to the mess hall like you do in the Army.

JT: Did you have a daily routine that you had to do at Crystal City?

IT: I would say my mother did. She would get together with her neighbor ladies, and they would go to the commissary to buy the food. We were issued tokens weekly with which to buy food, and we also received tokens for expenses like going to the canteen to buy snacks and soft drinks and things like that. Also there was beer at the canteen.

JT: The camp, as I understand, also held Germans.

IT: Yes, Germans and a few Italians.

JT: Was there much interaction between the groups?

IT: We had competition and athletics, football, baseball, volleyball—we got together for joint parties sometimes.

JT: That brings up the point of celebrations. Did you celebrate various national holidays or—

IT: Yeah, we celebrated both Japanese and American holidays.

JT: And where did they hold the events?

IT: There was a large building that had a large kitchen—I don't know what the purpose of that building was for, but there was a large kitchen facility with all the equipment to make large quantities. But, although the kitchen was there, we didn't have to use it because our parties were potluck. Each family was allocated to so much food from the commissary. Well, I guess there were a couple of times when we did use the kitchen. Everybody brought the sugar and flour and things and made things. So, it was—I don't know what it was for, but it was a very large hall so you could have large gatherings.

JT: I understand there was a German bakery and a Japanese canteen or store and that you could go over and buy German bread from the bakery. Do you remember doing anything like that?

IT: No, I don't remember doing that, although at the commissary, you could buy bread and everything. And the Japanese did not eat as much meat and butter and sugar as the Germans so all the time we used to swap. We could give them our meat rations, and they would give us their fish rations in exchange for sugar. We didn't eat much butter. We always had a surplus of butter.

JT: By this time you were out of high school, and you got your diploma. You did get your diploma from Gila Bend?

IT: I got my diploma from Brentwood. I finished my courses at Gila and sent certification from the teacher to Brentwood.

JT: I understand that Crystal City did have a high school.

IT: Yes.

JT: I guess a rather large high school as a matter of a fact.

IT: It was referred to as Federal High School. We had both grammar school and high school, and then there was the Japanese grammar school and high school.

JT: What was the difference between the Federal and the Japanese?

IT: It was in Japanese.

JT: Oh, fully in Japanese?

IT: Because many of the internees were from Hawaii and some of those from the mainland were Buddhist ministers. They were Japanese schoolteachers, and so they just opened up a school in the Japanese language.

JT: That also brings up a point about other Japanese being there. I understand there were Japanese from South America.

IT: Mostly from Peru.

[00:50:00]

JT: What usually happened? Did they stay or were they transferred out or—

IT: At the end of the war?

JT: Yeah.

IT: Well, Peru wasn't willing to take them back and so some of them went to Japan. But finally, through the help of attorneys in San Francisco—I think it was Ray Collins—but they were finally granted visas to stay in the U.S., and so a number of them settled in the United States. Not many of them went back to Japan.

JT: Were you surprised about the improvements in the camp?

IT: Well, the surprise was when they first arrived at camp, we met them at the gate, and then escorted them to their houses. We had to speak to them in Japanese because they didn't speak English. And then, some of them came from the rural areas and were not acquainted with flushing toilets and things like that so we had to explain to them what they were.

JT: Did they speak in large portion, Spanish?

IT: They spoke Spanish, yes, but they did speak Japanese, so that's how we communicated.

JT: Of Crystal City, who is probably the most memorable person you can remember right off?

IT: Memorable? I mean, in what sense?

JT: In that when you think back to Crystal City, possibly somebody you used to play baseball with or possibly a leader that was in the camp? Possibly one of the administrators from outside. Who comes to memory?

IT: That's hard to say. I had a number of close friends. Sid _____ (inaudible) and Hiro Taniguchi, not related to me.

JT: These boys were your age that you used to—

IT: More or less. They were one or two years older than I was, but Sid I knew in Gila. We were in high school together. For some reason, my mother and his mother were acquainted since 1935. It so happened that my mother visited Japan in 1935 and his mother visited Japan and they were on the same boat. So, they became friends, and they ended up at Gila together. And we also ended up in Crystal City together.

JT: While you were in Crystal City, did you have a job to do? Your father worked for the carpentry shop. Did you also work there?

IT: No, I did not. I signed up for a correspondence course through the University of Texas, and then I went to Japanese Language School, since I already had my high

school diploma, and then we also had athletic events. We organized teams and played basketball and softball and football.

JT: Was that within the camp or did you also play outside?

IT: Within the camp.

JT: No teams from outside came in to play you?

IT: No. Although occasionally, we went out for excursions. A guard would request _____ (inaudible). We would go out to the banks of the Nueces River or something and spend the day out there. A guard would be assigned to go with us.

JT: About how many people would go?

IT: Oh, twenty, twenty-five. A couple times it was a larger group.

JT: And they would just assign a guard to go with you or a number of guards?

IT: Just one guard.

JT: And then, did they take you by bus?

IT: No, we'd walk.

JT: You'd walk out. Do you remember a Mr. O'Rourke?

IT: Yes, he was the director of the camp.

JT: Did you ever see him?

IT: Occasionally. I actually, because my brother visited us from Detroit, and he visited—my brother was very concerned because my father had talked about repatriating to Japan. But in my conversations with my mother, I said, "I'm not going to Japan. I don't know anything about it. This is my country here." And my mother said, if I'm not going and my brother's not going, she's not going either. But then, it created some disagreements in the family. My father never talked to be about it directly, but he talked to my brother and my mother. And so my brother tried to take me out of the Crystal City camp, and Mr. O'Rourke was trying to help my brother.

JT: Did you petition to be released from the camp?

IT: See, there was no problem with that if you wanted to go to school or leave the camp, they would let us go. But, it was mainly I guess my father who was involved. He felt by the way he was treated there was no reason why he should stick around.

JT: So, your brother visited. He had to, I guess, get train fare all the way down to the camp and then to be allowed by what, the INS, into the camp?

IT: Um-hm.

JT: And stayed with you?

IT: No, he stayed in the hotel in Crystal City and then came in during the daytime and visited.

JT: And then, by evening or whatever he had to leave?

IT: He went back to the hotel.

JT: Switching a little bit briefly, not just about Crystal City but the camps that you were in, in general do you remember anything about crimes in the camps or any type of petty thefts, fights, or anything like that in the camps?

IT: There was some very minor situations. In Crystal City—well, it was not real criminal things, but parents were quite strict about fraternization. So, the young people would sneak off somewhere or whatever, and then they'd try to find out who did what with somebody. Other than that, I can't recall criminal behavior.

JT: I understand that there was a high school prom that created a little conflict between the families as to whether it should actually take place. This was at Crystal City.

IT: That had to do with the Issei generation. There was some hardcore Issei that felt that when the soldiers that were fighting on the front line and having a hard time, to have a party and celebrate is not very nice. And so, when the high school wanted to have a prom and have dancing and so on, they opposed that. So, there was some disagreement among the younger generation. Not all of the older generation, but a few of them were very hardcore.

[recording paused]

JT: Continuing with the question about the prom at the Crystal City High School, do you remember any kind of strike a couple days after or anything that evolved because of the prom being held?

IT: I'm not too familiar with that since I was not going to the high school, I think if you were to contact somebody at the Crystal City Association that was involved in that, they could help you. I only have vague memories about that. I don't know what happened.

JT: You mentioned pets at Gila Bend, lizards and whatnot. Did you have pets at Crystal City also?

IT: We had tortoises.

JT: Tortoises?

IT: Texas tortoises. You'd just catch them in the desert.

JT: Oh, once you'd gone out to the river, you'd bring one in? Were there any dogs or anything like that that you can remember?

[01:00:05]

IT: No, not that I recall. Occasionally, there would be cats around because they would come in through the fence. There were, for example, mischievous crows, ravens, that would come in and somehow they would get attached so when people would start feeding them—

JT: They would stay?

IT: Yeah.

JT: The fence around Crystal City, what type of fence was it? Similar to what you had seen before or was it different?

IT: No, it was more secure. Barbed wire very closely together and up at the top they had the—

JT: Barbed wire, the pointy end wire? So, you couldn't climb?

IT: Right. And then, the guard towers, _____ (inaudible) stations they had all the way around the camp. And they were manned.

JT: By Army or INS?

IT: INS. Local people hired by the INS, but they were very bored. There were some disturbances as a result, the fact that a guard got too bored and shot at some night owls or something.

JT: There were incidences like that in other camps where guards became bored and would shoot over the heads of the internees or something very similar.

IT: Actually, we don't recall anybody shooting over the heads of internees. We heard that they were just shooting at night owls flying around.

JT: Did they have lights shining through the camp? Do you remember?

- IT: No, I don't recall. Maybe they did but I've never seen them. I've never seen them turned on into spotlights or anything like that. All the streets in the camp were lit. But then, we used to—I mentioned earlier how we had surplus of butter and things like that. We had butter rationing and meat rationing, and we'd yell up the guards, "If you want this or something," they would drop a rope down and we'd tie these things up to them.
- JT: So, you'd trade with them also?
- IT: We really didn't trade. We gave them things we had a surplus of. Not only that, there was a surplus of cigarettes also. In fact there was such a surplus and we'd store them for so long, people would smoke them and the worms would start crawling out of them. (laughs)
- JT: The camp officials, other than Mr. O'Rourke, do you remember anybody?
- IT: There was an assistant administrator. I can't recall his name.
- JT: That's okay. What basically did he do, other than being second in command behind O'Rourke?
- IT: I don't know. I think he just took over when O'Rourke had to leave and things like that. Whenever he left, if there some things that had to be taken care of, _____ (inaudible).
- JT: The time you spent at Crystal City, when you look back on it as a whole, how do you really view it? Is it a memorable period? Is it a sad period?
- IT: Well, I would compare it to the relocation camps, and when I think of that it was nicer. It made wasting away more pleasant in Crystal City. I learned all the Japanese that I know in Crystal City by going to the Japanese Language School, which eventually led to the fact that I ended up in the MIS as an interpreter/translator.
- JT: What's MIS?
- IT: Military Intelligence Service in the Army.
- JT: You talked a little bit about your father expecting to be repatriated or you too possibly being repatriated. Within the camp itself, were a lot of people looking forward to being repatriated? Were they expecting it?
- IT: I think earlier in the world war period, more of them were expecting to be repatriated. But, as the war went on and, of course, their children started to resist—but then there were a number of families that were more militant and the children didn't have any say so. So, a number of them did go to Japan after the war _____ (inaudible). But

- they cooperated. They didn't go voluntarily. They cooperated because their father insisted that they go.
- JT: Was there anyone repatriated during the war from the camp that you recall?
- IT: Yes, I recall one boatload. It was late in the fall of '43.
- JT: Who were they? Were they from the United States or Peruvians?
- IT: They were from the United States. I'm not sure if they were Peruvians. Several of the children wanted to go.
- JT: When were you released from Crystal City?
- IT: I left in August of '45 and went to Detroit to join my brother and went to Wayne University.
- JT: On a scholarship?
- IT: No.
- JT: So, you had to work also?
- IT: My brother supported me.
- JT: Your mother was still in Crystal City then?
- IT: Yes.
- JT: When did she leave Crystal City?
- IT: When we got word that my father and mother were leaving, my brother and I drove down from Detroit to Crystal City and helped them get ready to leave. In the meantime, our father took our car and scouted around the Rio Grande Valley before leaving the camp. He received permission from O'Rourke to go investigate the possibility of resettling in the Rio Grande area of Texas. Then my brother and I left. We drove to Los Angeles, and my mother and father took the train to Los Angeles and met us there.
- JT: Was the trip from Detroit down to Crystal City—do you remember anything about that trip? Does anything stand out or just a typically long, boring drive?
- IT: Long, boring drive. We did stop in St. Louis, and we stopped in Tulsa. _____
(inaudible).

JT: Nothing from anybody seeing that you were Japanese traveling in the area or anything like that?

IT: We didn't have any problems. Well, I didn't mention earlier, when we were in Gila, my mother, brother, and I, three of us, went to visit my father in Lordsburg. We went by train, and we felt very uncomfortable on that train.

JT: I imagine so. Did you have to petition or request to visit—

IT: Request to visit. I don't recall how much red tape it took, but we did get permission eventually. We took a train to Lordsburg.

JT: So, you visited. Did you stay the night there at Lordsburg?

IT: We stayed at the Hidalgo hotel, and we had an incident there at the hotel. There was another lady visiting her husband, and apparently the cook had an issue with her. She spit in the coffee at the hotel. (laughs)

JT: When you visited your father, both you and your mother were able to see him?

IT: Yes.

JT: How was the visit conducted? Were you able to walk on camp and—

IT: No, no. Just in the visiting area. He would come to the visiting area, like prison.

[01:10:05]

JT: And were you able to see him for a day or two or just one day?

IT: I think we went for a couple of days. We went one day, stayed in a hotel, and left the next day.

JT: Do you know how this was all paid for, both your transportation and your hotel? Did you have to pay for it?

IT: We had to pay for it.

JT: So, you moved back to the Los Angeles area instead of going up to Byron?

IT: No, we went back to Brentwood. And then, my father found it very difficult, you know partly, because of the fact that the FBI used informers, neighborhood informers, which he found out about in his hearing. All those who were interned by the FBI received a hearing, and some of them were released and others were not. My father was not. My wife's father was released. But, those that were in the relocation camps never had any kind of due process.

- JT: The FBI classified three categories, A, B, and C. A being dangerous, B being potentially dangerous, and C being not dangerous at all. Those, obviously, that were grouped as C were released. Those that were A or B they decided, usually, in favor of the government and would intern those individuals. Did you ever find out from your father or family or whatever why your father was interned? Why he was deemed potentially dangerous?
- IT: I don't know, but we just assumed why. He was active in the Japanese association. He was the vice president of the Central California Japanese association.
- JT: Japanese American or Japanese?
- IT: Japanese association. He was also active in the _____ Shaki. They were immigrants or Japanese subjects. They were subjects of Japanese draft, military draft, and they were required to either go back to Japan and serve or do away with their obligation some other way. So, they raised money here in the United States and sent care packages back to Japan, that type of activity. So, he raised the money. I mentioned earlier how we took in one lady whose husband was also interned, and her husband became the messenger who delivered the money to Manchuria, China. And then, when he returned he gave speeches to different Japanese community areas to raise more money, and my father went along with _____ (inaudible).
- JT: Okay, so when you moved back home, what was the community feeling toward you? Do you feel like it had changed when you moved back?
- IT: Actually, when I got back there—I got back there at the end of February of 1946 and then in April went into the Army, so I didn't have much time get a feel for—in fact, I hadn't even reestablished contact with my school _____ (inaudible).
- JT: Were you drafted?
- IT: Well, I had to get a physical, and having gone to Wayne University for one semester I looked at the probability of continuing college, but the finances were difficult and the draft was after me. So, I said, well, if I signed up I could get the GI Bill for college.
- JT: Did your mother and father become U.S. citizens?
- IT: Yes, in 1952. But, by that time they were living in Texas. They lived in Brentwood for one year, and as I said I went into the Army in April and by December—well, after the crop season, my father decided no, he didn't like it there anymore and was going to go to Texas. I think it was sometime in October or so he took a Greyhound bus and went to Texas. He went to the Rio Grande Valley to find a place. As I mentioned earlier, before their release, he went down there and met some of the Japanese in the Rio Grande Valley and they had told him that they would help him. So, he went down on a Greyhound bus and talked to them and found place and then came back. So, I took a furlough from Preciado, Monterey in the Army and my

- brother was in California, and we drove the truck down to Texas and moved them down there.
- JT: So, they joined another small Japanese American community in Texas.
- IT: San Benito, Texas.
- JT: Can we talk a little about the Redress Movement?
- IT: Sure.
- JT: How were your feelings about the Redress Movement?
- IT: I was in favor of the Redress Movement. It was the idea of a friend who was also in Crystal City by the name of Edison Uno. Unfortunately, he did not live long enough to see it though, but he's the one who got it started. And then, in 1974 I became governor of the Central California Japanese American Citizens League, and as governor I served on the national board so at the board meeting in San Francisco, the governor of the Pacific Northwest district representing the Seattle chapter where there was a group of people who were on their own advocating Redress and designing a plan about how to go about it and all that. So, the governor of the northwest tried to lobby to us governors from the other districts to get the Japanese American Citizens League to endorse a program for Redress. That was in '74, but it was not until the 1976 national convention where increasingly there were resolutions to go for Redress.
- JT: Were you or your parents eligible for reparations or anything for your losses?
- IT: In the earlier—I forgot what year it was—the War Claims Act, my father did claim and received a token settlement.
- JT: You mentioned the farmer that was working your land, he worked it during that period. Do you know when you came back where all your things still in that bunkhouse that had been nailed up?
- IT: Most of it. Some of it—somebody had broken into it and gone through it, but most of it was still there.
- JT: From say 1945 through the fifties, did you see any kind of change in the way people would look at the Japanese and Japanese Americans? Was there a big difference?
- IT: Oh, yes. For example, the Japanese American Citizens League, we had a lobby—we had the McCarran Act, and we lobbied before it's passing to get the immigration laws changed. And the result was the McCarran Act giving the immigrants naturalization rights and then we took on the Alien Land Law and the miscegenation laws. But, in the meantime, I myself feel very strongly that we got a lot of help by the fact that the GI's occupied Japan, married Japanese girls, and found out the Japanese people were

not ogres, not monsters. And many of them married the Japanese girls, and then when they got back to the United States they found out some states like Virginia had miscegenation laws that did not recognize their marriage. So, from that other type of activism, it started to break down many of the barriers that existed previously.

[01:20:04]

JT: So, you went into the military intelligence service I guess. Did you serve outside the United States?

IT: I served in the occupation of Japan for two years.

JT: And what was your role in that?

IT: When I first arrived there, I was assigned to the Allied Translator and Interpretive Service and spent a couple weeks in the war crimes interpreting. And then, I was assigned to central interrogation and then sent to _____ (inaudible) Japan, where Japanese prisoners that were taken in by the Russians by the end of the war were interned all over Russia and put into labor camps, and they were being brought back to Japan and we were assigned to interrogate them.

JT: The war crimes, were you just a general interpreter for the court?

IT: Just a general interpreter. I was just assigned there for a couple of days on that.

JT: How did you view that experience? Was it—

IT: Well, it had to do with really the Australian situation from Japanese officers in charge of some atrocities so I was just interpreting for the Aussies, sitting in for somebody else.

JT: How did the Japanese people view you in your American uniform translating and so forth? Did they associate with you?

IT: You know, I've heard that some people having difficulty. I don't recall having any difficulty at all. Most of the time I conversed with them in Japanese. And then I had an opportunity to visit my relatives in Wakayama, and I was welcomed there.

JT: What prefecture is Wakayama in?

IT: Wakayama is just south of Osaka. I was introduced to the village mayor and so on. Everybody was helpful.

JT: So, it was a good experience?

- IT: It was a good experience. In fact, I knew my grandparents who were in the United States, and they retired in 1940 and went back to Japan.
- JT: So, were you able to visit them there?
- IT: Yes.
- JT: Sorry for my pronunciation, but I have a Japanese word here, *shikata ga nai*. What does that mean to you?
- IT: Translated it's like *Que Sera*.
- JT: Does any of your experience sort of—
- IT: However there is an implication with *shikata ga nai*: wait till sometime when things are better.
- JT: There's a cemetery named Evergreen in Southern California. Have you ever heard about it?
- IT: Yes.
- JT: Do you feel it has some significance to the Japanese American community and to Los Angeles?
- IT: Yes, there is one of the largest monuments there for the Japanese community leaders. _____ (inaudible).
- JT: Is there something similar to that here in the Central Valley, any kind of monument similar?
- IT: Yes, we have veteran's monument in Roeding Park that has the names of all those killed in action.
- JT: The 442nd.
- IT: Yes, and not just the 442nd but the MIS and others.
- JT: You also mentioned that it was one of your relatives helped design the Q structure at—
- IT: My brother.
- JT: Your brother helped.
- IT: And I raised the money for it.

JT: For the whole monument itself?

IT: The cost of it. My brother is an architect, and so he was able to give me the cost.

JT: In Crystal City I understand, as we were talking earlier, there is an association. The association itself has now become what a social association?

IT: Yes.

JT: What we're looking through right now is a Crystal City 1988 reunion book. How often does the association meet?

IT: It meets every year. They have a picnic every year, but then a reunion like this only occurs once in a while.

JT: So, there are informal and formal sort of get-togethers.

IT: Yes. Here are some pictures of places from camp. I don't know if you've ever seen these before?

JT: No, I haven't seen this. This is a 1988 Crystal City reunion book, and on page forty-nine there's a picture of the administration building, Harrison Hall.

IT: Yeah, that's where we used to have meetings and get-togethers.

JT: Japanese School, the pool, the canteen, water tower, and it looks like a guard on horseback? Is that unusual for the camp?

IT: No, we used to see them around.

JT: That was another question I was going to ask you and I forgot, and that was the pool at Crystal City. Was that unusual that everybody enjoyed that?

IT: Well, we enjoyed it. We helped build it. We all contributed to the labor. It was a little irrigation reservoir that we dug out. We had to wear boots and go into the pool—

[recording paused]

JT: Continuing with the pool, you all contributed to working there. You had to wear boots.

IT: Yes. And there was a German prisoner who was an engineer, and he designed the pool. We had to clear out the reservoir which was just mud and weeds. We had to get machetes and clear it out. And I remember getting all the bull snakes out, turtles

- and bull snakes. (laughs) After that we had to clean it out and dig it up and pour the concrete.
- JT: Have you been back to Crystal City since then?
- IT: Yes, for the _____ (inaudible), twice, but not for the dedication.
- JT: We are looking at page seventy-one of the same booklet, and it shows the dedication of the memorial and quite a few different people there, from the both the camp personnel and internees I think.
- IT: This is my father. This is my brother, father, and my nephew.
- JT: The picture's a central figure, and it shows Dr. Taniguchi's father. Were there camp administrators? Did they show for the dedication?
- IT: I don't think they were there.
- [01:30:00]
- JT: What about the local townspeople?
- IT: That I don't know. Well, the school district people were there, the superintendent—
- JT: Because the property belonged to the school district?
- IT: Yes. They were particularly interested. And then there was a maverick from the San Antonio newspaper.
- JT: Is there anything else, Dr. Taniguchi, that you'd like to add to the interview, possibly something I may have glossed over or something you may not have fully explained that you'd like to add into this interview?
- IT: Well, I would like to refer you to some people in the Crystal City association that they might have some clear recollection about things that happened after I left in August.
- JT: I appreciate that, and I'm sure they would be most helpful to the Oral History Program and whatever help you can give us—you and I discussed it, in that we have probably five or ten years left now before much of this is lost. It would be a very sorry state if we did lost a lot of this. I'd like to thank you on behalf of myself and the oral history project for allowing yourself to be interviewed. Memories that you shared will, I believe, give students and historical researchers better insight into understanding this period in time.

- IT: Maybe I'd like to say this in closing and I just thought of it, but in Crystal City camp there was a surgeon that was quite skilled. So, we received excellent medical care in the hospital in Crystal City. Dr. Mori, he's from Hawaii. Everybody marveled at his skill and _____ (inaudible) operation.
- JT: Let's talk a little about the hospital. There still seems to be quite a lot of tape here. What was the hospital like? Did you have both Japanese doctors and INS or—
- IT: I think the administrator, the head of the doctors was _____ (inaudible), however we were treated mainly by the Japanese doctors.
- JT: Did you go in and basically select which doctor you wanted to see or how did the hospital work?
- IT: No, I think everybody was assigned. There weren't that many Japanese doctors. Dr. Mori was well-known, however Dr. Fukuzasa was from Los Angeles, and he was the very highly respected elderly doctor and I guess from the point of view from the FBI was the more dangerous enemy alien. (laughs)
- JT: I understand Reverend Fukida, his son I believe it was, was ill in camp, and I guess died because he couldn't get special treatment.
- IT: I'm not aware of that part.
- JT: As for special treatment—in fact, did you ever go to the hospital?
- IT: No—well, we all went there for different things. I went there for dental treatment. Dr. _____ (inaudible) was my dentist, and he did a root canal for me. I guess now they do it in one day, but it took him months to do it. (laughs)
- JT: So, you got very good treatment?
- IT: Yes. How about if you needed prescriptions or things along those lines?
- IT: It was prescribed right there at the hospital.
- JT: And then, I would imagine for the Japanese population and the German population at Crystal City, especially for the older adults, there was probably a general need for various medical things. That would be prescribed by the hospital for them?
- IT: Yes, I would gather that the doctors requested whatever they needed. I haven't heard about any hardship situation whereas in the assembly centers and relocation camps, the doctors complained about not getting supplies that they needed.
- JT: Is there anything else? Are there any other kinds of things in the camp besides the hospital event that you can remember?

- IT: Well, in terms of recreational facilities, we usually requisitioned things and asked for things _____ (inaudible). I know in camp we had Judo, sumo, and they had Judo jackets. Also, in terms of food, at the commissary, when we said that the regular food was too rich for us, and we wanted fish and we'd like sashimi, so we brought in _____ (inaudible) for sashimi, things like that which the other relocation camps never received. And then through the exchange of the *Gripsholm*, the Japanese government sent soy sauce, _____ (inaudible), and bean paste and distributed it to Crystal City.
- JT: I've heard and I'm not sure if it was Crystal City. Somewhere I read that there was only so much soy sauce and people had their own little containers that they had that they made to keep their soy sauce in. It was such a valuable commodity to them.
- IT: Well, when that came from Japan, it was more than we needed in Crystal City so some of it was distributed to other camps. But then, in the meantime, a Japanese family in Arizona started a soy sauce factory. It wasn't as good as what we got from Japan, but that was available. That was one of the things about the relocation camps. They just had to make do with what was allocated to them, military ration type of thing, whereas at Crystal City, we got pretty much what we asked for.
- JT: Is there anything else you'd like to add?
- IT: The other thing about Crystal City—in the relocation camp in each block there was a laundry room, and everybody had to go do their laundry there. Well, at Crystal City we had a central laundry so once a week we were assigned certain days for laundry. We had to gather it up in a bag and take it to the central laundry, and it would be all washed, folded, ironed, and everything. We'd pick it up at the end of the day.
- JT: These are part of the camp jobs that other Japanese would do?
- IT: Right. Some people worked in the laundry. Some people worked as security guards, police, fire persons.
- JT: This is in Crystal City itself?
- IT: Crystal City itself.
- JT: How could you recognize a policeman if he was walking down the street? Did he have a badge?
- IT: I think he had a hat. (laughs)
- JT: A special hat?
- IT: He had a special hat, yeah.

JT: And let's say you did something wrong, broke a window or whatever, what would he do with you?

IT: I don't recall much vandalism taking place, although there was some rowdiness occasionally but then they would just come and tell you to stop.

JT: So, there was basically as far you remember no stockade or jail or place to take somebody to?

IT: No.

JT: And the fire department, did you have your own fire truck?

IT: I guess they had fire—it might have been manual, but we never had any fire to speak of.

JT: Never got to use it! Can you think of anything else?

[01:40:06]

IT: In the housing apartments, we had toilets, lavatory in the house.

JT: In the triplex?

IT: In the triplex. In all the buildings. The quadruplex did not. They had to go to an outside facility. But we did have to go to a shower building.

JT: So, your room, when you entered it, was much bigger than what you had in Gila Bend?

IT: It wasn't bigger. It was more compact, less space, but we did have a little kitchenette.

JT: With a stove? An ice box?

IT: With a kerosene stove and an ice box. Twice a week ice was delivered to the houses to put into the ice box.

JT: What else was supplied? A couple of beds? A couple of cots?

IT: A bed was supplied for each person.

JT: Military type bed? What about mattresses and those types of things?

IT: Right. It's a steel cot with a mattress.

JT: And again, did you divide the room somehow?

IT: No, they were already divided. Like I said, my father was a carpenter, and if you needed some modification they would come in and modify the room for you to fit into a family pattern.

JT: Did he also build furniture and that kind of thing?

IT: They did some of that.

JT: Do you remember your dining room table for example? What type of dining table did you have in the room?

IT: I don't recall. Just a plain table. And we had minimally adequate furniture.

JT: Anything else? It's been quite a lot actually. I'd like to thank you again. I appreciate you sharing these memories with us, and I think it's worthwhile recording that we have it here so that others can understand that time. Thank you.

IT: You're welcome.

END OF INTERVIEW