

JAPANESE CULTURAL CENTER OF HAWAII

Oral History Interview

with

Morris Matsumoto (MM)

April 10, 2009

By: Florence Sugimoto (FS)

Notes in brackets [] are added for clarification by the transcriber. Notes in double parentheses (()) indicate post-interview additional comments or clarifications provided by either the interviewee or his wife.

FS: I am conducting an interview today with Mr. Morris Matsumoto. His wife is also present and she may even when necessary participate in the discussion. Would you like to introduce yourself before we begin?

EM: Yes, I'm Elsie Matsumoto.

FS: Now then, Mr. Matsumoto, please give us your name in full and your place of birth.

MM: Morris Masato Matsumoto, born in Waipahu, born in 1916, April 16.

FS: Thank you, what about your parents' names and their place of birth.

MM: Father name is Kaemon Matsumoto born in Japan. Also mother, Shizu Maeda Matsumoto, born in Fukuyama-shi Hiroshima-ken, Japan.
((Father from Hiba gun, Hiroshima ken.))

FS: Thank you. Why did they come to Hawaii? And what kind—

MM: They came to Hawaii, make money.

EM: (laughter)

FS: What kind of work did they do?

MM: First, he worked at a Japanese laundry shop at Alapai where lots of Japanese young men came from Japan. Married and later opened a laundry shop in Waipahu. They work at the plantation sugar manager's house in Waipahu. [Interviewee later corrected that they worked at the sugar plantation manager's house before they opened the laundry shop in Waipahu.]

((Mrs. Matsumoto: Morris' father worked at Waipahu plantation manager's house in Waipahu. They both work at the manager's house cooking, cleaning, laundry, and took care of yard.))

EM: Cook and mother cleaned the house.

FS: How many children were in your family?

MM: Um, eight children-five boys and three females.

FS: Were they all dual citizens?

EM: No.

MM: Five born in Hawaii were dual citizens, three born in Japan.

FS: What was your family life like?

EM: His mother took him and his older brother to Japan when he was only two years old, and left them with grandma in Hiroshima-ken Fukuyama City. She came back and they worked hard and they had four more little children.

((Mrs. Matsumoto: Mother took 2 boys, 1st son Tsuneto and 2nd son Morris, to Japan. Her mother lived with her brother in Hiroshima Ken, Fusuyama shi Kinoshio Mura. Mother left her mother.))

FS: Okay, what was your childhood like, when you were in Japan?

MM: Grandma took good care of my older brother and me. She took me to temples and theater. I went to Japanese school until I graduated high school and went alone to Yokohama by train and boat to Hawaii.

((Mrs. Matsumoto: Morris' grandmother was a small, short, old lady but she can walk easily. She goes to temples and pray sometimes all moving by herself. Very nice grandmother. Morris was very athletic and played baseball, swam and went hiking.))

EM: What happened to your grandma, because your grandma took care of you?

MM: Yeah, they took care of us (inaudible) I don't remember what happened, by the time I come back Hawaii— ((Grandma died at 93 years old.))

EM: You know, uh, his father came back to Japan when he was in the fifth grade and then they stay together until he graduate high school and came to Hawaii alone.

FS: When did you come back to Hawaii?

MM: I (inaudible) don't exact date, anyway I was...

FS: When you were

MM: Seventeen years old.

FS: I see. So you spent fifteen years in Japan, is that right?

EM: Yes, (inaudible) You went to Japan when you were two year old.

MM: Yeah, two year old (inaudible)

FS: Fine, did you go to school?

EM: Yes, elementary and high school.

MM: I graduated high school, *chugako*.

FS: What did you do as a student in Japan?

MM: (laughter) Study and played baseball, kendo? Honest, I don't know, remember too much. ((Also swimming and hiking.))

EM: The father use to raise lots of chickens and sold lots of eggs to his friends and neighbors.

MM: My father sent the money to grandma take care of me.

FS: But, you don't remember much about your school life?

MM: High school wasn't you know that's why I don't know.

FS: You don't remember many things about your life in Japan as a student?

MM: (inaudible) —hard to—I don't think I remember anything.

FS: Mm huh mm huh

MM: (inaudible) Attend *chugako* (inaudible)

FS: Now, when you came back from Japan, did you go to school at all?

MM: Yes, oh yes. I came back to attend Hawaiian Mission Academy—three years then I went Honolulu Business College, two years.

FS: That means that you are considered a *kibei*, is that correct?

MM: Right.

FS: Now, when you came back from Japan what year was it?

MM: 1935? Seventeen, I think 1935. ((I went to school from my aunty's house.))

FS: Now, on December 7th 1941, how old were you?

MM: Let me see, that's, how old I was eh? Twenty five years old?

FS: What happened that day? Do you remember?

MM: Oh yes, I know ((I saw Japan plane with red round center, Japanese flag on the plane.)) I remember Japanese plane flying over from Pearl City. I saw how Pearl Harbor was bombed. I can see Oklahoma burning from the house and capsized.

FS: Where were you living?

MM: I live in Pearl City. I worked at watercress farm. I was staying with Aunty Nakatani and family.

FS: Does that mean your father was not here?

MM: (inaudible)They were all in Japan, (inaudible)

FS: How did you, how did you happen to come back to Hawaii? Did your aunty call for you or—

MM: Hawaii is a good place to live and to make money and this and that so soon as I graduate high school I come back to Hawaii.

FS: Oh.

EM: His older brother was here.

MM: My older brother was already here.

FS: That made it a little easier.

EM: Easier.

FS: Okay, now is there anything else you remember about December 7?

MM: I saw Japanese plane flying over to Pearl Harbor and saw how they flying over. Saw Oklahoma capsize (simultaneous dialogue)

FS: How did you feel?

MM: (inaudible) I don't feel anything because I live in Japan too long. I came back home right after the Pearl Harbor bombing.

FS: Did you think it was real attack or

MM: Oh yes, real attack. I see Japanese planes and see they have a sign, hino maru. I can the see them flying so Sunday the war started.

FS: Did you suspect that there would be an attack like that?

MM: I never thought of anything, no suspect. No I don't think so.

FS: I see. Now what did you people do after that? Did you have to do things in at home where your aunty lived? For example, destroy things

MM: Nothing happened to us, you know (inaudible)

FS: Okay.

MM: Until about one year later.

FS: Oh—

MM: (inaudible) two men came took me to Sand Island.

FS: What were you doing at that time? Still going to school?

MM: No. No school. I don't think I was. I was already um big (inaudible) and grew up working.

FS: At your aunty's watercress farm?

MM: That's right.

((Mrs. Matsumoto: No not there. Morris found a store in Nanakuli that wanted to sell. Morris must be delivering watercress to stores. Morris immediately talked to Aunty to buy the store. And he really worked at the store all by himself and slept there. Then Aunty buys land and build a large house in the back of the store.))

FS: I see. I see, okay. One year later, you said that would be 1942 that the FBI came.

MM: (inaudible) war started one year, so gotta be '42, right?.

FS: Mm, hum. Okay, now when they came, do you remember what they said? What they asked you?

MM: No. They don't ask me. Newcomers we talk about two Japanese (inaudible) I know it. Just ask me come with us and took me to Sand Island.

FS: Japanese FBI agents?

MM: Yeah, why I don't know the policeman or FBI agents or what, but he just tell me come with me that's it.

FS: Were they in uniform?

MM: No, just in plain clothes.

FS: Where did they take you?

MM: Take me to first to Sand Island. Yes, Sand Island. No.

EM: Immigration.

MM: Sand Island then to Immigration Station. Yes, I saw my brother was there and um next couple of days (inaudible) I don't know now. They took my brother to the United States. (simultaneous dialogue) United States Immigration Station. Then we stay Sand Island (inaudible) then a few days.

FS: So in other words, you went from the Immigration Office in Hawaii to Sand Island?

MM: No, no the other way. Sand Island, we put up Sand Island then back to Immigration Station we stay Immigration Station two day or three days. Two day, ka no? And uh, but no place for sleeping, you know (inaudible)

FS: Tell us about that.

MM: Only about uh, I think two days we stay there. All together about fifty, I think about fifty people go to the Sand Island. When the first group left for mainland, that's together with my brother, they ask to take to Immigration Station. We stay there couple days (inaudible). Then they said that you got to wait because ah the (inaudible) camp is not completed. You gotta wait here a little while so we stay up by Immigration Station two or three days. Then they say, we are ready they take us bus to ah

EM: Honouliuli

MM: Honouliuli Internment Camp

FS: I see. What were the conditions at the Immigration Office like? Where you spent a lot of time.

MM: (Inaudible) I never feel anything because I was young and ah, you know. (Inaudible)honest I don't feel anything, (inaudible)

FS: I see.

MM: Especially, (cough) there we have eight men in the one shack. Then I remember Sumida-san there. Sumida-san was a good friend (inaudible) Then uh, okay, Ken-chan, Ken-chan made miso , miso, miso. They use to make miso. Ken-chan.

EM: Mr. Murakami

MM: Huh?

EM: Murakami

MM: Mr. Murakami, Murakami down there, (Mira?) was there.

FS: How was the, how was the trade and you know, and the way they took care of you?

MM: (inaudible) Honest, I never thought of anything, you know. I don't feel anything, I don't suffer or anything. They feed us right away, yes, and uh.

FS: Okay, okay. Now when you went to from the Immigration Office to Honouliuli, now what was it like there?

MM: Yes, they took us a couple of days because they no finish (inaudible) couple days of the Immigration Station. They move to Honouliuli Internment Camp, yes.

FS: Did you have to do any work?

MM: (laugh) You work (inaudible) You know (laugh) I hate to tell you but, (inaudible) we make sake.

FS: (inaudible) oh Sho-chu?

MM: Mr. Murakami-san nan ka (inaudible) so

EM: gallon

MM: Gallon (inaudible)

EM: We have big gallon with fishes inside, you know water fish inside the large jar.

MM: (simultaneous dialogue with EM)

EM: (inaudible) downstairs (laughter)

FS: Is that what you made? I mean is that what you got from the visitors? Just the water with small fishes?

MM: (inaudible – simultaneous dialogue)

EM: Oh the water was nothing. You had to put fish inside there then they throw away that and then they make wine.

FS: They throw away what?

EM: The fish and the water.

FS: Oh I see. I see. In other words use the gallon to make—

EM: Yes, my dad asked me to bring gallon jar with fishes inside.

FS: How did you get the other material?

MM: They dig the hole down there. So the inspector come you know, and they look around every day. But uh, we hide underneath. They make a hole underneath.

FS: How did you get the other materials? To make the sho-chu?

MM: I don't never suffered. I think we can get enough sugar, water. We never had any problem getting the things that make wine.

FS: In other words the food was provided, the food to make the sake was provided by the camp?

MM: Yeah

EM: I think the fruits like that they put in the water and they fermented.

FS: They fermented the fruits.

MM: Yeah

EM: The water, you know. (laughter) then they all drank.

MM: They had a store there.

FS: Uh huh.

MM: I remember there was a (inaudible) store and uh. You work, you can buy any amount. "You like buy juice? Can I take juice?" Okay, go ahead.

FS: How did it taste?

MM: Huh?

FS: Did it, did the sake taste like the real thing?

MM: I don't think anything wrong. Was good! Yeah, good. We make sake into more like a wine because they make from juice. We enjoyed that one. We hide them underneath the beds. Couple of times the sergeant, the policeman they came. They (inaudible) they know whatever you hide.

FS: Oh

MM: Oh yeah.

FS: The guards knew all along.

MM: Oh, they watching us. We not suppose to make wine, yeah. So they know we made wine, yeah. They came they take us.

FS: Did they take away the ones that they found?

MM: Oh yes. (laughter) Oh yeah.

EM: They took the (inaudible) yeah.

FS: Oh, I see. In other words they confiscated the sho-chu jar?

MM: Oh, yes!

FS: Oh, I see. Okay. Are there any other things you remember about Honouliuli?

MM: Oh yeah, I was very busy. I was a doctor's helper. Dr. Uchida, Dr. Dima, Dr. Uyeda, you know, who's a captain.

FS: (Simultaneous dialogue)

MM: Yeah.

FS: Is this in Honouliuli?

MM: (inaudible) That's why I was really busy. I work ah dispensary, yeah. How many guy died. How many guy sick (inaudible) most (inaudible) hospital so. Oh yes, I was just a busy, busy man.

EM: Ask him for the medicine.

MM: Because ah, If I'm gonna get any medicine. I got a headache. Okay, (inaudible) aspirin. I get stomach ache, okay, just tell him, you know. Just all you get everything.

FS: Castor oil?

MM: Yeah. (laughter) (Inaudible) they call. Castor oil, you know.

FS: Oh, I see.

MM: Yeah, so easy (inaudible) I was the one doctor's helper and Dr. Uchida use to call me, "Matsumoto, customer." And I go there and say, "What happened?" and they say oh my stomach bother me. Okay, here you are. (inaudible) Headache, oh okay, here's the aspirin. (inaudible) idea anyway.

FS: Oh, there was no other kind of medicine?

MM: Oh, no.

FS: Oh. How many people died in that facility?

MM: I think because of me, only couple, yeah. Only couple, I remember. That's the way. I don't remember the name, but.

FS: Were any patients taken out of Honouliuli to see the doctor?

MM: (simultaneous dialogue) I think they did. You know why. They are mo busy. Because ah after time uh prisoners of war many of (inaudible). 300, 400 prisoners they came out here. So we are just busy, busy.

FS: So serious illnesses were any patients taken outside to regular doctors?

MM: Yes, ah I know Dr. Kaneshiro (inaudible) toothache okay we're going to pay for Dr. Kaneshiro. You gotta go outside because we don't have any, Dr. Kaneshiro. Dr. (inaudible), Dr. Gima...

EM: There were three doctors: Dr. Uchida, Dr. Gima and Dr. Kaneshiro

MM: Oh yeah, Captain (inaudible) was a commander and a doctor. He's a great...

FS: How much did you get paid?

MM: Pays the question, you know that. You suppose to get about sixteen dollars or over. I don't know. I have plenty money. I have about 700-650 dollar war bond plus about \$3000 cash money, I had.

FS: All, all money that you earned (simultaneous dialogue) in the camp?

MM: In the camp.

FS: You earned all that money?

MM: No,(inaudible) I earned...

EM: Outside

MM: Outside.

FS: Oh, that's money that you had with you when you were arrested?

MM: Here.

FS: How long were you at Honouliuli?

MM: Yeah, I was there for two years. I'm not really sure, about two years.

FS: What happened after that?

MM: They was saying they going close camp. We going all (inaudible) you know to Tule Lake. Yes, yes, we going with military (inaudible) Seattle, Tule Lake, yes. Then we will stay Tule Lake until the war end.

FS: How was the trip going to the mainland?

MM: (inaudible) I don't care. They kept most of us 99% down the bottom of the boat. And then ah one or two hours a day take us upstairs and sun bath, down the bottom again, yeah. So I don't get nothing (inaudible) they feed us. I don't remember anything, but I never suffa or anything. I enjoyed the boat ride.

FS: When you reached the mainland, did you go right away to Tule Lake?

MM: Yeah, they took us to Seattle we landed there. Right away train was waiting there. They put us in the train. You know why, they don't wanna see us. Get apple on the ground all over there, nobody picking up. And we have to give money to the guard so they give you apples. I remember that we had to pay money to get apples from the guards.

FS: Then you ate apples.

MM: Oh yes, the apple is delicious.

FS: From the ground?

MM: From the ground. (laughter)

FS: While you were waiting at the station.

EM: In the train, yeah.

MM: In the train waiting. You cannot get out the train so you gotta ask MP to go get for us. We gotta give some money, yeah.

FS: Oh, you had to pay them.

MM: Yeah, you gotta pay that's about it. We gave, I know I gave some money and ate a couple apple I remember that. A really tasty apple.

FS: And so you went by train to Tule Lake?

MM: Train to Tule Lake, yes. We, we just think that Saturday we get up- Saturday. I take train to us, you know why because Tule Lake, in there was a, I remember the train track, train

passing many times they take us to there because we are group of a about 90 and I like Mr. Sumida.

FS: That's fine. When you landed at Tule Lake, was there anyone to greet you?

MM: Yes, they already waiting for us. But they put in ah small sack, I don't know why they did that. They divided half-half. Sumida-san, us . They sew us prison caps, *karaboshi* there. They did say you guys (inaudible) going get this in there you know.

FS: Who told you that?

MM: Guard. I remember that clearly.

FS: How did you like the housing compared to Honouliuli?

MM: You can trust United States I don't believe how they did, how fast they made, you know so many hundred houses. Why, you gonna be at least (cough) at least not like Hawaii you know. There is a winter, is a you know the ice hanging there, yeah America made hundred houses. They made waiting for us.

FS: What time of the year was it?

MM: We get there (inaudible) because the winter came later, yeah. Late summer time, I think.

FS: Now you're in Tule Lake. Did you do any kind of work? Did you go to school? What did you do?

MM: We get to Tule Lake. If I work, I know I was Japanese school teacher. I work I know that, but yeah maybe. Few days after we get the sack and then the Japanese men came. Mr. Matsumoto I know your older brother is teaching Japanese school. How about you, you can teach Japanese school? At least I'm a High School graduate. I can teach.

FS: Excuse me. Was your brother there too at Tule Lake?

MM: Yeah, yes he was there before me.

FS: So in other words you joined him then, didn't you?

MM: Yes

FS: Is there any kind of work you did?

MM: Well, many of them gotta go to work, yeah they work (inaudible) They gotta raise ah vegetables, clean the yard like that. After I became a Japanese school teacher, they give us something like sixteen dollar a month, yeah. (inaudible) Till the end of war I was teaching Japanese school.

FS: How were your students? Were they good students?

MM: (laughter) You don't believe it some of the students is older than me. (laughter) Not like teaching the little kids, you know. Those guys, ah yeah they were 20, 30 years old and hardly speak Japanese. They came and told me your brother teaching Japanese school. How about you? I said okay, I go. So I teach. Yes.

FS: Do you remember anything else? From that Tule Lake experience? For example, there were a lot of incidents. You know some Tule Lake is well known for its violence.

MM: Yes ah . What is it, wasshoi, wasshoi, wasshoi. You know (inaudible) Japan win the war, wasshoi, wasshoi early in the morning. We are not political. I don't want that kind. I can see that my brother was (inaudible)

FS: So your brother was one of those people.

MM: I can see my brother was...

EM: He was the one that said Japan won the war.

MM: Yeah.

FS: You were not.

MM: I'm not, I'm not (inaudible).

FS: You never participated in then any of the things.

MM: Yes I never, I'm a good man. I never, I don't know.

FS: I see. Do you remember the loyalty questionnaire?

MM: Eh?

FS: The loyalty questionnaire? The one that asks you, if you would pledge loyalty and to the United States and

MM: Yes I, it's only over here I think. Only over here Immigration Station (inaudible) Some kind of questionnaire.

FS: Didn't they ask you that at Tule Lake? (simultaneous dialogue)

MM: Tule Lake, I don't think so. I don't think so.

FS: Then you are not a party to any of the incidents and...

MM: I am not.

- FS: Do you know of anyone who was involved?
- MM: Yes, hundreds of them, including my brother, wasshoi, wasshoi, Japan win, Japan win. Stupid. I don't get it.
- FS: Did your brother get into trouble?
- MM: We were living together, you know. I am a first colony, then my brother living on the side so...
- MM: I hardly talk to him. (simultaneous dialogue)
- EM: He's a quiet guy.
- MM: Yeah, my brother he decided to go after the war ended, then Congress came. Where ever they take you go. And then, I heard he went Japan. Yes, I said (inaudible) don't every think that way so I said. "Why". I said well just go straight to west (inaudible) Hawaii. Right there we have mountain, rich aunty there they are waiting, you talk to them. And then you like go Japan, go ahead Japan. Several time I told and discussed about Japan but he never listen.
- FS: Is this your older brother?
- MM: Yeah, only one older brother.
- FS: I see, I see.
- MM: Yes, one day he came and he said, "Oh I going Japan." [I said] "Stupid thing you do. You know Japan lost the war." He doesn't believe Japan lost the war. That's the trouble.
- EM: He thought Japan won.
- MM: When he went back to Japan, my father told him, "You stupid, how come you come back? You no more head!" But uh, too late.
- FS: Okay, now let's come back to you. Why did they send you back to Hawaii? Or did they send you back to Hawaii?
- EM: No, they didn't want to come back to Hawaii (simultaneous dialogue)
- MM: They lost the war. I don't want to see Japan. I don't want already, yeah. I decided, no, I'm not going back. They talk about Tule Lake Camp closed all over. You are free to go. Any place you like go, we take you go. But, that time they no give the money. And then the money they gave you later on they gave \$30,000 (inaudible) After that. Half the time anybody where ever you want they take you go. That's the order was. I remember (Ori?)

and them. No more money. No where to go. Just gotta depend on government to take us back Hawaii. ((Tule lake camp closes))

FS: Why did you decide not to come back to Hawaii right away?

MM: Well, main thing I had \$650 war bond, I had \$3000 money cash in my pocket.

FS: You never spent that money?

MM: No place to spend the cash anyway. Then they came war is over. You are free to go. We take you go. Yeah, I said, "Okay." How many guys, young men, what do you want to do? Well, we no more money. We just gotta go back Hawaii. Then Matsumoto what do you do? All that. I get the money. What I think of. Heh, all of a sudden then, they look at me they said, "Matsumoto, go up to New York."

FS: Somebody suggested that you go to New York?

MM: Well, somebody suggested, I remember one priest, Buddhist priest was going to Chicago or New York. (inaudible)...next house, so he talk to us. The church opening he is going to Chicago, anyway. (inaudible) Let me see, adventure but ah, take a chance to go New York.

FS: And you went all by yourself to New York?

MM: That's right. All by myself. One year and two months.

FS: What about the ticket?

MM: (laughter) Ticket? Six feet long, (inaudible) they gave me. (inaudible) Seattle, I think. Seattle to Northern Pacific, do ko ma de ka na? Anyway, Chicago, all ticket different you know.

FS: Train tickets?

MM: Train tickets. (EM laughing)

FS: Why did they give you that? Did they give it out to everyone?

MM: Don't ask me that. They gave me the ticket.

FS: But you said the ticket was a long one.

MM: Yeah, long ones.

FS: You had several destinations then, on the ticket?

MM: Sure, because from Tule Lake get out and Seattle right there I need the bus ticket, then ah Northern Pacific (inaudible) the ticket. Then Chicago I gotta give another ticket, then um, you know, haha good fun! I was a young man so good fun! I never thought of trouble. I was young boy I enjoyed that, honest.

FS: When you reached New York, what did you do?

MM: (laughter) I get to New York. There is a church. You know, church is a many fact very important because after the war over, (inaudible) I got some place to stay. Some kind of church, anyway I went there and she said okay you can come. Anyway, small amount, (inaudible) you pay only that much then you can stay. 'Cause you gotta eat, in the morning they have cookies or something, coffee (inaudible) Other than that you gotta go out and eat, yes.

FS: What did you do for a living for that period of time?

MM: Well, no question about I got the money.

EM: (laughter)

FS: Didn't you have to work?

MM: Honest, (laughter) you don't believe this, just walk in restaurant then uh any job for me? And he said, "You speak English?" "Yes." "Okay, come right in." I didn't get to ask I was in there.

FS: Which restaurant?

MM: (Dempseys??) (Simultaneous dialogue with EM) Yes, I remember I work over there three four months. Then we move. Why, because Yankee Stadium then you gonna go back and (inaudible) So we moved to east side.
(Mrs. Matsumoto: Morris worked at famous restaurants as waiter, bus boy, wash dishes. Jack Dempseys.)

FS: Just you or the whole (simultaneous dialogue)

MM: (inaudible) Oh yes, by myself.

FS: You found another job, then?

MM: Oh yeah, all over. How many job I take.

FS: After Jack Dempsey's restaurant, where did you go?

MM: So many restaurant I went I don't remember. ((I worked as waiter, busboy, dishwasher.))

FS: I see, I see.

MM: You know half of the time I got the money. It's not that I really need the money. So many time, you know, Central Station 5 cents you know, same thing the bus ride 5 cents. Catch the bus go all the way to Coney Island. How many time I went Coney Island to (sigh) those days you won't believe it. I got the money. I enjoyed it.

FS: So you were only at restaurants?

MM: Restaurant, yeah. I work about three, four restaurants I remember (inaudible) I remember because famous (inaudible) I remember. Other one...

FS: But they were all in New York?

MM: All in New York, right in the city (inaudible) (laughter) I'm a good man and enjoyed it. Stay there one year and two months. (inaudible)

FS: Where did you go after that?

MM: One year two months. Oh yeah, we enjoyed over there, you know. Somebody came told me, "Morris, no stay too long." One year or more because you stay here just like Tokyo you stay there Tokyo one year and two year. You no can get out. And ah you already one year so might as well get out because New York is a big town and they spoil you so you no can get out." And I think so because I enjoyed it. I stay here one year two month s.

FS: Did you spend a lot of free time going around visiting and touring the state?

MM: I met ah some of my friends from Tule Lake. But the lady (inaudible) The lady came our house in Honolulu later when I was married. Remember? Came Hawaii, yes.

FS: Where else did you go after New York?

MM: (inaudible)

FS: Were you going, were you coming home?

MM: Yeah

FS: I see. When did you decide to come home from New York?

MM: No ask me. I stay one year and two months New York. Don't know why I decided to come back. But, one thing sure somebody told me, this kind big town eh you get out. *Bumbai* [or else] you cannot get out. So I decided after one year and a half, one year and two months in New York, I decided come back.

FS: Did you still have your tickets?

EM: No.

MM: Come back time, you know why

EM: You went to several states (inaudible) (simultaneous dialogue)

MM: I went (inaudible) here and there. I come back straight to Hawaii.

FS: I see. I see. Then along the way you visited some places until you got to where?

EM: San Francisco

MM: Yeah, I stopped at Reno and San Francisco. Then, then I know I'm travel because uh train is only once a week. If you run out of food you cannot get out right away. The ship is, well I never went to one but see, one ship take you one month to go Japan, I mean Hawaii and uh come back.

FS: I see.

MM: So what do you want to do? (inaudible) I said, "Well, wait for the plane betta."

FS: Who were you talking to?

MM: I talk to, I don't remember. Somebody at the airplane ticket. (inaudible) yes, we the job for you, but available seat [sic]. You gotta sit down wait, okay. Be sure you want \$260 one way ticket. So

FS: And so you paid for your ticket and then waited?

MM: I had \$260 no touch then ah. I don't think I work at San Francisco.

Side B

FS: While you were waiting in San Francisco for your plane flight, what did you do?

MM: (laughter) (inaudible) The cheapest place you can stay that's it because Pan American told me yes we can book for you, but (inaudible) only one airline and ah if you like go back in the boat you gotta wait maybe one month, you know. (cough) So all I can do is money, time (inaudible) so I said, "Okay, cheapest place I can stay." I don't remember the name anyway, cheapest place I can stay, maybe one whole day I can spend ten dollars that including the food and the stay.

FS: What kind of work did you do to earn money?

MM: I don't have to work I guess I have \$3000 in pocket, but ah time is very important because \$260 plane fare going to cost you. If you wait ah boat you gotta wait maybe one

month. (cough) So I went to one of the, you don't know San Francisco cheapest hotel.
(laughter) What they call that? (inaudible) Cheapest place you gotta stay long as possible.

FS: Where did you work?

EM: No. He didn't work.

MM: You gotta stand by wait.

FS: Oh, oh.

MM: Plane, my plane might be more. Plane guy said, "You keep \$260 wait until we call you."
Only one primary complaint was there, see. So if I gotta hang on to my money I cannot
go out work.

FS: I see, okay. Then when you finally got your flight...

MM: Yes.

FS: to Hawaii...

MM: Then I call reservation. Mr. Matsumoto we have a seat for you. You sure you have \$260?
I said, "Oh, okay."

FS: So you had to save a lot of money before your flight?

MM: Oh yes. (inaudible) Money make. I know we make money. One time million dollar we
had.

FS: Okay, now from San Francisco then you came back to Hawaii and what did you do when
you came back?

MM: (laughter) No place to go anyway. I don't have father and mother only the place I call my
aunt. So I started back to (inaudible) father.

FS: I see.

MM: It was around September, October.

FS: What year, 1940--

MM: What do mean that 1940? ((Met 1940 Japan. 2nd time Honouliuli '40.))

FS: Because the war ended in 1945. The newer...

MM: We back in '47, two year later. Yeah '47

FS: So you came back in 1947?

MM: '46 I think. After '46 I come back.

FS: I see.

MM: '47 I (inaudible)

FS: I see.

MM: (inaudible)

FS: Okay, okay. Now you, do you have anything to say about your redress and the compensation that you got from the government?

MM: Yes, government gave us \$30,000, that's everybody, not only me, to all internee. (inaudible) They made mistake I know (inaudible) and uh to compensate \$30,000.

FS: Do you feel that you deserved the money?

MM: (inaudible) I never think of (inaudible) I got the money and uh I enjoyed the life. I've been traveling (inaudible) I really enjoyed and so bonus. I don't know.

FS: Did you see it? Did you see the internment experience as an adventure?

MM: (cough) (inaudible) You can say that I enjoyed it. (inaudible) I really

FS: Okay. Then did you retire as a watercress farmer?

EM: Oh no. (laughter)

MM: (inaudible)

FS: What did you do after you worked at the watercress farm?

EM: He worked at the first supermarket across McKinley High School?

MM: No, (inaudible)

EM: Mr. Evans. ((He was delivering vegetables to town after the war.))

MM: ((Then I met Elsie in Japan. So I went to the Kameoka's house in Honolulu. I deliver watercress and vegetables from neighbors to the market early every morning. I went every morning except Saturday and Sunday.))

EM: Because his mom and my mother, were cousins.

MM: That is why I came to her house and met her family September October. We got married next year, July.

EM: You mean the restaurant with three partners

MM: We was going to start the restaurant ((after marriage)), a small restaurant down Kakaako. As the time (inaudible). Yes. We going to start a restaurant. ((We had 1 restaurant and another store regular food, restaurant, pinball machine, etc.))

FS: I see. So you retired as a restaurant owner?

EM: (simultaneous dialogue with MM)

MM: Yes, sold two stores and went to Japan to see cherry blossoms. We took five cases each of things to Japan. Owner yes, owner start, but uh. Maybe one week I go help.

EM: We sold our two stores and went to Japan to see cherry blossoms.

MM: We sold, you know why uh (inaudible) restaurant, a small restaurant, not night time business, and then next door boss, Mr. Evans. Remember, next door to our restaurant, I met one guy, haole guy, he said he go start supermarket. First supermarket, Kapiolani Supermarket. Oh, this is a chance. Evan said, "Can I get a job for you?" Oh yeah you are nice man,(inaudible) I'm the first uh first employee Kapiolani Supermarket. Yes.

FS: Did you stay in the job until you retired?

MM: No, I stayed five years? You stay around only five years and he retired and went back to Seattle. So I quit. I worked until then.

EM: (simultaneous dialogue)

MM: Yeah I serve until two three years up and then. Then a big fortune came. One lady came. I met her. How I met, I don't know. Japanese lady, and husband, haole. She drive truck (inaudible) Borden Cheese. The lady said, "My husband is in danger from drinking alcohol. Is there any chance you can buy out us? So yeah, how much? Thousand two hundred dollars, something like that. Okay, that's how fortune started.

FS: Oh, you started a business?

MM: Yes, I bought the Borden Cheese distributor. Yeah, I started only two truck and then six truck, later more trucks and workers. Yeah, we were doing a million dollar month. (inaudible) So were doing good business. And my sons helped too. Now I took it easy and went golf three times a week.

EM: He retired at 65.

MM: Yeah, (inaudible) I asked. How's the money in the bank. She said, "I think we have three million dollars in the bank. That's it. We quit. Yeah, that's it. We sold right away our business and Borden Company.

EM: We traveled.

MM: We traveled. We traveled around the world.

EM: We went around the world. (laughter)

MM: Japan, thirty times. We got sick and pau travel.

EM: We even climbed Mt. Sinai.

MM: Yeah.

FS: An adventure all the way huh?

EM: Yes.

MM: Yeah. We enjoyed the retirement very much.

EM: The good luck. Three years ago we went Japan for the thirtieth time. We got pneumonia and that was the end of our trips.

FS: Okay, now you seem to have had a very full life, you know and it's so interesting, but do you have any message or last words to give to the younger generation? Is there anything you would like to say to them?

MM: (laughter)

EM: Be adventurous. (laughter)

MM: Well first you know you gotta make money. You run broke you cannot do anything. Yes. Life can be like art, we are so fortunate-wedding, nice girl, married we have all the money two million dollars we have.

EM: And now we live in Pohai Nani, for six years.

MM: Yeah. (simultaneous dialogue)

EM: We enjoy.

MM: They feed you. Clean the room for you.

FS: That's wonderful.

MM: We are lucky. We are lucky, anyway.

FS: I see.

EM: We have good children, good grandchildren. We have four great grandchildren. Life has been really good to us.

FS: That's good. All right, well thank you very much for telling us at least your of your internment experience. This will become a very important part of our collection. Thank you.

EM: Thank you. (laughter)