

NARRATOR: TADASHI KANEMOTO

INTERVIEWER: RALPH KUMANO

DATE: November 18, 2003

RK: This is an interview with Tadashi Kanemoto a Nisei man, eighty-five years old at his residence in Parlier, California on November 18, 2003. The interviewer is Ralph Kumano of the Oral History Project for the CCDC-JACL. First we are going to be talking about life before WWII. And it will be about the family and the home life. So the first question is where were you born?

TK: In Livingston, Montana.

RK: What is the date of your birth?

TK: December 3, 1917.

RK: Okay, what was your family's line of work?

TK: My father was a foreman at Northern Pacific Railway Roundhouse and then there were about thirty Japanese people working and the roundhouse was when the train comes in for maintenance and I guess that was just about it. He was just a foreman there.

RK: And your mother?

TK: Mother was and most of the people were single and she did cooking for them and then also did cooking for us and then my siblings, I am one of seven, and the kids kept her pretty busy too cooking and then taking care of the family and the kids.

RK: Right, so mainly a housewife was her primary job.

TK: And I am the only one left now.

RK: Okay, where did you fall in the family among you seven siblings?

TK: Where?

- RK: Which order, how many brothers and sisters and where were you?
- TK: Oh, I had one sister.
- RK: Oh.
- TK: And the rest were all boys.
- RK: And so how many brothers?
- TK: Let me see. Six brothers but one died.
- RK: Oh, okay.
- TK: Young and then my older brother was high blood pressure and he had a stroke and died when he was thirty-five years old in 1950. And other were all staying in Japan.
- RK: So where were you in the progression of the children?
- TK: I'm the third one.
- RK: Third one?
- TK: The second one died.
- RK: Oh okay. What do you remember about family life in Montana?
- TK: Not much. I was five years old and I'm a Kibei so when I was five years old, I was sent to Japan for education and I lived with my grandparents. And nothing much I can say much taking place in Livingston.
- RK: When did you come back here?
- TK: I came back after I finished high school in Japan.
- RK: Oh okay. So you were about how old?
- TK: Eighteen years old.
- RK: Eighteen years old okay. What did you do for entertainment in Livingston?

- TK: Well my brother was there in Sanger so I came back to him and we worked at the vineyards.
- RK: Oh okay.
- TK: And I started school at the Granville School. You know where the Granville School is, on Kings Canyon Road?
- RK: Right.
- TK: That was a three class school you know, country school and then I was accepted into seventh grade, Mrs. (inaudible) was our teacher and our class consisted of six, seventh and eighth grade and a month later, she elevated me to eighth grade. And then after several months I had to have surgery on my appendix problem so I had appendix surgery and then I tell you I recovered and school was out so that was about five or six months I only had of an American education.
- RK: Were the other brothers go through Granville also?
- TK: No.
- RK: Or did they stay?
- TK: No, I don't think they went to an American school.
- RK: Oh okay.
- TK: Another school I went was the Fresno High after they had night class and I studied for about two years.
- RK: What kind of values did your parents teach you when you were growing up?
- TK: That is one thing that hard to say. I mean I don't know how to say it. I was told by some other Kibei too they feel the same way I do. I feel like I was just thrown out so I don't know much about my parents. And when I got together I was sixth grade already.

RK: Already yeah.

TK: In Japan sixth grade and my whole family made enough and so they went back to Japan.

RK: Oh okay.

TK: And then I finished eighth and high school and then came back so you know I didn't have much time with my parents. I spent more with my aunt and then grandma in Japan.

RK: So the family was never together after high school because most of them were still in Japan?

TK: Yeah.

RK: Okay. What did you and your family participate in when you were in high school? Were you in any of the clubs or groups in the local area or with any of the Japanese organizations?

TK: Well, I guess I mean there was a young men's organization and I went to that. Not too active and then we had the clubhouse and we'd get together at the clubhouse about once a month.

RK: Were you a member of any religious organization?

TK: No, I wasn't.

RK: Okay.

TK: My grandmother was a very religious person and so I remember every time occasion they made a service and drive me over to church.

RK: Oh okay. And this is a church in Fresno?

TK: Huh?

RK: A church in Fresno?

TK: No in Japan.

- RK: Oh in Japan, okay. Did you attend any Japanese language school other than the one in Japan?
- TK: No just the—
- RK: The one in Japan?
- TK: I finished only Japanese school from first to high school.
- RK: So when you came back you were pretty fluent in Japanese?
- TK: Well it was about I went to the service for almost five years. I was among just haku-jin.
- RK: Oh okay.
- TK: And then most of the time I was the only one Japanese and I didn't use any hardly any Japanese so when I came back, I had a problem trying to listen in Japanese so I had to learn all over again.
- RK: So you were pretty bilingual, you could speak Japanese?
- TK: I don't say that bilingual.
- RK: Okay.
- TK: I would say myself no-lingual because my English is limited and now I forgot the Japanese.
- RK: Oh right. Your English is pretty good. Okay, we want to know a little bit about the family and how they got split apart and the transition between the United States and Japan and then back. So how did that happen?
- TK: Well I think my brother and father I guess most were immigrant because they came from Japan in 1900 and the intention was—they had not intention of staying here. Other words they just make money to go back. So that is what my father did. We had a sick—there were seven—seven of us and then one sister and six boys and when I was five years old

me and my older brother and the younger brother was sent back to Japan for a Japanese education called Kibei and I and the older brother stayed with our grandparents and the younger one stayed with another grandparent and about when I was sixth grade, my father and family decided they may be enough and they succeeded so they pulled up and they went back to Japan for good and they built a house and they live in Japan for ever after. And about when I finished the grammar school and high school, I came back and joined my brother who was here about two or three years before. And then I worked in the vineyard of course because they didn't have much work in those days. And then the war broke out—oh before then about end of 1940 open a draft board and started drafting and when I got the draft board classification, I was in fifth call. In other words they would call the first group and second and then I was fifth call and at that time I was serving the duration of one year and so when you go in and somebody come home. And I decided to go and ask for the earlier one and then I went to draft board in Fresno asked to be changed to earlier one and they said the first and second went out already and put me in the third call. Which went out about three weeks later and that was in February 26, 1941 and then I got on the train and night train a Pullman and arrived at Sacramento in the morning. And then we had an examination and physical and everything and then we passed so they sent us to the Monterey induction station.

At Monterey they processed us and a question and questioned and everything and I was ride in truck so they put me in the quartermaster and then they shipped me to Fort Lewis, Washington the 41<sup>st</sup> Division, Infantry Division and then I was assigned to 116<sup>th</sup> Quartermaster Regiment, Company A. And then we had to go through training you know basic training there was supposed to last sixteen weeks. And then the 41<sup>st</sup> Division is

supposed to be consisted of the National Guard Division from the Washington area. And when we got there, the barracks were brand new. So the first few days we had to go cleaning the barracks, cleaning the window and then finally we were assigned to the barracks and started basic training. And after seven weeks, about seven weeks we were told that the 41<sup>st</sup> Division National Guard people were going to come in and move into our barracks together. And then we needed some truck drivers. So they needed seven truck drivers beside the National Guard had their own and one morning after the whistle blow; that means everybody has to go out in formation so I went out and I just stood at my position at attention. Someway I was ready and I went out and then you know people started coming out and the next one came out a couple minutes later and then I think the last ones about ten minutes. And then we standing in formation and the lieutenant and the CO was our training camp and called you, you, you, you up. About one third were told to get out in other words they were rejected from passing for the seven truck drivers. And then after that the Lieutenant was going from top to bottom and started asking questions and the question that came to me and the question is “When did you shave last?” I said, “I shaved last night.” Because they have to shave at least once a day and then it was our guard, they assigned guard duty and the other guard rules, consisted of number one, to eleven and I don’t remember when I was but number one, rule number one is that I walk my post in a military manner. And then so on three and four and then he asked me “What is the number three? What is the number ten? What is number five?” I answered all amazing because my English was so bad and I have the Nisei ladies English, welcome and—

RK: Right.

TK: I say I walk my post in a military manner and just a pure memory and I just memorized it.

RK: Right.

TK: I didn't know the meaning of it. So I didn't know any meaning but amazing I memorized all the rules.

RK: All eleven.

TK: In one week. And—

RK: Now this basic training was it—was it just a mixture of different races in the group? You were not in any special?

TK: No, it a group.

RK: Right.

TK: Like a marching formation and right coming march and about face and all that and I managed and I went through all of that in Japan in high school the military requires once every day so everything came easy to me. Slight variation of movement but almost alike so I didn't have no problem.

RK: So you were selected for the Quartermaster group?

TK: Oh yeah.

RK: Okay.

TK: And see after the question was asked—the question I think about twenty or twenty or so was left.

RK: Oh okay.

TK: And so the CO told us to stand at attention and formation and then he tried giving us the command for march, right column, left column, and all that and every time movement somebody make a mistake so if you make a mistake you're out, you're out.



RK: Right.

TK: I didn't have no problem.

RK: Did you have any problems with any of the other members of the troop?

TK: What excuse me?

RK: Did you have any type of problems with racial type of problems with any members of—?

TK: No, I didn't have no problem.

RK: Well good. That's good.

TK: It's funny I think my broken English and everything?

RK: Yeah.

TK: They thought I was funny and treated me like a mascot.

RK: Oh okay.

TK: And that was kind of a pet for everybody. And the CO treated me just as good because I don't know the CO has the strength to understand what I say when I answer those questions but he passed me.

RK: Right.

TK: And when there was the seven left you know he the CO stopped everything and said, "Congratulations" and said that you just completed basic training. So we finished the basic training in six weeks and he said well sixteen weeks I mean seven weeks instead of sixteen weeks. And then we were given the truck and then I started driving truck and joined the National Guard people.

RK: So once you were finished at Fort Lewis where did they send you?

TK: What?

RK: Once you were finished with Fort Lewis where did they send you? Did they send you to another?

TK: Oh Fort Lewis?

RK: No.

TK: No we stayed until the war broke out.

RK: Oh okay, so the war broke out.

TK: And that was Sunday morning.

RK: Oh okay.

TK: I remember my bunk buddy sleeping next was a guy named Tokowski from Minnesota and he had a hobby of drinking and boy he sure liked to drink. Even Sunday morning from morning he'd go to PX and drinking. You know three/two beers were not very strong and he would drink so much when the war broke out I heard the news and boy I had to run to the PX right away. I told Tokowski you quit drinking and come right back. And I brought him back to the barracks and amazing I would say I was one of the luckiest Nisei GI in the whole United States Army that time. They treated me just like any other and even I mean even if we had to get on the convoy and we went to Seattle Outpost Garden and everybody got ammunition and I got along with it, and the only problem I had in Seattle was the one old lady came to me asking me are you for Japan or America? But that was about three of four other persons, GI's, my buddies were there and I didn't have time to answer her question. One guy cut in and said, "Lady, you better apologize to him. (inaudible)" and she apologized.

RK: Well good. That was good.

TK: You see how lucky I was I mean, everybody treated me real good.

RK: Yeah, right. You had a lot of support from your fellow soldiers yeah.

TK: Now there were two, I mean there were four Nisei in that A Company. Two from San Jose, Yoshioka and Araki and one from Miami and I forget what names. Of course being together like brothers, and C Company had two Nisei. They were sent to stockade on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

RK: Oh stockade.

TK: Oh yeah, in other words later I found out the CO told me headquarters had ordered this and I took responsibility for you and I didn't send you and so he said he asked everybody all the soldiers in our company and everybody said, "Okay, we're going to regardless of what we have to do, we keep all four of them." So I was really lucky.

RK: Yes, that was good.

TK: When they told me, I cried.

RK: You bet, yeah. That is very important otherwise you'd feel really alone.

TK: That's right.

RK: Exactly. So during the war what did you do once the WWII started?

TK: Well the war broke out. Like I say that morning, the company had to go out to the outpost in Seattle, Washington. About twenty miles I guess and of course we were between Tacoma and Seattle. And about three days later we received the orders saying that our company had to go out to Longview, Washington for an outpost so they moved. And I was a mechanic and so they told me that you stay, you stay at home and that when the major airplane coming in you go ahead and work on that. And the other mechanic just went out and in some way lot of people like me working on it because I don't know, but other two haku-jin were lazy guys.

RK: Oh.

TK: So a lot of people used to like my repair and they used to come back to me, driving about thirty miles.

RK: So how long were you here at Longview?

TK: I didn't go to Longview. I was told to stay at the Fort Lewis.

RK: Back at—

TK: The company area yeah with the garage and where the facility is.

RK: So how long did you stay there?

TK: Until about not very long though, sometime January because they came to be shipped out and I knew that everybody said they were going to South Pacific. But we didn't know it was going to happen to us. Later the CO told me that the war we can not go with them we had to stay back. So he said he appealed to them because I was the only a half-way decent mechanic.

RK: Right.

TK: The haku-jin, the lazy guy and didn't do anything and the other guy is a half way so that was another reason they wanted me to go over with them. And oh yeah one time before, I don't remember when, but in the barracks at night time and you know everything was covered for the black out reason with the blanket and I opened the door and wondered why the guy was standing guard and a rifle and all of a sudden it came to me. They are standing because of me.

RK: Right.

TK: And they said before then the CO was really nice. See if you the CO you had to get the permission of a sergeant before you go in but the CO called me in and said if anything

happened even regardless of my race or anything, don't go through red tape, you come straight to me. So when I saw that I went over to the CO and the guard was there, "Hey Kanemoto come back." I just kept on running and went into the CO's office and went straight in and so he didn't say anything.

RK: So did you stay here until the end of the war or were you shipped anywhere?

TK: Oh yeah I mean went to be shipped. Oh yeah they gathered all the Nisei GI's in the division and then took them to (inaudible) camp and that was the easiest time we ever had and almost five years time. No formation, only one second lieutenant was in charge. He never bothered. We'd get up whenever we wanted to. If you don't want to eat breakfast just go to sleep.

RK: Wow.

TK: Boy that was a time until Pentagon found out what to do with us.

RK: Oh because they weren't sure what to do?

TK: That's right what to do, discharge us or keep us and use us in something and then I think over a month they closed—everybody pack up and get ready to leave by such and such a time and we got on a train and we headed for Texas at the Fort Bliss, Texas right by El Paso, Texas.

RK: Right.

TK: There was an induction station and then all of us went in about two hundred of us went in as a (inaudible) so they processed us as recruits coming in and at first I was a truck driver and go into station and pick them up and after processing three days later we sent back, send them out as soldier to the basic training camp. That was my job for a while.

RK: Okay.

TK: And maybe some days two or three trips and some days nothing and when there was nothing we do nothing and just play poker or something. And that way one fellow asked me, he was an x-ray technician and just takes chest x-ray all the medical coming in and he asked me I need help. Do you want to help me? I said, "Oh yeah, I like x-ray." He could teach me and so I became an x-ray.

RK: Oh.

TK: And I like that. Troops come in and the first one was an x-ray and then go to the lab and you know and so forth and everything and then I finished well way before the other station and sometime I had to go and help like with blood pressure and things and last place. And since I was in x-ray, (inaudible) General Hospital in (inaudible) Oklahoma needed one technician so I was transferred to there so I didn't stay very long at El Paso.

RK: Okay, so Fort Bliss, so you went to Oklahoma after that?

TK: Yeah, Oklahoma and then worked for about four or five months and then decided they were going to take all the GI overseas so about three month we had to train. We got civilians coming in and assigned to each of us and our job was to train the civilian for x-ray.

RK: X-ray technician? Okay.

TK: We had to so in the afternoon nothing to do but go in a room and you know work and then teach them everything that we knew and like name the bones and things to—I don't remember anymore now like the finger and what the joints are and not and how to teach that and how to take a picture and I get the formula and I give to them and then I don't remember when but after about two or three months of training of the civilian and when

they were capable of taking over, we were shipped out which is now and went to Camp Berkeley in Texas.

RK: Okay so back to Texas again.

TK: That to the medical base.

RK: Okay.

TK: We had to go to basic again, all over.

RK: Oh wow.

TK: To go overseas.

RK: So when did you finally go overseas?

TK: Now that was in 1944 I think the beginning of forty-four and shipped out to France and went up and after that the Utah Beach invasion and maybe a couple of weeks after the Utah Beach we went up through the Utah Beach and then the place named Cannes in France, it is a small town and that is where we pitched the tents and then set up the 180<sup>th</sup>, the 180<sup>th</sup> General Hospital. And General Hospital is the place most rear-most hospital before they go back to US so casualty come back from up front and stationed in hospital and what not and we treat them enough so they can go back.

RK: Right.

TK: And then I send them back to U.S. and go back to Toledo and what not and then after the fall of the Berlin, we moved up to Frankfurt, Germany. And then we took over Luftwaffe Officer's Hospital and the German Air Force Hospital, Officer's Hospital.

RK: Right, Luftwaffe, right.

TK: Oh it's a beautiful hospital especially built for that.

RK: Oh wow.

TK: They had the top priority.

RK: Sure exactly.

TK: The Air Force Officers.

RK: Yeah.

TK: And then the x-ray equipment and everything was better than what we had in the US General Hospital. And we had the war was over then but then a lot of casualties coming back, coming from the station hospital and field hospital so it kept us busy and I think—I think about we stayed about six months and Japan fell in about August and I think November they said they were going to start discharging.

RK: Okay.

TK: And they did not and I stayed there so much that each month you get one point and oversea you get two points for each month and I had seventy some points, the discharge points

RK: Right.

TK: And it was pretty high so I was the first group that pulled out of the x-ray department and the rest of them stayed so I don't know what became of them.

RK: Right.

TK: And we gathered in one place and then we got together with the conductor Nishio he was one of them that came home together.

RK: Okay, so where did you come back to?

TK: Came back to Camp Beale; that is in the Sacramento area.

RK: Oh, north of Sacramento. Today Beale Air Force Base.



TK: Yeah and that is where they processed us for discharge and then we stayed about three or four days and my birthday is December 3<sup>rd</sup> but I missed it and December 4<sup>th</sup> discharge.

RK: Oh one day later. Now when you were in the service, did you have any relatives that were in the internment camps?

TK: Yeah, I was at the engaged her in camp and she was in camp Two at Poston.

RK: Oh, this is your present wife today?

TK: Yeah.

RK: And her name at the time?

TK: Takako Ishizaki.

RK: Oh okay. And so you met her in the camp or—

TK: No, no before.

RK: Oh before the war you knew her?

TK: Uh-huh.

RK: Okay, and where did you actually meet before the war?

TK: Well the picking grapes and everything together.

RK: Oh in the Fresno area?

TK: Oh yeah in the Sanger area.

RK: Oh, okay so.

TK: You know Mizuki? Mr. Mizuki was our crew boss.

RK: Oh okay.

TK: So we got a job with him and picking grapes and—

RK: And so were you married –

TK: After I came home.

- RK: OH so after the war so you were just corresponding?
- TK: Yeah.
- RK: When you were in the service?
- TK: Uh-huh.
- RK: Now what about your brother? Was he in the camp or did he go in the service?
- TK: No, brother was at—what's the name Washington border line? Way back East? Yakima some place?
- RK: Oh Yakima, Washington.
- TK: Yeah some place around there working. And so he didn't have to go into the camp.
- RK: Oh okay, so he was able to stay out of the camp?
- TK: That's right.
- RK: That was pretty good. And so after you came back to the Fresno area after you were at Beale or when did you get back with your wife?
- TK: Well came back to her family.
- RK: This was about 1945?
- TK: Got a job and with Stangoni, Stangoni Farm.
- RK: Oh okay and I was driving truck and tractors and then also maintaining and repair and what not and summertime loading grapes all day long and driving and unloading and then I ruined my back. So I decided to do something easier and I like to think over everything and I went to watch making school, repair for watches. So I went to school for watch making in Sacramento for one year and learned a trade there and came back to Parlier and I mean I came back and looked around for a place and there was an opening in Parlier and one friend Mr. Chiamori found a place for me and I started and we got married you

know I came home that December 4<sup>th</sup> of 1945 and following February 16<sup>th</sup> we got married, yeah.

RK: Okay. Now which camp was your wife in?

TK: Pardon?

RK: What camp was your wife in and when did she come back here?

TK: What camp?

RK: Was she in an internment camp?

TK: Yeah, she was in Poston.

RK: Oh Poston?

TK: Camp Two.

RK: Camp Two? And so she came back to the same area?

TK: Yeah.

RK: And then you got married? Okay, so we're going to talk about your resettlement here.

So once he came back and you were working at the jewelry store or watch store you got married and you were living in Parlier?

TK: Yeah.

RK: Okay and so how many kids did you have?

TK: Two. One is the older one is a daughter born in 194—1948 and then my son three years later in 1951 and just two of them. And my daughter's living in Kingsburg right now and my son is living in Fresno and nearby Clovis West High School. (coughs) And my granddaughter is a senior at Clovis West so she is going to graduate this year.

RK: Oh okay, so both of your kids grew up and went to Parlier High School through the Parlier schools?

TK: My son yeah uh-huh. Oh yeah went to Parlier High School.

RK: When you were raising your kids did you experience any discrimination from the community?

TK: No I don't, I don't really feel anything.

RK: So there was—after the war it wasn't too bad—

TK: No.

RK: It wasn't too bad living in Parlier?

TK: Like I joined the American Legion.

RK: Oh okay that's good.

TK: And I just—oh one guy I mean I was also a Lion Club member too and after the American Legion meeting usually everybody open a can of beer and socialize for a half hour or somewhere along there. And one of the guys got a little too much and they were talking about it and talking about the Lion's Club and this one was a Lion's Club member too and he was the President of the Lion's Club at one time. And I complained about you know I miss the one meeting one year but I was a committee member for central committee so I attended so many meetings and it supposedly made up for it. But they didn't give me credit for it you know and this guy said, "What do you expect? Your name is not Jones or Smith." That guy really got me but beside that I never had a problem.

RK: Okay. Now there were a lot of Japanese in Parlier so the Japanese community was a good support when your family was here?

TK: Well like Mr. Chiamori he is an old-timer at Parlier and Mr. Monqui(?) had a Chrysler dealer and then when I go in the high school there is a real good picture of Mr. Monqui

and Mr. Chiamori was a big stalky guy so he was always a catcher and you know battery mates and I went to visit and came back and visit him he said I think the exact word is that the love all the Japs money, I don't want any Japs back in Parlier.

RK: Gees.

TK: You know it was a pretty good friend to go to school and then catching and pitching.

RK: Sure.

TK: So there was some problem.

RK: Yeah.

TK: And it was very bad for some of them with, someone was shot at Lac Jack Avenue and then the Judge Crosby said to me "Not guilty" And the Japanese should be just like a shooting dog I guess.

RK: I guess.

TK: And there were a few problems.

RK: Right.

TK: But I myself I used to visit them and I used to socialize with that guy the judge but I understand that he had the pressure.

RK: Right.

TK: Not him but the pressure so there was some bad ones but my—I myself that was good, the only time that one guy said.

RK: Yeah.

TK: And my Lion's Club about the Jones or Smith?

RK: Right, yeah that wasn't good. Was the JAACL an integral part of the Japanese community here in Parlier?

TK: Yeah.

RK: Okay so.

TK: Yeah I was pretty active in JACL.

RK: Okay.

TK: And President at one time.

RK: Now did you send your children to any Japanese school?

TK: I didn't.

RK: Nihon-gakko? Okay. What about taking lessons in Japanese cultural or arts?

TK: No, nothing we didn't do anything.

RK: Okay, nothing out of the ordinary. Okay, how did they do in school at Parlier High School?

TK: Okay.

RK: Okay.

TK: Okay, not at the top of the class but—

RK: But they got a good education?

TK: Yeah, good education. Well my son said JACL sponsored—no not the JACL, the American Legion, excuse me, sponsored the Boy's State and so they asked me to be one of the interviewer and so four or five of us were interviewers and then we (inaudible) for top five in boys.

RK: Oh that's good.

TK: And he was one of the five, oh I'm dumb but not that dumb to be a top five that is that he said. He wasn't straight A's so they didn't say anything like that but he was—lots of times. He was the class from 1969 which almost that is the time that was started taking

over by the Mexican people. And unless you are Mexican, it is almost impossible to get the class or anything but he was the President of the senior class.

RK: Oh that's good yeah.

TK: So he got along good with the rest of the people.

RK: That's good. Now have you discussed your war experience with your children? Have they asked any questions?

TK: No they don't ask and I never said anything.

RK: Oh okay. Now do you think you've passed down some Nisei traits to your children?

TK: What is it?

RK: Nisei traits things like you know Japanese like to push their children especially in education and—

TK: No we didn't push anybody. We left them alone.

RK: Oh okay. So they were—

TK: We told them to do their homework but we didn't push.

RK: Oh okay. Do a lot of—do a lot of pushing but they were still pretty successful because they were—

TK: But I guess my son was very successful working at PG&E and started with meter-reading and then he got promoted to—one time I said keep your nose clean and your chin up.

RK: Oh yeah. Yeah.

TK: You know he said “Dad you don't know.” (inaudible) seniority is the only thing that counts and I said “Don't mind about seniority, just keep working.” Keep (inaudible)

RK: Sure, as long as you work hard you just you know.

TK: He was picked as one, young one to become junior what do they call that? What do you call that?

RK: Junior—was it do you mean in his job?

TK: Yeah, yeah he was office.

RK: You mean supervisor?

TK: Yeah, yeah junior supervisor.

RK: Yeah okay, so they promoted him and he worked his way up.

TK: Yeah.

RK: That's the way you do it is to stay with an organization like that. That is a big organization so you can always make advancements and go up. So he's still with PG & E?

TK: Yes.

RK: Oh good yeah that is good.

TK: One time about three or four years ago he was talking about thirty years I'm going to retire.

RK: Oh okay.

TK: He's only fifty-two you know.

RK: Oh yeah.

TK: He started at twenty-two you know.

RK: Oh yeah so he can retire pretty early.

TK: But he had a headache and he was in the call center and his supervisor there were twelve supervisors under him so you can see what kind of headache he had.

RK: Oh yeah, yeah.



TK: He had to go in at seven o'clock in the morning and come home about seven or eight at night and everything.

RK: Wow twelve hour days.

TK: But he had a chance to move over to customer service department and mainly collection of fees you know, and he went there. And seems like oh that is a pretty good job you might say. Yeah he says eight to five job now.

RK: That's good. Much shorter hours yeah. Less people to worry about.

TK: Yeah that's right.

RK: Now what is the most important things that have happened to you in recent years? Do you think there is something that—?

TK: I don't know.

RK: Having grandkids probably is one of the big things?

TK: Yeah, yeah. I mean like she was playing at the (inaudible) just a couple of weeks ago at the volleyball and we went and watch every week twice a week.

RK: Sure.

TK: And that is the only thing.

RK: Any other major surprises that happened?

TK: Well one of the hobby is this that we still go on a trip and cruise after retirement in 1983 and we used to go about three cruise and trips and things like that.

RK: Oh wow, that's good.

TK: Now we're getting too old.

RK: Yeah.

TK: Two years ago we went to Beijing, Beijing, China.

RK: China, wow.

TK: And I don't remember last name Paul, he was our group leader and he was asking people where is Mr. Kanemoto? Oh he's way up ahead. Oh, he thinks I am behind because I am old.

RK: Right.

TK: So, I mean I don't like that to drag other people.

RK: Right.

TK: So I don't go anymore.

RK: Were you able to get to the Great Wall of China?

TK: Pardon?

RK: To the Great Wall of China?

TK: Oh yeah, yeah, Great Wall it looks very steep but half way I had to pull by myself on the rail.

RK: Oh okay.

TK: I made it half way.

RK: Because that is an enormous structure.

TK: Yeah.

RK: They can see it from the space shuttle.

TK: That's right.

RK: Right to China so that is amazing. That is one of the—

TK: Another thing I don't know if it's a hobby or not but we enjoy doing it, ball room dancing.

RK: Oh, okay.

TK: Yeah we started in 1977 with my wife.

RK: And you are still doing it?

TK: Yeah, Arthur Murray so we always take a lesson every week and then we go for Friday night party and come home at midnight. And we still going.

RK: Do you enter in any contests or just for fun?

TK: No, no, no that is one thing we don't.

RK: Oh just for the fun huh? That's good. Here is the question. How do you feel about the redress and reparations that were given to people in the camp? Do you have any views on that?

TK: Yeah, I got twenty thousand too but I was disappointed the type of paper they used.

RK: Oh.

TK: You know it seems like they could have used at least a heavy, more heavier paper.

RK: For that, for the Presidential?

TK: Yeah.

RK: Proclamation?

TK: Yeah, twenty pound the typing paper.

RK: Exactly, very, very thin. Right.

TK: I was disappointed. If you are going to frame it?

RK: Frame it exactly yeah. Oh, are you taking a computer class?

TK: Oh computer class (laughing) about four years ago. About eighty, eighty-one, I sit and my brain was getting numb. So I got to exercise it a little bit.

RK: Right.

TK: And then I bought me a computer and then a scanner and then a printer and then I went to Clovis Senior Class. I went for two semesters. The first one is basic and the second one was for the internet and then I found out there was one in Reedley so I went to Reedley for two semesters and then Reedley College, Reedley College opened up Parlier Campus for computer too.

RK: Right.

TK: So I'm going to go, I'm going to start it.

RK: Oh yeah.

TK: The only thing is the college course you know and all young people. That course was mainly for young people that are polishing their skill for a job change or something. I really had to work. The only thing I had a lot of time for the homework.

RK: Okay, so you learned how to use the computer so do you—

TK: I'm forgetting.

RK: Oh okay. So you don't do the e-mail or anything?

TK: Yeah.

RK: Oh you do.

TK: I do, but I don't do very much though.

RK: But at least you are able to learn it which is pretty good exactly.

TK: I don't say good but—

RK: Enough to get by that is what you need, exactly.

TK: Enough to get by.

RK: Are you a member of the Parlier Buddhist Church?

TK: Yes. Yeah I was really active for instance on the building I drew up the blue prints and I supervised.

RK: Oh that's great.

TK: I hung the door all by myself with college people helped me and then we hired a carpenter to do the fine point. We had a permit for doing the, you know, to line everything.

RK: Right.

TK: And then well the mason was putting up the walls but beside that there were about thirty or forty people come up every night and were pounding nails.

RK: Right, so it was a community project then?

TK: Oh yeah. It was a big community project and we finished in about a year so.

RK: So when was it finally finished?

TK: I think we finished in 1955.

RK: Oh okay.

TK: So talking about almost fifty years now.

RK: Yes, it's a nice church. And still in good shape too.

TK: Still in good shape exactly. And then we had—I mean I did a lot of things for the church and then JACL too. Until my hearing got so bad that I'd go to the meeting and I didn't know what was going on sometime. So I just quit going to meetings about thirteen years ago.

RK: So you are just now taking it easy?

TK: Oh yeah.

RK: Yeah. And enjoying.

TK: Enjoying myself.

RK: Yourself? Okay. If you were giving advice to young people or even your children today what would you tell them?

TK: I don't know.

RK: Well one thing you said was to work hard. You always want if you work hard you are going to do well.

TK: Like I told my son.

RK: Sure exactly so that would be important advice. Because today I see a lot of people that don't put 100% you know. They just do a job that is only 50% just to get by, just part effort so a lot of people don't think hard work is necessary.

TK: I don't like to be pushing them but you know I just advised them.

RK: And then you showed them by example so if you do 100% you expect everyone else. Yeah, that is if you are going to be a supervisor you are going to have to do that. Okay we are nearing the end of this interview. Is there anything else you want to say?

TK: Well, I don't know off hand.

RK: Do you have any questions for me? Or—

TK: I appreciate what the JAACL is doing. Some of the things you know I do not agree. But I think they are basically are good. Still we need—we need you know a civil service organization to protect us.

RK: Sure. Yeah.

TK: And the church too. I don't know about church. Most of the young people are going out from Parlier and won't come back and having problems getting enough membership.

RK: That is the same with the JAACL all the Japanese—

TK: Same thing in Parlier.

RK: The groups are getting older and then the younger children are leaving to the big cities and so they usually don't stay in the smaller communities. Yeah we see that in a lot of the valley communities. What did you think of this oral interview?

TK: Oh I don't know. I never had interview before so.

RK: Yeah.

TK: I was kind of nervous.

RK: Of course. But do you see the value. I think this is very important because we get to save history of the people in the past for future generations and everyone learns from history so that is a remarkable thing. And with today's electronics we can put it on tape you know, so people can look at this in the future years and with the recorded information they can possibly write books and retell some of the history that has been passed and a lot of the information that has been lost. So I want to thank you for sharing your story with us Tadashi and—

TK: Thank you for picking me.

RK: You bet.

TK: I enjoyed it.