

NARRATOR: ANNE MOORE

INTERVIEWER: RALPH KUMANO

DATE: July 1, 2005

RK: Hello? Oh yeah, that's perfect. Let's see if the zoom works here so I don't have to touch the camera. Okay. There we go. We are in Fresno, California, on July 1, 2005. This interview will be part of the Izumi Taniguchi Oral History Program housed in the Special Collections unit of the Henry Madden Library at California State University of Fresno. My name is Ralph Kumano of the Central California District Council, which is part of the Japanese American Citizens League. I am interviewing Anne Chieko Moore, a Nisei woman, who is seventy years old. Okay, Anne, first of all, we're going to look at life before World War II, the family and home life. Where were you born and what was the date of your birth?

AM: I was born in a small town called Spreckels in California near Salinas on February 19, 1935.

RK: And what was the line of work for your family?

AM: My father was a farmer. I don't remember too much about it, except that he's, for a long time he leased several hundred acres, and the main crop was sugar beets. And there was a sugar beet factory there near the edge of the property where he took the beets to be processed into sugar. And he had a small plot of land that he used to grow other things. And he was one of the first farmers to raise iceberg lettuce to be shipped out across the country.

RK: Now, he was an Issei, so when did he come over from Japan?

AM: I don't know exactly what the date was. It must have been—

RK: Pretty close to the turn of the century?

AM: When he came it must have been, like 1915, something like that. And he came with his brother, and they worked on some farming. And then my father went to Japan to marry my mother. That marriage was arranged when they were children. And then my mother was finishing her degree in nursing, so she didn't come back to the United States until later in the year. It was 1921.

RK: Now you were mentioning that he was one of the first with the iceberg lettuce, and today in the Salinas Valley that's the number one major crop in that whole area. That's amazing.

AM: He took a lot of pride in it.

RK: Sure, he started it. So he should be given historical credit for that.

AM: He spent hours on the farming. I just remember hearing that he had stayed up practically all night with the irrigation at certain times of the year. And my older brothers were out on the tractor when they were way too young for it, really. (chuckles) But they were out there, and then I remember the whole family going out sometime to help harvest the head lettuce, just going out there and cutting it off. My younger sister and I were kind of just trying not to get in trouble.

RK: Right. Now you were saying this is near the Spreckels plant now. How far from Salinas was it?

AM: I don't know how far. I went to visit a few years ago, and we just drove, and my father was very involved with a Christian church there in Salinas, and so the community activities evolved around the church and that was very important. He and my mother

were both converted to Christianity in Japan before they came to the United States. So that was a real important part of our family life.

RK: Sure.

AM: And, they were very devout Christians in a very serious way. And my mother talked a little bit once about how her family was worried about her converting to Christianity. They had heard there were so many strange things about the western religion. But anyway, they needed that over the years. So it was an important thing for our family.

RK: Sure. Now, how many siblings did you have? And where did you fall in the order of the family?

AM: There were eight of us altogether. I had four brothers and three sisters, so there were an equal number of brothers and sisters. And I was next to the youngest. So there was quite an age range. My oldest sister has just graduated from junior college and she was studying business so she could help my father, and then war started. So she had just finished, so that was good. So we were in all those grades in between, you know.

RK: Right.

AM: And my younger sister was two, and when the war started I was six.

RK: Now, do you remember anything about family life before going to the camp?

AM: Oh, yes. I'm so glad I can remember something about living in California, because by the time I came along, my father had worked very hard to establish his business in the farming and they had both worked very hard in their relationship with the church people and with Caucasian friends, too. And so, and I remember a very comfortable house. My mother had a beautiful flower garden in the front, and we often had people over for dinner. My mother was a good cook, and so a lot of what I remember is people coming

to the house and having dinners at the house. And then for some other reasons, it seems sometimes there would be other groups of people who came to the house. And my father had some people working for him on the farm, and it seems for lunch, I remember something about them being around the table having lunch with us. But I don't know much about business.

RK: Right.

AM: But we were out on the edge of the town, in a sense, you know, because I remember a big barnyard. So we weren't right in town, but we were right on the edge. And then the new elementary school was right across the street.

RK: Oh, that was convenient, yeah.

AM: Uh-hmm. And they were, I think, a pretty progressive school, and a, that used the latest educational philosophies and stuff. I felt it was a good school. But, I was pretty young. I thought it was fun to have lunch at the school, and for some reason, California was giving raisins to the children for a snack in those days. That's fun. (chuckles) But we moved, just a year before the war started, I think, and to a place called Chualar. And I don't remember much about it except that's where I was in second grade. It was in the middle of the year or something. School had already started. And that was my first, sort of feeling that some people didn't like me. But the people that my father had arranged to farm, rent the farmland from, somehow provided the house and then they lived close by. And they turned out to be very good friends. They were Caucasians and when the war started, they were very helpful. So I felt my parents were kind of lucky because there were Japanese who didn't know any Caucasian well enough that would help them. So, now, so what was the question?

RK: Now was this a small town, Chualar?

AM: I don't know what it was. We were really out in the country out there. There was no—I never felt like there was any town connected with that place.

RK: Uh-hmm, but it's outside of Salinas somewhere?

AM: Somewhere, but in that area, yeah. Around that time—well you talked to my older sister, my father was looking around thinking, he might buy some property under my sister's name who was old enough then. And just hadn't decided yet, and for us, that was fortunate. But I know that my sister was talking about looking around for some property around that time. So, where I remember having a lot of fun growing up is the other house at Salinas, at Spreckels.

RK: Now, you said that you had already moved and then the war broke out. Where did you hear the news of the Pearl Harbor bombing? Was it on the radio, or your parents told you, or were you in school when it happened? This was in December of '41.

AM: Yeah. I don't remember when it happened, except all of a sudden we were, we had some dark shades on windows, and my father and brother were going outside to see if you could see any light outside the window. And then we had a little space heater in the living room to heat the house in the winter a little. And they were going through albums burning photographs. And I remember my mother, she was kind of, she wouldn't say much, but there was something that made me know that was a very sad thing to be doing. These were family pictures.

RK: Oh, yeah! Heirlooms, they were priceless.

AM: She knew she would never have them again.

RK: Exactly.

AM: So, otherwise I don't remember too much. I remember hearing on the radio, some songs like "Don't Sit under the Apple Tree," and I wasn't into popular music so much, but for some reason I remember hearing that. And, wow—but as far as getting ready for leaving, I wasn't aware of exactly what was going on. There was a group of people who came to our house, and because my mother was a nurse, maybe, they were giving shots to everybody. And I was not a good kid—I just wasn't going to have it, you know. So, that was kind of a problem. But I just remember, I didn't want that! And there were all these people in the house. I know they were very seriously talking about stuff, but I didn't understand at the time. And I know my mother, see, my mother left me at home with my little sister and she went shopping and I suppose she decided it would be more efficient and less trouble. And I just remember she came home with something, and she had bought my sister and me new toothbrushes, and they had some little cute things on it, like to look at. But she got that to take to camp, so it was something that would be a little more fun, you know. And she had bought these little tin cups. You know how everybody had to bring metal dishes and cups. And she bought a couple tin ones for my sister and me with little bears or something for children pressed into the metal, so we'd have something that would have a little—

RK: Right, so she was already given notification that you were going to have to pack your stuff and leave?

AM: I guess so.

RK: Right, so she was preparing you. Right.

AM: And so she was trying to make it seem like a little more fun.

RK: Right, exactly. You're going on a trip.

AM: Yeah. We were going to go on a trip and she wanted us to kind of think that some parts of it were going to be kind of nice. So that was very thoughtful of her. I was so young that I wasn't too involved in the Japanese school, but I remember going. So I must have been some of the youngest kids that went Saturdays for Japanese school. And, my mother was teaching us some at home. And, I just remember a real grouchy man telling us to write "hiragana," probably, tracing over. And of course if you went off the line, you really were scolded. I think it was very fun, actually. But anyway, I remember going to Japanese school. But my older brothers and sisters learned to read and write a lot better than I did.

RK: Right. So they probably learned "kanji," too.

AM: Oh, yeah. Yeah. It's funny though, different ones at this point, remember more than others.

RK: Right, exactly. Now did you have to go to an assembly center?

AM: Yes, we went to an assembly center.

RK: And where was that located?

AM: I suppose it was Salinas.

RK: Yeah, usually they picked the fairgrounds or something like that.

AM: Like the rodeo grounds?

RK: Yeah, where they had the rodeo.

AM: Yeah. And all of us were in one room, so it was just lined with cots. And it was different. And that was the first place I absolutely panicked. They had Christian church services on Sunday morning, and my parents had gone on ahead, and my mother had taken my younger sister. And I was supposed to tag along after my brothers, and they

were just kind of going on, not paying too much attention. And the people were out in the middle a lot, not staying in the barracks, you know? And so there were lots of people out and I, I didn't know where my brothers went.

RK: You got separated?

AM: I got separated and I really was upset because I didn't have a clue where home was. And I didn't even know where I was supposed to be going, you know. But some nice woman figured out that I was a Shimomura and she said, "Well, your family goes to Christian church, so I'll take you over there." So that was really helpful. So there was kind of a feeling people wanted to relate to each other. I'm amazed that they knew where I probably belonged. And there my mama was, just sitting right there. (laughs) But that was, you know, there weren't very many instances where I just felt so afraid. That was a real panic thing that I still remember. (laughing) Because it was the first time away from family, which was always together.

RK: Oh, yeah.

AM: And especially when you go out to the country, the family is always together. And then just to be totally lost, you know, was very scary. But as far as being in the camp situation for the first time, it was—what I really didn't like was eating. I hated standing in line to get in to eat and I didn't like the food. It wasn't anything like Mama's food, you know. It was very, very weird. And there was so little that Mother could carry of our personal things, you know, because you only could take what you could carry. And so I was really glad that my mother let me bring a little cloth bag with jacks and a ball, and that was my most important toy all through camp. As I grew older, I became better at it. But I remember trying to play on the wooden step. There was a little step that went up into the



barrack. Of course, there was space between the boards and they would fall down underneath and whatever. But that was a major preoccupation for not just me, other little kids, too, to have something they could do that didn't take up space. So I was really glad I had that. My mother and father always had a little family devotional thing in the evening. It didn't matter where you were, you were supposed to go home. And it was, you know, in the mess hall, it got so that everybody didn't eat together, especially the boys. It seems like they would find other friends and then when it was time to eat, you'd go eat. But they didn't look up and try to get with the family. The family is in the line someplace else. But after supper, everybody better be home because our father was going to read the Bible and have prayer time. So that's something we always did. And I felt like that, in comparison to the other people, it was a unifying thing that was important for us.

RK: Sure.

AM: So that first assembly center experience was a, just so different. For somebody like me, it was just kind of figuring out where we would be?

RK: It was a big change.

AM: Yeah. I've read some other things people have written about having neighbors from home live right close to them, or something. But I don't remember seeing anybody I knew. I think maybe if you're out in the country, it was a little harder to be grouped with the people you were close to.

RK: Right, exactly.

AM: So, I don't think that we were placed next to people that were our neighbors.

RK: Now getting the time perspective—the war had started and how long after 1941 was the assembly center? A few months, or was it a year?

AM: Oh no, it seems like it was something like April.

RK: Oh, okay, so it was about four months.

AM: Maybe, it was something like that.

RK: And then how long were you in the assembly center before you went directly to camp?

AM: We went to Poston in the summer, early in August. It was really hot. And we went on the train. And it was weird, they wanted the shades down.

RK: Right.

AM: They didn't want anybody to see us in the train, I guess. Anyway, the shades were always down. And then when we got off, the boys all had to go with my father and stuff mattress things full of straw, I think, and that was a pretty hard job in that hot, hot weather, you know. But that was to make our cots a little more comfortable.

RK: Right. Most people said they just gave you army cots that were pretty flimsy.

AM: Yeah.

RK: And so by having straw in the mattress it made it a little more comfortable, I guess.

AM: But I remember my brother saying, boy, it was hard to breathe, trying to get that stuff packed into the mattresses, but that was what they were supposed to do. That's what they did, and of course, I stayed with my mother. And then, yeah, the barracks were tar paper on wood frame, and—

RK: Can you kind of envision the size of the room you were in? Was it a single room?

AM: We got two rooms because there were so many of us.

RK: Oh, okay.

AM: So we were lucky. So that meant five in each room, though, so we used up our space.

But the barrack's rooms were bigger than what we had in California—

RK: Right, at the assembly center.

AM: In the rodeo horse stalls.

RK: Yeah, those were horse stalls. They were tiny.

AM: Yeah, whatever that was, those were smaller. And you know, no wonder people walked around outside. They put wet towels on their head, or something. It was hot inside, too, you know. And it was something to get used to the lizards running around all over, (chuckles) and worry about scorpions getting in. They did try to warn us; they had pictures of these things. And it was so hot and dusty, you know. And there was just one faucet on the end of each barracks, and then there was community bathroom. And my older sisters were like teenagers, you know, that era, and they were absolutely mortified with the bathroom.

RK: Right, because of the lack of privacy.

AM: No privacy, and the shower room was just one big room with shower spouts. They had a time getting used to it, more than the younger kids. So I guess in a sense, I was lucky because I was so young that I didn't, I wasn't so affected by the worries of the older people. So I was just kind of reacting as a child to how hot it was and not liking the food, and dust storms were kind of scary, you know. And then the first schools we had was a room in a barracks. There were no chairs, so we were sitting on old crates and things. They didn't have any school supplies, so there were a bunch of old magazines and the teacher would say, "Try to find a word that starts with this letter and tear out the picture." You know, I remember that as one of the more fun things. Anyway, but they were trying

to have some school early on, and it was a Caucasian teacher. I kind of wonder if she was one of those Quaker people that came in to help. It might have been. And after we got out of camp, she sent me some dates—she said she had gone to Florida and had heard where I was and so sent it out to New Jersey where we ended up. So I thought, well, that was nice.

RK: That was nice.

AM: But they somehow made plans for school in Poston. And they had these adobe bricks made and they built this building with the adobe bricks and it was more like a school.

RK: Sure. And the adobe probably insulated the inside temperature a lot easier.

AM: Right. And they had this cement-like walk in front where we could play jacks at recess time. And my teacher was named Miss Hirata. I must have been a really bad student because I felt like I was never quite getting what we were supposed to be doing.

(chuckles) But I know that she went to my parents and said that I was not able to see the blackboard, which I wasn't! I was missing that, you know. And so, fortunately there was somebody, an optometrist, who brought his stuff so he fitted me with some glasses, and then I could see better, you know. (chuckles) But anyway, so they were trying to have school in a more ordinary way then, once that was set up. And then there was some kind of a Christian Bible school. I don't know what their seasons were like in the teaching. But at some point, we were going to Bible school. So the church people were doing things with us and having activities with the kids. So actually, I think that was one of the really important groups over there that helped the people, helped the children, helped the teenagers a lot, too. I didn't hear about all this stressful stuff that was going on that I've

read about since then. My brother, oldest brother, went to the army and he was in the Philippines for awhile. Then he was sent to Japan—it was at the end of the war.

RK: Oh, for occupation?

AM: And he, yeah, and he was trusted to go over there. And what do they call people who translate for—

RK: Interpreters?

AM: Yeah, interpreter for the army. And so he was over there for awhile. I'm sure my parents were relieved that he got back all right, because he was talking just a few months ago a little bit about the army. And he said, you know, Japanese boys, when they went in, they didn't expect to come home. And we all have just not talked about all this—

RK: Right, exactly.

AM: We just haven't talked about it at all, hardly. And so that was interesting, because he's eighty now. And a, so that was interesting to hear him talk about it. We didn't know anything about that, you know. He was just away from home, and it was worrisome because he wasn't there. And then while we were in camp, during the last year we were there, I guess my father was eager to go someplace and not stay in camp, and so as soon as they were letting people out, my older sister and the next sister who had just graduated from high school in camp—

RK: Well, what year was this, roughly, about '44? Was the war over yet?

AM: No, '43, the war wasn't over yet. But I think it was bothering my father a lot to be stuck in here. And so my sisters had this job to do. They went to Philadelphia and I think the Quaker, the WRA and the Quaker people helped them. And so my sister got a job in Philadelphia and stayed with a Quaker couple. Then my sister, the younger sister who

was still a teenager, went to stay with a Quaker family in Swathmore, Pennsylvania, and had a little job for a while. And then, I don't know how she managed it, but later she enrolled in Temple University and I think she was staying with a Japanese family, a couple at first. Anyway, she found a place to stay and by helping do something, she was able to work out the financial part of it. Then later she was staying at the same Quaker couple's house where my older sister was staying. But that, you know, my parents were just trusting them to somehow manage. And then they sent word back, told my father that he might be able to be placed with a Quaker family out there somewhere, in New Jersey. And it was very different from California.

RK: Right.

AM: So he had been working in the camp. They started farming on the edges outside the camp, and he knew how to farm. So he was out there on tractors and whatever for a while. And he was, you know, there were some kinds of work you could do and get a little money, twelve dollars a month or something. So he was doing that. He was also, I think, cleaning latrines or whatever could be done around there. And my oldest sister, before she left, she had some kind of a job at the post office. We should talk about that tomorrow.

RK: Okay.

AM: But so different ones were talking on some jobs out there. But the people who didn't work, they were having some problems, I think, because there were some things you had to buy.

RK: Right.

AM: You know, if you needed toothpaste or whatever, you had to buy it at the canteen. And when we left, my sister had told my father, I guess, to come to Philadelphia. And so we, so we all went together except for my two sisters who were already out there and my brother in the army. And a, so we took a long train trip, went up to Chicago and then across. It was in the summer and we stayed at a hostel in Philadelphia that was run by a Japanese couple. It seemed to be the thing they did was to provide a place for people coming out of camp to stay in temporarily until they found a place. So it was so nice. And I remember we came in in the morning and they had a little breakfast for us. And I was so impressed, you know. Came in and had tables with tablecloths, white tablecloths, for the first time in a couple years, you know. I was just really thrilled with that, and little tiny juice glasses with flowers painted on them. It's weird to remember something like this, but it made a big impression on my to see such a nice, civilized sort of setting. And then we stayed there, and then a Quaker couple provided a place for my family to go to. And so there was a house and my father helped the farmer out there, mostly fruit, a lot of peaches and apples. It was hard work though, hard physical work, you know, to carry big loads of fruit, and he had to sort it all out after it was picked. And then they went out and sprayed the trees. It was before they said you couldn't use certain kinds of chemicals, you know.

RK: Right.

AM: But anyway, it was our first contact with a Quaker family, and so we learned something about the Quaker people. And we went to meetings with them sometime. But it was just amazing that they would open up their homes and help Japanese people who were considered enemies of the United States, you know. So that was a real advantage for us.

We didn't know other Japanese people in the area except for one family, one couple that was not far away, and they didn't stay too long. (cough)

RK: Now on the train ride from camp to back East, were you in a special train or was this just the regular, or do you recall?

AM: I don't know. I don't know. I know that once we got to Chicago there were a lot of army people in uniform. And they were very friendly.

RK: Okay, yeah. What I wanted to get at was what were the other people, if they see Japanese, you know—

AM: Yeah, they were very friendly with us. I remember.

RK: Out of the camps, what the reaction would be.

AM: And I remember when we first started out, the train stopped at Colorado, and our next neighbor to us in the barracks was leaving on the same train, and he got off in Colorado. And he said good-bye to my parents and I could see that he was a little anxious. You know, it wasn't that I was listening to what he was saying too much, but I thought, I feel kind of worried about him going. I could see that. But then as we went on, I don't think the train was full of Japanese people. And I don't know how everything was taken care of. I just know that somehow they bought some sandwiches every once in a while, you know.

RK: Were they escorted by a Quaker family back East, or did they go on their own?

AM: I just do not remember.

RK: Okay.

AM: And I know my mother, when we stopped at Chicago—it seems we had to change trains and my mother was kind of concerned about us looking neat, I guess, cleaned up. If I



remember my sister and I wearing, we thought it was dress-up dresses, thought, what is this about, you know? But, we had to wait, you know, to get on another train in Chicago. And it was just riding coach, you know, and just opened the windows to let a little air in, no air conditioning then. You know, it was a pretty hot ride without the air. And sometimes there'd be some people out—well, it seems like there was farmland or something and there were people out there and they were waving to anybody on the train. I think that's just what they usually did. So I didn't feel any discrimination on the train. (inaudible) you know, it just wasn't so obvious, maybe. So, it didn't affect me that much.

RK: Now after the hostel, did you get settled somewhere in Pennsylvania?

AM: In New Jersey.

RK: Oh, in New Jersey.

AM: In New Jersey. It was near Camden.

RK: Oh, okay.

AM: Kind of the middle and a little south at a farmland. A Quaker couple owned this farm and they provided a house for my father. And they paid for two years like a scholarship for my younger sister and me to go to the little Quaker school, a Friends school. So that was kind of a special experience, too, a small school with a lot of individual attention.

RK: What grades were you in at the school?

AM: I was in fourth grade and fifth grade and the class just had five people, just five people. And they had kind of a little Quaker meeting for everybody in the school. They would just get into this one room that was kind of set aside for the meeting. And some people would just read something, but just to have a little bit of experience being in the Quaker school, you know. And otherwise, it was a very nice experience for my sister and myself.

And my other brothers went to public schools in Palmyra, I guess, that was the small town. So my oldest brother of that group of three, one was in high school and the other two were someplace in between.

RK: Right. And then where did you go to junior high and high school?

AM: Oh, my father moved after a couple years to outside Princeton.

RK: Oh, okay.

AM: There was a nursery there, and I don't know who found the job, maybe my sister—but you know, they grow trees and bushes and those kinds of things, and the work was not quite as physically demanding. So, she thought maybe that would be a little helpful, because my father was really finding that work was pretty hard, climbing the fruit trees and lifting the heavy baskets and all that stuff. It was pretty hard work for him. So, so he worked in the Princeton nurseries and they provided a house for us out there. This is right outside Princeton, so I went to Princeton Junior High School. For some reason, the Friends school said I should go into seventh grade, so I didn't go into sixth grade. And so I went to junior high school in Princeton and high school and my younger sister did, too. My brothers next to me finished high school there and the next brother was already out, so he went to college. And we were still out in the country, outside Princeton. So but anyway—

RK: Was there a school bus to take you out to school?

AM: Yeah, the school bus.

RK: And did you feel any discrimination at the school or were the other students pretty easy-going people?

AM: Yeah, I guess—I didn't feel so discriminated against in school. I just wasn't paying that much attention either. But I had a really good friend in the little town that was closest to, a teeny town called Kingston, and she was Caucasian and she was my best friend from then on, you know.

RK: Right.

AM: And so there were no other Japanese people around, so I didn't think about it too much, I guess because I couldn't see myself. There was one Chinese girl, but I never saw her, really. So, so I wasn't that much aware of being Japanese, except at home. My mother and father didn't speak much English—my mother spoke no English. And my father had learned some English to get along on the job. But they did speak Japanese. And you know, this business of teaching us the language became a little concern, I think, because people being arrested for teaching Japanese in camp, so it was like, well, we're not supposed to do that anymore. But we got out of camp and my father started having us read Japanese scripture when we had devotions. (chuckles) Oh, my goodness. It was amazing how patient they were. But anyway, we still had our devotional time in the evening, so that was a way of getting the family together for just a little bit. My father never stopped doing that. And so as the family got smaller, he just kept doing this little thing with the smaller group.

RK: Now were you at Princeton when the war finally ended, and what was your reaction?

AM: Uhh, we were in Riverton with a Quaker family when the war ended. My brothers especially were just so thrilled to have a radio. They had it on all the time. My mother used to get a little annoyed because they were listening so much to the radio. But anyway, it was what we heard the news on, so that was important. And when the atomic

bomb was dropped, you know, my mother didn't say much, but she did say something like, Oh, all the children being killed. She was very sad about that. But, I think ours is a pretty typical family, though. I think in those days the Japanese still tried to protect the younger children.

RK: Oh, you bet. Yeah.

AM: Just did not discuss serious things in front of the children. So that's why I act so dumb about it.

RK: Right, you were out of because they never shared their feelings.

AM: They really kept that away from us and made an effort, you know, so we wouldn't be seeing them upset. So, but anyway, I remember something about some newspapers being around the house and the older kids were talking about it, wondering if Tara was going to come home. He didn't come home for a while. He stayed there for, well, he was sent there after the war. (inaudible) he was in the Philippines and then he was sent to Japan after the war ended. So it was fine. We were at the place outside Princeton when he came home, and it must have been 1948 or so. Around there.

RK: Okay. And at this time roughly what were the ages of your parents?

AM: My mother had her birthday in the year whatever it was, so if it was 1947, she was forty-seven until November and then she was forty-eight. And then my father was about ten years older.

RK: A few years older?

AM: About ten years older than my mother.

RK: Oh, okay. Now his name is?

AM: Shungo Shimomura.

RK: Shimomura. Okay, and your mother's maiden name?

AM: No, my mother's name, I don't understand this stuff very well.

RK: Okay.

AM: My mother's name was M (??) Shimomura and there was some kind of samuri families and they wanted to keep this name in place, and so my father's name was, I think, Mimura—something like that. And then he changed to Shimomura.

RK: Oh, okay.

AM: So, and that happens every once in a while.

RK: Yeah, exactly.

AM: And everybody in my family except myself has gone to Japan and met some relatives over there. I guess there's an old castle that was part of my father's family that's a museum now.

RK: Oh, okay. (laughs)

AM: So they went to see the family house that's a museum. And it has a little cemetery beside it. They said that all the young samuri in the group had to commit suicide because they were overpowered by another larger group. And so there's that little cemetery with all these names on it that the family wants to consider every once in a while. But anyway, it was interesting that they had turned it into something like that.

RK: Yeah.

AM: And it was, I think, really interesting to see some of the family out there. My sister Toshi, who you would meet tomorrow, had a very good visit with folks out there. It's good because she understood the Japanese language pretty well. She's the one that lives in San Francisco. But I grew up in a pretty normal kind of household. We were so

separated from other Japanese people. We didn't have much contact with other Japanese, except it was kind of lonely for my parents, I think. And my father went into Princeton and met the graduate students or whatever from Japan and wanted them to come over. They seemed to enjoy my mother's cooking. And we'd have them come over for New Year's. So there was some, some interaction. There were very few permanent Japanese residents around there. But as far as growing up, I just knew that those people, the other people, you know, you do certain things with and then you have the Japanese things going on at home. But that was what was going on.

RK: Now, during your high school years, were you involved in activity at school?

AM: Well, I was involved in group things like choir and orchestra and oh, some athletic things, you know. It just seems like everybody was doing this stuff. But I didn't go to prom and I didn't date in high school. And there was a lot of church stuff, you know. It was choir at church and all the things that people do that you're always going to. So, that was what was normal for us. And, and my younger sister kind of went through the same thing. And as I said, we never discussed racial problems at home. I just remember one time when I was at a store with my mother—and this is before I was a teenager—I remember my mother saying, I guess we shouldn't speak with that group of people over there because I don't know where they're from. You know, Koreans or Chinese or other people didn't like to speak to us. (chuckles) And Japanese, of course, are very conscious of being correct and polite and not doing the wrong thing. So, but, I was surprised at my mother who was all alone in the fifties. About 1958 or so my father died of cancer. So my mother was still fifty-seven years old. And she—we were all kind of wondering how we were going to take care of Mama. We were all in college—I mean, I was in college at

Indiana, my younger sister was in college in New Jersey, my brother was still in medical school, my other brother, I think, was taking classes in Florida or something, and my other brother was in seminary. We were all in school. And a—

RK: And she was alone at home?

AM: And she was alone. How was she going to manage?

RK: Exactly, yeah.

AM: But it was just amazing how things worked out. There was a student at the seminary from Japan who was licensed in Japan to give instruction and testing in driving—and this tells you how long ago it was—he got permission from the auto licensing place in Princeton to let him give her the test in Japanese.

RK: Wow, translate.

AM: Translate with the person watching as though he could understand. (chuckles) And so she was able to pass that, that exam, get her license, because they had this interpreter. You know, he would say, he would read it off and tell this other person, you know. And that was just kind of miraculous. She could not read English well enough to pass the test. She tried and then when I'd come home from college, she'd say, "I wonder if you could take me and try to pass the test." She just couldn't read the English well enough to answer the question, you know. Somehow she passed. Somehow she passed the driving test, and that was Papa's car, you know. And somehow, well, somebody must have helped her, but she got a little job in Princeton seminary then. And so she drove herself to work. You know, she was just acting like she couldn't understand English, because when she was all by herself, she went to the store and went shopping. She went to the

post office. She could do everything. She just refused to speak English in front of us.

(laughter)

RK: That's amazing.

AM: So that ended up working out, but we were concerned about her at the time. Because, by being in school, none of us had any money.

RK: Right.

AM: My oldest sister, Toshi, was out West somewhere and she was married to a minister.

And she was not able to help either, you know. But anyway, that just worked out great.

(chuckles)

RK: Yeah, wow. Did anyone eventually go back home and live with her?

AM: Well, my younger sister got her Library Science degree at University of Michigan and she went to Japan. Well, she got two master's degrees, one was in Asian Studies and then she went to Japan for a while and came back. Then she decided to get her Library Science degree, so she finished that and there was a job opening for a cataloguer in Asian Studies library at Princeton.

RK: Wow, that was good.

AM: And you know, so she went home and applied for it, and nobody gets a job this way before, but while she was interviewing, the person who was interviewing her asked her if she would mind if she would call this reference she had, somebody at the University of Michigan that this person knew. And the person at Michigan said she'd do fine, so she got a job just like that!

RK: That's great.



AM: And so she started working there and she stayed there ever since. So she just stayed with Mom at the end. And so, I know my mother was kind of wondering if this was all right for her to just be staying with Mariko who was taking care of everything. But it was all right.

RK: Right.

AM: And so that worked out. So my younger sister learned Japanese and was able to stay in Japan and worked with (inaudible) for the library there. It seems like by coming to Indiana and getting married to somebody in Indiana, I had the least contact with Japanese than of the others. There are several living in New Jersey now. And then my older sister who went to Philadelphia with my sister Toshi ended up marrying someone who was getting his doctor's degree at the Princeton seminary. He was from Japan, so she ended up living in Japan. So different ones have different contacts. And then I have two brothers who married girls from Japan. So, I'm the only one who, well, I married a Caucasian and one brother who became a doctor, married somebody from Germany who was also a doctor. So we were the two that were kind of doing the adventurous thing, I guess, in marrying outside the Japanese. And my oldest sister is the only one that married a Nisei. They were both in camp and so they had more things that were alike. So a, anyway, I don't feel that affected by race—

RK: No.

AM: You know, in the way I've lived or grown up. I've never had a best friend who's Japanese. I didn't know anybody. Right now, I have a friend, a Nisei, you know, that came from California, was in the same camp at Poston, who is a Nisei friend in

Indianapolis now. And that's nice. But, I've never felt I needed to have a Japanese friend. Good thing, 'cause there weren't that many Japanese people around.

RK: Right.

AM: And I've never felt I could speak Japanese well enough to communicate with these people from Japan that come into the community, unless they could speak some English, you know. So, it's kind of an interesting mix, you know.

RK: Yeah. Now what university did you go to and what was your major?

AM: I went to Ball State and then I took—well at Ball State, I studied art and biology for a teaching—

RK: Credential?

AM: Yes, licensed to teach. And then I took IU classes in library and I ended up doing most of my work for a while in a museum, an art museum. Then I worked in an historical museum. And so this was a president's house, President Benjamin Harrison's home in Indianapolis. And they had archival collection, so I took care of the library and also learned how to repair documents, paper conservation or some book repair. So I, and I have volunteered at the Indiana State Archives. So what I really like to do is to restore paper documents, old papers, old letters, deeds, old books. That's really interesting to me. And then I also do all sorts of art craft stuff. So I seem to have all sorts of things around. (chuckles) So and I have three kids.

RK: Did you meet your husband at the school?

AM: Yeah, at Ball State. And a, he was a teacher, too, in the same subject.

RK: Right. And your three kids, were they—

AM: We had two boys and a girl.

RK: Okay, two boys and a girl. Let's hold the picture up so we can see it, right in front, there we go. Okay.

AM: Okay. Julie is the oldest and she has her master in Library Science—

RK: That runs through the family, it seems like, which is good.

AM: We have lots of librarians in the family.

RK: That's great.

AM: And my middle son is an engineer. And the younger son here, is a jeweler. He made this necklace that I have here.

RK: Wow, that's great.

AM: So, this picture, did you want to see this? I'm sorry, this is going backwards, but—

RK: Oh yeah, that's the whole—

AM: That's the whole family of eight children.

RK: The Shimomura family, heh?

AM: Yes. This was taken, I think, when the war started and my father wanted to have a picture of us before we had to go into the camp, because I think he wanted a record.

RK: Yeah, of everyone together, because you never know what's going to happen.

AM: Right. So this must have been like 1941.

RK: Right.

AM: So my mother was almost, well, she was probably forty-one when this was taken. My sister was two.

RK: Okay.

AM: Anyway, we all went to college.

RK: That's great, yeah.

AM: And we all had to work our way through, somehow. But it was the expectation. We all knew somehow we were supposed to do this. You know, I can't imagine saying I'm not going to go to college. (laughing) But I knew that somehow you had to figure out how to manage it. Find a place where you could afford to go and work it through somehow.

RK: Right, and this was all instilled by your parents' values—hard work, dedication and all that.

AM: And education.

RK: Yeah, education is the key.

AM: Yeah. And of course, I had all these older brothers and sisters who had been doing it already. And by the time it came to me, why, there was no question.

RK: Exactly, you just followed their steps, yeah.

AM: Yes, but mostly though for me, and of course everybody else, too, had to figure out how to pay for it. My goodness, in those days there were schools that you could work yourself through. Nowadays, I don't know how they do it.

RK: Oh, I know, with the cost nowadays. It's expensive.

AM: So you know, we all did get through school in some way or other, you know. So, and my mother and father, well, I don't remember them saying much about it, except you just knew it was expected.

RK: Right.

AM: So and we all went into different kinds of work, different majors in school. They never said, "I want you to be such-and-such." So my brother came back from the army and went to Temple, I think. I don't know what kind of program he was on, but he was doing electrical work of some sort. I didn't know what his title was. My sister, you know, had

the business experience, and so she always had some kind of secretarial work until she married the minister and then she was doing all the stuff that comes as a preacher's wife. And then my other sister got her master in Library Science, the one that's in Japan. She was a librarian. And then my one brother was a physician—he became an anesthesiologist. Another brother, he was a meteorologist for the United States government. He had joined the air force after he went to college. And he had to go to Temple and then he went into the air force and was sent to Japan. So then he married a girl from Japan and came back and he continued to work for the weather, meteorology department in Washington, D.C. Another brother became a minister. I was into kind of museum and library and art work. It's kind of mushy, sort of career title. (chuckles) And then my younger sister is a librarian.

RK: Right. Wow, what a successful family. Everyone pulled through despite the hardships.

AM: Somehow, and we're all still living. So that's amazing. And my mother—you know, when we were in camp, I'd hear some people kind of, kind of complaining about things. But my mother and father never brought that into the house—I didn't hear it too much. And after we got out of camp, didn't have much money, you know, so it was difficult. But my father always had this garden full of vegetables for us, and we really lived kind of frugally. My mother made all my clothes. She was so happy that our sewing machine was sent from California after we got out of camp. But she sewed clothing for my sister all through college. I remember one time saying something about wishing we had money to do such-and-such, and my mother very rarely scolded me, but she got me up, and she said, "We are never to say we're poor. Papa works very hard to provide for us. We have

everything we need, and we never should say we're poor." So you know, when it's only said once that way, I never—

RK: Never questioned it.

AM: I never said it again. And you know, my kids wonder why I don't talk more about certain things, even with them. But you learn to communicate things without a lot of words.

RK: Oh, exactly. Yes.

AM: And with my parents, from a real early age, you learned not to complain, not to ask about certain things, you know. And so I think as far as this camp thing goes, it was just one of those things you don't talk about—

RK: Right.

AM: Hardly at all. My brother that was a teenager, two brothers who were kind of close together, they had really good times with their friends they made in camp. And they had a very good minister, a young minister who worked with them and so they remember fondly the relationship they had with their friends there. And they don't say much about camp. I don't think they want to say too much about camp. And as I said, I think it was most difficult for the people who were the parents, and the wage earners, and the older people like the oldest brother and sister. That was very traumatizing. And then, all the worry about losing everything at home and the business stuff, you know.

RK: Oh, exactly!

AM: And people getting their money out of the bank, and you know, wonder what was going to happen to everybody? And some would talk about going to Japan and some people would talk about going to Colorado, you know, it was really awful. But I've read this stuff about later on—

RK: Right.

AM: I didn't know anything about it at the time. So, in a way I had to learn this stuff later.

RK: So you probably didn't know what they lost. You know, I mean, the house and a few things, but the extent of what they lost was not discussed that much.

AM: I remember hearing my oldest sister talking to my father about making a list of some of the things that we lost. And I think earlier on there was a few hundred dollars that were given, but you'll have to ask my sister about that, because I didn't really understand it all. What I didn't like was not having the family together at dinner time.

RK: Oh, exactly.

AM: And having the usual family thing. It just felt so weird, you know. And then if I went home to the barracks for something, often my mother would be out doing something with other women. They'd get together and make flowers, paper flowers. They needed paper flowers for funerals, you know. There were no flowers to buy. But she was learning to make crepe paper flowers or dolls or carving wooden things and stuff. But, I was not used to her going someplace else to do these things. And you know, doing the laundry had to be at a different place, and so—so it was kind of funny to get used to.

RK: But I think if they didn't do all these activities, they would be just thinking—

AM: Oh, they'd be going crazy.

RK: Yeah, crazy.

AM: But this helped them. My mother was, I guess, fairly social. I remember Toshi talking about Mama being well-liked in camp. She was friendly and encouraging, and she had this natural, natural personality that was helpful to, I think, to her nursing, you know? She was very sympathetic to hearing people talking about their problem or helping

people who had some kind of physical problem or gave them some advice. I know in California she helped midwifing, you know. So she was very good with people.

RK: Oh, yeah.

AM: And she was one of the youngest Issei there, so somehow, well, and then she had this very natural thing with manners, you know, saying the right thing, all that, that so many Japanese people do. So, I think she tried very hard to keep it at a certain level.

RK: Right.

AM: And she would say, you know, she would tell me that the meals weren't so bad and we were so lucky because we had a cook who knew how to cook, you know, and all that stuff. So, (inaudible) you know. There's a lot of it that I haven't thought about too much, actually. And there were people who liked to play together and—I'm sorry, I'm going backwards again.

RK: That's all right.

AM: In the camps it was a big deal to go with some kids to the kitchen, and they would be giving away the rice that stuck on the bottom of the pans, and put some salt on it. That was a huge treat, you know? And then I started rummaging around in the trash at a young age. We would look for cardboard boxes that cornflakes came in and then take it home and we could make paper dolls or make little play furniture-like things, you know. There were lots of things we did to have a little fun. So it's amazing, the ingenious things that some of the people helped us to learn to do.

RK: Oh, exactly. Yeah.

AM: So, so that was that.



RK: Now what did you feel about the redress and the reparations, when they passed that civil liberties act and the Japanese were given the apology and redress in 1988?

AM: Was it 1988? Oh. Well, we came to Indianapolis to live—we had been in another place—we came to Indianapolis about 1971 and then I heard about this JACL group after we had been there for a little bit. It turned out they, there were a couple Nisei men who, I think, had been hired into the Lilly pharmaceutical place as chemists or something. And they decided to just see if they could get enough Japanese people together to do something. So I think they just went through the phone book and any name that sounded Japanese, they just called them up to see if they wanted to get together. (chuckles) So that's how the little JACL group got started. So by the time I got into it, it was pretty organized. And, there were a couple people who were really into this redress thing and working so hard and getting on TV and talking. And I thought, "My goodness, I didn't even know anybody was making such a big deal out of this," you know? And they were asking everybody to send letters to the senators and how important it was and all that. Actually, I couldn't imagine that the government would pay any money.

RK: Right.

AM: Just couldn't imagine that they'd do it. So, I started reading what was going on. And the Nisei who had become politicians and all they were trying to do and then, you know, there were a lot of books being published then that had more information about all this. So, yeah, so I was very impressed. And then by having some people in that group who were very vocal about it, made me learn more about it, too. So, yeah, I was very impressed. And I thought that was a good sign for the American government. My sister in Japan had a daughter who was a teenager at the time, and my sister said that she wasn't

home at the time the check came, and my niece, who is a very verbal person, she gathered people together and she took that check and was showing it to everybody. As I said, where else could this happen except in the United States? So I thought that was interesting. Anyway, I thought it was a very impressive thing for the government to do this.

RK: Oh, yeah. Some people even xeroxed their checks and put it on the wall, and everything.

AM: Yeah.

RK: It was something special. Because it kind of was a healing of what the government did wrong.

AM: Yeah, to admit that they did something wrong!

RK: Exactly. That is a major thing, exactly.

AM: Yeah, so I thought that was an important thing.

RK: Now, during your schooling years, did you read much about the camps and the Japanese internment in the schoolbooks?

AM: No.

RK: Yeah, see.

AM: Not at all.

RK: It was not made pretty well public, so a lot of people did not have an idea that this even occurred, you know.

AM: And I was, okay, was it '55 or something when –

RK: Ownership of land?

AM: Ownership—voting.

RK: Voting, right.

AM: Voting was permitted for the first time.

RK: Right, right, I think in '54.

AM: '54. That was a big deal. That was very important. My father was really pleased with that. And you know, through all this, my father was a real supporter of Abe Lincoln. He just thought he was a really important person. So I have a brother named Lincoln.

RK: Okay! That's great.

AM: And I can remember when I was little that there was a children's book written in Japanese about Lincoln that we had. You know, the fireplace with the boy reading—

RK: Right, reading with the candlelight.

AM: Uh-huh. I remember that. And I thought, isn't that amazing that he could still be so supportive of the United States after all that.

RK: Right.

AM: And but anyway, that was neat, because he always had this faith in the United States government somehow.

RK: Exactly, yeah.

AM: Of course, with our family, with eight children who were raised in the American system, I imagine it was hard to believe that we could assimilate to the Japanese culture if we went there.

RK: Right, right.

AM: So but that was a real trying sort of time, because people just (tape interrupted)

RK: Are you very active in the Japanese-American community in your area? Or are there a lot of Japanese in Indianapolis.

AM: I don't know how many, but maybe about fifty in the area attend the JACL meeting, or on the roll anyway. They have brought in Japanese businesses in the area. So these are people coming in directly from Japan, not to immigrate exactly. Most of them are planning to work for a while and then go back, so I don't know how you count them.

RK: Right.

AM: And they have a Japan-American society in Indianapolis that seems to have a lot of money to do things. But these are the business people.

RK: Right, right. That's where most of them are.

AM: Most JACL people don't think it's very easy to pay a hundred dollars for a dinner. And so most of the, what we think of as the JACL group, don't belong to that. There's also a Minyo dance group of Japanese women who do traditional Japanese dancing, and they're pretty popular and organized. They all seem to belong to the Japan-America group. But they also come to JACL. The JACL group in Indianapolis has quite a mixture because there aren't that many Nisei, not many at all, actually. And just two of us have been in camp. And some of the people are students, Japanese students who come because they just think it's interesting. Some of the people are war brides who have come over and then for social reasons have come, but they really don't like to hear about the internment stuff. They really don't like to hear it. So it's quite a mixture of types of people. So I don't know how they all relate to JACL and what JACL stands for. There have been some discussions about whether we should keep this under JACL or call it something else. But anyway, they've been working more to help educate everybody about what JACL is trying to do, and talk about the conferences and things that our president usually attends. So they used to take part in international festivals and some other organizational

things, and there's usually maybe two things that we're supposed to help with as part of the community project, and it helps to raise a little money. But I think most of the people like to just get together and have the food that's brought in.

RK: Right.

AM: And there are quite a few who are third generation in the group now. So they said, well, my parents did this, that, and the other. Or my grandparents, you know. But, and they can be, maybe, in their forties or so, and so they talk about what they've heard from their parents. And so, JACL is changing a lot and so I don't know where that group is going.

RK: Yeah, but you still do some of the culture of Japan, like the mochi during—

AM: Oh, yes.

RK: The first of New Year's day?

AM: Yeah, we have our New Year's theme and somebody has one of those mochi machines—

RK: Yeah, now the machines do it.

AM: So they fix up the mochi in packages that people can buy, and that's kind of a fund-raising thing. And there are some really good cooks over there. So that's neat, too. And, but they've been trying to rethink the programming, to bring more into programs that relate to the people or help teach about the culture. So it's kind of a mixture.

RK: Yeah.

AM: Sometimes somebody will talk about a certain kind of work they do, or this person who's ninety years old that's in the group had been a missionary for years and she's from Japan. She presented a really interesting program of all the things she's done.

RK: Oh, that's excellent. Yeah.

AM: Yes. So there are some neat things going on there. And so it takes some thinking to try to get a good program in. I had my niece who is the daughter of my sister living in Japan come over once. She has graduated from law school in Philadelphia, and she's working with a group in New York now. She's helping people from diverse groups, people from other countries who have problems but don't understand the laws. And so she's doing a very important job and it was interesting to hear what the Sansei is doing, you know, working with minorities. So anyway, we do try to do a number of different kinds of programs there that's helpful for the group to know about. And they were discussing a little more about the Middle Eastern people in the United States who were being persecuted because of the war.

RK: Exactly. Yeah.

AM: That was brought up because there's such a similarity to our camp situation. But anyway, we do try to do some things. But we don't have a real close tie, I don't think, with other JACL groups, except sometimes we get together with a group in Ohio. And that's interesting. They're trying to think of ways to keep the contacts together a little. And it gets harder because the second generation is starting to die off.

RK: Oh, exactly, plus they're interblending with the other people outside the Japanese race.

AM: Right, right.

RK: So a lot of that is there are a lot of mixed Japanese now and so—

AM: A lot of the couples in the group have mixed marriages now.

RK: Exactly. Now one of the things that we learned from our experience in the camp, do you think such a thing in history could happen again, with putting—you were talking about with the Middle Eastern people, putting them in camp without due process and going

against the Constitution, putting citizens in a camp. Do you think it could happen again if we're not very vigilant?

AM: (pause) I don't know, but I think there is concern that it might happen again. And it seems like if there's talk of war, anything can happen.

RK: Exactly, yeah.

AM: And so there are people who are aware of everything and able to do something, get support for helping these people. It is kind of a concern that it might happen.

RK: Yeah, they always say if you don't learn history that things can happen over again. That's the importance of learning about past history and then preventing things that shouldn't happen from happening again.

AM: Well, you know, there have been some scary stories in the past couple of years.

RK: Exactly. Now, your daughter, Julie, wanted some questions asked, and I'm going to ask them right now. Here's one: Please comment on the role that religion played in the Shimomura camp family.

AM: Well, I think we talked about that.

RK: Okay. Mainly Christian religion, right?

AM: Yes. It was all Christian. My parents had a very basic kind of faith. So that was very important, to keep the family together was one problem that, I think, gave us a solid base that maybe some of the other families did not have.

RK: Right, and that's very important. You need that solid base.

AM: So that was important. It was as though, even if this, this, and this happened, at least we have—we have the guidance and God's care over us.

RK: Okay. Another question she asks is: The code of silence has come up in many of the books I've read. Have you talked about life in camp with members of your own family and/or your children? Please explain why.

AM: (laughter) Oh, come on, Julie. (laughter) Well, I don't think there was something as formal as a code of silence.

RK: Right.

AM: We just didn't talk.

RK: Right.

AM: It's the same thing. We just didn't talk. We didn't try to make a big deal about it. Nobody said don't talk about it, we just knew, without saying anything, that we weren't supposed to be talking about it.

RK: Right.

AM: And I didn't talk about it with my own kids, hardly.

RK: That's why the Japanese are sometimes called the "quiet Americans"—they just didn't express themselves openly about these things. A lot of things are kept private, more or less.

AM: And it's also considered kind of lowbrow to be grousing about things, don't you think?

RK: Well, you just put it behind you and just move on with life is what the Japanese did. And so—

AM: Right.

RK: The past was the past and you just go forward.

AM: You have to go forward and put that other stuff behind.

RK: Yeah.



AM: And there's enough to think about to try to make things better, especially those first years that were so hard, especially with so many dependents, you know? And not having money, it was very difficult.

RK: It was difficult, yeah.

AM: And the hardship of just day-to-day living was something to deal with.

RK: Okay. If you could speak to your father, what do you think his legacy would be? Uh, if you could speak for your father, what do you think his legacy would be?

(thoughtful pause)

RK: Mainly, what was the important thing that he did for the family? Probably instilled values and was strong in keeping the family together.

AM: Yeah, I think he wanted people, the family, to all—

RK: Be successful, and that's what happened.

AM: Work hard and be honest, and you know, not give up.

RK: Yeah. And would that be the same for your mother?

AM: Oh, yes. And not complain. (chuckles)

RK: Yeah, not complain. That's the key.

AM: Yeah, my mother and father both were such workers. Just amazing, really.

RK: Now, is your mother still alive?

AM: No.

RK: When did she pass away?

AM: Ahh, I kind of forget. It was about eight years ago.

RK: Okay.

AM: No, you know the year—

RK: Right, one year after.

AM: (laughter) It must have been '94. She was always the gentle, hardworking, understanding sort of person, but she was very tough, too.

RK: Well, you had to be to persevere through all these things.

AM: And you know, I never heard her act like things were hopeless—

RK: Right.

AM: Or too impossible to handle. And you know, they had some difficult things to deal with. But we never heard it.

RK: Right. Well, that's what good parents do, they try to do everything for their children and make it as easy as possible, even though things would be hard.

AM: Yeah, and not let the children know. Part of the time my mother was not very healthy, but anyway, she got through it. And people like my oldest sister really know more about it than I do.

RK: Okay, one final question from Julie: Speaking for yourself, what do you wish to pass on to your descendants?

AM: I don't want to do this one. (laughter) What a funny thing to ask me.

RK: But I imagine it's the same values that your parents passed on to you.

AM: Well, yeah. It's the same kind of thing. We wish they would, you know, work out their problems and remain, you know, honest. And whatever they try to do, to try to do the right thing. And you hope they'll be happy.

RK: Oh, exactly, that's the key, just be happy and do what you love, as far as a job, and enjoy life. Things will work out. We are nearing the end of the interview, is there anything else you would like to say? (apparently indicates no) Well, I appreciate having this

interview with you, because what this information is going to go to is for future generations to learn how a group of people, mainly 120,000 Japanese-Americans back in the 1940s had to endure with the internment camps and going through the process of having to be uprooted from their homes and then moved to a camp. And then, after that, having to endure and come out of the camps and be successful with their family and their kids. And how they endured all that and became a success today. After this little abbreviation of life, which is kind of a strange thing that happens because most of them were American citizens in this country. And to have been put in this situation by their own government and to persevere through this all, it's a remarkable story and I think future generations can learn from this. And so I thank you for cooperating and doing this interview so that we can have it now for history in the Fresno State Library. Thank you very much.

END OF INTERVIEW