CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON

Children's Village at Manzanar Oral History Project

An Oral History with TAKESHI ISOZAKI

Interviewed

By

Reiko Katabami

On June 21, 1993

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NARRATOR: TAKESHI ISOZAKI

INTERVIEWER: Reiko Katabami

DATE: June 21, 1993

LOCATION: Gardena, California

PROJECT: Children's Village at Manzanar

RK: This is an interview with Mr. Takeshi Isozaki by Reiko Katabami for the Japanese American Project for the Oral History Program at California State University, Fullerton. The interview is being held in Gardena, California, July 21, 1992 at approximately ten to eleven. To begin with, what is the background of your family? I will like to ask chronologically, your Japanese ancestry and your parents. I noticed your parents come from Kanagawa in Japan.

TI: Right. Close to the water.

RK: Oh, the water, yes. Do you remember around when they came over to America?

TI: Oh, no. I don't know.

RK: You don't know?

TI: Yeah.

RK: Do you have brothers and sisters?

TI: Yes.

RK: Before the interview, you told me you originally have five sisters and five brothers.

TI: Right.

RK: Will you tell me who is alive and who—

TI: Well, the boys are alive, and the sisters, Masko and Haruko, they're alive.

RK: And you told me oldest sister—

TI: Oldest sister, she's married. She lives in Stockton.

RK: You mean Masko is married?

TI: Masko.

RK: Okay.

TI: Haruko lives in Pleasanton; it's close to San Francisco.

RK: And so, if you don't mind, what happened to the other three sisters?

TI: Well, one of the oldest sisters drowned in Mandeville, I believe. The middle one died from illness, one of them through accident, and the baby died in the stomach of the mother.

RK: Oh, okay. How about your brothers? The oldest one is Sam.

TI: Sam.

RK: The next one is Kiyoshi, and then you, Tak or Takashi, and then younger brother is Tamo[1], and Aki. Right now everybody is alive?

TI: Yes, seven of us alive. Three girls died. We've been a lucky family.

RK: Oh, that's good. Would you give me the background of the brothers?

TI: Well, my oldest brother, he's—

RK: Sam.

TI: Sam, he's around seventy-two, seventy-one. He's lives in Stockton. He was a gardener, and he's a really talented person. He makes Japanese sliding doors and lamps. Japanese things he makes out of wood. My other brother, he's also a gardener.

RK: You mean Kiyoshi?

TI: Kiyoshi. He runs sort of a small business. Myself, I worked in the post office. My name is Takeshi, or they call me Tak. I worked there in the post office until I retired.

RK: When did you retire?

[1] Tamotsu Isozaki, O.H. 2332, Center for Oral and Public History.

TI: Nineteen eighty-one.

RK: Almost ten years. More than ten years?

TI: Thirteen years, yeah.

RK: Your youngest brother Tamo, is he also retired?

TI: Yeah, Tamo retired not too long ago, two years, three years. The youngest retired—

RK: You mean, Aki?

TI: Aki, last year or two years maybe. Only one who's working is Haru. The youngest is working.

RK: What is she doing?

TI: I'm not too sure.

RK: Oh, that's okay. I'd like to focus on your family. You have a wife. I saw your wife. She seems to be Japanese. Is she a Nisei or—

TI: She's a Nisei, yeah.

RK: She comes from—

TI: She comes from Wakayama. They are fishermen people.

RK: So, her parents came from Wakayama?

TI: Yes, I'm not sure where they come from exactly, the town. What I hear is Tara, in that area.

RK: Father came from Tara, Wakayama?

TI: Yeah.

RK: Do you have any idea about the mother?

TI: The mother, I think they're from the same area. I'm not too sure about their story, but he was a fisherman here in California. He lived to be pretty old, anyway. He was ninety-six when he died. He had a good life. Everything he did, he did for people whenever he could. The mother died from an accident. She was hit by a car. Yeah, that's about it. My wife has a brother who lives in Fresno.

RK: When did you get married?

TI: (laughs) It will be forty years this August 13, '53, I guess.

RK: So, I have a rough background about your father. I noticed your mother died during your childhood. After your mother died, your father could not support you seven children, so you had to go to the Salvation Army. Before asking about Salvation Army, do you have any memory—I noticed your father was running a Japanese restaurant?

TI: Right.

RK: In Livingston?

TI: Visalia. Well, actually, it was around the East Center Street in Visalia.

RK: Do you have any memories of those times?

TI: Yes, we came from Exeter to Visalia. We started this business during the Depression years, until we had to separate around 1935, I think.

RK: So, '35 is the year the children went to the Salvation Army?

TI: Right.

RK: You parted from your father?

TI: Well, yeah, we parted from the father. He went to Japan, and we chose to stay in California.

RK: And the reason why you didn't go with your father?

TI: Well, we didn't get along. (chuckles) That's the best I could say.

[00:11:47]

RK: You mean, your father is strict?

TI: Strict father, yes. I guess a lot of people who know Japanese people, my father used to be real strict. They're always talking about Japan—the most important thing for them. They figured we were all going back. He did; we didn't.

RK: So, he went to Kanagawa, Japan, and you went to Salvation Army?

TI: Right.

RK: As a child, do you have any memories about how your father was living in those days?

TI: Well, I know when he was working farms and things. He was a good father, paid attention to us and things. But, when he went into the city, well, there's a lot of sinful things to do, and he didn't pay too much attention to us then. That's why we really separated.

RK: I didn't ask you about your generation. What generation are you in?

TI: I'm a Nisei, which is second generation. I have family—Esther Takeko—used to be Yamamoto, but now Izosaki. Our family, we have five children. One girl and four boys. Now we're getting ready to have a ninth grandkid. They live right in the same area that we live, so we are fortunate that we don't have to run around seeing anybody. Gives us closeness.

RK: Can I ask you your age and birthdate?

TI: Yeah, I was born March 15, 1925. I'm sixty-eight right now. My wife is going to have her birthday August 13. She will be sixty-three.

RK: And then, your relationship with your siblings—I already asked—the seven siblings that are alive, you have good contact with them?

TI: Yes, we are very close. Whenever we go up north, there's a place in Watsonville that you try to meet as many relatives as possible three times a year we go up there. Just two of us live down here, so we get together. We do things together and go camping, different things. We are very close.

RK: So, you're enjoying your retirement?

TI: Yeah, I retired 1980. I said '81, but it's 1980. I've been retired thirteen years.

RK: Will you explain the children and the children's names?

TI: Well, I have five kids. One is a girl and she is—well, she worked part-time last year, but I don't know about the school year that's coming. I don't think they are going to have enough budget for them to be hired. But, the rest of them—two of them are computer person. One of them just started his business, one of them works on a medical thing, and two is a fireman. And, if you call 911, that's Kevin. Two firemen. Kevin has two boys. Steph, the girl, she has two boys and one girl. Tamo has five kids, three boys and two girls. And the youngest—

RK: Aki?

TI: Aki, he has two boys and one girl.

RK: That's a big family. (laughs) I've noticed you didn't have any relatives when your parents came to the U.S.

TI: Only one that I know of, that was here that we saw was birth name Matsumoto. They were very close friends.

RK: Family-wise, you didn't have any relatives when your mother and father came to America?

TI: Not that I know of. I don't know of any relatives—oh, yeah, there's on my mother's side—her side was Kikuchi, and we don't see them a lot. Parents are dead. But, there's a boy Billy Kikuchi who is a relative.

RK: So, your mother's side, the Kikuchi, some relatives were in the U.S.?

TI: Yeah. I don't know where they live. I think it's in the Monterey area, the Monterey Park area.

RK: So, you have five children?

[00:20:00]

TI: I have five children, yes.

RK: Two are boys, and three are girls?

TI: No, four is boys, and one is girl.

RK: You have been working in a post office?

TI: Yes. Thirty years, counting Army time, so I was able to retire early. (laughs)

RK: Is that a benefit—

TI: Well, I got three years-something from the Army, eighteen months from being in Manzanar, so they had to add it up and added two dozen so I retired.

RK: How do you like it?

TI: Oh, it's fine. (laughs) It's great. Retirement is the best thing for you. (laughs) Don't get too much stress.

RK: So, I'm now asking about the Salvation Army. You went to the Salvation Army after the age of—

TI: I was eleven, and that was 1936. That's when our Salvation Army life started. We were not English speaking people. We just spoke mostly Japanese. Even at that age of eleven, we didn't speak English too much. We lived there till 1942 off and on. The life in Salvation Army was great.

RK: Oh, really?

TI: Yes.

RK: How?

TI: People—well, we still see each other in the reunions and stuff like that. I think people missed it, the reunion, missed _____ (inaudible) because it was nice to see all of them again. I hope they have another one again.

RK: Salvation Army, your sisters and brothers separated?

TI: Yes. Life wasn't too good during certain parts of that time because our family separated because of different reasons. The longest we haven't seen one of the brothers was a good six years or so. When we got together in 1947, that was one of the happiest times, anyway, for me.

RK: Your father already went to Japan?

TI: Yeah, he was already in Japan.

RK: After you went to Salvation Army, you didn't have any chance to see him?

TI: No, I didn't, but my oldest brother and oldest sister—

RK: How come? Because he already went to Japan?

TI: My brother went to Korea. He was able to see our father because our father came to see him in the hospital in Tokyo, so he was able to see him before he died.

RK: But, all the children went to the Salvation Army?

TI: Yes, all the children went to the Salvation Army.

RK: And, during the Salvation Army period, Father was already in Japan, so you didn't have any contact with him?

TI: The only contact we had—well, that was just before he went back to Japan. I don't know what year it was, but it must have been about '39, someplace around there.

RK: Okay. Do you know when your mother passed away?

TI: Yes, she died, I think, 1934. I think.

RK: Do you have anything to say about your mother? Do you have any memory?

TI: The memory I have is all good. She was a really good lady. She took care of us. She always watched over us, so wouldn't get into trouble, I guess. Like any other kids in the place, we did things that we shouldn't have, maybe.

RK: In Salvation Army, boys section and the girls section were separated?

TI: Right.

RK: So, you didn't have chance to visit sister's dormitory?

TI: Well, we always had church or playtime or eating time, so you'd see each other then. They put them all together in the dining room to eat.

RK: Can you describe the staff members from a child's viewpoint?

TI: When I first went to Salvation Army—this is my experience—we weren't treated very good, because, I don't know if it was Japanese people who were running it or what, but they had people that wasn't fit to run the home. The one that was in close contact with us was the administrative people. They were okay cause we never saw them, hardly. But, we had people who were directly watching over—it wasn't too good.

RK: Wasn't too good?

[00:29:00]

TI: Yeah, we used to take beatings and things. Well, it was getting close to 1941, and a lot of them went back to Japan. They went back to Japan, and, I guess, they quit the Salvation Army and things. But, the Caucasian people, they started to treat us better, and life was getting better, too. The early part was pretty bad. Then things we had no control over was bad. We were shipped out of San Francisco and brought back into San Francisco, then went to camp. As far as my life started, the full part of my life is when I married Esther my wife and started a family. That was the best thing that ever happened to me.

RK: What was your wife's experience before she met you?

TI: She was working for county as a computer person. That was in the early fifties. After she had our kids, she went back to county and decided to work there. She just retired last year.

RK: Did she go to one of the camps?

TI: Yes, she was in Heart Mountain. Usually, they had people from different cities go to the same camp, but she had to go somewhere else and went in from there. She would

have been in Manzanar if she'd stay in San Pedro. I don't know too much about that life. We don't talk about it, I guess.

RK: Salvation Army, it's a religious or a Christian orphanage?

TI: Well, I hate to say things that's bad, but things that happen to us—we got punished because they gave us money to put into the offering, and, if any of the money didn't go into the offering, the total, they would get us together and say, Who didn't put the money in and this and that. We used to get beat-up for that. That kind of stuff we didn't need. It's always the younger group that got beat-up because the older ones could take care of themselves, so they didn't get beat-up. Well, these things I hate to talk about it, but they need to be told. The Salvation Army wasn't all good at that time, but togetherness in the home was really good because we did things together, played together. We did things together, which was important.

RK: Among the children?

TI: Yeah. So, you remember them and what they were and things like that. Most of them were good people, and they are very good people now. They are my age and older.

RK: So, staff members were strict?

TI: Staff member—to a degree—you see, it's not all Japanese at that time. They just had to follow instructions. Food they gave us, for a guy like me, wasn't enough to take care of us. We were hungry until somebody started giving us more food. (laughs)

RK: So, you were hungry? You didn't get enough food?

TI: Well, for me, yeah. I'm a big eater so you know.

RK: Were there other kids like you?

TI: Oh, yeah. There was many who was hungry. So, we did things that we weren't supposed to, like I said before, keep it straight and things. Some of those people who watched over us, they were good. That's the only part—when we had reunions, we didn't invite them to come, the people we didn't like. I guess that told the story to them. A lot of them was hurt because we didn't.

RK: Do you know the name of the person?

TI: The person who was mean?

RK: That wasn't invited?

TI: He's dead now. I don't know if I want to—

RK: So, your mother and your father didn't speak—most of you spoke Japanese?

TI: We went to Japanese school. We went to English school, but we didn't study because the father, he said, "Don't speak English at home," and things. So, we didn't speak it at the English school, too. Our family was backward, you know? It was just like people from Japan come here and try to learn English. That's what we had to do. One of the things, all my brothers, in their way, are smart and talented. I hate to brag, but they're all good.

RK: Before Salvation Army, you went to school, and the school was English school?

TI: We went to public school.

RK: And you had to speak English?

TI: Yes, so we started to pick-up. They put us in special class and things. Things that you were good in, like math, we were pretty good because you learn it in Japanese school and things. So, that part wasn't hard, but other parts we had to learn. So, we didn't get the education that we should have had. That's why some of them didn't do what they really wanted to do. If they had good proper learning, I think—well, they did well anyway, but they would have been much better if they got the education.

RK: Language wise, you have a lot of trouble?

TI: Yeah, I had difficulties trying to explain things.

RK: The school was mostly Caucasian students?

TI: Well, yeah. There was quite a few Japanese where we lived because we lived near a Japanese town. There was quite a few. Like I'd get into trouble at school because I don't know English, even with the teachers. I guess we'd get angry if somebody said something. If they said something, normally, you didn't get angry, but when they said something *dumb* and things like—that used to get me angry. So, you'd get into fights. You'd get into trouble at school and things. Our education was very poor; mine was.

RK: So, it was mainly Caucasian students and some Orientals?

TI: Oh, yeah. It was a whole mix.

RK: Okay. Like do you think blacks were there?

TI: The people we ran around with were all mixed groups. Like we had blacks, we had—

RK: Hispanic?

TI: Filipinos, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, they were all mixed.

RK: But mainly Caucasian students?

TI: Yeah, we didn't—like now, the way we talk, we didn't have that kind of feelings. We went by how people was. If they were good, they were good. We treat them like anybody else. In fact, we didn't even separate each other for being a different race.

RK: So, when you say somebody called you nasty names, did those conflicts occur among students?

TI: Some. Most people, if they're good to you, you're good to them. But, some of them like to say bad things without good reason to. That's the kind of people that used to—you had fights and stuff like that.

[00:41:00]

RK: The kids were mainly—do you remember?

TI: No, no, in San Francisco, we didn't have problems like they do now. They didn't have gangs. If you fight, you fight your own battles. You fight with your fist. We didn't pick up sticks or knives or guns or whatever. We never did that. But, first time was when we came in touch with Southern California people. Otherwise, we never had no problem with that kind of thing.

RK: During your school period, was there racial conflict?

TI: No, at that time—well, the school I was going to, there was enough Japanese. To me they played favoritism caused they liked the _____ (inaudible). Just like when we went to Lytton, I went from junior high school to high school. We took _____ (inaudible) San Francisco, and then we went to Healdsburg. We tried to get in a team, but they didn't want us because it looks bad for the people that live there, that their kids can't be playing in the team. A lot of the teams from the home couldn't play sports with them because there was favoritism. It's not that country players are not good. It's just they weren't good, and we couldn't make the team. So, things show up. You know when you feel those kinds of things. You know, you try to avoid those things. I don't think people like to get into problems. They try to get along, but then these things come up. Then you have to cope with it and do what you can. You probably would fight or something. Now you can't. There's no fighting anymore. It's shooting. It's crazy to do that.

RK: You were talking about after Lytton orphanage you had experience, like, something like a conflict?

TI: Yeah, during that time.

RK: So, before Salvation Army, you were a foster boy. You went to Salvation Army, and then, for some reason, you were sent to the Lytton orphanage—

TI: That was because of the war.

RK: For three months or something?

TI: Yes.

RK: And then you again came back to Salvation Army?

TI: Yeah.

RK: So, the second time in Salvation Army, you couldn't make team?

TI: No, when we went to Lytton, we went to school, Healdsburg High School, and that's where we couldn't make the team because the people, the big bosses around town, business people, if their kids are not in, they won't support the team. So, we couldn't go out for the team, but we joined other teams after, just the home kids. When you take home kids, they're so many. High school and things and towns that you played, they had a choice of good players, more good players than we would. We still did well. Those are the things that hurt you. _____ (inaudible).

[00:46:36; recording paused]

RK: So, we are talking about Lytton orphanage. So, would you describe what kind of kids, bad kids are there?

TI: I guess they couldn't get along with people at the certain places or they weren't real bad where they put them in prison, a real bad boys place. This was sort of a mild thing that they used to do, but they were slightly hard to handle people. But, they weren't criminal types.

RK: So, in-between?

TI: Yeah, in-between.

RK: Extremely bad and extremely good.

TI: In this home, they were pretty good. They were trustworthy. They could go out, and they'd come back. Other places like juvenile hall and things, if they go out, they won't come back.

RK: So, Lytton orphanage was—

TI: We called it bad boy's school, but we were in there, too. We were there because of the war. When we were there, they gave us duties to do, and, if you do certain things, you get paid for it. You get a dollar for a week. I used to sweep the gym everyday.

RK: How much did you get?

TI: A dollar. Some get 75 cents. Some get piecework. They'd cut wood and what they called a chord. It's so high—you have to cut that much to get whatever they are paying for.

RK: So, while you were staying at Lytton orphanage, you got pocket money?

TI: Yeah.

RK: Were you satisfied?

TI: Well, we had no choice, but (laughs) it was better than nothing. At least we didn't do bad thing, like when we didn't have no money at all. So, if we want something, you have to just take, so that's what we did. Most or all, in fact almost 100 percent of the kids that was in the Salvation Army used to—like when we were going camping, we had no fishing supplies and things so we go and take from the stores.

RK: When you say take, it's just you buy?

TI: *Dorobo suru*! (laughs)

RK: Oh, you steal! (laughs)

TI: That's the only way you could have anything!

RK: So, facility wise, I didn't ask, but comparing the Salvation Army and Lytton Orphanage, facility wise the Lytton orphanage is much worse? They didn't have fishing equipment, so you have to steal?

TI: Well, they were getting money, so they could buy if they wanted something. You could spend it any way you wanted.

RK: Oh, so you think—

TI: It's better to give kids spending money by them working, like the home we went to.

RK: You mean Salvation Army?

TI: Yes, they wouldn't give you anything.

RK: They didn't allow you—

TI: No, they don't give you allowance or anything. You just took care of the property like sweep, clean the *benjo* [toilet], take the wax off and put new wax on, things like that. They didn't pay you for those, but Lytton did. I don't know if later on they started giving kids something for their labor like us. Before we used to steal, but we stopped stealing because we had money to spend for a show or something. At least you had your own money.

RK: Now you are satisfied.

TI: Yeah. If you're hungry, you're going to steal for food. You're not going to steal something that you can't eat. If you're hungry, you're going to steal for food. That's what we were doing, stealing for food and things.

RK: Did you have any trouble when you were found [out] that you stole?

TI: Well, the people who catch us usually let us go. Usually, they put you in juvenile hall or something, but they knew we were in Salvation Army home.

RK: Lytton Orphanage?

TI: No, Salvation Army home.

RK: Oh, you stole something when you were staying at Lytton Orphanage?

TI: No, no, no! I never stole anything over there because we were way out.

RK: Oh, I was mixed up.

TI: We were bused into school. That's the only time we would go into town. I think we went into town. I think we saw movies once a week. Otherwise, they'd bus us to the thing and then bus us back. The money we earned—I don't know if we spent that or not. I think that part of being in there, that you get entertainment. I don't remember anybody stealing in Lytton Orphanage because a dollar in those days is quite a bit. It's not like now. You could buy something anyway.

[00:52:00]

RK: In the Salvation Army, facility wise, you didn't have fishing equipment, so you stole?

TI: Yeah. See, they used to take us, as soon as school is over, to camp near the river, and you gotta have a fishing line or whatever. We don't buy poles and things. We'd get these fishing strings that we'd have to steal because we don't have no money. Or we'd steal candy because we were going to be in this place so we want to have some candy throughout the year, the camp days.

RK: So, you stole, and other kids also stole.

TI: Yeah, yeah. Almost 100 percent stole.

RK: After school, you come back to the Salvation Army, and you were given something to eat?

TI: Yeah, *oyatsu* they call it. Snack.

RK: Snack. Still, you have to steal something when you go to the camp?

TI: Well, what they give you is like bread. They chop it up, and they put it into an oily thing. Then they put sugar on it. That's *oyatsu*. After that, when they start, I think they were giving five cents an hour for certain jobs. During the week, you have enough to go to a show or movie. That was enough for us. We have other entertainment that we could do without stealing, like play baseball, football, different kinds of things. But, when you have to pay and you don't have the money, you either sneak in or you go get money someplace if you want to go see it. Somehow we used to go to the show.

RK: Some older kids have a chance to work outside?

TI: No, that's it. See, you can't even work outside.

RK: So, some kids delivered newspapers or something like that?

TI: No, they can't do any of those things. That's why you just didn't have no money. If you could deliver a paper or something like that, you have a job. You get money.

RK: But, no kids are allowed to work outside?

TI: Yeah, but we would go to different place. They have samples. They give out samples, and they pay you for it. That kind of money. We weren't supposed to do it, but we did it. Or sell newspapers at a football game or things like that. Otherwise, the kids are pretty straight to me. The children, after that you didn't hear about kids stealing because they talk among each other. This and that, we went over here, we got this. But, after that, when they start feeding you, they didn't go steal food. Anything they did, at least they paid for it.

RK: From Salvation Army—well, I'm a little confused. You talked about Healdsburg School while at Lytton orphanage. What about school while you are staying at Salvation Army?

TI: Which one?

RK: Salvation Army. You have to go to school outside—

TI: Yeah, they had school—like Healdsburg High School, we went there on a bus. We had to take a bus to go. It wasn't at Healdsburg. They didn't have a school. You had to go outside to a public school.

RK: While you were staying at the Salvation Army?

TI: Yeah.

RK: So, you have to ride on a bus?

TI: Right.

RK: And every kid's in the bus?

TI: Yeah, I forgot. I don't know how they did it. Either they had a bus for us to go or—yeah, they had to do that. A school sent a bus over there to pick us up, but I don't know how they did it.

RK: Oh, school bus was available. So, you didn't walk to the school?

TI: I don't think so. It was too far.

RK: And then the school, compared to Healdsburg School, the teachers were Caucasian?

TI: Oh, yeah.

RK: No Japanese?

TI: I don't think so.

RK: And then, how about the students race-wise?

TI: Well, when you compare to *hakujins,* there were more *hakujins* than Asians. Always. At most schools, the majority was Caucasian.

RK: And then, this time also Spanish and—

TI: They're from all over now. The Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, they're all going to one school.

RK: And also blacks?

TI: Yeah, blacks.

RK: Jewish?

TI: I assume. They're all mixed groups. But there are sections here in Los Angeles. You know, Jewish live in this area. Japanese live in this area. Mexicans this. The different area is where they live.

[00:59:49]

RK: How about school life among students?

TI: Oh, school life is the same as any place. Kids are kids, I think, while we were kids.

RK: Did you have the same type of experience?

TI: Like myself, I'm sort of an exception because I was getting into a lot of trouble because I believed a certain thing was right. And then, they didn't do it—I'd go to jail. See, if they were fair to me, I could take that. If they're not fair, I'll fight for it. Anyways, this one time, I wanted to play basketball. They said I was too small. They kept saying I was too small. And then, the last year that I was there, they said, We want you on the team. But, by then, I already had been to juvenile hall because I won't go to school because they wouldn't let me go out for sports, for the team. So, I told them, "As long as you keep me in this school, I'm not going to school. If I could go to another school, I will go back." So, that's what happened. I went to another school and played basketball. And that year, like I said, we took the championship. This coach was fair to everyone. He already told you from the beginning that if you were good enough, you could make them. And, if you were better [than] the people who made the team, then you might be first string. So, at least I had hope. When they told me I could go to another school, I said, "Okay, I'll go back to school." So, for one year or half-a-year, I transferred to another school where there was hardly any Japanese, maybe two or three. Well, there was two from the home, and there was another one. I don't know where he came from, but mostly it was Spanish people, Mexican people because that's the area. I don't remember seeing too many blacks. I know Roosevelt Junior High School, there were mostly blacks on the basketball team. You could tell.

RK: So, you were the only person from your family? Other boys and girls didn't go, didn't transfer to other school while at Salvation Army? Okay, so you were the older kids so—I'm sorry.

TI: You mean—

RK: From the school, while you were staying at the Salvation Army?

TI: That's not a school; that's an orphanage.

RK: Yes, but you went to school during your Salvation Army life?

TI: Right.

RK: And then, you have some trouble in some situations, so you moved to another school.

TI: Right.

RK: You were the only person from your family?

TI: From my family, yes.

RK: And so, other two or three?

TI: Yeah.

RK: How was the other school—you mentioned—

TI: Well, when I went to that school, I had no problem because I was on the basketball team. I was doing what I wanted to. Take the same courses to graduate from the school. There was no problem after that. Kids are kids. They either make friends with you, or they don't. So, if a guy wanted to be friends, okay! If they don't want to, fine! We stayed away or whatever.

RK: So, while you were staying at the Salvation Army, you graduated from elementary school?

TI: Yeah.

RK: And then, you went to junior high school?

TI: Junior high school.

RK: And in that case, you have to take a bus?

TI: No, when you went to high school from Salvation Army in San Francisco, the school was only about a block-and-a-half away. The junior high school was about ten blocks away, so that was close enough for you to run to school or walk to school.

RK: So, you went to junior high school. I'm confused. Grammar school is the same as elementary school?

TI: Yeah, grammar school is one through sixth. Seventh grade is junior high school. It's from seven to ninth.

RK: Okay, so you said grammar school is like elementary school.

TI: Yeah, yeah.

RK: And then, to get to elementary or grammar school, you have to take a bus.

TI: No, not there. At Lytton.

RK: Oh, I'm sorry.

TI: I don't know what the grammar school kids did, but what we did, we were bused to school at a certain age. They might have had a school right there. I'm not sure. For grammar school, they might have had it right in Lytton, but for high school, they'd send us to Healdsburg High School.

RK: In Lytton, you were a high school student?

TI: Yeah.

RK: You finished junior high school during Salvation Army?

TI: Yeah.

RK: And then, you graduated?

TI: No, no. Junior high school is just before high school. High school, you got to go three more years.

RK: Yes, I know. So, when you went to Lytton orphanage, you went to high school? So, by that time you already—

TI: Let me explain—when you're in junior high, it goes from seven to nine. Then Healdsburg Country School goes from nine to twelve, so that's four years. Junior High School ends after you finish ninth, and high school begins when you start ninth. That year—

RK: You have to repeat?

TI: No, see when I was in ninth grade, that's when I played basketball. When we went to Lytton, we went in as ninth graders, junior high school grade, but instead, you're going into high school because they have a four-year high school. Some have three years. Grammar school is from one to seven or something like that. Eight to nine is junior high school at some places. It's all mixed up. It's not all the same.

RK: I see, in those days.

[01:10:30]

TI: I think it still is in some places. You can't say high school in this and that. Certain school systems have it this way, and others school systems have it another way.

RK: Okay. So, you transferred to another school before you went to Lytton?

TI: After the juvenile hall I was in, I went back and had another year or half-a-year in junior high school. I graduated from there because I went to high school in Healdsburg. Anyways, when I went to camp, I was in tenth grade, a sophomore in high school. So, I just graduated from junior high school in ninth grade. In Manzanar, I was in high school, but I was older than most people. Like I said, I was having trouble in school in the early part. We were sort of backwards. We had to take special classes and things like that.

RK: So, back to Salvation Army, can you tell me the daily routine at Salvation Army?

TI: At Salvation Army, daily routine was you'd get up early, get ready for breakfast, eat your breakfast, and you'd go get ready for school. School was nine o'clock grammar school. I think junior high were at eight o'clock. Then you'd come home, to Salvation Army, *oyatsu*. They give you *oyatsu* up to certain time. You come later than that you don't get it. Then after that, you're on your own, you go out and go to school and play basketball and baseball or whatever they're doing. Then you got to be home about five o'clock, I think. That's when he had our dinner. So, we ate our dinner. Some people would study from after school and do there homework. Some people, after dinner they studied. One time they had Japanese school in that place but not many interested people so they quit that. And you'd go to bed pretty early. You didn't have T.V. in those days, radio—so you could go to bed and listen to the radio if you had it.

RK: And then, you'd have to get up early in the morning?

TI: Routine, same routine. And then, we had chores. So, you'd have to make your bed, all your clothes, you'd have to name them, put name on them so—they had slot where you put the clothes in. I guess after they finished washing and everything.

RK: So, everything like underwear, shirts, everything was labeled with names?

TI: Yeah, because otherwise—

RK: Confused.

TI: So, they go by name there.

RK: And some kids helped with laundry?

TI: Yeah. Well, girls do that. Girls have certain chores; boys had certain chores. Girls have to do laundry, I think. I don't know if they did the actual laundry. Some might have helped, but they had a laundry lady who does that. And then, they have to fold the clothes and had so many people to do it.

RK: What about washing after eating?

TI: Oh, yeah. I think we did. I think we did. (laughs) Girls helped with setting-up the table, getting the food ready and things. So, they had their chores.

RK: Did they enjoy—

TI: Did they enjoy doing that? (laughs) I don't know about somebody else, but I didn't mind it, I guess.

RK: What did you have to do?

TI: You could wash, clean up the dishes, you wipe, those things we did. We mopped the floor and things. We had chores for the bathroom because everybody uses it. I think they rotated us, so many in a group that cleaned the toilets and things like that.

RK: Do you have any memory about the infants and how they were taken care of?

TI: Babies?

RK: Yes. How did they take care—

TI: Well, there was a lady who takes care of them. I guess they get help.

RK: How many babies?

TI: Well, I don't know. There wasn't, too, many babies. Very few had babies, real tiny infants. They didn't have, too, many. Mostly it's boys—three, four.

RK: Did you visit that place?

TI: The baby thing?

RK: Um-hm.

TI: No, I don't remember. (chuckles) When we went in, they were ready to break up the building. They were going to put a new building, and this person named Kobayashi—his name was Major Kobayashi. He was the one who run the place, and he used to go out and talk to people who had money to donate to build this place. Anyway, before that, we had lived in different places so everything wasn't in one place. It was maybe a block away or two blocks away, the eating-place was someplace else—after they built it—the dining room, sick place, and different things, nursery.

RK: Before you moved to the Salvation Army, it was different facility-wise?

TI: Yeah, when we first went in, yeah.

RK: You have to divide it?

TI: Yeah, the girls were in one section. The boys were in another building, apartment or whatever. They rented a whole floor and so you had so many kids in that. You can't have more than so many because of fire regulations and things.

RK: Mr. Kobayashi.

IT: Mr. Kobayashi, Major, he used to go to different places and raised the funds to build it. It's terrible they took it away from the Japanese people because he built it. Well, now it's a Chinese consulate or something. While we were there, they started changing over to a Salvation Army training school for Salvation Army officers. So, they moved all the kids and things to one side, and then the other side was for the training people. I think third floor was boys, second floor was girls—I think that's how it was. And in-between was sort of a hospital. They take care of the sick.

RK: So, you saw training people?

TI: Yeah, that place began to train people.

RK: Salvation Army? So, did you see those adults?

TI: Yeah, we saw adults.

RK: What was your reaction? How did you feel?

[01:22:00]

TI: Well, just lost of space. (laughs) I guess we didn't interfere with them because the only thing—we were learning whatever they had to learn. Like us, any activity, we'd go outside. If you want to play on some basketball team, baseball team, we'd go outside to these parks, form a team.

RK: Because of the shortage of space?

TI: No, because of the home shortage because we never did have those things.

RK: You mean, training people?

TI: No, before that—less and less people stayed there, I guess, so they could move them to new area where they had more—not more space but space enough for the kids to live in. But, instead of having seven beds, they had ten beds like that.

RK: Okay, so I have to make sure. The new facility, the new building was constructed for the training purpose of the Salvation Army?

TI: It was an orphan home, period.

RK: So, your orphanage was occupied partly by the trainers?

TI: Trainers, yes. After a while.

RK: So, before you moved to Manzanar?

TI: Yeah, it was before. Maybe two years before or something like that.

RK: Oh, really? Such a long time.

TI: Yeah, something like that. Well, time when you're kids, you don't keep track of it. Like for us, the only thing we were interested was our area. We have to take care of it. We have to clean it. That's basically, you know?

RK: In Salvation Army, you saw trainers training?

TI: Yeah.

RK: Almost two years?

TI: Yeah, something like that. Maybe it was less than that but it seemed like that.

RK: After school, you'd come back to orphanage and playground and then playground, you did basketball—

TI: We had a small area where we played baseball. We'd get a tennis ball, we had a small stick to play, or you'd hit with your fist. You'd throw tennis ball up and let it bounce and then hit it.

RK: Your fist?

TI: Yeah, your fist. That's our baseball because they had all the windows covered with the wires so they don't break the windows. And then, they had a basketball court. If you played basketball, then you couldn't play baseball because it takes up the space. That's all we had as far as entertainment. If we wanted more, we'd go out to playgrounds or parks.

RK: So, if you choose playing basketball, mostly involved in playing? Did boys and girls mingled together?

TI: Most the girls went to girl's high school and things. Grammar school, they stayed in grammar school area. I don't think they went to junior high school, girls, but boys had to go to grammar school, junior high school, and high school. But, you could stay there until—

RK: Eighteen.

TI: Eighteen, I think.

RK: Graduation of high school?

TI: Yeah, right. And then they'd leave.

RK: Did you see your sisters very often during your stay at the Salvation Army?

TI: Yeah, my oldest sister, she made sure we stuck together. They wanted us to go to different families, but she prevented that. She wanted us all together, so we didn't go, but eventually some of us parted because some things that happened, I guess.

RK: Among your siblings?

TI: Yeah.

RK: Like Kiyoshi?

TI: Kiyoshi and ah—well, Sam was almost on his home anyways. He was old enough to almost go out.

RK: He also experienced the Salvation Army, right? But he left Salvation Army before Pearl Harbor?

TI: Yeah, he was out already.

RK: And then what happened?

TI: He went to Santa Anita. That's the track over there in Arcadia. Anyway, they stayed there I don't know how long. Anyway we went to Manzanar—since we were in Manzanar, my brother was allowed to come to Manzanar. So, when he came, I left the home.

RK: You mean the Children's Village?

TI: Yeah, the Children's Village because I was under age, and they wouldn't let me go on my own.

RK: You're at least eighteen years old?

TI: No, no, no. See that's a whole thing. All of a sudden, I turned one year older cause they used to tell us we were one year younger. Instead of 1925, they used to say, I was born in 1926. Then I sent for my birth certificate, and that changed because it said I was born earlier, 1925.

RK: Your birthday was registered?

TI: Oh, yeah. It was registered for '25, 3-15-25.

RK: In San Francisco Salvation Army, we are talking about—

TI: School. You know, I didn't go to high school in San Francisco. I went to high school in Manzanar, but I didn't go to school that often because the school over there wasn't that good either. While I was in Manzanar, I went out, what they call, beet topping.

RK: Beet topping?

TI: Yeah. In springtime, you thin out the beets, sugar beets. During springtime, you try to get one plant—you cut off and leave one here, one here, one here. Then, in wintertime, we'd go out there and it's grown to a fruit then we'd have to top it off.

RK: While you were in high school in Manzanar, you had to do that?

TI: No, no, I didn't have to do it because they allowed you to go out to work.

RK: And did you get paid?

TI: Yeah, I'd get to keep everything I'd make. Didn't make too much. (laughs)

RK: So, you went to high school in Manzanar?

[01:31:40]

TI: Well, part of the time because in springtime I was out there thinning, wintertime I was out there topping. So, I missed out in schooling, a lot. The only way I graduated high school is when I got hurt, and when I went to Mare Island Naval Base. Remember I told you I went to Mare Island for training? Well, they had a school there, so I registered in the school, and I learned what I had to graduate high school. So, I did that, and I had to take a test. They sent me to Vallejo Junior College there, and I took the test, what they call GED Test.

RK: What does that stand for?

TI: General Education Test.

RK: So, we are talking about—

TI: Mare Island. It's a Naval base and trains veterans who had their legs amputated to wear a new leg.

RK: So, you are talking about the Mare—

TI: Mare Island.

RK: It's located near where?

TI: It's across San Francisco.

RK: So, after Manzanar, you went there? During high school age?

TI: When I was just out of the service, I went to Mare Island. After they amputated my leg, the training place was Mare Island. So, that's where I went, and I went to school there.

RK: It's a high school—

TI: Just to get your GED, high school diploma. So I finish the course and then I had to take the test. They send me down to Vallejo Junior College to take the test. Well, when I took the test and passed it, they gave me a diploma from there, high school diploma. Then I went to business college after that.

RK: What did you learn?

TI: I was going after accounting. Accounting and well, it took me two years of school to get my diploma. I was over there, and my wife was over here. We weren't married then, we were just going together. We were just writing to each other. I got lonesome. I came down here. So, I went to Woodbury business school. It's a college near Occidental College, I think.

RK: Uh-huh. You joined the Army, and then you left because your leg was injured. Your higher education for was veterans education?

TI: What do you call it? Public Law 16, I think.

RK: Sorry?

TI: Public Law 16. That was the—when you get out of the Army you could go to school. I'm disabled so I get better benefits than a person doesn't have a disability. Anyone with disability could go there.

RK: So, your higher education was done there?

TI: Yeah.

RK: Can I go back to Salvation Army?

TI: Sure. (laughs)

RK: What about the religious aspects of the Salvation Army? Did you attend church on Sundays?

TI: Well, in Salvation Army, we had to go to church every Sunday. They gave us two cents offering. That's the one I told you, if they don't find the two cents in there, and somebody put it in there pocket, they want to find out who did it. They'd get all of us together and get spanked or whatever you want to call it. Beat us or whatever.

RK: Some kids stole the donation?

TI: I don't know about stole, but they didn't put it into the offering. Maybe it was all there. But, we got up to a certain level, and they used to beat us. That's about the church. We used to always have to say a prayer at dinnertime, when you eat dinner, breakfast, lunch, if you were there.

RK: Do you mean say grace?

TI: Yeah, say grace. Yeah and things.

RK: How was Sunday service? What was your reaction? Did you enjoy it?

TI: If you're forced to do something, then you don't enjoy it. If you go on your own, you enjoy it more, I think. But, we were forced to go so—everything was a force to me. Now, I don't even go to church myself, even now. Then we have to go to church on Sunday because they make us go. We don't go on our voluntarily, and then they give us two cents to put into the offering, which is another force. If you're going to do that, don't give us any money. Just go. I don't know if you want to show that we give something, but that's not right. And, on top of that, if they don't find all of the money that they gave us, then we get—we got to go in one room, and they say, Did you keep the money? To everybody. Naturally, we are going to say no. And they would say, okay, we are going to start hitting from the smallest guy. If you don't come up, everybody is going to get a whack with the galoshes, a shoe made out of rubber for rain. They would get that thing and whack you. It used to blister like that on our butt. They hit you so hard, and after they hit you so high, they quit. They don't hit anymore because those people would probably start fighting. So, we used to go to dinner or lunch or anything. Anyways, we would go, and we don't sit down because it hurts, because it's a blister. It's a blister all over your back, black and blue because they hit you.

[01:40:00]

RK: Like a bruise.

TI: Anyway, we used stand up. Everybody would say, Why don't you sit down and eat? (laughs) In a group like that, they call it snitch. A snitch is telling on someone. If you snitch, they don't like you because you told on someone, instead of them finding

out themselves. Just like when they had the riot in Manzanar, the person who keep telling the one who is in charge in Manzanar something, always telling on them. And whether they do it or not, they get their name, people find out who told on this guys and that.

RK: Kind of like a secret?

TI: Yeah, sort of secret. Those are the people that got beat up. Just like an example, if you tell on them, you're mud or whatever you want to call it.

RK: Like scapegoat?

TI: They give you silent treatment, and that hurt more than anything else. Those are the things they used to do. No one tell on each other. Even how bad it is.

RK: Among children, they took care of each other by keeping secrets?

TI: Yeah, they don't tell on people. You don't do it. It's like prison, you would not talk to an official about your companions and things, what they did and things like that. They say, we're going to get that guy later. It's something like that.

RK: So, you call it like a prison?

TI: Well, I would say that because we got beaten just like—well, even prisoners don't get beat up like that. That was the worse thing cause we came from family like that. That's why we don't tell on each other.

RK: Because you come from that background, all kids parent's lack of supporting themselves. Did these experiences make you a stronger person, not to disclose a secret and making _____ (inaudible) together?

TI: Rightfully, I think people should tell—not just for telling someone because, if they do something bad, if you don't say anything, it's going to be worse. They might do worse things. It's better for them to say something so they won't do something that's really bad. But, prisoners don't think that way, or the home kids, they didn't think that way. They rather keep quiet, don't tell them. I'm saying all these things, which is bad, but there was a lot of good things. This is the first time I've ever said these types of bad things.

RK: Thank you. So, the staff member had it harder for the kids?

TI: There were certain ones that were terrible.

RK: Do you have any specific memory?

TI: Yeah, I could feel it in my *oshiri*, the blister and thing. I could never forget that. It sticks with you all your life. Bad things that happen to you, you almost don't forget. You might say you forgot and things like that, but it's pretty hard. At the age I was, I couldn't forget those things. I can get really emotional when I talk about these things because all the memory comes back. I don't know if it's good to say it or not, but I feel it's okay right now. It's like one of the person that was at the Children's Village reunion. This lady says, about her parents I think it was, "It's better to say it, get out of your system, then you'll feel much better."

RK: Let it go.

TI: Yeah, that's why I'm saying this right now because I never said this before.

RK: Thank you. I think everybody needs an outlet.

TI: Yeah, right.

RK: So, we were talking about Sunday service church. For you it was forced?

TI: Yeah, it was forced. I don't force my kids. At an early age, I say it's okay. But, because they don't go to church, I'm not going to beat them. It's like kids like to do certain things, they don't want to be told. Certain things you have to tell them whether you like it or not. You just say your piece and things. I think things that were forced upon us hurt because the things that we used to believe, we don't believe any more.

RK: You didn't believe—

TI: Yeah, I believe in Christ and things, God and things because it has to be someone.

[recording paused]

RK: Okay, to continue, Salvation Army, can you describe the members all Japanese or all Caucasian?

[01:49:36]

TI: Well, the early part of my stay at Salvation Army was Japanese members. They had ladies that take care the younger ones, not the older ones. Older ones just lived there, I guess.

RK: How many staff member are there?

TI: Gee.

RK: Ten?

TI: About twenty, I think.

RK: Oh, so many.

TI: Yeah, because, I think, the whole home was about sixty or something. Maybe it was fifteen.

RK: There was Japanese staff members there?

TI: Yeah.

RK: And later?

TI: Later was Caucasian. Gee, I think some of them left. The head of the home left. They were four or five left, then the Caucasian people came. They were Salvation Army officers.

RK: The ones that left Salvation Army moved to another section of the Salvation Army?

TI: I don't think so. I think they went to Japan. I don't know if they continued or not.

RK: So, in the Salvation Army life, I'm just interested in culturally how many percentage or how often you were exposed to the Japanese culture like food-wise or language-wise, customs?

TI: Well, they spoke Japanese, the early part, because they were Japanese people, they spoke Japanese. Food was about maybe about 25 percent. That's a wild guess because we had all types of food there.

RK: So, Japanese food was also served?

TI: Right. They gave tofu and things, and sushi, different things. It depends on what the menu was. If it was English, spaghetti and all that kind. Well, whatever they cooked, it was good. Oh, yeah, it was good.

RK: Was it satisfactory?

TI: Yeah, they were good cooks. Just didn't get enough of it. That's it. (laughs)

RK: Usually, it was the first helping, then another helping if the leftover was available?

TI: Well, there wasn't too much leftovers.

RK: So, just one serving?

TI: One serving and that's all. I think later on they were giving us more because I wasn't as hungry. We must have got seconds or whatever was leftover.

RK: I guess your mother must have cooked Japanese food so you were accustomed to Japanese food?

TI: When mother was alive, it was all Japanese food because we ran a Japanese restaurant.

RK: Oh, that's right.

TI: It was homemade-type of noodles, the kind you needle. I guess that's what they call it. Put it in rice sack, they take it apart, and then they wash it and everything. They put the dough inside, and then you walk on it. Then they make it flat. They cut it for the noodle.

RK: You mean *omachi*?

TI: No, no, no, no.

RK: Rice?

TI: No, it's not *omachi*. It's a noodle, but *omachi* is pounded, pound. This one here, you needle with the _____ (inaudible).

RK: Anyway, you had Japanese food.

TI: Japanese food, it was very good. I could taste it now. (laughs)

RK: (laughs) So, language-wise everything—

TI: Yeah. Well, cultural-wise, it's like being in Japan because we spoke Japanese. We ate Japanese food. We went to Japanese school. Samurai, we fought Samurai.

RK: You fought? (laughs)

TI: (laughs) After every movie, we would go get a stick and—(laughs)

RK: Did you see Japanese movies?

TI: Yeah. Not talking, someone says—they look, they say whatever the person is saying—not talking, in silence.

RK: So, a lot of Japanese culture there, later the staff member changed, and then it also changed?

TI: Yeah. Unlike the personnel from both Japanese and Caucasian group that came in to watch over us—anyway, we try to get them to come to our reunion, but they were busy and one we could not reach. She was a really nice person.

RK: Okay, we're going to take a break.

TI: Yeah. We should eat while it's hot.

[01:57:40]

RK: Okay, thank you. [recording paused] Okay, we came back. It's 2:10 p.m. Okay, so my next question is, while you were staying in Salvation Army, did you have any aspiration for your future?

TI: They didn't give us an incentive to even have—we were just. We went in as a kid, that's all we remember. We didn't know how to speak English, just Japanese so we had no choice. We didn't know what we wanted to be or what. They didn't teach us anything. Aside from that—you know, a father would teach his kids how to fix a car or things like that. There was no one to show us that. So, there was no aspiration on our part. At least me, I didn't know anything until after the service, and I went to school. I couldn't even choose the subject I wanted because I didn't know any of those because I never worked with anybody. So, I told them, "I'm pretty good in math," so they said, Math, you can do accounting. What else what there? Two or three different things. I just thought accounting was just number, but it isn't. It's laws and things like that. So, that kind of discouraged me, too. I was going to finish and see if I could make it in there. I courted Esther, so I needed money because I was running short. So, I went to work in the post office, and it so happened, that was my life.

RK: While you were staying at the Salvation Army, did you have specific difficulties to solve by yourself, and then did you have anyone to talk to? Did you go to staff members or other siblings?

TI: No, we had no one to go to, except among yourself.

RK: Like siblings or friends?

TI: Or whoever was living there were in the same situation that I was. Because most kids that went in there, either their both parents died, or they had problems at home. Some could not take care of their kids, so they left them in there. That's the only thing I could say. What was the other question?

RK: I was just thinking about when something happened, most kids have somebody to talk to? Because it's crucial for—

TI: No, we didn't have anybody. Not that I know of. We did what we thought we were going to do just on our own. So, we didn't get no special training. The only thing I remember was at the Japanese school. The Japanese school was a pretty easy for us because we were going to Japanese school before.

RK: Japanese school was open or held on Sundays, Saturdays?

TI: It was open Saturday, but I don't know about Sunday.

RK: Is it the reason Salvation Army complex?

TI: Um—

RK: You had to go outside?

TI: No, we were inside. There's what we called a butler; he was our teacher. I don't even know what happened to him. I don't know if he left because he wanted to or there was nothing else he could do but leave.

RK: Do you remember talking to him?

TI: Nothing on problems. If I wanted something bad enough, I would go up to the—I guess they call him Captain Furusho. He was the head of the home. I would go up to him and say, "I need this." I wouldn't go through some type of line. I would just go right up to him. Otherwise, you could say, they said, no.

RK: You didn't have a troublesome situation?

TI: No, only—(laughs) Only brute force. If we don't behave, they going to hit you and things like that.

RK: That was the most?

[02:04:00]

TI: Well, that was the most I could think of. Nothing the person ever did for us. The only thing was punishment. If we needed a punishment, they wouldn't think twice. They don't ask you, Do you deserve it or anything. They just hit you.

RK: So, they dehumanize?

TI: Well, the person there, he one time hit him. He got a bat, baseball bat, and he went like this from behind. He went paw! Hit the guy in the head.

RK: Back? Hit?

TI: Yeah, and then—

RK: Back side of head?

TI: Hit, yeah, back side of the head. He had to go to the hospital, and we didn't see him anymore. So, the authorities should have known, but they didn't do anything about it because that person was still there.

RK: Wow.

TI: So, they knew these things, but they didn't relieve them. They should have kicked him out when he did that. You know how the rest of them is, any little thing they would—like I said, the two cents. Who cares about two cents? They were out to beat you, then forget about it. See, that kind of stuff happened. Then they had favorites. If they liked someone, they do things for them, but if they don't like them, they punish you. Like our family, when we went, they called us *inaka kozo*.

RK: That means country—

TI: Hick.

RK: Ha-ha.

TI: They keep calling us so *inaka kozo*. We didn't like it cause we used to call someone else *inaka kozo*. (laughs) Anyway, that was one of those bad things they did.

RK: Discourage you?

TI: Yeah. See, they are not here, so it's not really worthwhile saying it. If I could face the person, and tell them that, then it would be different. But still, these things happen.

RK: So, stuff happened often?

TI: Often things happened. They could wave the thing, and say this is nothing, just let it go. That's not so bad. That's okay. Even how small it was, they punished you. That's what the main object—to me, the way I felt—is because they want to punish us. That's why he did it.

RK: Before punishing, did they talk with you about why you were going to be punished?

TI: No, because you didn't say that he did it or that that guy did it. He just punished you because you were silent. You didn't snitch, what they call snitch. You're not a snitch baby or anything like that, so they punished you. Well, there's a lot of things that I could tell you, but it's only negative part. Good part is, you don't have to talk about it because we had companionship. We went to American River. We stayed three

months out of the year over there, outdoors. It was fun for the kids. We did a lot of things a lot families won't do, but still, these punishments, a lot of times, it goes beyond bad.

RK: You can't forget that.

TI: Yeah. I don't know.

RK: Sounds terrible.

TI: Yeah, it was terrible. What they did to Sam, even, they take all his clothes off and tie his leg up, and put him up like this. He was upside down.

RK: Upside down?

TI: Yeah, upside down.

RK: Somebody was hung?

TI: No, they pulled the leg up, and he's like this.

RK: Like upside down?

TI: Yeah, upside down. That kinds of things they did.

RK: How about the girls?

TI: Well girls, I don't know, too, much about. They kind of strict too. They don't hear anything. I really don't know who helped the girls or—well, you see, this one family that was there, the father used to cut our hair. He had two other brothers. They would come to the home and bully us. They would hit you on the back of the head like this. Slap you on the back of the head and things. He can't do nothing because he's so big, you know? One of them wasn't bad, of the three, I thought. At least he was human, you know? Then the sister—even the sister was pretty bad, I think, to the girls because boys don't listen to girls and whatever they say. But, those are the terrible things that happened.

RK: I see. Thank you. Changing subject, do you remember if there are some *hapa* kids at the Salvation Army?

TI: Yeah. I don't know about Salvation Army.

RK: If you don't have any memory, it's okay.

TI: I don't remember. I know in Children's Village there was.

RK: So, Salvation Army was mostly Japanese?

TI: Yeah, I think so. That's why they send them over there because San Francisco is the only place that—Salvation Army home for Japanese.

RK: So, no other race?

TI: I don't think so. I can't remember any.

RK: So, next question. Do you remember adoption inspection at the Salvation Army?

TI: Well, we never get to face any of those or hear about it. Maybe they just saw them—left without even good-bye. I know they went either to their relatives or somebody else. I don't know who had people out in Nebraska and places like that. I would think it was the *hakujin* people, you know? I know one of them went out that way. But, otherwise, I don't know any adoption and things.

RK: You perceive those things going on there?

TI: Yeah, at that time, yeah. I think they could tell you more about it that I can because some of them were there earlier than that. Although, when the good stuff was done, they honor him for being good. A guy name Hideo Takahashi, and he had his brothers and sisters over there. _____ (inaudible) Takahashi watched—that's his brother—they were human. They treated people right. They just didn't go spanking them and things. I think he used judgment on if they should be punished or not. He didn't think any of the things the kids did was punishable. So, then he went into camp, Manzanar. I think he watched over a kid for a while, and he was really good.

RK: He went to Manzanar?

[02:14:40]

TI: Yeah, he went to Manzanar. See, he was in the home first. Then he became old enough to watch kids. Well, there's a lot of good stuff in there, good people in there, but certain ones just spoiled it for everybody, I think.

RK: So, that caused complaint among children?

TI: Yeah, yeah.

RK: So, those are the vivid memories for you?

TI: Yeah, there were good memories, but some of the stuff I didn't tell you. No need to tell those, I think.

RK: If you're ready to talk, it's okay. Well, I think orphans, in school they have to mingle with other kids, Caucasian kids, other races. Do you have any experience that you were invited by those white, Caucasian friends or something?

TI: Like the home kids, well, they were known as being stronger than most people. Because anything they had to do, they had to fight their way. Just like my brother and I, we had to fight our way. They didn't want to, what they call, mess with us. They don't want to *mess* with you because they know we are not scared. We'll fight anybody. We'll tell somebody what to do, and they better do it kind of attitude. Most of the time, I think, we were fair to them. In fact, even the teachers—they had one teacher watching the yard and some kids fool around and hit kids and things like that. A lot of time we would go there and say, "Why are you hitting them for?" We helped the kids out. One time, one of the kids ran up to her and says, "Tak and Rub, they hit me," and things like that. And the teacher says, "Well, it serves you right for going next to them." (laughs) So, even the teacher watched over us. They were good teachers.

RK: I was just wondering if you had a good enough relationship with Caucasians to be invited [to their home]?

TI: Well, I know this lady name Mrs. White, she had either a cherry farm or—[recording paused] Anyway this lady, I guess she knew we were from the home. She took us to her farm out there for a weekend, and she fed us, did everything folks would do. She was really nice lady. The only thing I didn't like about her was she teaching bad boys class. You know? (laughs) And I was one of them!

RK: So, you were invited! (laughs)

TI: I guess to maybe tame me up, you know.

RK: Okay. So, you don't have any conflict among when you face other Caucasian students? My concern is maybe if you felt that you came from an orphanage, so you have special feelings, or something like that?

TI: No. I never had no ill feelings about being in the home. In fact, I was glad that I was in a home, but I wished I was outside with my own family. But, the home was a good place. People you know, any nationality, if they treat me right, I treat them right. I don't say this guy's stronger than me so I'm going to be his friend or anything like that. It's just if they're good to me, than I am good to them. A bunch of them felt that way, too. There was always a few that you know, spoiled it for a lot of people.

RK: So, you didn't have any sense of inferior complexion? Something the same?

TI: The only time I felt that was my education, where I could not come out with things I really wanted to say. See, that's a point against me all the time. I can't explain, even to a doctor. When I see a doctor you now and try to explain things to a doctor, I

couldn't explain to him the way I wanted to. Those are things that bother me more than anything.

RK: So, the education system while you were staying at the Salvation Army—

TI: In the Salvation Army, we went to public school.

RK: Did you have any complaints at that time?

TI: Well, yeah, at that time I had a lot of complaints because they put me down two grades because I was going to hit a girl. She was about six foot tall, and I was about five feet. Anyway, she was saying things, dirty things that most the kids don't care to talk about. At least at that time, we didn't. I told her, "You better shut up." I said, you know, "Let's go see your place. You say that once more I'm going to punch you." Then the teacher interrupted me. I don't know exactly what she said. Anyway, she said something that made me angry, and I turned around and faced her, and I swore at her and called her all kinds of names, right there. We used to get along pretty good, but she put me down two grades. So, that's one thing I didn't like because all my life that they were doing that. When I was home in Visalia, a teacher was going to put me down because I don't know enough. *Because I didn't know enough*. Because I didn't know English, you know. So, she put me down. I remember I cried because my father was going to find out that I flunked. I don't know whether she put me back up or what, but I think she did put me back. I felt good then, because somebody would change his mind and listen to my story. I guess they could tell because the only thing we're talking is Japanese, and can't learn nothing talking Japanese in English school. So, those are the things that bothered me most, but I can't blame that on Salvation Army because that's where my life began as far as school was, you know, American school. But, we didn't learn enough fast enough.

RK: Did you have friends there, in the school?

TI: In the school?

RK: Mostly Japanese?

TI: No, I had Chinese friends. I had a Filipino friend.

RK: Caucasian friend?

TI: Yeah, Caucasian friend.

RK: In those days, did you have any racial prejudice among kids?

TI: Well, not us. We treated everybody almost alike. Or if we get mad at somebody we might call some names, crombo. You see our days, they didn't have blacks or things

like that. We used to call them colored. Now, if you call them colored, you're calling them names. So, those things are the things that are bad with us. We didn't believe in calling anybody anything except what they were. They're good, they're good, you know. In fact, we fight among each other; it's kids. So, when it comes down to being friends, we were friends.

RK: Did you have any romance? Any romantic experience?

TI: Romance? No, not as a kid. I guess might have with some older people. You know how kids fall in love with someone they see.

RK: Any in the Salvation Army?

TI: Well, you would like some girl, but I don't know about fall in love. Certain girls they just play with us. Some older people play with us. There was no romance. You like some people more than others.

RK: How did you know about Pearl Harbor attack?

TI: Oh, Pearl Harbor? Gee, it was Sunday, and I think we just got out of church or something. I know we were in the front of the home, and someone said, "Pearl Harbor was attacked." It didn't mean nothing to me because I didn't know Pearl Harbor from anything. So, it didn't dawn on me that the United States was fighting them or what. So I guess I didn't think nothing of it at that time. Because who heard of Pearl Harbor before that, you know? So, I didn't think nothing of it.

[02:30:00]

RK: The people around you—how did you perceive people around you? There was some commotion about the attack?

TI: Oh, there was noise, you know, on the streets.

RK: How about in the orphanage?

TI: Orphanage? Gee, it's been a long time, so I don't know how they reacted. Like anything else, they don't get too excited by anything. When we really felt it is when they wanted to starts moving us out, you know, out of San Francisco. I says, "Oh, that must be pretty bad then." Maybe it was about a month before, a month after, we moved out of there. I'm not sure. But I guess that's when we really knew something bad was going on. I thought we were going to just stay there, but the home was going to close down. They said it was still there when we were—in fact, we were going from Santa Rosa—we went to San Francisco Boys Club. We played basketball there. When we went to Santa Rosa, we played over there. We travelled to different places because guys wanted to play us, I guess.

RK: Basketball?

TI: Yes, basketball.

RK: So, after Pearl Harbor, the orphanage was closed, but you still had a traveling basketball playing?

TI: Well, no, the Salvation Army wasn't closed. People lived in there until July of '42.

RK: So, did you have any big differences after Pearl Harbor attack while you were outside, especially from other race?

TI: Well, we didn't care one way or another, whatever anybody thought anyway. The home kids anyways didn't think. If we wanted to go out, we'd go out at night. There was curfew, but we went out. We knew we were going into camp, so we decided, well, we better get some balls. You know, the only way you could get a ball at that time was when somebody would hit the ball over the fence, and we would go after it and take it home. We piled up balls to take to camp. That's what I remember. The war thing didn't hit me because I guess none of my family was involved in it. If it was my brothers or somebody involved in it, I might have fought. And Japan, I don't know Japan from—the only thing I know is the Samurai movies and _____ (inaudible), that kind of movie. (laughs) I would go see Japanese shows, but that's about it. Actually, I wouldn't think nothing of it right then, only to stay alive, I guess to see that your brothers and sisters are okay.

RK: Did you know somebody affected by name calling?

TI: Well, I must have fought some fights, when they called me Jap! Cause who's to say that German and Japan were allies and Italians. They don't call them names, but they call us? In fact, Japanese people never openly said this and that, but the Germans they had the _____ (inaudible) system. They were raising all kinds of _____ (inaudible), and they didn't say too much about them. It seemed like it was just an Oriental thing that they were saying something bad because we don't know anybody from Japan. My father is over there, and that's about it.

RK: So, there was a curfew?

TI: A curfew?

RK: But, you didn't go outside? Any of you?

TI: We went outside.

RK: Oh, really? What time did you have to come back?

TI: Well, it was early I guess, but we never did come back early. We just went out and just acted like everybody else you know.

RK: Until about what time? Do you remember?

TI: I think the curfew was ten o'clock, nine o'clock or something like that.

RK: It wasn't an early time?

TI: It must have been about nine o'clock I'd say—nine or ten at the most—because we had to go get our balls. You know they'd ask us, What race are you? I'd say, "Chinese." That's all I'd say. (chuckles) We used to go out, and they wouldn't bother us. Most people around there know us anyway. They know we're Japanese.

RK: Well, I think you told me while you were in the Lytton orphanage you had to work and you got an allowance, you got paid. How about in the Salvation Army? Did you have an allowance?

TI: There was no allowance. Not a cent was given to us while the Japanese was in power, and then, when *hakujin* came in a lot of us was taken to—I didn't go I don't think—taken to a police station. They say if they tell the truth they won't get punished, so all these guys came up and said, Yeah they stole something or this and that. They took all of them to the police station. (laughs) What was the question again?

RK: Did you have an allowance?

TI: Oh! No, we didn't get no allowance until after that, I think.

RK: After Japanese power.

TI: Yeah, after Japanese split. Then we started getting nickel or something an hour. We were getting something, so we were able to go to a show or whatever we want to see.

RK: So, most of you would spend it for a show or movie?

TI: Right. Well, sometimes we would go after school supplies, because we didn't have any school supplies. You have to bring certain things. Sometimes they wouldn't have it so we would have to go to the stationary or five and ten cents place. We use to carry it out there.

RK: So, you lived, you arrived in Manzanar in July of '42. The last party?

TI: Yeah, I think we were the last.

RK: When you left the Salvation Army, what did you bring with you to Manzanar?

TI: I don't even know. I don't think I even—maybe just clothes I guess because they said you cant have anything bulky—just what you can carry. That's all you can take. I think we just took our clothes or maybe a baseball bat, a ball, we took those things.

RK: So, you left something very important maybe?

TI: Well, a lot of people had something that they wanted.

RK: Well, after you left the Salvation Army, who took over the Salvation Army? Do you know?

[02:40:26]

TI: Yeah, the Salvation Army. I know, when I went over here to the Salvation Army place, they had the thing. You see we were planning a reunion for Salvation Army people in San Francisco. I was down here, so they asked me. We went over there and asked questions, and they brought out the things. They gave us some of the things they had, the pictures, different things. We had our reunion in '85 or '84.

RK: How was that? What did you expect as time has past?

TI: It was nice, saw people you wanted to see.

RK: How many people come?

TI: Gee.

RK: Not many?

TI: Well, I would say about at least sixty.

RK: Sixty people? That's good.

TI: That's at least. There were so many people there.

RK: Did you identify those people?

TI: Some of them, yeah. Some they got so big that you couldn't recognize them, unless you asked them what their name was.

RK: So, did you talk, talk, talk?

TI: Yeah, we had groups. You know like any get together they have what they call—what do they call it? You know a place where you bring your pictures? You have drinks and small things to eat. I don't know what they call it. Oh, a hospitality room. Everybody brought any kind of pictures from the Salvation Army. There was people

who were there before us—we never met them before—they were there, too. Whoever we could get in touch with was there, but a few we couldn't get in touch with. Somebody knew them and said that they wanted to come, but they didn't get any letter or something. But they sent it to everyone who wants to be there. Maybe they lost it or something, so we want to have another one.

RK: How long is that '84 or '85 reunion?

TI: How many days?

RK: Yeah.

TI: Well, we had most if it on Friday and Saturday, and Sunday they broke up. We ate breakfast.

RK: It's like Los Angeles downtown?

TI: You mean the Village?

RK: The Salvation Army.

TI: No, the Salvation Army is in San Francisco.

RK: The reunion?

TI: The reunion? The Children's Village reunion?

RK: Well, I'm confused. There were two kinds of reunions. Last year there was the Children's Village, but '84 or '85 Salvation Army had one?

TI: That was in San Francisco.

RK: San Francisco. That was like a hotel room?

TI: I think it was Western hotel. Whoever got in touch with these people tried to get a discount for the people. That's up to a certain time, before the reunion you have to send in the money and everything and reserve the place. That's what most of them do when they have reunions. Do you want a soda?

RK: Oh, okay.

TI: We had the Salvation Army reunion around 1984, and we rented rooms in Cal Western. California Western. But we had our banquet in thing in Miyako Hotel. So, that's about it. We had a lunch and breakfast.

RK: Did you have some discussion?

TI: Well, we had a program. We had dancing and singing and visiting. We visited each other and talk about old times.

RK: How was it fruitful, meaningful for you?

TI: It just made my heart feel much better to see the faces I haven't seen in a long time. About forty years or more.

RK: So, knowing those people in certain time, it's a meaningful experience. Was it also a healing experience?

TI: Not healing, I guess. It just felt good to see someone that you loved before, but you didn't think of love and things at the time when we separated. We just had to go, so we went. When you saw them again, you recognize a lot of faces, but then you didn't recognize some. But, after you meet and have banquets and things then you start recognizing other faces, you know, the way they walk or the way the talk and things like that, that brings back memories. Then you recognize that person, oh, yeah, that guy was this and that. One thing I regret is that more didn't come. There was as good part of the people there, and it would have made more people happy because they were looking forward to seeing them. Because most of the time, as far as the list was concerned, we couldn't find them. If they showed up, I think they would have been more happy people there.

RK: Made it perfect maybe?

TI: It would have been a real good reunion.

RK: Do you think, if it's available, maybe you can have another reunion?

TI: Well, it's a lot of work. The distance, too. To some it would be nice, to others it would be pretty sad because we are all dying slowly now. I hope it's slower. I hate to say these things, but we all have to go soon. I would like to have another one.

[02:49:41]

RK: Okay, so you went to Manzanar. Can I ask how did you arrive at Manzanar from the Salvation Army?

TI: We went by train, I think, first. We stopped at Mohave, I believe, the town of Mohave. At one of the stations we stopped. Then we changed from train to bus. Then we went from Mohave past Lone Pine and into Manzanar.

RK: You didn't take any freight? You just took a train and took a bus?

TI: Gee, maybe it was a bus. I thought it was a train from San Francisco, but I'm not sure now. It had to be a train. From the house to the train, it must have been a bus, and

then we had to change again, I guess. I'm not too sure where it was, the changing place.

RK: So, do you have memory that you took a ferry?

TI: A ferry? No, I don't think so. Wait, you might have something there. We might have taken it from Oakland to Mohave. Yeah, I think we did take it from Oakland.

RK: You mean maybe you took a freight?

TI: Freight? No, it was an old train.

RK: No, on the sea. You took a freight? I should have said like a boat.

TI: Oh, at that time—they had the bridge. The San Francisco Oakland Bay Bridge.

RK: So, you don't have any memories?

TI: I'm pretty sure we would have taken the bridge because it would be quicker.

RK: Did you know Executive Order 9066?

TI: No. That was the order to move us. I didn't really know.

RK: Nobody teach you like the Salvation Army?

TI: No. They probably told us that we were going to move, but that's as far as I know. Well, they said you can take as much as you can carry. That's about it.

RK: When you move, maybe on the bus or train. The train was—so far we know this—you can't see outside because it's covered the window.

TI: Right, it had the curtain.

RK: Can you describe that general mood in the train?

TI: No, no. The only thing I was thinking about was probably sleep. (laughs) There was nothing to see so probably most people would sleep until they said, Mohave!

RK: (laughs) When did you learn about the evacuation? Who told you about the evacuation?

TI: Well, at the time, they told us we were going to move. They didn't call it evacuation, I don't think. They said we're gong to go to Lytton. I think that's what they said. We're going to Lytton. And said who's going? I don't even know. I think we took the bus to Lytton. That's about seventy five miles, something like that.

RK: To the east.

TI: No, it's north. It's near Healdsburg, so that's a good seventy-five miles.

RK: So, you didn't know about any notice of evacuation?

TI: No, I don't remember.

RK: When you arrived at Manzanar, what was your first reaction?

TI: Well, I just want to get off the bus. (laughs) Then I wanted to know where our beds where, and then we wanted to go out and play.

RK: While you were taking the train to Manzanar, you didn't have any feelings like a picnic life feeling?

TI: No, I know we were going to a strange place. I would think I would have felt. I wouldn't have thought of anything. I wasn't that thinking type. I would just accept everything.

RK: How old were you at the time of the evacuation?

TI: I must have been seventeen.

RK: So, you never heard about the word Manzanar internment camp or relocation center?

TI: No, not that I know of. They said they were making an orphans home, so that's why we're going yet until it's ready.

RK: And then, after you settled in Manzanar in the camp, you might have many gunmen, military, barbwire?

TI: We didn't think of anything like that. First thing, I know we saw the fence. We saw the tower, row barracks into Children's Village. There was three buildings in a row. One was a dining area, superintendents, and there was a nursery and a girls section. Then on the last line there was a big boys' section. That was me. They had the smaller group. I don't know if these young ones were in another section. They had the smaller group. I don't know if the young ones were in another section. I think right here was upper. We were in—it must have been a smaller area, and the kids had a bigger area, because there wasn't too many of us in there. There's some pictures here. They took like they were taken in '43.

[03:00:00]

RK: This was taken in '43. Somebody told me that 1941 is probably wrong because '44 should be '43, but I'm not sure. So, what was your general reaction at Manzanar? I mean, saw many Japanese in the camp.

TI: Well, we knew it was going to be Japanese in there. A lot of it wasn't completely finished really. A lot of the barracks, the sand—they had sandstorms, and the sand used to go into the house, your living quarters. Our first reaction was we were glad that we had the barracks that we had in Children's Village because they were wider, and they were insulated more so that sand doesn't come in when the wind blows. There was always sand in something, until later on when they put the insulation, you know those ply boards. They put that on later. After that it was pretty good, I guess. But, the Village was the best barracks that were built.

RK: Yeah, other informants also said [that].

RK: So, you only stayed in Children's Village for how long?

TI: About three months.

RK: Three months, I see.

TI: Not much more than that.

RK: So, before you moved to another barrack, I should finish up the Children's Village questions. I've noticed that Tamo talked about *no reunion* last time there was a reunion of the Children's Village and then some Nisei say no reunion. What about that?

TI: Well, I've never been. I didn't even know that they have that no, no reunion. I didn't know anything about that because I was a yes, yes. The no, no went to Japan.

RK: Well, what about, I've noticed that there was no person from Maryknoll. Does that have something to do with that?

TI: No, I don't think so because they were orphans Maryknoll people were orphans some of these in here were from Maryknoll. The Matsunos[2], the Kudanis, I think, this lady. There weren't too many from here.

RK: I see. Well, first of all, you went to Manzanar, and then do you remember any staff member from Salvation Army came over to Manzanar?

TI: There was one. Ishoda I think it was. She was there. I think the husband was there, too. They were both working for Salvation Army. I don't know if they were lieutenant or what.

[2] Takatow Matsuno, O.H. 2339, Center for Oral and Public History and Mary Matsuno Miya, O.H. 2489, Center for Oral and Public History

RK: Do you know who else?

TI: No, that's it I think. A lot of theme went to different camps, but I think that's the only ones I know that went to Manzanar.

RK: In terms of the name of the Children's Village, do you have any idea who named that Children's Village?

TI: Gee, I don't know.

RK: Do you have any imagination? Like most Japanese, the word *orphanage* is not an appreciated word. It has a connotation that doesn't sound proper or liked well.

TI: Oh, you know why they named Manzanar, Manzanar?

RK: I don't know. What's that?

TI: Well, Manzanar, in Spanish, is apple. They had apple orchards out there so I guess that's why they named it Manzanar. I think that's why it is. But, I don't know why they named it Children's Village because I guess it was going to be all children.

RK: I see. Well, I was just thinking about maybe other Japanese people maybe looked down on them or something like that.

TI: Well, yeah. There are some kinds of people who look down on orphans. I think a lot of them think they don't belong. The orphans they think they don't belong to anybody. Well anyway, you take even divorce people. The kids they look like they don't belong to anybody. But, now it's a little different because even single people have children, and they take care of them. They don't look down on them like they used to in our days way back. I don't know there were a lot of feelings like that.

[03:08:37; recording paused]

RK: Okay.

TI: I think orphans think they're not wanted because they don't have parents. Orphans, they don't have anybody normally. A lot of people who are called orphans and that sit in an orphanage are not orphans really because they have parents, a father or a mother. Or something like that. They're there because they can't take care of them. If they're in an orphanage without parents they figure they're not wanted, that kind of feeling that way.

RK: So, you feel like you were not accepted by those Japanese?

TI: Yeah, you know? Japanese, they have a saying like *yotsan* and that kind of stuff for different types of people, different grades of people. I think that's where they put us in, in a lower level of people. I didn't mind, but that's what it is.

RK: You said *yotsan?*

TI: *Yotsan.* Yeah, you ever hear that?

RK: No, never. Some hierarchical social order or something? It's like slang or something?

IT: Yeah, I guess. (laughs) I don't know.

RK: So, did you visit the other barracks?

TI: The other barracks?

RK: Before you moved into the other barracks? You know when you were staying in the Children's Village?

TI: Yeah, yeah.

RK: Did you feel like you were accepted while visiting the other area?

TI: Well, they showed pictures of it where people lived. Like at Santa Anita, they had horse stables and things, so they lived in there. They didn't show. But, some places they did have fairgrounds, or some places they had to put up barracks quickly. They put it together, and they didn't know how long they were going to use it. That's when I saw barracks, and I didn't want to live in that kind of place. But, when I saw the Children's Village, it was all together different. It looked solid. It looks good. It didn't look black, what I call the barracks. It had a little color to it. Maybe white and maybe green or something like that.

RK: Oh, inside?

TI: No, on the outside.

RK: Outside.

TI: Yeah, if you go to Manzanar, if you just look at it, it's all black barracks. They don't have green or orange or anything like that. It's all black. They just made it better, stronger because they were children. You don't want to put them in the dirt.

RK: So, more depressing?

TI: Yeah, it's more depressing.

RK: It's depressing, I see. Would you describe the orchard and the garden at Children's Village?

TI: Children's Village garden? Well, I'm not too sure about the garden, but anyway, they had lawn in the front and in-between. I think it was in-between. Then they had trees cut for a fence that goes all the way around that grass area. I think they had a garden, sort of a pond. You know koi and things.

RK: What's koi?

TI: Koi is carp.

RK: Carp, I see, Japanese. I see!

TI: It had a porch. Other barracks didn't have a porch. (laughs)

RK: That makes a difference. (laughs)

TI: And they had better food.

RK: I see, yes. The Clifton's cook, the cook was different. The Children's Village cook comes from Clifton, in downtown L.A.

TI: Oh, Clifton's? Who said that?

RK: Oh, the _____ (inaudible). The restaurant name I guess is Clifton's.

TI: Clifton's is a place where it's cheap to eat, kind of place. If you didn't like the food, you didn't have to pay for it, but most people paid for it.

RK: And then other barracks' cooks were professionally trained?

TI: Well, there was one baker that was from Children's Village. I don't know if you have heard of Grace's Pastry? No? Well anyway, there was a Japanese man who used to bake at the Village. His name was George Izumi.

RK: George Izumi? He was a baker?

TI: You know, a baker, a baker's helper. He worked in the kitchen area. Anyway, he started a business on Tenth Avenue and Jefferson.

RK: After the war?

TI: After the war it became famous. It got good so they started going different places and pretty soon, it started going down. It took on too much, so I guess the cake wasn't as good as they wanted. But he was a good cook, baker.

RK: So, the cooking in the Salvation Army, what is the difference food-wise?

TI: Then the Village? One, the government paid for it, and the other one, the county paid for it. We were from the county. I think most of us were from the county, in the Salvation Army, but the government paid for the Children's Village. That makes a lot of difference. They get the best food, whatever they want.

[03:15:42]

RK: Did you have any prejudice or discrimination from the Japanese people from other barracks?

TI: Japanese people? Prejudice? The only prejudice they had was who had more money. Money talks they say. They had the power no matter what.

RK: Because you are an orphan?

TI: Yeah, that's one of the reasons. And I think another reason, I don't know why, but they don't trust orphans. They show us in a gang, and all those movies they make, they show that orphans are not trustworthy. So, I think people take that into consideration, and they don't trust us.

RK: I see. Because of the T.V. influences people, movies, so the images are made from a stereotype?

TI: Well, what's that? *Boys Town*. They have the image at first although they build it up so that it became *Boys Town*, which is good. Before they used to steal from these homes, steal off of people. Most things it helped to hate things. A lot of things that's in the movies, they show it because it creates problems.

RK: Okay. I'm just wondering how other Japanese people in other barracks know that you were an orphan. That you came from the Children's Village barrack?

IT: Well, the only way they know is if you tell them.

RK: If you don't tell them?

IT: Then there's no way they know.

RK: And then they treat you so-called, normal?

IT: Normal, yeah. Well, even if you were in the Village, and you went someplace, and they know you're from the Village. We were all in the same situation. We were all prisoners, so they put us all in the same thing. That's how I would believe. They could say all they want. *We didn't suppress them. We kept them. We guarded them.* Those are all just sayings. You know how they say the reason why we put them in

camp is because they were protecting us? But, they weren't protecting us. They were putting us so we can't give them no trouble, if trouble comes. That's how I feel. A lot of people will say no, no but they never was any camp, prison.

RK: So, the prison wasn't in camp?

IT: See, they called it a relocation camp, or this and that, but it's still a concentration camp because you don't deserve to be there. You were put there, not because you committed a crime or anything, but because you were Japanese. So, that's how I feel. They can say anything they want, but it's still a concentration because only concentration camps keep people.

RK: From the Children's Village staff members, how were you treated by them?

IT: Well, like I said, one of my friends who was in the home in the Salvation Army, he was one of the ones who took care of me. There was another one, he became a minster. He had a bad leg. He was cripple. He was a nice person. In the Village, they were all pretty good as far as I'm concerned. You know, all the kids might have different ideas, but what I saw of them and how they treat kids, or treat people, I could tell that they were good.

RK: Well, I've noticed that most of the staff comes from Shonien in Silver Lake and then some staff mainly in charge of Children's Village.

TI: Who was in charge?

RK: Like Mr. and Mrs. Matsumoto. That staff are different from Salvation Army staff? I mean treatment-wise?

IT: Gee, I don't know too much about Shonien because I wasn't there long enough to even know the Matsumotos that good.

RK: But most of the staff comes from—if I'm correct, Shonien staff came over to Manzanar? So, the Matsumotos are two of them. So, I was just wondering—

IT: No, there was no Salvation Army people that worked in the Children's Village, but there was some in that was in Salvation Army who was one of the people that took care of the Salvation Army place that was in camp.

RK: But, they didn't come to Children's Village? So, how did you contact them?

IT: Well, actually, we didn't because everybody scattered. Everybody went to east coast, or north, northeast. Chicago area, or stuff like that. My cousin went to Detroit. Everybody scattered. There's still a lot of Salvation Army people living in Chicago and Minnesota and places like that.

RK: Maybe I can ask later? Well, do you know the Manzanar hospital?

TI: I know if it just slightly.

RK: Were you injured during this camp life?

TI: No.

RK: So, you were not injured—

IT: Oh, I had my teeth fixed because I got in a fight. I cracked my teeth.

RK: Was there a bodily injury?

IT: A bodily injury? No, just the tooth. I don't know how he hit it.

RK: And then, you went to the hospital?

IT: To the dentist, which is part of the hospital.

RK: Can you describe it?

IT: The fight? Well, the fight, like I said, usually, if a person who asks for help, I would step in there. He just wanted me to be there so that nobody would jump in and hurt him, see. So I said, "Okay, I will be there." Some of us, my brother and I, and some friends went there to dance. They were dancing. This one guy, I know him good because I was in the same class with him in sports. He was a much bigger guy than me. He comes out, and we were all sitting on the lawn. He comes out, and he sees us sitting there, quiet, nobody saying anything. He comes out and says, "If you guys want to fight, you come in one at a time." He said that, and I got so mad. I just flew in there and start fighting. My brother was fighting his sister. He didn't want to hit her because she was like this. She was a big woman, too. Anyway, I don't know when he hit me, but he hit me in the teeth, I guess.

[03:26:09]

RK: Then you went to the hospital? Can you briefly describe the hospital?

IT: I don't know if you have ever seen an Army hospital. Have you ever seen an Army hospital? They connect up like this. A big corridor, and then there's one, they call it ward, here, with a lot of hospital beds. I've been to a lot of places like that. Well, that's how it was, built something similar to that.

RK: How were the doctors, dentists, and Japanese doctors?

IT: Well, there was one doctor, which I give him moderate credit. Later on they found out that he was a great doctor. He was one of the leaders over there. He saved some of those people that was in the riot. He told the people who came after this one person, he hid them under the sheet, I think—I don't know if you know the gurney? You push it when someone is lying down. He was underneath there, and the sheet was cobbering him, and the guy asked him if anybody came in here and this and that. He told him, "No." He saved his life with that, I think. Anyway, he did the operation for whatever injuries they had in that thing. In fact, my classmate got killed. They keep telling us that they have the power to protect us. But, nobody was outside. They were all inside. And they shot someone. I guess they were scared because a lot of people coming at them. They shot him. I don't know where he got shot. Anyway, he died. Just one died and a lot of injuries.

RK: And then, who shot—

IT: Who shot? The guard. You know, the guard that was in the tower or on the bottom.

RK: Because the Japanese people—

IT: Went toward the gate area. There was a gate to come in and out.

RK: Okay, so they noticed—

IT: I guess they got frightened and then shot.

RK: I see, the guard was frightened.

IT: Yeah, probably.

RK: Did you see?

IT: I didn't go there.

RK: From the window?

IT: From the window I saw was it one or two guys getting hit by 2x4s. They were whacking them. We were right there outside looking in. They were hitting them right in there.

RK: Was that two or three people in there who were injured?

IT: Two, or three *in there,* but elsewhere I don't know how many. We said, "Let's go to the police station," and then we said, "Nah, let's not go." So, we decided not to go, and we went home.

RK: Because you saw it was going to be a big fighting?

IT: No, I didn't know what it was going to be, but everyone was going over there. It was crowding the place, so we just went back. Then we heard the sirens.

RK: This happened during the daytime?

IT: No, this was during the night. When I saw it, must be around six, seven, someplace around there.

RK: Dark.

TI: Uh-huh. Because it was movie time, and movie time is always at night.

RK: Then later?

IT: Well, after that, it's just a matter of mending the people, getting them out of camp, whoever got hit or whoever was the problem. The ones who caused the riot, a lot of them were shipped to different places so that they could get out of there so there would be no more trouble.

RK: Can we get back to the hospital? Is that okay? So, did you see that there were many people in the hospital? Was it crowded?

IT: Not that I know.

RK: The doctors, most of them were Caucasian doctors?

TI: No, it's all Japanese, I think.

RK: Mostly Japanese?

TI: Yeah, mostly Japanese.

RK: How about the nurses?

TI: Nurses? Oh, I would say that they were all Japanese. Maybe there were a few other races, but mainly Japanese, and I think the doctors mainly Japanese. Maybe higher-up someplace in that administrative place there.

RK: Did you experience physical check, health check at the Children's Village? Like an annual examination?

TI: Oh, I don't remember any myself, maybe shots or something.

RK: Like when you arrived or something?

IT: Gee, I don't know. I don't know if you got it before. I think we got it in camp. I think we were quarantined, too, that area because the kids they all shots or something like that.

RK: What else do you remember? Do you remember that you were carefully checked?

TI: Carefully checked? No, not really. Searched? No, I didn't notice anything.

RK: Oh, I see. But, you stayed there eighteen months?

TI: Something like that, all together.

RK: Including living at Children's Village and start living outside of there?

TI: Right, through all.

RK: So, essentially, how long did in the Children's Village, three months?

TI: Well, I was gone two or three months. I went to Idaho for about two months.

RK: Oh, you went to Idaho? Not from Salvation Army?

TI: No, we went from the camp, Manzanar. They had a bus.

RK: Well, you came from the Salvation Army to Children's Village, and then you stayed three months?

TI: Yes, three months.

RK: And then after—

TI: I was in the barracks. From there whenever they say they're going to take people out—what they call furlough. It's called work furlough to help them out in thinning, so we went out there three months we were out there.

RK: And then after that?

TI: After that, we came, and I go to school and things. Well, the winter came, and it was harvesting time for potatoes and beets. What we do is there's three rows of beets. We'd straddle one of them—we stay in the middle—we take from different rows, you know chop off. Then whatever you cut, you load up the wagon, full of beets. Then they weigh it. Whatever it weighs, they give you so much a ton, I think, and that's what you get. You work as a team. You have six people who go through that one farm.

[03:36:30]

RK: So, after the furlough, you come back to the camp again? Then you wash the beets.

TI: Then I go back to school.

RK: During schooling, you worked sugar beets? After that you worked?

TI: I worked just springtime for three months while school was on. In the wintertime, we went out for the same reason. I think it was in September, October, November, and you go for harvesting potatoes and beets. When you do beets, you hope for beets to be this big. But potatoes, they have big ones like these. You don't see it in the stores. I think they use it for potato chip places.

RK: So, different type of a potato, big size?

TI: Right, big size. Really, really big, you'd have to fill up both sides for five cents. You work as a team.

RK: And then, you got paid?

TI: Yeah, we got paid for what we picked up. We had a problem there, too. When we were working over there, we had a problem. We misunderstood. They meant us to understand the way they were explaining. We though he said the other way, which would be an advantage for us, but the way he said it was an advantage for him. We had a problem, and we went on strike. (laughs)

RK: Was the strike helpful?

TI: Well, it gave us a little bit more money.

RK: Did you make close friends with people who lived in other barracks?

TI: In other barracks? Well, there was a girl there, who I got friendly with. She was younger than I was. There was a mother and daughter combination. They were friendly, so we were friendly.

RK: When you moved outside Children's Village, you had a queue every time mealtime?

TI: Well, you gotta know about what food is. We would go there early, so if the food wasn't good we would go to another barrack. Each block has a mess hall. If the food is no good, we would go someplace else so we would get better food. No fish!

RK: Did you experience frozen fish cooked in the oven and then it was not washed beforehand? Soft on the top?

IT: No, I didn't eat too many fish.

RK: Did you experience horsemeat?

IT: No, if I ate horsemeat I wouldn't know.

RK: Well, okay. I think you maybe not experience, but did you see Issei men and Issei women in the Children's Village? I think later, near the end of the war, they are working, doing maintenance and gardening and laundry. Did you see that?

IT: In Children's Village? No. They worked? I don't know that. I don't know what they could do except mow the lawn. They were mowing the lawn. No, I don't know that. It must have been after because even the lawn wasn't made when I was there because it came in after I left.

RK: Did you visit, after you left, Children's Village?

TI: Yeah, because my sister and brother.

RK: That's right. So, to see them?

TI: Yeah, yeah.

RK: But still, you didn't know that Issei men and Issei women were working there? You didn't see those Issei men and Issei women working there? You didn't know that?

TI: No. Why? They weren't supposed to work there?

RK: The Issei women were doing laundry and helping—

TI: Oh, they might have because they have to wash the clothes some place. I'm pretty sure they had a laundry room.

RK: Oh, by the way. So, you stayed only three months in the Children's Village. Maybe you didn't know. But, you noticed clothes that were given to the children. Did you experience that?

TI: Give dirty clothes.

RK: No, not dirty. New clothes that were given to the children, mostly it came from donations.

TI: Is that right? I didn't know that. Well, you know what they were doing later on? They were giving out $3.75 a month, I think, for clothes.

RK: Oh, maybe you are right.

TI: Yeah, you could buy clothes.

RK: How did you buy that?

TI: Well, you didn't have to buy clothes all the time, so you would spend it for—they had dances at the mess hall—for refreshments. Nobody made money on those things, just for the food and things. So, they'd pass it out and give to everybody.

RK: So, that means allowance?

TI: For each person.

RK: Also, pocket money?

TI: No, that's the pocket money. But, you could work for $12, $16, or $19—$19 is for doctors. You know, professional people.

RK: Nineteen. That's per day?

TI: Huh?

RK: Nineteen, that's big money?

TI: No, that's not big money.

RK: Oh, really? In those days?

TI: No, $16 was for a whole month. In one month $16, and doctors get $19.

RK: Oh, okay. That's with other pocket money? Like allowance?

TI: No, you just get $3.75 for clothes. Nineteen if you are a doctor or professional person. If you were a laborer you get $16. If you were a part-time you get $12.

RK: Yes, yes I know. In your case, how much were you given? You were given a clothing grant?

TI: Yeah, the $3.75.

RK: If I'm right, children were given a certain allowance monthly? For example, your elder brother, Tamo, he remembers he spent for the Ritz Crackers or something like that. Do you have those experiences?

TI: Yeah, I'd spent it for whatever I want. If I buy clothes, again you can spend it for anything.

RK: So, you were given allowances monthly? Or did it depend on the age-wise? Smaller kids would get less.

TI: No, I think they all get same.

RK: Oh, really.

TI: I think so. Well, I'm not sure, but that's what I told everybody that. So I spend, you know, whatever I need to spend.

RK: Do you remember how much you were given?

TI: Three, seventy-five.

RK: Oh, $3.75 per month?

[03:38:17]

TI: Per month, I think it was.

RK: As an allowance?

TI: Yes.

RK: Do you remember, did you perceive Issei people and Nisei people, Kibei, how they interact with each other?

TI: Well, Kibei, I guess they weren't treated that well by the other side because they have two thinking: they Japanese thinking and the English thinking, American thinking. A lot of them don't trust them. They've been in Japan and lived there and all that, then the other part will be here. They were born here. Well, they were born here and did things here, and they went to school over in Japan, so a lot of people don't trust a dual thing.

RK: How about Issei and Nisei? Between two generation, how did you perceive them?

TI: Well, I though Isseis were good.

RK: Really? How so?

TI: Yeah, my father was an Issei. See, most parents were Issei then. Nisei were like me, so we think alike, I guess because we lived the American way. We didn't live the Japan way; except sometimes we did. Because my son, they lived Japan style. Everything they own is Japanese things.

RK: Okay. After Manzanar riot, did you see a big difference than before in the camp life? Were people angrier after the riot?

TI: Well, like anything, some is for, some is against. One who thinks like American, they think it was right that they did it. But, the others they don't like these people who tell on them. They still probably felt the same way. But, if they knew about them, they would be sent out from the camp to different camp, so, they won't have any problem again.

RK: Well, in the psychological aspect in the camp life, since you stayed just three months in the Children's Village, maybe you can tell me about the staff members. How did they help children psychologically? Did they offer very parental like treatment?

TI: I would think they treat the little ones like parents. You feed them, you look after them, and you dress them and everything else. The big boss, Matsumotos, what he should do is make sure everything functions right so that nobody would complain about what they were doing. They were good while I was there. There was one Caucasian guy who was there. I don't know his name; a guy who had red hair. I don't know what his duties were. I think the bigger problem would come between the oldest ones who would have the least amount of trouble because they did what they want to do anyway. They didn't worry about them, and they could go eat were they wanted to eat. But, it's the little kids in this area here, I would think that they would have the most trouble deciding one way or another.

RK: So, they didn't extend to those bigger ones?

TI: No. They needed someone to be a big brother. That would have been satisfying for them, but I don't know how much of that they got because there wasn't too many older people in there. They didn't hire that many neither.

RK: How many staff is there in Children's Village?

TI: Staff? Well, I know on the girls—

[03:44:52; recording paused]

RK: How many staff were there?

TI: Well, oldest ones, oldest group, we just need one. The younger ones, they might need two or three. Depend on how many they had. Then I would have to say the little ones, they would have to have much more, maybe four, five, six because they're still in the diaper stage and things. That's why you need more. They didn't have them, then they would need less. Then the administration people, then the cook, dishwasher, all those people—they might have to have at least eight or nine. Because you're preparing the food, washing, cleaning, sweeping, all those, so I would think about eight or nine.

RK: All together?

TI: Yeah, in the kitchen area.

RK: How many staff?

TI: Well, that would be around ten, plus sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, almost twenty I would say.

RK: Do you think those staff members offered great help during transition from Salvation Army to Manzanar?

TI: I think the one the infants, the ones that need the most care—I know that there's a person there that knows children and how they should take care of them. Problem is some of them are learning, too. Well, if they had long learned helpers, then they won't have as much trouble. But, if they don't know anything, one person or two person can't help until they learn.

RK: Quality-wise, how did you perceive the staff member?

TI: I didn't stay there long enough. There's a few that I saw that was good, Deguchi and a few names I caught, but a lot of them I didn't know. Kaneko? Takeguchi? Takeguchi.

RK: Takamune?

TI: Takamune? Maybe that was it! (chuckles)

RK: Did you have counseling with the Matsumotos?

TI: No.

RK: No. How about the case study?

TI: Case study? No. None of those.

RK: Discuss about your case I mean.

TI: They didn't give me any counseling or anything.

RK: Really? I see. How about discipline for the orphans?

TI: Me?

RK: You and the other orphans.

TI: Well, I was the oldest so you could imagine the kids are not going to tell me what to do. I did mostly what I'm supposed to do or wanted to do. That's why I left the place

because they wouldn't like what I was doing. I stayed out a little later than the rest of them cause I'm older, you know, gotta see other people besides children, so I used to go out. Any older people did. But after we left there—see, this guy here, where is he?

RK: What number?

TI: Number seventy.

RK: Seventy is who?

TI: Gene Murakami.

RK: Seventy-four?

TI: Seventy, Gene Murakami. [Bugs]. It was [Bugs].

RK: That's the nickname, I think.

TI: Bugs. Joe Tanaka, I don't know what number he was.

RK: So, those people—

TI: That's Bugs, Gene Murakami.

RK: So, those people are—

TI: Well, he did almost the same thing I do. We went out together and things like that.

RK: When you say out together it's just—

TI: Well, the reason why him and I were the two left together was his brother came in about the same—

RK: Oh, you lived outside Children's Village, and then you went to another barrack?

TI: No.

RK: You're talking about—

TI: We're talking about we lived in the Village but to play—

[03:51:29]

RK: Okay, we are going to take break. [recording paused] So, when you go out and come back—

TI: We used to come back to the Village, yeah. Then when my brother and them came and Bugs' brother came, they came same time. We got drunk together. I guess bachelors quarters.

RK: My question is, orphans had disciplinary—did they behave well or not?

TI: Well, if they don't want to get spanked, they do. If they want to take a chance, they don't. They take a chance and go have fun.

RK: Which is more severe between Salvation Army and Children's Village?

TI: Oh, there is no comparison.

RK: Oh, really?

TI: Salvation Army was—

RK: Much?

TI: Much, yeah.

RK: Severe?

TI: Severe, yeah. I don't know if any of the Village kids ever got bruised.

RK: Oh, I see. In Children's Village?

TI: Unless they thought somebody got like a black eye or something. But home kids, they got beaten, where they shouldn't been beaten that much.

RK: Did you experience mental or physical abuse at the Children's Village?

TI: Children's Village? I don't have _____ (inaudible).

RK: How about in Salvation Army?

TI: Salvation Army? Yeah, I got abused.

RK: You said the word abuse is proper?

TI: Abuse? Yeah, it's proper.

RK: Extra punishment.

TI: Yeah, it's where any children shouldn't be getting that kind of treatment. I don't care what the kid did. Unless it's close to murder or something, they shouldn't be punished that way.

RK: So, it was almost closer to mother in those days? Close to the mother like treatment?

TI: Yeah, yeah. You got to be level headed, don't raise your head, beat up your own child, you get that. I guess just like anybody's parents. Later on they say, I shouldn't have done that. It's too late.

RK: So, there was strict treatment?

TI: Well, it wasn't strict for us later on, but early part when we were considered small, yeah, they were strict.

RK: Can you discuss similarities and differences between the Salvation Army and the Children's Village?

TI: Well, that is hard to say because it's two different situations. One, we were in this home because we didn't have the parents to take care of us. The Village, well, maybe they're younger so it's not as bad. But, when you're older, it's worse. The younger ones, they only fought themselves. They didn't go out to fight, where the older had to fight inside and out. I think if I was going to get a spanking or whatever, punishment, I would rather get it from Children's Village. Salvation Army was more severe.

RK: So, you get more freedom in the Children's Village?

TI: Yeah, because I was older.

RK: Concerning the reunion last year, can you tell me how the reunion went? Who did you talk to?

TI: See, they have a hospitality room. When you come in early, they have a place where you can come to, bring your book, albums, different things. Whoever had something would go there. Well, even if they don't have anything, they go there because you can get together and talk about old times and things, which brings back good memories, as well as bad. You can laugh at the bad now, but not then.

[03:57:29]

RK: How were the Matsumotos perceived among orphans?

TI: Perceived?

RK: How they were thought of?

TI: Though of by people?

RK: By the children?

TI: I think they liked them.

RK: Oh, really? Weren't they authoritative?

TI: Well, you have to be that in order to run a home. Not to where you punish the kids, but if they could talk to them, you have to have a certain kind of order. So, you tell them what you could do, what you can't do. I think he did that.

RK: I see. So, very good job?

TI: Yeah. Like for me, it didn't matter to me—he never was going to discipline me because I'm too big for him. Not because I'll fight back. Probably he thought I should be able to behave like an older person. I liked them. At least he was straightforward to me whenever we talked, but we didn't talk that much.

RK: They are like a mother figure or father figure for you?

TI: Oh, none of that. No, it's just a person who's watching over me.

RK: Is it fair to say that they treated children like business?

TI: See, in that place, certain people liked certain kids, and, if they liked them, they treated them right. If they don't like them, does not feel like they treat them right. It's how you, the person who is being treated by this person, judge what they did was okay or wasn't right because everybody had different opinions.

RK: That's right, different views. Did they mingle with children?

TI: Well, I know they liked one girl that was there. I thought they were going to adopt her, but somehow, I think, they couldn't adopt her because they don't have her. They had their favorites. (grandchild walks in)

[recording paused]

RK: Was it businesslike?

TI: On what?

RK: Did they treat you like businesslike?

TI: Oh, oh. Not like human? I think they are pretty good people, as far as taking care and things.

RK: Oh, I remember. You were talking about the one girl who was—

TI: She was their favorite, you know? I though she was going to be adopted by them. That's the rumor that was going around. But she wasn't, because they never mentioned her name or anything. Gee, I don't know if I see her in here. I was trying to locate that girl that they were kind of fond of. There's so much red tape and things like that to even adopt.

RK: Did you have an adoption expectation experience there?

TI: Oh, no.

RK: Other kids also?

TI: Other kids? I don't think so, no.

RK: You don't remember?

TI: Some like us, nobody wanted us. (chuckles) When we were in the home, too—like I said, we have a cousin someplace. We don't get together, and we don't hardly speak. They don't know if we exist or not.

RK: _____ (inaudible).

TI: No, I think—to a certain degree, I guess, anything to with _____ (inaudible) people got to be more less. Yeah, that's what I think. I think they treat them good. Well, they depend the people under them to take care of those things.

RK: Subordinate.

TI: Yeah, subordinate people and there were some good ones.

RK: Did they provide any kind of disciplinary talk or something?

TI: That I don't know. They might get a group together and talk. Like I said, the group that I think should—they might get this kind, so—maybe they feel better if you told them something that it would help them. You know when something would be helped by you saying something.

RK: Did you have guest from the outside visit the Children's Village?

TI: I don't see too many. They might have.

RK: You don't remember?

TI: I don't remember.

RK: Was the daily routine similar as the Salvation Army?

TI: Yeah.

RK: You have to get up so early.

TI: Right, right, because everything has to be timed. If you don't get up early enough, then the lunch would be later and so on because they have to be certain time limit. Maybe it takes four hours to clean up and get the next meal ready.

RK: So, if you didn't get up, you lose breakfast. (laughs)

TI: Right. (laughs) I don't know if they did that with us little ones. (laughs) Older kids, they know they better be there.

RK: Do you remember this person, Margaret D'Ille?

TI: No, I don't remember her.

RK: What about forty five?

TI: No.

RK: You don't know?

TI: I don't know. Takamune.

RK: Takamune, um-hm.

TI: Is she married? Must be.

RK: I think so, she lives something like Korean.

TI: It could be English. She was a religious person.

RK: Takamune?

TI: Yeah.

RK: Oh, I see. I'd like to—

TI: This lady was married to _____ (inaudible). Is he here? I don't see his face.
RK: Now I'm asking about the school in Manzanar?

[04:06:53]

TI: Right, right.

RK: Will you describe the ethnicity of the teachers? Were they Caucasian?

TI: Mostly white lady, or white man, a few Japanese.

RK: What kinds of subjects were available?

TI: Well, anything that California public school—

RK: Offered.

TI: Yeah, in order to go up. If you want to graduate, you have to have so much credit before graduate.

RK: So, system-wise, same?

TI: Same. Yeah, California system. But that they are the best teachers, that's a different thing.

RK: How different?

TI: Well, Japanese are pretty good at math, and, when you go against Japanese teachers, then you know, _____ (inaudible). She knows this is right. The other one doesn't know for sure if it is right or not.

RK: Oh, you mean the teachers don't know?

TI: Oh, yeah. There's a lot of teachers that doesn't know math. You can teach math without knowing.

RK: Really? (laughs)

TI: Yeah, you could! You just have to have a book; as long as they understand.

RK: Do you remember the names of the teachers?

TI: No, I don't know it for sure, but ah—

RK: What subject _____ (inaudible)? Or something like that?

TI: You know, teacher could be from English, but she could teach math.

RK: Oh, all kinds.

TI: Yeah. But they know straight math. Children learn ten times ten is one hundred. Japanese people would say, "Ten times ten is—" you just move the zero up and it becomes one hundred. That kind of things Japanese knows, the short-cut.

RK: The short-cuts. (laughs)

TI: If you compare, it's different.

RK: What is your most and least favorite teacher?

TI: Well, I tell you. Japanese teacher gave me an F. (laughs) No one gave me an F but this guy. He didn't like me. He brought personality into it, but I was sure I drew Clark Gable—not Clark Gable, Robert Taylor. His picture, I draw it really good, I thought. But he gave me an F. Even the effort of a least doing it should get at least a D I would think, but he didn't like me because—

RK: What class?

TI: Art class. And he gave me an F, so that's the worst teacher I had. He's a Japanese and should understand it. But, he gave me an F, so that was it. (chuckles)

RK: How about the other teachers?

TI: I used to be good at memory, but now I'm terrible. I used to know history a lot because it's a lot of memory thing, the dates and things. I used to know those things. I got As. Math I got an A. Music I got a B. Science, I got a C. It was a bad grade but when that Japanese guy gave me—

RK: Oh, that's disgusting. (laughs)

TI: I know I didn't deserve that.

RK: Did you talk to him?

TI: No, I would have hit him, I think. I didn't want to talk to him cause that got me so angry cause I tried my best in his class. I tried my best.

RK: It's just a drawing?

TI: Yes, you get a picture, and you put lines like this. Then you get a bigger sheet, you put a bigger line like this. Then you're supposed to draw his face.

RK: That makes Clark Gable or something.

TI: Yeah, yeah. And he gave me an F for it. (laughs)

RK: I see. No wonder!

TI: That's why I say it's the worst subject.

RK: Any other complaint? Facility-wise? You didn't have any desk or just chairs?

TI: I think there was tables with the arms.

RK: Oh, really?

TI: Yeah.

RK: So, you draw on the desk?

TI: I remember people sitting on the floor, too. I guess there weren't enough chairs or something.

RK: How about textbook wise?

TI: I don't know if it was good or what—

RK: Were you allowed to bring the textbooks with you to home?

TI: I don't remember that. I wouldn't have taken them home anyway.

RK: How did the teachers treat you?

TI: Most teachers were good to me, fair to me.

RK: Like friendly?

TI: Yeah, they're friendly. I had some old lady that was a math teacher, and she was good to me. I had old man that teach history; he was good. He gave me good grades. There was an actor that was in Manzanar. He had music, and he gave me a B. So, they were good to me. English teacher was good.

RK: Did you mingle with students from other barracks?

TI: Oh, yeah. We went to the same school.

RK: Among the children, were there differences? Like, Oh, they come from Children's Village or they come from—

TI: No, I never came across that.

RK: So, everybody the same?

TI: Well, I think so.

RK: Were teachers enthusiastic in their teaching?

TI: Well, some were. [Lou] Frizzell, who was the music teacher, he puts-on a show and things like that with the talent that he has there. He was a nice guy. He was good to Japanese people.

RK: Another question is, while you were staying at Children's Village, you didn't have any privacy? Because everybody was in the same big room?

TI: Well, we lived like that in the other place, too.

RK: From the Salvation Army?

TI: Yeah.

RK: Sometimes it must be inconvenient? How did you see that?

TI: I just needed a bed, food. That's all I cared about.

RK: You didn't care?

TI: No, I didn't care. Well, most of them, we are used them. We knew each other already. Old group came from Salvation Army, anyways.

RK: Were your siblings closer to each other?

TI: Yes, we were close.

RK: From Salvation Army to Children's Village?

TI: My brothers and sisters?

RK: Um-hm.

TI: They were always good to me. The family was always—

RK: Closer.

TI: Close.

RK: When you left the Children's Village, you frequently visited Tamo?

TI: Yeah, we used to visit.

RK: Stay there in the Children's Village?

TI: Right, right.

RK: Did you feel protected in the Children's Village?

TI: Protected?

RK: Um-hm, sense of protection.

TI: No. I didn't feel like I was protected.

RK: What else?

TI: I just figured it was a place to stay until I was old enough to leave; that's all I figured. But, my brother came, so we left earlier than we planned to.

RK: You brother Kiyoshi came to the camp?

TI: He just visited camp, but I didn't see him because we were in Idaho then. So, we didn't get to see him.

[04:17:00]

RK: Well, maybe I can ask you—I can ask later. The girls section was separated like Salvation Army? Were you permitted to visit the girl's dormitory?

TI: A guard section?

RK: In Children's Village. A girls section or boys section are different.

TI: Oh, girls section?

RK: Yeah. You are not permitted to go to the girl's dormitory?

TI: Well, gee, where did we meet?

RK: In the orchard or the playground?

TI: Well, I—

RK: In the dining hall?

TI: Could be or wash area.

RK: So, how did they interact? Did they play with each other?

TI: Kids?

RK: Boys and girls.

TI: They played together, yeah.

RK: In what place? The orchard?

TI: Well, they had the yards and things.

RK: Backyard?

TI: Yeah, they had basketball court. They had where they played baseball and things like that.

RK: Do you remember the small kids that were around the age of six or something? Did they also play themselves?

TI: I think they needed supervision, I think. Too young. Because you could easily walk away from there, you know.

RK: Dangerous.

TI: Because where the superintendent, Mr. and Mrs. Matsumoto lived, there's a street right there. There's not a whole lot of cars that come through, but it's more dangerous because they don't expect a car to come. You can get ran over, the young ones anyway. So, they probably had more care for them.

RK: I see. Do you have any memory about parties held at Children's Village?

TI: Did we have parties?

RK: During your three months stay there?

TI: No, I didn't go to no party.

RK: Nothing like a New Year's party or Christmas party or something like that?

TI: No, I don't remember those.

RK: Tell me about the outdoor movies.

TI: Outdoors, yes.

RK: Did you attend?

TI: Yes, it was sandy, dirty, cold, everything because it was during the winter if you had the theater. That's why they moved it to the kitchen area and start showing it in the kitchen area. You got the walls to keep you warmer. The wind that comes, that the thing that makes you cold. So, that eliminated when they put it into the mess halls.

RK: How did you perceive that there was only outdoor movie theater and not being protected from the wind or dust?

TI: We just had one theater that I know that was out—what they call windbreaker. What they call it? The strips—they are barracks here and barracks there. It's the same area here and there's nothing, so in-between there they showed the outdoors movie. Anyway, they learned a lesson early because that year it was exceptionally cold and windy.

RK: Oh, really?

TI: Yeah. Well, in fact, it was cold, and it didn't snow much cause it's usually—warm is not cold. If it snows, it's just another weather. If the wind blows, it goes into your system and make you shiver.

RK: Much terrible condition to see the movies?

TI: Right.

RK: So, did you go frequently?

TI: Whenever we could, when we know there's a good movie.

RK: I think it might be hard, but do you remember the movie titles?

TI: Gee, not off hand. It was in the forties. (chuckles) Yeah, I don't know exactly. Oh, maybe Holiday Inn or something, Bing Crosby, that kind. That was around that time, I guess.

RK: Many people came out to watch the movies?

TI: *Yes*, a lot of people.

RK: Because it was an escape?

TI: They wanted entertainment. The only way you have entertainment is you go to a dance or you go to recreation place or go watch people play basketball or baseball or football.

RK: Where were the dances held?

TI: In the mess hall.

RK: And people came from all parts of the camp?

TI: Or they're invited. If it's a club thing, they got to be invited.

RK: So, mostly adults?

TI: Yeah. Well, eighteen and older, I guess.

RK: So, adolescent?

TI: Adolescent.

RK: Did you attend dances?

TI: Oh, yeah.

RK: How was it?

TI: I was good, you know. I didn't know how to dance. We learned how to dance.

RK: Then you make became an expert at dancing?

TI: I don't know about expert, (laughs) but it was fun dancing. (laughs)

RK: (laughs) So, you enjoyed the movies, dancing, and then you didn't experience any parties.

TI: See, in my days, I used love movies. I don't care if I saw it five times or ten times, I would still enjoy it if it was a good movie.

RK: Oh, that's good. Well, religion-wise, I know that in camp, there are three types of churches available.

TI: Church?

RK: Church. Like a Christian church, Catholic church, and a Buddhist church. But mostly Buddhist church the children did not attend because language-wise, it was difficult. It didn't have any meaning to them. Did you attend Sunday service?

TI: Gee, I don't remember if I did or not. I don't think I did, not in camp. In SA we did, Salvation Army.

RK: SA?

TI: SA is Salvation Army. See, S for Salvation—

RK: Oh, Salvation.

TI: We call it SA just to make it easier. And in SA we had to go. It was must.

[04:28:23]

RK: But in the Children's Village—

TI: In the Children's Village, they never asked me to go to church. There were a lot of religious person in there watching the kids and things like that.

RK: Do you remember many of the children attending—

TI: Church?

RK: Churches.

TI: Yeah, yeah. A lot of them became exceptionally religious in camp. I don't know why.

RK: Maryknoll is Catholic?

TI: Yes.

RK: And Shonien is a Christian church.

TI: I think so.

RK: Salvation Army a Christian church, also in addition to those Buddhist churches there. So, my question is, did those children mainly attend Christian church, not the Catholic church? From your point of view.

TI: Well, I think it was more Protestant, which is Christian.

RK: Protestant?

TI: That's all denomination of Christian.

RK: How about Catholic church?

TI: Gee, I don't remember where Catholic church was. The only thing I know are the kids that were in, they said they were Catholic, but that's about all I know. I didn't even know where the church was. Some of those churches used schools.

RK: School?

TI: In school, yeah, a church service.

RK: Oh, really?

TI: Yeah. (chuckles) I won't swear to it! I'm not sure.

RK: So, you never attended any church that existed?

TI: Not that I know of.

RK: Generally, do you know if church was crowded?

TI: Well, I know a lot of people went, but I don't know if they all went to the same one or different one. They might have had different places—maybe they attended churches in camp, say Protestant, and I don't now if they were packed or what.

RK: What was the common shared feeling about orphanage life in Children's Village?

TI: I think most people—well, the younger ones, I don't think they had too much feelings. They might have wanted to know where their parents where or something like that, but otherwise, I don't think they worry too much about those things.

RK: Oh, really?

TI: I don't think, anyway.

RK: Tamo said it was like a sense of family-like feeling.

TI: See, he went to church, so he could speak well about church. I don't remember going to church.

RK: My question is about general mood, general feeling.

[04:33:00]

TI: Yeah, feeling as far as church is concerned, I have feeling for Christianity. I believe most people believe. I won't want to claim any church as my church because—[recording paused] Yeah, I love Christianity. I believe in it, but I don't believe in church itself. It all depends on each individual church. Some are good, some are not as good, so I'm not the kind that is able to choose which is good and which is bad. I stay away from church.

RK: Did you ever visit Japan?

TI: Yeah, I visit Japan in 1985, I believe, and we had two tours, in fact. Two ten day tours and we went around Tokyo—Ok—not Oka—(mumbles)

RK: Is it Nikko? Nikko?

TI: Nikko, that was not on the agenda of tour, but we went there because we had free time.

RK: Did you see your birthplace in Kanagawa?

TI: Kanagawa? Birthplace? No.

RK: I'm sorry, not birthplace. Your parent's—

TI: Oh, parent's birthplace? Yes, we visit our folk's place. They had a ranch over there and ah. Well, I don't know how big it was, but it's old. I don't know how they acquired a property. I think through some good deed as a samurai. They got that property. Now it belongs to some other family.

RK: While you were staying at Salvation Army and also Children's Village, did you frequently miss your mother and father psychologically?

TI: Well, the only thing is I missed my mom more than dad because she was good to us. And my father wasn't too good. He paid for that, I guess. Well, I love mother more. I remember more about her because she was with us.

RK: You moved Children's Village to other barracks? Because you were kind of got kicked out to other barracks.

TI: Not kicked out, I left. (laughs)

RK: (laughs) Oh, okay. Because you're at least eighteen.

TI: No, because my brother came into camp.

RK: Oh, okay. I'm sorry!

TI: (laughs) Because if you're kicked out, your—

RK: (laughs) Okay, let's forget about that! So, you went to another barrack? Who came, what brother?

TI: Sam.

RK: So, Sam came to—

TI: To Manzanar.

RK: And before he came to Manzanar, what was he doing?

TI: He was in Santa Anita.

RK: Oh, yeah, you told me this.

TI: that's a reception center. He came to Manzanar after I was in Manzanar for three weeks already. No, three months. They put us in with bachelor's quarters, I guess. It was five of us in the bachelor's quarter.

RK: Who else lived with you?

TI: Well, the Murakami brothers had Kiyoshi, Bugs or Gene, and Toru.

RK: So, you, Takashi, and then Samuel?

TI: Yeah, Samuel.

RK: And you. Who—

TI: Three other. That's Murakami brothers. We went into the same barrack and stayed there.

RK: Can you give me the names of the Murakami brothers?

TI: Yes. The oldest one is Kiyoshi; second one is Toru; the youngest is Gene or Bugs.

RK: So, five together?

TI: Five together. And then, we moved around camp because we went in and out of camp for furlough. Then we lost our space and things like that, I guess.

RK: And then, another time you come back, and they'd given your barrack—

TI: Away. Get another place. That's about it.

RK: How often were you in and out? You went to furlough.

TI: Oh, furlough? We went every spring or winter as long as we stayed in camp.

RK: Ah, yes, you told me. When you left Children's Village, you left your brothers and sisters behind?

TI: Yes, younger brothers and sisters.

RK: What was your feeling about parting from them?

TI: I don't know the feeling, but I knew they were close to us, so I wasn't worried about them then. But later on, I was worried because when we left camp, we didn't have any money. I knew I was going into the service soon, and that's when I worried about them. I know my brothers wanted to come out, but there's no way we could have call them out.

RK: So, you left Manzanar—when did you move?

TI: I left Manzanar around April or May in 1944.

RK: How long did you live in the barracks?

TI: All together fifteen months I believe because we went on these furloughs.

RK: I see, so Children's Village is three months, and then fifteen months is outside of it.

TI: I think.

RK: So, before the end of the war you left the camp?

TI: Outside.

RK: And then you went to Detroit?

TI: Detroit, yes.

RK: Who else?

TI: My brother was already there; that's why I went to Detroit.

RK: The brother Samuel?

TI: Samuel, yeah. In order to leave camp, you had to have assurance of job.

RK: Isamu _____ (inaudible)?

TI: He found a place to work.

RK: And how about you?

[04:44:00]

TI: Well, he found a job for me. He had a job already. He found a job for me, so I could leave camp.

RK: Will you describe life in Detroit?

TI: Well, Detroit is a slow city as far as entertainment and things. You gotta go to different outside. But I don't know too much about Detroit because I lived there six months at the most.

RK: In Detroit, what did you do?

TI: I worked for a McDonalds creamery. I worked for Guardian Cleaners—

RK: Did you have any difficulty living ethic wise because you were Japanese, and it was still wartime?

TI: We applied for a job at Ford Company, and they refuse us because they said we didn't have clearance to get a job over there.

RK: What else?

TI: As far as I'm concern, that's a lot of lie because—

RK: That's a lot of what?

TI: Lies. Because we could get a job because we were put in camp without no reason, and why should we have clearance? You know? We didn't have to have clearance because we were all cleared, otherwise they wouldn't have let me out from the camp.

RK: How did you perceive Ford Company?

TI: Well, Ford Company, I swore I would not buy any of their cars but I did. (laughs)

RK: How come? (laughs)

TI: Well, I figured I'll try it, give it a go. The two of them that I bought wasn't that good. I'm sorry. (laughs) So, I haven't bought a car in a long time from Ford.

RK: So you, beside that, did you encounter any racial prejudice?

TI: Racial prejudice? You know, I don't feel any racial prejudice. I guess I'm pretty lucky. Maybe I walked a different road from others. I haven't had that much prejudice.

RK: Did you have any difficulties in your working environment?

TI: Well, I know when I got fired by this McDonalds, I thought I worked hard, but they thought I didn't. I was laid off. I don't know what the reason was.

RK: How long did you work?

TI: It wasn't much more than three months, I think.

RK: So, after three months you were laid off?

TI: Yeah.

RK: What did you do after that?

TI: Then I worked in a laundry. I worked there until I quit because I had a feeling I'm going in the service anyway. But, before that, my brother called, he said, "Hey, I got a job," so I went to this glass company, and I worked there until they call me into service.

RK: So, you were drafted?

TI: Yes, I was drafted.

RK: What was your feeling?

TI: When they drafted me?

RK: Um-hm.

TI: Well, I had not much a feeling, I just I thought I was going in earlier, but they told me to come back when they called me. So, I went back and waited three months, I think. Three months, then they called me, and I went in.

RK: Well you tell me about your experience?

TI: My experience about draft?

RK: Um-hm. What kind of training did you do? Where did you do? Can you tell me about that, your experience?

TI: Well, I went in on the fourteenth of November, '44. I went to Fort Chariton Induction Center.

RK: It's located where?

TI: In Chicago. I think South Chicago, some place around there. Then from there we got inducted, and they give us a haircut and whatever they have to do. They put us on a troop train to Camp Wheeler, Georgia. Well, the only place I felt horrible was Columbus, Georgia, because it was a Sunday—was it Sunday? Maybe it was Thursday. It was Thursday. It was Thanksgiving Day, and everybody was going to

church and things. When we came out of the train, they looked at us like we were freaks (laughs) because it was all Japanese. That's the only time I really felt funny about being in the service. Otherwise, it was pretty good. And they gave us cold cuts for Thanksgiving.

RK: Cold cut? What's that?

TI: Cold cut is sandwich meat.

RK: Pork cut?

TI: No, lunchmeat. They call it *cold cut* in the Army. That's what they gave us for Thanksgiving dinner.

RK: What was the Army daily routine?

TI: Daily routine? Well, every day or so, you have different things that you have to learn. You have to learn riffle shooting, different rifles, carbine, M-1. Then they show you about explosions and different mine traps. You do the rope exercise and running and carrying heavy stuff.

RK: How did you like that?

TI: It was okay.

RK: Physically you were improving your physical toughness?

TI: Yeah, yeah. (laughs) Supposed to.

RK: What was your reaction to learning about rifles and bombing?

TI: It was the first time I ever shot a rifle and things.

RK: Was it scary?

TI: Well, it wasn't scary because I wasn't shooting at anything but a target. I learned how to shoot because I think they had me as a sharp shooter, but I don't know if I hit the target. (laughs)

RK: Was it difficult to hit the target?

TI: They always bring out the flag where you hit. That's how you tell—

RK: And, if you didn't hit, shoot the target, you have to do the same again?

TI: No, there's no rule. You miss the whole thing.

RK: Oh, you miss?

TI: No, I was hitting right into it. They gave me, I think it was expert rifle, but I'm not sure myself. Well, you learn different things: breakdown your riffles, put it back together, different things.

[04:54:00]

RK: And how long did you serve in the Army draft?

TI: Well, I serve at least three years and four months, but I was injured after four months, I guess. Or five months.

RK: Oh, really?

TI: Yeah.

RK: You got training three years?

TI: Three years, four months, I think it was.

RK: After four months, you got injured?

TI: Yes. It was the fourteenth I went in, and two months I got hurt.

RK: After you joined?

TI: Yeah.

RK: So, the most of the three years you suffered—

TI: I was in the hospital.

RK: Tell me about that. So, you got injured.

TI: I got injured. A grenade exploded under my leg. It hit both my legs. One was severed, one was minor.

RK: Grenade? That was—

TI: The grenade that's shot like a rifle. It's called a rifle grenade. Anyway, the rifle grenade exploded and tore up my leg pretty bad. So, I went from one hospital to another trying to get it fixed. But they were closing down most of the hospitals and a lot of the forts, so hurried me up when I was in Pasadena. And they covered the hole and never did it well. They just put the skin graft over the hole and then discharged me. Six months later, it just blew up, and they had to amputate my leg.

RK: During your service, you couldn't continue the training, you went to the hospital?

TI: Yes.

RK: And eventually, you got the amputation?

TI: Yes, 1948 I think it was.

RK: How did you feel about your experience, that you had amputation?

TI: Well, I didn't feel good because it stopped me from moving like in sports and things. Couldn't play sports too well anymore, so that's the one big thing when I was young.

RK: What age were you when you left Manzanar?

TI: I left around April or May in 1944.

RK: So, that means you were almost how old?

TI: Forty-four, I was nineteen, I think.

RK: So, in two months you got injured?

TI: Right.

RK: How old were you at that time?

TI: Well, it was 1945 when I got injured; I was three months short of being twenty.

RK: You left Manzanar at the age of nineteen, and you went to Detroit.

TI: Right.

RK: And then, you worked there for three years or something?

TI: No, no, no. I could work only from April, May to November, so it's six months. Then I went in the service.

RK: At the time of joining, you were twenty?

TI: Well, I was in when I was nineteen. When I got injured, I was still nineteen. But, that March 15, I became twenty. Because I was born in 1925. In 1945, I was hurt.

RK: How were you treated by the hospital?

TI: Well, I had a good doctor. The day that he served, it was not too long—when I got hurt, the war was over in six months, nine months at the most. Or eight. The war was over so they started closing up all these hospitals, one after another. And then, every hospital I go they do something. Then, when I was in El Paso, I decided I should have my leg amputated because it's not getting any better. It's still draining and things, so they sent me to Battle Creek, Michigan. They refused the amputation, so after that I went to Pasadena, which was the last hospital I was in. And that they were closing down because they were closing a lot of the hospitals. So, they spread the skin graft over my infected leg and six months later, it just exploded on me. It started to drain or it just puffed up; my leg just puffed up. I went to VA, and then they poked a knife or something. The puss just came oozing out. That's when he says, "I think we should take your leg off." "Well, that's what I wanted before. I feel the same way; I should have it amputated." That was the best thing I did cause, otherwise, I would be in and out of hospital if they didn't take it off.

RK: How long did it take to get it amputated? More than one year?

TI: To have it amputated?

RK: Yeah, from the injured time to the amputation?

TI: Well, I was injured in 1944, January fifth. I was discharged from the hospital December 6, '47.

RK: So, that's—

TI: Three years.

RK: Three years that doctors couldn't reach the amputation?

TI: Well, if the first doctor was there, he would have did a good job. He was doing a good job until he got discharged. He couldn't do it anymore.

RK: Can I say you are a victim of World War II?

TI: No, I wouldn't say that. I wouldn't.

RK: After amputation operation, who paid for that?

TI: The government. The injuries I have, they'll get me new legs and things like that.

RK: But, still you can't get the same leg.

TI: Right, right. I lost that part, but in losing that I might have found something else. Maybe I could have been dead, you know?

RK: So, you think positively.

[05:06:00]

TI: Yeah. See, that's how I met her.

RK: Oh, where did you meet your wife?

TI: In Stockton.

RK: Is Stockton a hospital?

TI: No, no. When I came out of the hospital, she didn't want to go to the dance, so she went to the theater with me.

RK: Immediately, you saw her. You asked her to go to theater?

TI: Yeah, I said I don't want to go dance. She said doesn't want to go dance so we decided we go to the theater.

RK: What was she doing at that time?

TI: Oh, visiting friends.

RK: Oh, I see. After you met her, how soon did you get married?

TI: No, we courted each other for about three years or something.

RK: And can I ask you, what was she doing at that time?

TI: She just graduated from high school and she was working for county as a computer operator. Computer, before it used to be numbers, number keys and things.

RK: She's also American Japanese? Nisei, second generation.

TI: Second generation.

RK: Her parents come from what part of Japan?

TI: Wakayama.

RK: Wakayama, yes. And then, you get married?

TI: Yeah.

RK: When did you get married?

TI: August 19, ’53.

RK: Fifty-three, I see. Now you have children.

TI: Children, grand children.

RK: So many children! Five children?

TI: Five children. One girl, four boys.

RK: Can I ask another question? The Exclusion Order—all I know is the Japanese Americans [were] excluded in the west. They have to go inland.

TI: I know we had to go inland, but I didn’t know how far. I didn’t know what number it was, what law it was.

RK: Those conceptions, you knew that? You have to leave the west.

TI: Yeah, I know we had to leave the West Coast.

RK: In your camp life, what is your most vivid memory or significant experience that you can’t forget?

TI: Well, the memory that I have of our camp, Manzanar, is the people I met. I had good friends. We might not see each other, but I think we still good friends. There wasn’t too much aside from that because we don’t have positions. We only had love for the people you meet in there. Oh, you know, you have good and bad side, too. That’s the good side.

RK: How did you find out about the atomic bomb? It was dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

TI: Well, I was in the hospital. We heard it on the radio cause I was in bed in the hospital. I knew the war was over. The only thing you can do if you’re bedridden is get visits from your friends or you got radio to keep you company. That’s where I was. I’m pretty sure.

RK: So, you were in the hospital and then news came when the atomic bomb was dropped?

IT: Yeah, I was in the hospital, with the leg, yeah.

RK: So, you know Japanese attacked by Americans and the atomic bomb. What was your reaction?

IT: Well, I though the war was over cause because I had brothers ready to go in and things. Mainly, I was happy it was over.

RK: After that, you got amputation. And then, did you tell me that mode of travel because that amputation caused you—what was your experience?

IT: After I had the leg amputation, I didn't have any problems until just recently, 1992. I had a neuroma, they call it. It's a growth on the back of my stump, and they had to cut that out. Actually, the neuroma wasn't bothering me that much, but if you press on it, it just gave me a lot of pain. I thought it would be the nerve pain, [but], when they cut it out, I found out it wasn't that. It's still a nerve pain but a different kind, I guess. I still have pain, so I go to a neurologist and they going to try to find out what's causing it.

RK: Do the doctors know the cause of the pain?

TI: They don't know what it is yet. They just gave me a pill that takes care of the pain. But, I don't get the pain all the time; I just get it every so often. I'm in better shape than I was. Before I was just getting pain, pain, and even if I press it. But now, I can press it, and I don't have no pain. The only thing I had was the shooting—the nerve, I can feel the nerve working me. That's when I take the pill. That helps. So, my life is okay.

[05:15:11]

RK: So, now you are retired?

TI: Yeah.

RK: Everything went smooth with your amputated leg. Does it _____ (inaudible) when you apply for a job?

TI: Well, I only had one job that was in the post office.

RK: How long did you work for the post office?

TI: I worked there for twenty-nine years. Then I had the Army time, camp time. If you add that up to the twenty-nine, it will be thirty-four years. That's how I retired at thirty-four years.

RK: So, you retired when?

TI: Well, when I was fifty-five.

RK: Nineteen—

TI: Well, 1980.

RK: So, almost twelve years?

TI: Well, it's going to be thirteenth year.

RK: How do you like retired life?

TI: Oh, it's great. You feel relaxed. You don't have to take orders from people. You just live your life quiet.

RK: Well, after mother died and father went to Japan. Siblings total? Five?

TI: Seven.

RK: Besides the seven—and then no relatives in the U.S.?

TI: Well, there's one of them that died that I know of. [One] lives someplace in Monterey Park, I think.

RK: And almost in fifty years, your family relatives are how many people?

TI: About one hundred now.

RK: That's great!

TI: See, I have four boys and one girl. My brother, Kiyoshi has four girls and one boy. Tamo has three boys and two girls. So, that's fifteen there. Then you get married. (laughs)

RK: Your children, everybody get married?

TI: Yes, ours all got married.

RK: And then they have, for you, the grandchildren.

TI: Yes, right.

RK: Did they mostly Japanese Nisei?

TI: All except my third boy, his wife is Korean and Japanese. All the rest of them are Japanese.

RK: Did you ever talk to your children about your experience at Children's Village and Salvation Army?

TI: They hear us talking all the time so—like when we get together with friends and everybody that live in the home talk. Oh, there they go again, talking about the same old thing. (laughs) So, I think they know a lot about us.

RK: So, you had a lot of change to talk to, and they can listen to your story.

TI: Right.

RK: Before the interview you told me you feel like it is important to tell your story.

TI: Yeah, the story is very important.

RK: Not only your children and relative, but also other people.

TI: We could be in the same situation.

RK: Have you ever talked to a *hakujins* people?

TI: Well, I talked to psychologist once. That's the first time I came out with whatever I had. Not like this other form. They asked me questions. When I start answering, I got emotional because it's the first time I started to bring out things. Well, like my life, the only thing I really miss was I couldn't love mother back. I couldn't hold her, hug her. That hurt me cause my life, right now, I don't hug my kids, my daughter—

RK: You don't? How come?

TI: Because I guess cause I wasn't hugged myself when I was small, mother's hug and things like that. Father's hug or whatever. That's why—

RK: You don't do that.

TI: Yeah. I want to do it, but I just can't come out and do it.

[05:22:50]

RK: Naturally. So, you had difficulty to hug your children because you didn't have experience, that your mother didn't hug or father—

TI: Well, she couldn't help it. She died.

RK: That's right.

TI: Those things, if you don't let it out, it will eat away at you. That's what it was doing to me until I started talking. Even today, I felt like coming out and crying, but I just held back. Things come back, but you want to say it, you don't want to say it

sometimes. But, I feel better of speaking out. I'm not afraid to speak up anymore. That's why I was wiling to have you ask me question and things.

RK: Thank you. Well, another question? How was your adjustment in American society after you left Manzanar?

TI: American society, I didn't have too much, except the hospital. See, my time was spent in hospital that was over three years.

RK: So, for you, after the hospital was a crucial time?

TI: Actually, four years all together because when I had my leg blow up on me, they put me in a cast and sent me home until it got down to where they wanted. Then they amputated. All these things take time.

RK: Frustration. Not knowing who to ask, what doctors.

TI: If I had a doctor that was with me, who could understand me, it would have been easier. I had some doctors who would tell me, threaten me—like when I was in pain—he says, "If you don't keep quiet—" I said, "I don't care what you do, but give me that pain killer." I was in pain. I said, "I don't care if you shoot me or what. He said he's going to shoot me if you don't watch out. He threated me while I was in pain and things like that. That doctor, you know, I would have shot him if I had a gun. He was no help to me. He was a backup for the doctor I had, Daniel Baker. Those are the things that hurt me but I don't _____ (inaudible) then my doctor, I figured.

RK: Doctors are white?

TI: Yeah, both of them.

RK: Do you think there was a difference because you were Japanese American?

TI: The doctor I had was—I wouldn't have any other doctor if I could have him. He's white. He was a good doctor. I don't believe for a doctor to be one race or the other. If they are a good doctor, they're good doctor, whether they are white or black or whatever.

RK: When you started working at the post office, how did your co-workers treated you?

TI: They were pretty good because disabled got a little bit more advantage than others because of their disability. They wanted more disabled person to have job. They treated us pretty good, although, they tried to catch me at things. They'd come to the house without calling or anything. They'd just come to see if you're home. Like I said, "I'm sick." They don't believe it. They just want to catch you telling them lies,

I guess. That part I didn't like. Otherwise, they were pretty good because I was a hard worker, put out for them.

RK: What kind of job in the post office?

TI: Well, I sort the mail, throw in into these bins and then the carriers takes them and do what they have to do and things like that. We had a group of Japanese that was in this group—

RK: Post office?

TI: Post office, yeah. We were all pretty good workers. If they couldn't award one person, they would award a group like the Japanese. Except they always put one other people besides Japanese so they won't be no squawking. Anyway, Japanese got a lot of honors. They gave you letters, they work hard, this and that. They issued awards and stuff like that. See, all these Japanese guys good. They were all pretty good workers.

RK: So, you went to last year's reunion?

TI: Yes.

RK: How should I say it, do you feel better that the orphans united?

TI: Like last year wasn't as emotional as the first one because—

RK: Oh, Salvation Army?

TI: Yeah, Salvation Army because all my time was spent in Salvation Army, and just three months in Manzanar. But, the same people that was in Salvation Army was in Children's Village. See, those I know them emotionally, I'm close to them because I did things with them; before even going to camp.

RK: Did you ever think about that because every Japanese American ancestry has to go to Manzanar because of the order of 9066, so they want orphans also has to go to Manzanar because they are part of Japanese American and were even dangerous? Did you think because your experience was orphan—sorry, my English isn't good. I should skip—you received Redress amount?

[05:31:28]

TI: Right.

RK: Twenty thousand?

TI: Right.

RK: What was your reaction?

TI: Well, I was naturally happy that we did get it, get something, but it would never pay for what we lost. But, putting us in there, most people think we got too much because they didn't get it.

RK: Who think—

TI: Well, the *hakujins*, those people who will never get a chance to get it. So, now blacks are saying they're going to fight for it, and they're not going to get it because it's not the same situation. We were put in because we were Japanese and they try us that we were guilty of anything. They assumed that we might be guilty. That's not enough to put someone in jail and put us in one area and control a group of people that's been living here all their life and never been to Japan. They don't even know how Japan look like. And, they think they were doing right, but, when you look back, they know it was wrong. So, the amount is not enough, really because, when you got the money for that, it's shrunk to almost nothing. You can't even buy a house. You can barely buy a car, you know. If you had that in 1941 or '42 when we went in, it would be a large amount. Like me, I say, "If they give us that, that's it." You're not happy about it. Most people say are you happy with $20,000? Well, last year $20,000 is better than nothing.

RK: Do you think that this is an indication that the American government apologized?

TI: See, they don't take human feelings—like myself, the reason we didn't get an education was cause, like I say, when we went to Salvation Army, we didn't know English too well, so it took us a long time. Once they took us out and the war came and they sent us to Lytton—see, they took something away from us, education. It was a month before we can get back in school. Then we went a school that's not really good school because—

RK: Salvation Army period?

TI: No, in Manzanar. Our education was interrupted. Now, that took a lot off of us. You're talking about years that was taken away from us to learn. That might have helped us quite a bit. I could think so because my brothers are not genius or anything, but whatever they do they do they do well. If you had the education added onto that, they might have made it further. See, when you talk about that, they didn't give us anything. They took away all the things that they should have had. If they had a reason to put them in prison, then that's fine. They don't have no reason at all. They just say cause you're Japanese you're going to camp; that's it. Well, that doesn't work. Give them $20,000, and they should be happy. Who's to say what amount is being happy? Some people lost a lot of money on property and things like that.

RK: Most Japanese lost a lot of property?

TI: Yeah.

RK: So, even though you received that amount, do you think you are not healed from the experience of wartime?

TI: See, I don't feel bad until somebody start talking about it and say, "You guys are lucky and things like. You got $20,000." That's when I get angry, because we are not lucky. If you want to trade $20,000 for three years, something like that, well, fine, but it's not worth it.

RK: Do you have experience with being approached—

TI: Well, people talk to you about those things. Oh, you guys lucky cause you $20,000 or something. Like it was a gift. It's no gift for me. I don't think it was a gift. It is something that they owe us. In fact, I think they owe us much more than that. (phone rings)

[05:38:50; recording paused]

RK: How has this experience contributed to your life?

TI: Well, it gave us more experience. You took a lot of heat but come through it.

RK: Do you think you got deeper into human?

TI: Well, tolerance never really entered my mind. Never felt bad about one or the other.

RK: I see. Okay. My question was, because your education was disturbed by the miseducation at Manzanar, did you think your children should get a more good educational background?

TI: They got as good an education as possible through me. I think they would have gained more if I had the education that I lost. I think education is the most important thing; it carries over because things are changing so fast. You have to know things. The more you know, the more the children know, or their generation after.

RK: Did you encourage your children to study harder?

TI: Oh, yeah. See, our family, the only one that didn't finish college—they all finish college—just one, he knew what he wanted. He didn't want to college. He wanted to be a fireman, so he did everything in his power to—well, paramedic. So, he went to college to take certain courses that he needed. Then he became what he wanted to be, which is important to me. It's not one who could read this and this, I think. The one who didn't graduate, I think he has a lot of savvy. He knows things. Yeah, I think education, if you lose it, you taking it out in the kid, too. You can't help him as much

or follow their example. They don't want to follow my example of education. They will have better education because he has it himself.

RK: The reason I ask you about education is because education helps you shape your identity, especially if you had a bad experience with amputation. Anything can help you.

TI: I think education is very important cause it's part of life.

RK: As a father, are you happy with your children?

TI: Oh, yeah. You hate to see them struggle. I have none that is struggling, so that makes me happy cause they could do what they want. They don't have to come to me, depend on me. They could do it themselves, whatever they want to do. That's important to me.

RK: Do you still keep in contact with Salvation Army member?

TI: Some that is close to me. I'm not very good at writing. I don't write too much.

RK: Do you go on the phone?

TI: Well, I can talk better than I can write. (chuckles)

RK: You still contacting, who?

TI: A friend lives in some place close by here, Takahashi. You know the one I was telling you about?

RK: You know the first name?

TI: Takahashi and _____ (inaudible). Mas Takahashi.

RK: In the picture?

TI: No, he's not in there. They pull them out of the home—

RK: Somebody took care of them—

TI: I think before the war. They had a father, and I think they went back to French camp, which is near Stockton. They met in Manzanar because their group, the French camp group, went to Manzanar, so that's where we met again.

RK: And then, you told me Matsuno family?

TI: Matsuno family, I think they were from Shonien? I'm not sure if they're Shonien. Well anyway, their family, big family, one of them is about my age. They had bad luck in their family.

RK: Did you feel angry that little orphans had to experience interment?

TI: You mean, did I get angry?

RK: Um-hm. Did you feel more angry—

TI: Because the kids were younger? Or I was younger?

RK: Because you were younger.

TI: I was younger when I went to camp? Well, I always thought I was older—

RK: Well, compared to the much older adults. How do you view the smaller kids?

TI: Smaller kids, I view them as, well—

RK: They should not go in? They should not have been interned?

TI: Interned? No one should be interned because see that carries throughout your life.

RK: But, this time America and Japan fighting each other, and then because you were a scapegoat, every Japanese American interned. But, because you were an adult—you understand what I mean?

TI: As an adult, how would I feel that the kids—well, I think now, even this $20,000 thing they fought for and write to the government to apologize everybody, well, that's not even enough. But, I think now we have people who are stronger as far as voices. They have a lot of lawyers and things like that who would fight for the rights Japanese. They have a group, I think. There's a lot of Japanese lawyers now.

RK: So, they are fighting?

[05:50:00]

TI: They come out and say what they want to say, you know. The way anybody would say for that kind of thing; they have the weapon now. Before we didn't, we didn't have people who would speak up, you know. They might just complain about it but they won't come out and say what it is.

RK: _____ (inaudible).

TI: I think this won't happen again. I hope not, anyway.

RK: Did you experience history repeat again?

TI: Repeat again?

RK: Do you think it is?

TI: I don't know about repeat again. It's always some group always wanting to try something. The only thing you have to worry about is people that has raw material because they could make anything with raw material. If you don't have it, then you can't do anything. They could think and all that. Like Japan, for instance, they didn't have raw material, so, I think, that's one of the reasons they lost the war.

RK: Yeah, I see.

TI: Because they didn't—you know, they were short of different things to fight with. This country is a big country, so it had more raw material, but they could use it up, too. I hope it never has this thing—the only one right now, it would be China because they got billion people.

RK: Can I ask you a question?

TI: Sure.

RK: What is a peaceful thing right now? Because you have family, grandchildren—

TI: I think love of family is the most important. And love of country, you have to love your own country that you live in. You have to fight for it or even die for it. Nobody wants to die, but, if you're willing to die for it, it's worthwhile. So, I say family and country.

RK: Have you visited Manzanar after you left?

TI: No, I haven't. We went by it. In fact, we went by it—

RK: You drove by?

TI: No, on the road, going to Mammoth we went by it. We didn't stop.

RK: Oh, I see.

TI: Or look at it.

RK: How come?

TI: How come? Cause there's nothing for me—you might keep going but eventually that place is not going to be there anymore. I think after people die and things, I don't

know if kids will take up where they left off. Because even the disabled veterans—they're people that started this club—they started to die off and no young people want to take over. See? So, I think it's going to die. Hope it didn't but I think it will happen. Older ones want to quit being the leaders. They think the younger people should be the leaders now so they could carry on for a longer period and whatever.

RK: Are you planning on joining the upcoming reunion?

TI: No, I'm not. I'm going to Newport Dunes. We have arranged a place. It may be the same day.

RK: If it is not the same day?

TI: I would be there. Like I said, family first. Well, they are family, too, but—like my brother, he's one unusual person. He likes to help people, but if he doesn't get help, he'll still do it if he sets his mind to it. Like myself, if I do it, fine. If I don't do it, fine. That kind of attitude I have.

RK: Did you experience any type of racial prejudice after the war?

TI: After the war?

RK: World War II?

TI: Well, you hear it always in the radio and things like that. You see it in the paper; sometimes you see it on a sign.

RK: How about personally?

TI: Personally? Well, not from eye-to-eye. From a distance, you know. When somebody is against whatever the people are doing to help Japanese, and they go against it, they are going against my wishes. The skinhead now, they have trouble. They're in jail now. They knew they were going to bomb something. That kind of people, they say they hate anybody but white, but the person who is the friend of the leader is part Oriental. So, I don't understand them. Everybody thinks they are pressured into it or something. What was your question?

RK: Personally, you had a special racial prejudice after the war?

TI: From somebody to me?

RK: You seem not to have.

TI: You know, I don't mix well with people. I leave them alone if they leave me alone.

RK: So, you didn't have much—

TI: When I get to a point where I want to hit someone, then it will affect me, but, otherwise, I just take it as everyday thing because you're always going to meet somebody that don't like Japanese or crombo or Mexican. There's always going to be people like that. No matter how you like them, doesn't matter, they are going to hate anyway. I don't know if they had a bad life, or something that caused them to be like that. Our life has been pretty good. I'm thankful for God because he kept us alive. Only one that died out of the whole group, the hundred group—one of them died, and that was through cancer. And you can't beat that. It was a good life for us. Then, you know, I think if you start seeing your loved ones dying, it hurts you more. I'm thankful for that.

[05:50:00; recording paused]

RK: Well, I think this will be my final question. Do you associate with many American families, or mostly with Japanese American?

TI: I don't associate with—going to someone's house, it's mostly family. Gee, I don't know any *hakujins*. My children, they associate with some families. We do through them.

RK: Through children?

TI: Yeah, through children. She knows a few people she works with that she'll go eat at lunch or something like that.

RK: I was just curious. It seems to be a natural encounter through children.

TI: Through children, yeah.

RK: And then, you can communicate with those *hakujins*. That's great.

TI: I myself, I don't get, too, close to *hakujins*. Maybe it's because of Manzanar. Maybe I see some things on T.V. I don't know, but I'm happy as I am. I don't want it to change. It's too late to change anyway. (laughs)

RK: Nothing is too late. (laughs) Before we close, do you have anything to mention? Is there anything that comes up?

TI: Do they want to change things? Well, I think we should, writing all these things, we should get together and share the love that they had for their families to other people then we get along much better, I think. Because you always love your family. If they act like your family, you don't have no problem.

RK: Family is like a grassroots tree. Everybody is concerned.

TI: I think so because I never had family. The family values is great for me.

RK: I have one more question come to mind. I was just wondering, because you lost your mother at the age of eleven, and then father left, still you had memory of mother and father, but you did not have mother and father figures. When you became a father, did you have difficulties as a father role model?

TI: No. See, he was the first one born to us. He's thirty-nine now, so when he becomes thirty-nine, we know our anniversary is the fortieth, and so on. His is May twenty-third, and as soon as he says he is going to be forty, we know we are going to be forty-one. We put them together. That's important to me.

RK: I met your son—

TI: The oldest.

RK: What is his name?

TI: Martin.

RK: Oh, I see.

TI: He was the last one to get married. (chuckles) He got married last year, February.

RK: You have nice children. I met your daughter. So, you didn't have any difficulty as a father?

TI: To take care of them?

RK: How to take care of them?

TI: I didn't want the same kind of beating that we had in Salvation Army or through our dad. I wasn't a strong father image. I want them to be loved. I'm like that because we didn't have too much of that. But, the kids give me all the love that makes it easier for me. I don't know why I want it easy. They do help me a lot because they don't give me problems. So, if you don't have problems, then life is a lot easier. We do things together, decide things together. Every year, at a certain time, we make a schedule for what our family could do. We take some away and put news ones and things like that, which I think is important.

RK: So, right now you're enjoying retired life. Your wife likes to travel because you don't so much want to travel.

TI: Well, we travel, but not like she wants to travel, which I don't blame her, because she sees everybody else going. Well, I guess that's is something to talk about after. I don't know. Maybe they'll go someplace. (laughs) So, how's your family?

RK: Fine, thank you. Well, we are going to finish this interview. Is it okay?

TI: Sure.

RK: Well, thank you very much. I appreciate your cooperation and enthusiasm and patience. Thank you very much. (chuckles)

TI: You're welcome.

RK: Well, it's 6:35 p.m.

END OF INTERVIEW