

NARRATOR: KIICHI TANGE

INTERVIEWER: IZUMI TANIGUCHI

DATE: October 20, 1999

IT: Today is October 20th, Wednesday, and I am Izumi Taniguchi, interviewing Kiichi Tange of Sanger. Now Kiichi first, just state your name?

KT: My name is Kiichi Tange, I live in Sanger.

IT: Now, first we are going to have questions regarding life before WWII. Do you know where in Japan your father came from?

KT: Yeah, my dad come from Hiroshima, Japan.

IT: Do you remember when he came here, what year?

KT: 1917 he came.

IT: And do you know what reason he came here for?

KT: Well, the reason he came is because in Japan, things were so rough you can't make a living so he had—he heard the rumor that everybody was going to America, you know, Hawaii and America, so he took off to Hawaii first and worked in the sugar plantation farm or some place like that. Then he come to—he heard about California so he landed in San Francisco and he happened to come just before earthquake in 1906 in San Francisco and he come a few days before and then he wanted to work so, there was a job across the street in San Francisco Bay in a town called Alameda, sugar beet farm. So they were cutting sugar beets and he was working over there and then he happened to see all that smoke across the bay and he didn't know what happened and everybody said oh, that is an earthquake over there so the whole town is burning up. I guess what else do you want me to say?

IT: Where did he go from there?

KT: From there, he worked in the railroad track. Chinese had kind of a camp there to work so a lot of Chinese people and Japanese people worked there and he worked to, on the railroad track. And do you want me to tell you the story of he went up to Yosemite Valley someplace, building a track and Chinese have on the railroad track, they have a kind of mess hall and camp there and the water they were getting from up on the hill and they had kind of a little trough coming out of a creek over there. They were commenting on how good the water was and from that stream over there and somebody went up there and gone up there from where the water was coming down and a horse had fallen in this trough and it was dead there, so once that news got down to the camp, nobody would drink that water. So, but before that they were talking how good that water was. But after that news, nobody would drink the water.

IT: And then how long did he work on the railroad then?

KT: Oh, he worked, you see, he came there just before the earthquake of 1906 so he worked on the railroad track for a few years, then he came to the Fresno area, lot of people were saying there was a lot of work around Fresno area. So he came somewhere in, I would say, 1912 or '13 or somewhere around there to Fresno to work and he worked a few years and then he decided to go to Japan and get himself a wife. So, he left here in 1916 or '17, somewhere around there, he went to Hiroshima and he picked—he was supposed to pick one wife over in the Osaka but never did meet her with, the Osaka so he came back to my uncle place and they met—let's see. My uncle had a, oh,—well, actually, he wasn't uncle then. My uncle actually married that guy's sister, Butchie his name we call him, anyway, he went there and he picked her up and brought her home to San Francisco but

everybody in those days had to go in for something at Terminal Island somewhere and any people don't get off the boat go back to Fresno. So anyway, she stayed there for a while and then after that, she passed inspection so she is, 1917. And they came to Fresno. And that following year I was born in 1918 here in Fresno.

IT: Oh, okay, so your mother is from Osaka?

KT: No, that's the previous one.

IT: Oh, previous one.

KT: Hiroshima, no, Fukuyama is the town.

IT: Fukuyama?

KT: Yeah.

IT: Fukuyama. And then the person you called your uncle is her brother?

KT: Yeah.

IT: Was he here before? Did he come to the U.S. earlier?

KT: My dad?

IT: No, your uncle.

KT: He never did come here. He just happened to be, he was the young fellow and he had to take care of the ranch and his brother was in the military navy, military officer, and he was over in Ureshima until the atomic bomb came and he disappeared on that bomb. My uncle looked for him but he couldn't find him. And he just happened to be, just next day or two, everybody come from all over Japan, you know. Oh, there was a million people and then the police and army were trying to keep those people from going into that atomic bomb area. They said there is a lot of heat and they are going to get burned up or all that, but they still came over looking for their relatives.

IT: What became your father's permanent occupation?

KT: Oh, he was a farmer. He was working before he went to Japan, he was working on this ranch and they liked him so he came back and worked over there, mowing the hay and haystack and all that. That was what he was doing.

IT: When did he start farming on his own?

KT: Well, he started farming on his own—well, during the 1918 somewhere back in Fresno and they tried to put him in the army so he was dragged into the army in 1918, WWI, but he was in—I don't know how many he was in, but they found out he couldn't—they couldn't—he couldn't speak too good of English and they discharged him, I don't know, two or three days after that. So after that he was working on this ranch for a few years and he started farming his own, I think in 1922, somewhere around there.

IT: Where was that here?

KT: Yeah, right here, 180 highway and Highland Avenue.

IT: Oh, and you were born in 1918?

KT: 1918, yeah, I was born over there in Fresno.

IT: What kind of farming did he do in the beginning?

KT: Well, he farmed, he leased a place that had muscat grape and Thompson and in those days, they made all raisins so he was making raisins in those days. So I remember helping him turning tray and all that when I was a young kid yet.

IT: Was your father active in the community, Japanese-American community?

KT: No, he, some of the—Issei friends come, get him and go and pick up and go and collect donations and things and I noticed he went around to help those Issei people but I don't

think he was a leader or anything but he did help and contribute to donation and things like that.

IT: Do you recall what some of his achievements were?

KT: My father?

IT: Uh-huh.

KT: No, he just—he was a pretty good farmer. He farmed that thing and made money in 1922-1923 so in 1924 he went and bought a ranch over in Clovis district, between Clovis town and Pinedale district, oh, where the, what is that hospital there, St. Agnes Hospital, Millbrook Avenue, he was just third ranch north of that, he had a twenty-acre farm there. So he had a ranch from 1924 to up to '29 and he bought it long time because prices just kept going down and by 1929, he couldn't make a payment because, I thought he said the price, reason was one cent or a cent and a quarter pound and the price went down below one cent, three-quarter cent or something, and gee, he only had a, I remember he had 5-6 ton and less than a pound, that is twenty dollars a ton, so five times twenty is a hundred dollar or something, and he couldn't pay his bills. The payment on the ranch was, I don't know, was two hundred dollars and when he pays that, he wouldn't have nothing to buy his groceries with. So anyway, he—he kind of snuck around and had a friend to haul the raisins, hide the raisins so he could sell some for cash and make some money but the banker was watching for every day over there and he asked me what happened to the raisins. I don't know. My dad is doing that anyway, he told him—he wouldn't tell him for a while but he said he was going to put him in jail so had to tell them where they went. He give it to some friend to get some cash money. So that was a rough time.

IT: But did he manage to retain the land?

KT: No, the bank took it away.

IT: The bank took it away?

KT: In 1929.

IT: '29.

KT: Then we came back over here where he used to farm around here in Sanger.

IT: Was he living there in Fresno then?

KT: Yeah, he was living, at the beginning, he was living over there on, what street? Chestnut and Belmont Avenue, farming, then he came over here to Sanger and farmed and got that and then he made some money, so he bought the ranch over in, up there by Community Hospital is now. And then he lost the ranch there in 1929, so we came back here.

IT: When he bought the land, did he buy it in your name?

KT: Oh, no, I was too young. Minor couldn't claim a title or something so, did you know Iwasaki in Sanger, Charles Iwasaki in Sanger, anyway, he was older and my dad, his dad were buddies and friends at one time so he got his son—he was old enough so he used his name. I remember his name was involved in buying the ranch over there.

IT: Did your dad use his name for business or just?

KT: Well, business he used it, but that property, he couldn't use it because the, you know the Alien Land Law they just, Isseis couldn't buy no property.

IT: When he came back to Sanger, did he lease the farm or what did he do?

KT: Oh, that was '29. Yeah, he leased a farm. About that time I was old enough so I did most of the work. I did tractor work so anyway, we farmed fifty acres that time and boy, we had a rough time making a living and trying to make it, and on top of it all, my dad had eleven kids in the family, see, and so that was a lot of mouths to feed.

IT: He had eleven kids?

KT: He had eleven kids.

IT: Are you the oldest?

KT: I'm the oldest. So, it was rough time so I had to work to keep everybody fed up, otherwise we were starving. I know lot of days we didn't have no food.

IT: And what are your—how many brothers and sisters?

KT: Well, I had, well, five brothers and five sisters, easy to remember because five brothers and five sisters.

IT: Where are they now?

KT: Well, I got one in Detroit, one in Fresno, and another one over here farming on Leonard Avenue and then I got another brother over here that doesn't live too far away. And then all my sisters, one is San Diego, she is a polio victim, and I got two sisters in San Jose. And then I got one over here in Selma. Let's see one, two, four, oh, let's see, where is the other one? There is supposed to be five sisters.

IT: What are your brothers' and sisters' families doing now?

KT: Well, right now they are all retired, looks like.

IT: All retired? What kinds of occupations did they have?

KT: Well, my brother Henry, he was farming with me on the farm until he retired and then, of course, he got Parkinson's disease so he is having trouble with that. Then I got one of them partner with me, Calvin, and he's over here. He's farming, working driving tractor most of the time. Let's see what else. One, two, three, four, I'm trying to figure out something. Oh, one in Detroit.

IT: Okay, what schools did you attend?

KT: Well, over there we started out when I was—when my dad rented the farm, I went to Locan School here in Sanger area and then he bought the ranch, I went to Lincoln School in Fresno area. Then from there we came back here and went to Granville School here in Sanger and after graduated, went to Sanger High School. So, that is far as my schooling.

IT: Did you participate in any activities in high school?

KT: Well, I did a little bit in Ag, I took Ag course in high school so I did some of that thing and raised a little bit of crops for display at the fair.

IT: Is that the Fresno Fair?

KT: Well, no, I don't think so. I think I participated here in Sanger Ag fair they had over here, and then I was a pitcher at the Lincoln School in Clovis district until we moved out and so I was a school pitcher at that time and we did pretty good that year so the teacher took us to, 1928, I think it was, or '29, to the Wilson Theater here in town here, took the whole team to the something, movie theater they showed us.

IT: Did you continue pitching in high school?

KT: No, after that I didn't do much because I did a lot of work on the farm.

IT: On the farm?

KT: And then the last senior year, I had enough credits so three semesters, they wouldn't let me go a half year and so I had to take three semesters the whole year so I had to take three semesters to get my graduation diploma. So I did three courses in the morning and then afternoon, I would go to work on the farm and take care of the farm.

IT: Were your friends and playmates and so on? Were they Japanese or Caucasians or?

KT: All kinds actually. Yeah, Italians, Spanish, nihon-jins, we got all kinds of people.

IT: Were you invited to homes of any of the Caucasian friends?

KT: Oh, once in a while, yeah. Sometimes we did visit those people.

IT: Did your parents have any contact with the school like PTA or anything?

KT: No, they didn't speak too good of English so they didn't participate in that.

IT: How did your parents view your schooling? Were they strict or what did they expect of you in school?

KT: Yeah, they expected us to make good grades but I wasn't that good at it so.

IT: In school, besides making agriculture and exhibiting, did you belong to any clubs?

KT: Well, high school I belonged to FFA and I don't know. We didn't do too much. I know we had a grape display and I know it appeared in the *Fresno Bee* one time. The teacher liked that so we were raising grapes and so I was raising hogs, too. But I see this guy put our picture, my brother Henry and I, took a picture, it appeared in the *Fresno Bee* paper, we were raising Thompson grapes. I saw that.

IT: So in school you worked mainly on the farm, you didn't work outside of that?

KT: No.

IT: Can you describe your experiencing during your teenage years, going to school and working on the farm or—?

KT: Well, most of the time I had to get back to the farm so I'd get back and work. And as far as school, whatever classes I had to attend, I'd attend those. I didn't do no extra curricular as far as high school activity so I was mostly on the ranch.

IT: Were you a member of any church or scouts or anything like that?

KT: No, not that I know of.

IT: Did you encounter any racial prejudice?

KT: Oh, yeah, when I first came back here.

IT: I mean before, before coming back?

KT: Oh, before.

IT: When you were growing up?

KT: No, most of the people, the neighbors were really nice, most of them, helped us along.

IT: Did you have any chance to go to college?

KT: Yeah, one of (inaudible). One of my classmates said hey, let's go. He was going to the University of Davis and he wants me to go with him. No, the way my dad is, he can't do all the work so I had to do all the work so I couldn't go.

IT: Did you—when did you get married?

KT: Oh, after I came back from the service, in 1950 I guess. '49 or '50, I forgot what year.

IT: Did your family have any connection to a Japan town or was there a Japan town in Sanger?

KT: No, there wasn't too much. The only thing is the Yoshiki store and that's the only one that I know of and most the time he go Fresno to get the grocery. Like there used to be, Kamikawa used to be in Fresno. Aki grocery, Yabuno's, and he used to go over there.

IT: Did you attend Japanese language school?

KT: One year of Japanese language school. I'm not too good in Japanese.

IT: Where was the Japanese school?

KT: Oh, that was on Blackstone Avenue. Kawaguchi place, I worked at one year.

IT: Okay, now we're going to go through the WWII period. How did you hear about Pearl Harbor? What were you doing when you heard about Pearl Harbor?

KT: Well, we playing basketball, we participate our club, Sanger club plays some other city, you know, Reedley, Parlier. The other town and I was over there and when we were

playing there and one haku-jin guy came over, and he's the janitor, and he told me, "What do you think about the war?" And I didn't know what he was talking about because I didn't know what happened. And then later I found out, I didn't know what he was talking about and he didn't say anything after that so when I came home and on the news and then you hear all this big (inaudible) about Pearl Harbor.

IT: You said you were playing basketball?

KT: Yeah, I was playing basketball at the Sanger High School at that time.

IT: Sanger High School.

KT: The high school has a gym, you know, and I played some other city. I don't know if we played—?

IT: What kind of team was it?

KT: Oh, we belonged to this club, was organized through the Buddhist Church. So YBA.

IT: YBA?

KT: Yeah, that's what they called it and I participated in that team.

IT: Okay, what did you—how did the Pearl Harbor affect you following, was there a curfew and all that? Can you describe that period as you remember it?

KT: Yeah, well, after Pearl Harbor they restricted all the Japanese people from moving around, daytime was okay but nighttime you are not allowed to go anywhere so we didn't go nowhere in the evening but daytime we went around and to keep our farming going. I had, let's see, I had five parcels of land at that time in 1942.

IT: Where did you go to camp?

KT: Camp Poston.

IT: Poston?

KT: Poston Camp 2, Camp 2 we had.

IT: Before Poston did you go to the assembly center?

KT: No.

IT: No? You went directly to—?

KT: My wife went to Fresno Assembly Center.

IT: Oh.

KT: She was living the other side of Fresno town so they (inaudible) and put them in the Fresno Assembly Center.

IT: But you went directly to Poston?

KT: But I went from here, I had five parcels and I had to get rid of my property to different people real quick like, because there was a deadline you see, July 15, and we were supposed to go to Clovis district to get on a train to take us to camp, you see. So, we moved—I got rid of the ranch and I got hardly nothing. Only one parcel land I got five hundred and fifty dollars. The rest was, all the rest I had one, two different parcels I didn't get nothing. I didn't get a thing out of it.

IT: So you lost a lot?

KT: Oh, yeah, normally we make around twenty-five grand that year with all that parcel and all I got was five fifty. And one guy and he said he was going to send me the rest of the money, instead he never sent nothing.

IT: Did your parents go to camp, too?

KT: Yeah, yeah, we all went together.

IT: You all went together?

KT: Yeah.

IT: But can you describe your experience in the camp? The family's experience in the camp?

KT: Well, we went into camp and I remember Mas Yamamoto, Dr. Yamamoto had a thermometer and he lived in the next door, barrack, and when he first went over there in the middle part of the day, he had a thermometer and he said it was a hundred and thirty degree in the barracks. It was hot and dry and dusty. And it was rough there, and Arizona is a real hot country so we had to suffer a lot. I don't know what the outside temperature was but inside the barracks it was a hundred and thirty degrees. I think it must have been a hundred and ten or fifteen outside.

IT: But you had a big family so how much of the barracks?

KT: Yeah, we had to get—we took care of half of the barracks. We had two apartments so, so we had two apartments so when we went over there, there was nothing in that barracks so they gave us a army cot and we had to get—they brought a bunch of straw around so we had to take one of these canvas sacks and put straws in it and make a mattress out of it to make so we could sleep on it, otherwise we had to sleep right on a steel wire.

IT: So did the girls stay in one part and the boys in another part or?

KT: Yeah, we divide up one room with the girls on that side and then boys on the other side so that is how we slept there.

IT: Now in camp, what did you do? Did you participate in sports or anything? How did you pass your time?

KT: Well, I worked in maintenance department. First, they needed a plumber so I helped the plumber there. I did that, start working with the electrician and I knew quite a few people know about electric and they want some more and I take that job and I went up the pole

with the spikes, you know, and boy, you have to know what you are doing. I went up about half way and those spikes come loose and I slipped clear down and oh, my arm, I told the manager there, no, I'm not going to take this job. I could do the electrical. I know how to handle the electric wiring and all that so anyway, they want me to do that. But no, if I have to climb a pole like that, I don't want the job. So I ended up, what is it, restroom places and boiler places and then I end up taking care of the refrigeration in camp. We had cold storage with all the vegetables and food and we had to make sure the unit ran so we put gas in it to keep it running, otherwise if you didn't put enough gas in it, it wouldn't run, you know. It wouldn't keep it cold so that's my job. That's the end of that camp and from there I went—from there I went up—when I went up—when I went in, right away I asked for indefinite leave because I didn't want to stay there. There was no place for me to stay there. So I went from there, I got a job at Chicago and (inaudible) and I 'll go work for there but I did not. You know, I got a lot of people I know in camp so right away I try to keep it quiet but I just leave, you know, and everybody must have found out so he,y why don't you take me with you? No, I only got one job. I'm the only person hired there. You had better get your own job. They said, no, the government is having people taking care of harvesting like sugar beets and things like that and I didn't want to get involved in that thing. But anyway, they keep forcing me, you got to help me out. My neighbor, two of my neighbors and then the other two that I worked with, actually five families, I had to go up on Minnesota and work on the farm to get the job to take those people up there so I end up taking, let's see, actually one, two ,three, four, five families. I took them with me over there to help out. That's a lot of headache.

Int: When did you leave the camp? Do you recall?

KT: I left—we were evacuated on the fifteen of July in 1942, I think we left, and then I stayed in there nine months. And then the following year, April, May, I got okay to leave so I left I think May, so I left May of 1943 Poston Camp to Minnesota to farm over there.

IT: So, then while you were in camp you were not involved with the loyalty question 27, 28?

KT: No, they was 17.

IT: No, 27 and 28.

KT: 27 and 28?

IT: Did you have to—did you have to?

KT: No, they called us in and I did and answered that question but I didn't have no trouble answering the questions. It was all yes, yes. A lot of them was no, and no and no and yes and I heard all kinds of stories but I didn't have no trouble.

IT: So when—how long were you in Chicago?

KT: Well, I didn't go to Chicago. I had the job.

IT: But you didn't go there?

KT: I was to go there but they told me they needed guys to rebuild the motors, they needed bad and I was supposed to go there but these guys bothered me and I took them up to farm in Minneapolis.

IT: Minneapolis?

KT: Yeah, Minneapolis.

IT: How long were you there?

KT: Well, we left there around May, June somewhere around there, and little by little they all can't stand the farm work so they all took off, a lot of them went to—two of them went to

Minneapolis downtown. And then the other two they supposed to, they didn't show up, they ended up in St. Paul, what is that famous hospital there?

IT: Mayo Clinic?

KT: Yeah, yeah, Mayo Clinic I think, and they have doctors over there got a bunch of homes so they go and work, and one of them was a gardener and the wife worked as a house maid and the other one worked downtown mechanic, Chevrolet garage and he was a mechanic over there. He was a good mechanic so he got a job repairing, technician job. You know, like ignition and carburation and stuff like that.

IT: So how long were you there?

KT: I was there that year '43 to fall until December. It would get so cold that you couldn't work out on the farm, but anyway, I left there and came back to camp. And then, I figured out that maybe I could take the family out of the camp because you can't keep the family like that there and we didn't know what the government was going to do. So I found a farm over in Amarillo, Texas, so I told them I would farm that thing and he gave me fifty-, sixty-acre farm to raise vegetables, with a fruit stand so that's what we did. I brought part of the family out to raise the vegetables and fruit and we did all right selling vegetables at the fruit stand, but in the meantime, the army tried to get a hold of me and we were in class 4C and they changed it to A1 and then (inaudible) for military draft so I told them, well, I'm farming here and you pay my expense out, I'll be willing to go into the army right now. But no, we can't pay your expense. I got a lot of money involved already, so anyway, they give me thirty day and that was the second letter. So thirty day and then no, I won't be able to get my crop out. I got to get more than that to get my expense out. So they give me thirty day and I don't think they answered me after that for

two, three months, three, four months, somewhere around there. So anyway, I told, I had my brothers out that time working the farm and I told them and there were people from Arkansas people, a couple, one of them came over to work. And he didn't want no pay. He just wanted to get out and do some work he said so I got him working over there. So I told him no, you know, everybody you got to go on your way and find some other place, I got to go to the army, you know. I'm not going to be here so. So, I left there and came back to camp because I told my brothers, and in the meantime, my brothers were getting inducted two, two of my brothers in the meantime were drafted into the army so, I come back to camp and then ended up in the army. The first place I was drafted over there— what was the name of the place over there? I can't think of it. Marysville was the draft induction center for our—

IT: Marysville? What year was this?

KT: It was 1944, I think it was, wasn't it? Somewhere around '44.

IT: '44? And you were in Poston and drafted to Marysville or?

KT: Well, Poston, I went back to Poston but I stopped by on the way to the induction center.

IT: Where was the induction center?

KT: Huh?

IT: Where was the induction center?

KT: Oh, the induction center was here in Fresno.

IT: So you stopped by here?

KT: Yeah, I stopped by here. I had to build this house. We had this piece of property that time so I had to build a house so when it was time to come back home so I couldn't get no wood to build a house so the only thing I could get is, lumber is only on government

priority and unless it's for war effort you can't get the lumber so the only thing I got was cement. Cement, I mean, brick that could, could build so I built that house with brick and I got the roof on and my brother, he had a big foot over here a big bunion and the army couldn't find a shoe for him so they gave him a medical discharge so he was coming home. Good deal, so you take over the place while I'm going into the army so anyway. He come over here and he didn't know how to do the electrical work so he said I don't know how, you have to get that electrical or otherwise you won't have no light so I worked that night until that morning I was leaving here. I was supposed to meet the bus to go to Sacramento. And then two nights—

IT: This is 1944?

KT: Somewhere around there, I don't know what year?

IT: Because I'm trying to figure out when you came back to California?

KT: Well, '44—end of '44, actually JACL went to court, Supreme Court, and I think we won the case in the middle of the year but it didn't open up until that November or somewhere around there.

IT: That was the Endo case?

KT: End of '44 or somewhere around there.

IT: That was the Endo court case?

KT: (inaudible)

IT: '45?

KT: '45?

IT: Yeah. When did you go into the army?

KT: I'm not too sure whether it was '44 or '45, somewhere around there.

IT: Well, because '44, sometime in the middle of '44 the earliest you were to come back to California or permitted to come back.

KT: Yeah, maybe it was '45. I'm not too sure. Maybe it was the middle of '45. Well, it could be.

IT: You don't remember when you were inducted?

KT: Well, it was the middle of the year, June, July, May, June, July, or somewhere around there.

IT: Where did you do your basic training?

KT: Texas. Texas, Camp (??) in Texas.

IT: You went from Marysville to Texas?

KT: Yeah, I went over there.

IT: And then where did you go?

KT: From there to MIS school, St. Paul.

IT: St. Paul?

KT: Yeah, I went over there.

IT: And then did you finish there at St. Paul?

KT: Oh, first they take in all the nihon-jin Nisei and the guys that read and write and I didn't know how to read and write. I could speak it so they wouldn't take me so I ended up doing the KP over there all the time so I got tired of that. I told the captain in my outfit I didn't go into the army to do KP duty. I came over there to fight. So you know. Oh you're in the army and you'll do what they tell you. So anyway, I got tired of pulling KP every day so I went to see about getting a job. I had a neighbor, Kongo Mori, he was in the supply already and I said, hey find a job for me. And he said no, but there is an

opening in the mess hall cooking over there. So that is better yet. There is food right there so I went and signed up and got that job as a cook, cook's helper, and ended up as a mess sergeant after a while and by that time they were giving discharges, you know, the people, by points system and so I become moved up and become mess sergeant. And it's rough when you started moving up fast and you don't know what is going on.

IT: Now when did you get discharged? Did you go in there besides Camp Savage?

KT: I just went over there and then we ended up they moved that school from St Paul to Monterey. Presidio, they called it.

IT: And so you came to Monterey?

KT: Yeah, Monterey and got discharged there.

IT: When was that?

KT: I think—I think it would be the end of '45 or beginning of '46, somewhere around there. Yeah, I think it was January or something so it must have been '46.

IT: '46? You came back to farm over here?

KT: Over here to farm, help on the farm.

IT: And so you had some farming equipment and stuff to begin with?

KT: Oh, yeah. We had—I had a truck and I don't know what happened to the truck. Tractor, we had Caterpillar and the roller was supposed to be round and diesel so it got locked up and so the roller was square and anyway, the truck would slide on top of the roller but it was flat and it was supposed to be round and I couldn't figure out why, they didn't grease the rollers and they just kept running it and so when I came back, I had to put all new rollers on that doggone thing to keep it running, otherwise I couldn't even run it. Well, we had trouble with the government because we spent too much money. And you are

supposed to put that depreciation or something and you can't take it out on one year expense, you know, all that parts. I don't know how many thousands we spent. So the Internal Revenue got after us and said no, you can't deduct all those things. You have to depreciate it out. So, so instead of two and three thousand dollar expense account because I didn't have that I had to depreciate it out. So, we didn't get the deduction like we should. Actually most of the parts for truck and tractor are supposed to be deductible that year.

IT: That's repair.

KT: Repair—do you want to try and save some money so we don't deduct too much off of my income.

IT: So you had some property here when you came back?

KT: Well, I had tractor left and I had a Mark 2 Ford truck left, and I had a lot of discs and cultivators left, and oh, I didn't get my cotton cultivator back.

IT: How much land did you have here?

KT: Oh, I had twenty acres.

IT: Oh, twenty acres.

KT: The others are leased out, you see. So I didn't get all the money I was supposed to get out of it so. All I got was this twenty-acre ranch.

IT: And you got back into farming and expanded from that?

KT: Yeah, we expanded and— How many acre farm is this one here, twenty? Twenty, and I bought forty from the next ranch over and then after that I bought another forty after that and then I bought another hundred acre after that so we had—

IT: You bought a hundred acres?

KT: Yeah, I bought actually two forty acres, eighty, it was two hundred acres we bought.

IT: You bought?

KT: Yeah.

IT: So you still have that two hundred acres?

KT: No, I sold most of it. Things got rough so I had to pay the bank off so I sold some off so we still got sixty, seventy acres left. You know, when you get fifty cents, a dollar box, you know, you can't come out on that price.

IT: When did the rest of your family come back from camp?

KT: My brother he came back and the army gave him a medical discharge because they couldn't find a shoe for him so he got out so. Yeah, he had to come the day before I left here so I told him he could take care of the electrical wiring and he said no, he didn't know how to do that so I spent all night long until that morning I had to go. So I hooked it up so at least he could get the electric lights. And then my brother, I left a car here and he went after the family in Poston the next month or next week, he did that. He took care of that part so the family came back here. At least they had a home and a place to stay, otherwise boy, these places to stay was scarce. You couldn't find any place. I know I rented one over there. There is a guy named Ray Hasegawa and Nishioki, George Nishioki, didn't have no place so they came and stayed with us because no place to go and they had a property but they had it leased out and they won't get out right away so Ray Hasegawa stayed one or two nights and then George Nishioki, I think he stayed one or two nights until he get his ranch back.

IT: You don't recall exactly when your brother went after them in Poston?

KT: It sounded like a week after or so.

IT: I mean what year and what month?

KT: Oh boy, anyway, I went in the army that year, I don't know what year that was, April, May, so he must have went after that April, May of that year.

IT: Must have been April or May of '45?

KT: '45, yeah, could be.

IT: So, when and what circumstance did you get married? When did you meet your wife?

KT: Well, that was 1949. I think it was '49. I knew my wife's cousins and they are the ones that I got a blind date to see my wife. So that is how I met her.

IT: Is she from here, from this area?

KT: No, she's from the other side of Fresno, so they went to the Fresno Assembly Center camp there and then they went to Arkansas.

IT: The other side of Fresno would be Madera or Biola?

KT: Just the other side of Fresno would be Ashlan Avenue.

IT: Oh, I see. But does she still have relatives?

KT: She has a sister that lived in Pasadena.

IT: When did you get involved in JACL?

KT: Well, as soon as I got back from the service I (inaudible) but back then they just started that and at that time we were going to meetings there because of this evacuation and we got to work on it and I got interested in JACL.

IT: Who did you work with at JACL? At that time who did you work with at JACL?

KT: Oh, at that time I think Johnson Kebo was the chairman and then he was active in that thing and also Tom Nakamura and also Freddie Hirasuna was involved in that JACL and there was a bunch of others that came in late.

IT: George Abe?

KT: George Abe was another one of those and actually the guys was Tom Nakamura, Johnson Kebo and Fred Hirasuna, then George Abe was pretty close there. He helps whenever he can there. He has been in the office at different times.

IT: What about Seiji Mikami?

KT: Yeah, Seiji Mikami was in there, too. He's been in it at different times. Let's see who else.

IT: When did Sanger Chapter form?

KT: Oh, I think it was 1952 or somewhere, Ralph Kumano is making a history and it was supposed to be recorded in this convention—

IT: (inaudible)

KT: And they got the date and everything, Ralph dug it up. Well, we have a historian who keeps up the book when it first started out. I think it was '52 when we started out because Fresno said we got to spread out a little more so we supposed to have one in Sanger and Reedley and Parlier, all that and Selma so that is how we got started. '52, I think we—

IT: What office did you hold in the Sanger Chapter?

KT: Oh, I've been all kind of offices. I don't know. I've been chapter president I don't know how many times. Years ago, at that time Tom Nagamatsu was the chairman and then I took over and Johnson Shimizu was the chairman and I took over one time. Then after a few years, later after everybody rotated and took turns, then my turn came up and then about ten years later, I took over the job again as chairman. Then after a few years later

here, the last ten years ago, nobody wants to do that no more. Nobody wants to take their turn so I think I got stuck with six years steady, that—

IT: Have you been involved in any other organizations besides the JACL?

KT: Well, the only one I know of is Farm Bureau.

IT: Farm Bureau?

KT: I was chapter president and then I become the regular president of Farm Bureau. And then this is a different time to help the office there. I didn't want to get too much involved because I had to take care of the land and then I ended up being on the Board of Governor in a cotton gin over here and also I think it was Farm Supply, Farm Bureau had a Farm Supply so I was director of that thing for I don't know how many years, three or four years there.

IT: So you said you were Board of Governor of the cotton gin so did you grow cotton?

KT: Yeah, we were raising cotton at that time. Oh, I don't know, a couple hundred acres at that time.

Int: While you were in JACL, what programs were you involved in ?

KT: Well, mostly I wrote the chapter picnic and graduation exercise we had, those were the two things I got involved in.

Int: Did they have a picnic every year?

KT: Yeah, we had a picnic every year so I ended up going down (inaudible) and up in the foothills somewhere. We had a problem with sanitation problem. The toilet facility, we had to bring our own toilet facility over there. Then we had somebody, professional guy to do that. Boy, that got to be a problem so we ended up renting high school, no,

grammar school and taking care over there so we had a restroom and boy going up the mountain, we did a lot of work to get those things arranged you know.

IT: How did you feel about redress and reparations?

KT: Oh, redress, I wanted to get all the money I could get a hold of so I supported that.

IT: You supported that from the beginning?

KT: Yeah, the beginning. Yeah, because we lost a lot of money in that. Actually we got twenty thousand money but that's enough to cover my expense.

IT: Was the chapter all in support of redress in the beginning?

KT: I think so. We didn't have no argument. Everybody was interested in getting the money. Every once in a while one or two tried said I ain't going to get the money. But they, when the money came, they took it. I know one of them said I don't think and he took it.

IT: What do you think was the highlight of your life? Did you have any real success stories?

KT: Well, I didn't really successful to much but I participated where I could help. Help like the JACL and Farm Bureau and (inaudible) farmers so I supported the farmer's position and I got in and became a member of the staff at different times.

IT: What do you think are the greatest contributions of the Nisei?

KT: Contributions, that's what money?

IT: Not necessarily money but to the society?

KT: Well, Nisei, our problem is too many people think they are too busy to help so they don't want to participate so they don't help too much so that's the reason I get stuck with the number of years taking care of chairman and they should take it. We got a lot of members but they don't. So Lloyd Kurihara helps. What is it Kumano, Ralph Kumano,

he helped. Kaz Komoto, he helped for a while. And a few others, old timers, old timers helped but young ones don't want to help no more.

IT: Now we're getting near the end of the interview and the purpose of the interview is to try to get the Japanese-American stories recorded into history. And you know that, you know that in the public schools, there are very little stories of Japanese-Americans and therefore the Sanseis, a lot of them don't know what their heritage is. And so our objective is to try and record this into history and by telling the story so do you have any other stories you'd like to share about your experiences?

KT: Yeah, I'd like to talk about it but generally I don't have too much time to do that, see. I tell my daughter, I only got one daughter. And I tell her the story of what happened to us, you know. She knows about it but trouble is, I don't think we tell everything of our story of what happened. We tell the story but I don't think, actually we should have this recorded so everybody knows it should become history so the Japanese people shouldn't be forgotten what they went through. I think the Japanese were only people that was thrown in the concentration camp that I know of. I don't think any other race got into this kind of problem. And they shouldn't be forgotten because this country is supposed to be free for everybody and not the way we went through. We went through—we lost all our property. All the property that we had, we lost all that. And then we had to start all over. We went in the army and came back and we had to start all over again and we took a beating. A lot of people said well, you got twenty thousand but that is nothing compared to what we lost. We lost a lot of money. So, I think we should continue explaining this to the general public and they should know about what happened. Hey June, meet Izumi Taniguchi, this is my wife, June.

IT: How do you do.

KT: She has Alzheimer sickness so she is having problems trying to remember people. She is not doing very good.

IT: You say you have one daughter?

KT: Yeah.

IT: One daughter, what is she doing now?

KT: She works in the Fresno County office. Fresno County has an office over there and she is one of the staff members over there, secretary over there.

IT: Does she have children?

KT: Yeah, she has one daughter.

IT: One daughter, too?

KT: I raised one daughter and they raise one daughter, they copied us. She married a Spanish boy so that Spanish boy's name is Lopez so my granddaughter is a "happa". Nihon-jin and Spanish mix.

IT: Is there anything else you want to say?

KT: Oh, other than we should continue fighting it. We put this in the general public so everybody knows we shouldn't be forgetting about this Japanese evacuation that took place. The young kids don't even know it happened. I talked to a lot of these kids and they don't believe that it really happened. They said you mean to tell me you guys were thrown into camp? Yeah, we had to go through that thing and they can't believe it. I think we should have this thing repeated often enough so people would know about it and a lot of people say, "Oh, not in the United States. We don't do things like that." But well,

this thing should be repeated all the time so people will know about it. That is what I think.

IT: Okay, I guess that completes the interview. Thank you very much.

KT: You are welcome.

IT: We will be putting the videotape into the Asian-American Studies Program at Fresno State so that it will get into the history somehow. Thank you very much.

END OF INTERVIEW