

JAPANESE CULTURAL CENTER OF HAWAII

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Carol Kuroda (CK)

February 21, 2015

Interviewer: Melvin Inamasu (MI)

Notes: Comments in brackets [] are by the transcriber. Inaudible words or sections are identified by ((?)) in the transcript. This transcript has been lightly edited for readability.

CK: I didn't know very much about how my parents felt about the camp because they never talked about it. They never said anything negative. After the war, they never spoke about it. And somehow, you had the sense they didn't want to talk about it and at that time we were not that interested in it. And, of course, I didn't tell my friends, I mean, that I was at an internment camp until, I think, maybe at college. Well, one friend knew it.

MI: It may be easier for you to talk about it because...

CK: Because yeah...

MI: But they never did.

CK: No. I mean...

MI: It's not unusual.

CK: Maybe it was to protect us to having all these negative thoughts, but they never mentioned anything about it.

MI: I don't think it's important to you [to?] protect you. I think it fits, it never came to a point in their lives where they could, you know, talk about it, but it's not unusual, more difficult to talk about it.

CK: It was very traumatic.

MI: Yes.

CK: So...

MI: This is a summary that you prepared?

CK: Right, so this is my father's history.

MI: So, can I keep it?

CK: Yeah.

MI: Thank you.

CK: This is some of my memories (laughter) which I have put things down.

MI: Okay and these, is it all right to share these publicly or...?

CK: I guess so.

MI: Because sometimes people we don't intend to share things that tends to be public, and we want to make sure you wanted to do things you want.

CK: My cousin's wife is with the—what is it, the Japanese Cultural Center in Los Angeles?

MI: Umm, the Japanese American Center or something.

CK: And so, I think she was...

MI: She was your cousin?

CK: My cousin's wife. She was born in one of the relocation camps because...

MI: What was the name?

CK: Ahh, I forget what her maiden name is. She, I think, was somewhere like Heart Mountain? We talked on the phone, and I didn't jot it down so I can't remember exactly but, so she doesn't, she was born in camp, I mean "relocation camp." What's her maiden name? (Laughter) I can't think of it.

MI: I have a former classmate, well, college roommate.

CK: Uh huh.

MI: Who was born in camp Tule. Why don't we start officially.

CK: Uh huh. I lost my train of thought.

[Note: Interview "officially" begins at this point.]

MI: That's okay. Let's start officially. Today is February 21, 2015. I'm just going to talk. We're at the Japanese Cultural Center [of Hawaii] doing the interview today. Could you give us your name and date of birth?

CK: Carole Kinko Kuroda. Maiden name was Mayeda. [Born] February 24, 1935.

MI: 1935 and the names of your parents and same thing [for] maybe siblings, brothers and sisters?

CK: My father's name, legally, was Yoshihisa Mayeda.

MI: How do you spell Mayeda?

CK: M-A-Y-E-D-A. My mother's name was Haruko. My father was an *Issei*, my mother was a *Nisei*. I had one older sister, Loretta Tomoko Mayeda. There's just the two of us.

MI: Okay. Do you know what part of Japan your parents came from?

CK: My father came from Kumamoto. I think Kumamoto. I know in the Crystal City records that they have, I think it said Ikeda-cho, in Kumamoto City.

MI: Okay, so we are here to interview you today about your and your family's experience, specifically in respect to Crystal City. Also, most the interviews start with December 7, but you're free to start any place. If you want to, you can tell us how...

CK: I remember my father. We were living on Molokai at that time.

MI: I see.

CK: My father was a Japanese ((?)). They had a two-room school, Japanese school.

MI: So, he was an instructor?

CK: He was like the principal.

MI: Principal. What was the name of the school?

CK: It was in Kualapuu, Molokai. I don't know what the official Japanese school name was, but it was in Kualapuu, Molokai. And my mother was—he was teaching the upper grades and my mother was teaching the primary grades. So, I think it was just the two [of them].

MI: From the time, do you know when they came to Hawaii?

CK: Oh, gee...

MI: They came as teachers or...

CK: No. My father came when he was about 18 or something because his father had died. His mother and two sisters were living here. And so, at eighteen because his father died, he came here.

MI: To join the mother and the siblings?

CK: Right. And so, he became like the father of the family.

MI: How did the family end up split?

CK: I don't know. He had a sister in Japan also. She had been older than he was.

MI: So, he came here to join the family but was he already a teacher of...?

CK: No. He was just finishing high school in Kumamoto City. And so, because, you know, his father passed away, he came, and kind of took over the family because he had a mother and two sisters who were born here in Hawaii.

MI: Do you have any pictures? So, his mother was already a citizen?

CK: No. I don't know if they were citizens.

MI: What, the daughters had children?

CK: The children are. The sisters are because they were born here in Hawaii.

CK: He met my mother, oh, I don't know when they got married in the 1930s. But my mother had gone to Japan to get educated so she was more fluent in Japanese, and she can even write Japanese more than English. She was more fluent in Japanese than in English.
(Laughter)

MI: And what was she [doing before getting married]?

CK: I don't know what she was doing before she got married. But after she got married, from Molokai, I guess, my father, well we were born in Kona, Hawaii.

MI: Okay.

CK: And he was teaching Japanese school there also. So, after they got married, my mother moved to Kona. And, so we were, I don't know if she was teaching Japanese school at that time because we were little at that time yet. I only remembered from Molokai.
(Laughter)

MI: Okay, okay.

CK: Because after Kona, we moved to Molokai. I don't remember how I was, maybe four years. I can remember things four or five years old. Then December 7 [1941] I remember very vividly.

MI: You're on Molokai on December 7th? Okay.

CK: And I can remember, I can remember, it was dark, it was evening, yeah.

MI: This is the night of December 7th?

CK: Right, right.

MI: Had you heard on the radio what had happened in the morning?

CK: Well, maybe my parents did, but, you know...

MI: You didn't understand.

CK: I don't remember hearing. But I do remember him walking out the door with two men who came to take him. And we were in the back of the room, and it was dark, we just saw him leaving. It was the last time I saw him until we went to camp.

MI: After years later though...

CK: Uh huh. My mother might have seen him, you know. I don't know where he was on Molokai, but her brother came so they must have gone, I don't know where. But she never talked about it, you know. And when school was over, we moved to Honolulu, and we were with the maternal grandparents.

MI: That would have been in '42 or somewhere...

CK: War broke out in 1941. So '42, right, June. And at that time, father was at Sand Island.

MI: Did you get to see him at Sand Island?

CK: No.

MI: No communications.

CK: I think my mother...

MI: Any communications?

CK: No, I think my mother did, but she didn't take us.

MI: Okay.

CK: Because I remember at Santa Fe, they made rings out of the toothbrush handles. And I have one and my sister has one. I was looking for it and I couldn't find it. (Laughter)

MI: Go back and find it.

CK: I know it's around here.

MI: He made it at Sand Island and ...

CK: Or I assume he made it, but my mother came back and gave that to us. And my sister's one is kind of cracked. But we still kept it. But I have it, but I couldn't find it. And, ah, I then think in the *Ganbare* book, it tells you when he left for the mainland. Oh, then on August 6, 1942, he was sent to Lordsburg, New Mexico. He was in the fifth group that left, went to the mainland according to the book.

MI: He's written up in the one of the books?

CK: In the *Ganbare* one. His name is listed in the back.

MI: Okay.

CK: But he was in his late 30's. He was 37 years old on December 7th. So, he was one of the younger ones. And so, from December 1942, he petitioned to have the family join him.

MI: And it took him about how long?

CK: So, December, '42, '43.

MI: So, two years.

CK: Two years. And these are all from the Archives.

MI: Does the family have any of the original documents?

CK: I have the Archives documents, but the copies of it. So again, August 1943, oh, June '43 he went to Santa Fe camp, internment camp. Then in August '43 he put in another petition. Then in January [1944] he had to declare loyalty to Japan, you know that...

MI: In order to get back.

CK: I think so and I think that...

MI: Talked to because he had choices.

CK: I think Crystal City was started, like a—they were going, meant to, ah,..

MI: Sort of like exchange prisoners.

CK: Sort of exchange of prisoners, right. And so, January 26, '44, there was a document where he declared his loyalty to Japan.

MI: Let me go back. So, on December 7, 1941, the cops picked him up and took him away.

What happened to the family from December 7, 1941?

CK: Well, my mother had to support us, right?

MI: Because she had been working...

CK: I don't know what she was doing.

MI: She was not a teacher there?

CK: Well, the Japanese schools were closed [she had been a teacher]. There was and it was really hard for her.

MI: You don't know, off-hand, how she supported the family?

CK: I think she did go to work, but we were going to school, and we only saw her in the evenings, after school.

MI: So, life for you and your sister didn't change that much [without your father] after that?

CK: Well, not really, except I don't know how it is. Like, one family from Kualapuu had become very, very good friends and I have a feeling they were befriended by this family. There were other families who did not, kept away from our family, you know...

MI: Because of your father?

CK: Because my father was interned. What I called "arrested."

MI: Were you aware and felt it as a child?

CK: Well, not really because I was only, what, '42, 6 years old. But we hardly ever saw other people, you know, coming to our house or interacting with other people in the community. It was more or less school, home. And so, in thinking back, I think this one family helped my mother because they've been lasting friends since then. And I did hear this of this family in Japan that would not—like guilt by association and they stayed away. So, there was hardly any interaction with the other people in the community.

MI: Was that a change or was it all before that a change?

CK: That was a change.

MI: It was a change.

CK: Yes. Because the Japanese school was like a—they did things for the, to the gathered groups, community things, and...

MI: That went away.

CK: So that went away.

MI: Partly because there was no school anymore.

CK: Yeah, school was closed. So, I don't know what my mother did and how she did but I remember one night she was crying. But that was only one night I could remember. But it was—it must have been really, really hard for her.

MI: Were you folks aware of who were being picked up like your father?

CK: Uh huh.

MI: Knowing what you know now, were there others?

CK: Yeah, probably all the ministers.

MI: Yeah. So, the families who had their fathers picked up, they did help each other out?

CK: Molokai was small, right? And the—I don't know if they even had a church in the community. I don't recall any church in the community. But most of the ministers and people with the consulate, whatever, connections were taken on December 7 because they had done this check-up...

MI: They were ready.

CK: Before the war. I think from 1930 something, no. I don't recall the year. So, on December 7, they knew exactly who they were going to pick up. So then, we stayed with my grandparents. And my grandparents had a...

MI: Wait, this is June of 1942?

CK: Right, after we moved out to Honolulu.

MI: Who were your grandparents?

CK: They had—her maiden name was Niki. They made, they had a factory named Niki Macaroni factory. (Laughter) They made *udon*.

MI: How do you spell that?

CK: Which one?

MI: The name.

CK: N-I-K-I. And so, my mother was working, you know, wrapping the dry noodles.

MI: This is her family?

CK: Yes, this is her family. So, my grandfather and my uncle made noodles, and they had this huge mixer. But the noodles would be cut by the machine. But then they would hang them by poles, and then, you know, they would put it out in the sun to dry. (Laughter) Then, everything was manually wrapped, this was the 40s. (Laughter) So this is the 40s. (Laughter)

MI: So did your folks ((?)) come the girls...

CK: Not really. I don't know whether we helped move the things when they took it out to dry and we moved it back in. I don't remember the things or not, but I remember all the things...

MI: So, okay, economically and you folks lived with them in their house?

CK: Right.

MI: Things stabilized when you came in June...

CK: Right.

MI: And then it was a matter of your mother trying to keep in touch with your father.

CK: Uh huh. Right.

MI: When the family could join...

CK: And so, we had a— my uncle and his family and used lived with the grandparents. So, it was blackout time, so we went to...

MI: You folks went to school here?

CK: Ah haa. We went to Kaahumanu School, walked to school and all that because of blackout. My aunt and my grandparent[s] were really good, my aunt, you know. We'd go out for ice cream, we would go to the park and have picnics, you know, things like that, so...

MI: So, you moved away from a different island. Did the people who you met, like classmates, your mother's friends, were they aware of the situation with your father's [internment]? That becomes an issue, as far as you were concerned as to friendships and that kind of thing?

CK: Well, I don't think, I don't know...

MI: So, moving away was good. You had a clean start. Friendships in school and that kind of thing?

CK: Well, I don't think so. I don't know.

MI: School, in a sense, moving away was good. You got a clean start here.

CK: Umm huh. Well, the school we were going to on Molokai was out of the community, so we had to catch a bus. It was an English school, so we had to catch a bus. I don't remember any friends because it was only half a year or one year. I don't remember any friends from Molokai, at all. Kaahumanu, I don't remember anything either.

MI: No incidents or anything like that.

CK: No. Just the typical war life. You go to school with a gas mask, all those kinds of things. (Laughter)

MI: What kind of gas masks?

CK: Ah, I was in second grade - third, part of fourth - so we had to take the gas mask to school, they had all these bomb shelters, right, and everything. (Laughter)

MI: So, your grandparents had a bomb shelter at home?

CK: No, no, not there but in the school area. They were selling, remember, the government was selling bonds but then you could buy these stamps for 10 cents.

MI: Uh huh.

CK: We used to paste them in a booklet...

MI: Yes, once it was full, you could think about it.

CK: So, we used to buy these stamps in school and add to the book. (Laughter) Once a year they had a gas mask drill to see whether...

MI: At school.

CK: Right.

MI: Everyone had to put the gas mask on...

CK: There must have been teargas was in the room, and you had to walk through (laughter), you know.

MI: When you folks moved here in the summer of 1942, did you get to see Pearl Harbor or anything like that?

CK: Um huh [Commentary indicating "No"] So I really didn't know what the impact of December 7 was here.

MI: Separate islands so...

CK: And, of course, we didn't really keep up with the news and read the paper and things.

MI: Okay. Life went on pretty normal for two years or so.

CK: Uh huh.

MI: Was your mother telling you that she was trying to make it so you could join your father?

CK: No.

MI: You didn't know anything about your father?

CK: She never said anything.

MI: Then all of a sudden she said, "We're going to join your father."

CK: Yes.

MI: And that is about when?

CK: About December of '44, no, I guess November 1944.

MI: November '44.

CK: But she did write in cleaning out my mother's room, I found a letter from my father. That's the only one. What he said was please teach the Japanese language, you know, to us when you have time. So, he said, you can't develop a future without knowing the Japanese language because the assumption was that we were going back to Japan after the internment.

MI: Did he indicate why he wanted to go back to Japan? Look, it seemed to me in listening to other people, the purpose was to keep the family together. Do you have—was he patriotic to Japan and those were the reasons that he wanted to go back?

CK: Well...

MI: Or did he have the opportunity to have the family...

CK: I think that was basically what it is.

MI: To get the family together.

CK: He says that we would be better off to reunite at the earliest possible moment, and then

repatriation with Japan by the next exchange ship.

MI: Do you have that letter?

CK: Yeah. I just have the translation. So, if there is another exchange ship, we might have a better chance to be repatriated. The U.S. government may let us live together before the exchange ship sails.

MI: Now, by this time he is writing this letter, actually others have already gone.

CK: Right. And so, the letter concludes with, two years of our bitter experience will lead us to the good of our future. This is translated. And I guess they screen all of the correspondence...

MI: Were cut out...

CK: Right. And this particular passage was translated and put into....

MI: Oh, so you have a copy in the—you don't have the original letter that was cut out?

CK: The letter that I have I don't know if I have that.

MI: Could you bring it next time? We can photograph the...

CK: I don't know if I have that letter. Because this one [translation] I found through the Archives. Oh, in March, this was January 6, 1944, that he wrote the letter. Because in, oh, before that, he declared his loyalty to Japan. Then he sent this letter. Then March 22, he wrote...

MI: He was a citizen of Japan?

CK: Uh huh. He said, "Owing to the arrangement for the exchange ship, you might have to come to America sooner. So be prepared to come whenever the notice for departure comes to you." Then [it] says, then the sender states, he will repay his wife's family for their help. He says, "I firmly believe that the opportunity will come, and I declare this spring, the happy season with flowers blooming, will visit us again." This is the translation of the letter. So, November 24 we left for the mainland.

MI: How much time did you have to get ready to go?

CK: I really don't know but what I remember is we had to buy, you know, coats because this was wintertime. We, they had a family party before we left. (Laughter) And I think there were ten or eleven families that went in this last group, on the SS Matsonia, which was used as a troop ship.

MI: Did you go with the same group as the Fukudas and...?

CK: No, we went with the Matsuis.

MI: Oh, Matsuis, okay.

CK: Because they were on the ship.

MI: This was late...

CK: Yeah. And so, from, [When the party appears] so we arrived at San Francisco. Richard was staying at ((?)) Sharp Carp. We were staying at...

MI: In the city?

CK: Not in the city. We kind of isolated in an area. I don't know if there is a military camp or whatever it is. We were just in a group.

MI: In San Francisco, not Oakland?

CK" I guess it must have been San Francisco. Because I think the papers say San Francisco to Crystal City, by train. So, we departed on December 1. December 3, my father left Santa Fe to Crystal City. So, when we arrived in Crystal City...

MI: Oh, he was not in Crystal City?

CK: No, because he was in Santa Fe all this time.

MI: Spent most of the time...

CK: Only the families were there.

MI: In Crystal City. He didn't have a family.

CK: No, because we hadn't joined him yet. But when we arrived there, he was there and Crystal City grew on us.

MI: How did you get from San Francisco to Crystal City,

CK: Oh, by train.

MI: Train.

CK: And they had black porters during that time. It took several days. Whenever the train pulled into town, the station, they didn't want us to be seen so they had to pull all of the shades down. (Laughter) They [porters] were really nice to us. The porters were really nice to us. They let us off the train, sometimes. (Laughter)

MI: The porters go around closing all the shades? Okay.

CK: I remember the shades coming down.

MI: But he was in camp when you folks arrived?

CK: Yeah, when we arrived. According to this, he arrived December 5 in Crystal City, according to Archives paper. I don't know exactly what date we got there but the Crystal City community, the Japanese, had like a welcoming party.

MI: How did he [her father] appear to you from when you had last seen him in Molokai?

CK: He looked more or less the same.

MI: The same. Well nourished...

CK: My father was on the bigger side. (Laughter).

MI: ((?))

CK: He wasn't fat, but he had just a stocky build. And so, we were living, like in this one room hut or whatever...

MI: You had your own private—the family had their own private...

CK: Right. One room thing and later, we later moved to the duplex. And the Takeis, who were also on the list, came with us, were our neighbor next door because this was a duplex.

MI: Do you remember the names of the kids?

CK: Huh?

MI: For instance, do you remember the names of the Takeis?

CK: I remember the son's name was Yoshimitsu. The daughter's name was Junko. I don't know what the father's, but I'm sure...

MI: They were from Oahu also?

CK: I think so.

MI: I mean, they went all the way from the Matsonia down to...

CK: Uh huh. You have this, aah, this one (sheet) has all the names of the people who returned from Crystal City?

MI: Now, when you say, "Returned from Crystal City," what do you mean?

CK: The *Hawaii Times* in December 6 had this article.

MI: December 6. What year?

CK: 1945. It said that the people from Crystal City were coming back. So, it's going to be and it listed all the names on the ship, the Shawnee...

MI: This is the last group left over at Crystal City. They all left?

CK: Well, I don't know if they were the last group or the group that—the one that came back from the Shawnee.

MI: Okay, this is not your group?

CK: This is my group. This is our group.

MI: So, when you left, as far as you know, were there people or some of your friends who [were] left back there, Crystal City?

CK: I really don't know.

MI: Okay.

CK: But the funniest thing is I can't remember leaving Crystal City and how we got to and getting to Los Angeles, I guess. I don't remember any of that. I was really in, I know the ship was very crowded. Umm, of course, I was six at that time. (Laughter)

MI: Now this is the home trip.

CK: Home trip.

MI: Now, this ship, the Shawnee, came to Honolulu.

CK: Ah huh. It was a troop. I think it was a troop ship.

MI: So, you didn't repatriate in Japan?

CK: Right. Oh!

MI: You came to Honolulu.

CK: Oh.

MI: He (her father) changed his mind?

CK: Right. In August 30, 1945, he applied for non-repatriation.

MI: Why do you think he did that?

CK: Well, Japan had lost the, I mean, Japan lost the war, yeah, and the certificate of the reviewing officer denied it as the application had little or no merit.

MI: He was afraid to change to ((?))...

CK: For non-...

MI: They wouldn't let him.

CK: Right. And the reason...

MI: So, they kept him at Crystal City.

CK: Well, no, no. He, before we were all in Crystal City, okay. According to the Archives, on August 30, 1945, this paper where he had applied for non-repatriation said, "Application has little or no merit. Reason: Subject stated desire has been stated for repatriation until termination of the war." When he had the loyalty [to Japan] thing earlier. But he must have reapplied because, you know, the non-repatriation was approved, and we came back to Hawaii.

MI: How were you united? When did you come back?

CK: December 1...

MI: Sometime between August and December they had reconsidered the options.

CK: I don't know. Whether because my mother was a *Nisei* or so and there is no paper that confirms, you know. All the papers are not complete, whatever they had. So, we left Crystal City December 1 and moved to Los Angeles. And on December 4, (we) moved to Hawaii and this one said that as they were leaving, I think, on the second day but it does not state when they arrived because... So, I just found out that the ship arrived on December 10, 1945. At first I thought that this article simply came back, but...

MI: So, you were in Crystal City for, maybe one year?

CK: Exactly one year, just about.

MI: What do you remember things about Crystal City that you could tell us?

CK: I don't know. But when we first got there, we were enrolled in the English school because, you know, they had full-time English schools and then Japanese school afterwards.

MI: You had to choose one ((?))?

CK: But, and so, I don't know how soon after that, we were transferred to Japanese school.

hopefully for the most months, but for most of the day and I think that because at that time the feeling was that time we would be repatriated to Japan. So then, and being I was really put in the primary grade, (laughter) first grade or whatever and...

MI: Were you in first grade or were you last in first grade?

CK: No, because I was...

MI: They kept you back?

CK: Well, because I was in fourth grade. Because I was in fourth grade but then, in Japanese school you had to start all over again. All that I remember is the *katakana* (laughter), which I had learned in Japanese school because my mother, they didn't have babysitters like, I guess it must have been five or so and sitting in the back of the room. In the process, my mother was teaching *katakana* to the primary grades.

MI: Oh, you were waiting for your mother?

CK: Yeah, sitting in the back of the room.

MI: ((?))

CK: Right. She was teaching and [I was] listening.

MI: While waiting for your mother.

CK: Oh, I think we were so good. (Laughter) Yeah, we just sat there. I don't know how long the class was. (Laughter) So it was learning from scratch, I guess. But there was an excellent teacher, Kimura *Sensei*, from the Big Island of Hawaii. He was a really good teacher.

MI: What was his name?

CK: Kimura. I guess he was from the Big Island. He had grey hair, but he was the nicest teacher, you know. He was a good storyteller. (Laughter) You know how the Japanese taught morals through stories? We sang children's folk songs.

MI: Do you remember any of the stories he taught?

CK: Ah, nothing new, but I had a, you know, I had a small little book with all of the songs, with all of the Japanese songs copied in *hiragana*. I was looking for that, but I couldn't find it. I guess I should put all my things, internment things, in one place. (Laughter) I spent all day looking for it this morning. I do have all these children folk songs, like "Chi Chi Papa." All these children folk songs. All from this class and...

MI: By that time, they were, well, really organized.

CK: They were very, very well...

MI: Did you have outside teachers coming in, also?

CK: In the English school, they did. But the Japanese schools were from the community because there were lots of Japanese school teachers and ministers and so on.

MI: And you went to church on Sundays?

CK: No, I don't think we went to church. (Laughter)

MI: What about other activities in school?

CK: Well, they had other activities, youth kind of activities. I know they had Girl Scouts in camp, but we weren't, but I guess we weren't, that I don't know if they were Girl Scouts or Brownies or what it is or if that was just sewing class. But this is something I made. This is like a sample with all of the stitches.

MI: I'm not sure what the ((?)).

CK: And it had all the different stitches, like a...

MI: What does it say?

CK: These are the names of the stitches.

MI: Oh, the names of the stitches. Oh, I see.

CK: But with the *kanji* now, I can't read all the *kanji* any more. (Laughter)

MI: Interesting.

CK: I don't know whether I wrote it, or the teacher wrote it because the *kanji* is written so beautifully.

MI: Uh huh.

CK: But it's done on paper and stitched so this was...

MI: Oh, so that little piece is paper?

CK: Right, a piece of paper.

MI: Interesting.

CK: So, this is something I kept because, you know...

MI: Someday, if we can, these kinds of things—we have a professional photographer. If we can, someday, get online, come back and when we have the photographers and maybe take a photograph of it. It's interesting.

CK: So, yeah. So, this about the only thing I really have about camp. (Laughter)

MI: What's the other one?

CK: Well, I don't know when this was done. This is embroidery stitches, but I don't know when this was done.

MI: They taught you to do this later?

CK: This was done later after we came back, or this was done in camp.

MI: Interesting.

CK: So, that, you know, they had these weekend activities or things like that. The camp had movies, the Japanese movies. I don't know how they got the movies, though.

MI: They had sports or ((?)).

CK: Right, but we were too young for that. But it was like regular camp life. I mean, Christmas time they would have parties. They had community events every now and

then. Aah, we really didn't interact with the other Germans and Italians. It was more the Japanese community.

MI: Right, you weren't mingled a lot in the camp? They had their own...

CK: They were living in one section, but they did go—people who went to the English schools, knew them because they were there in school.

MI: In class.

CK: And in reading about the camps, uuh the Japs, uuh the Germans were not very well organized as the Japanese were.

MI: What about the numbers? Did they have enough of the numbers to organize?

CK: I think they had—oh, this is only for the Japanese. (Shuffling of papers in the background.) This is, I think JCCH has a copy of this. This is the original that my mother had, which I thought. It's all in Japanese. I have the translation some place. This is what the camp looked like. I think that Clifford showed you this.

MI: Where, who is the person who drew this thing?

CK: I don't know. I think that Clifford had this.

MI: Yeah.

CK: And this was Clifford's house. We lived near...

MI: But was he there when you were there? Or did he already come back?

CK: No, he was there.

MI: He was there.

CK: Right. We were somewhere over here. Right here.

MI: How did you get this?

CK: Oh, from Clifford.

MI: Okay.

CK: Oh, so that, this one shows Clifford's house, but it has the layout of the camp. He gave me a copy.

MI: Yeah, we're going to photograph a copy.

CK: And so, this one, let's see. I don't see the translation. It's stuck in the book. Because everything is in Japanese, I can't read. I can't read Japanese because we came back from—we did not go to Japanese school. My father said, "You're going to be an American citizen. You don't need the Japanese language anymore." So, we did not pursue the Japanese language. But this, what I remember, oh, you have the translation. Oh, here. This is the English translation of the contents in here.

MI: One of the—they had bylaws.

CK: Hmm. So, the whole camp organization is, I think, in here.

MI: And this the whole thing? I am not going to touch it. The whole thing, the English

translation of that?

CK: Right. This is the English translation of the index.

MI: Wow! That's real interesting. But the camp map is not this one?

CK: Well, I don't know. What date is this camp map?

MI: 14 or 15. Umm, between 14 and 15.

CK: 6, 7. Even the page numbers are in Japanese. (Laughter)

MI: It is amazing. They had bylaws for self-governance ...

CK: Is this the pens?

MI: It looks like it. So, is this something that you can bring back so that we can have someone photograph?

CK: Uh huh. And they have a copy of this, but I also have the copy on the CD.

MI: So, you don't have a complete English translation?

CK: Oh, no.

MI: Would you like to—it is so interesting.

CK: Yeah.

MI: But this is so interesting, I mean.

CK: Yeah.

MI: That they had bylaws and rules and things.

CK: And then...

MI: Are you the only one who had this?

CK: I'm sure the people in the camp had this.

MI: I see.

CK: But I did give Ron, what's his name? But someone here in the Resource Center and I showed him this copy and he made a copy.

MI: For ((?))

CK: Xerox copy.

MI: Yes.

CK: But if you want to make a better copy, I have the CD [Compact Disk] for this. Because I went to Kinko's to get it, copies.

MI: Scanned and...

CK: Right. So, this is a copy from Kinko's and this was, is the original copy. But from here, they have the list...

MI: I think you are very interested to have it translated.

CK: Right, from here on is a list of all the people, all the families who were there. This is ours. Mayeda. So, it listed the father, whatever, the children, the wife, and so on. This is where we were, the house number, so to speak...

MI: So, from that you made this? Who made this?

CK: Aah. This is Ron. I think Ron got somebody from here to do the translation.

MI: Just the title?

CK: Just the title because it's too long to go through this, the whole thing.

MI: It's so interesting to have, but...

CK: But right. For people like us who cannot read that, but—and so my mother had still kept this one thing and apparently they had newsletters in between with addendums. There was one with recipes. (Laughter) Real Japanese-style on the back. Oh yeah, so this had part of the translation. Oh, yeah, this was part of the attendant.

MI: It's real. That's amazing that they had it so well organized.

CK: Yeah.

MI: If they were all leaders, that ((?))

CK: But I guess the Japanese could tend to organize themselves in groups and they kind of worked together, but, I mean, it was run like a town, small town, in a sense because everything...

MI: If we can leave this bunch before. If Marcia is still there, I'm going to have her take a look at this and see anything. I think she would be very interested in this part.

CK: They must have had ((?)). This must have been about recipes. They were issuing these...

MI: You could cook, I mean if you had a recipe, you could make things on your own? You could get the ingredients and everything to cook these recipes?

CK: Yes, they had a store. I think they did the cooking in the house.

MI: Did you [have] one, a stove of your own?

CK: I think so. We didn't, didn't. In the beginning, I guess we went to the cafeteria but later when we moved to the duplex, it was something like a regular apartment.

MI: You didn't go out?

CK: We didn't go out.

MI: These are the back of, I'm not a ((?)). I am going to ask her to come in later on. That's the covered one. That's on the cover...

CK: Yeah. This the one Clifford has and I, oh, I wanted a copy of because I didn't have a map of the camp.

MI: Somewhere we have the name of the person who drew the...

CK: Yeah.

MI: He's an architect.

CK: Oh, is that someone in camp?

MI: Yes. You remembered any stories from the camp site? You were a little young. You remembered seeing any interesting things, like wildlife and things?

CK: Oh, yes. We used to play with the horned toads because they had lots of horned toads.

MI: A lot of horned toads pop into the camp?

CK: Yeah, because it was kind of a desert area, sandy. We were living close to the guard tower yeah, along the fence and so there were skunks outside. (Laughter) And apparently, when they were startled, you could smell, (laughter) the smell of the skunk coming through. (Laughter)

MI: What did it smell like?

CK: Not a very pleasant smell. (Laughter) But then, you know, we got whiffs of this. (Laughter)

MI: If that it's obvious to you, you smell this?

CK: The first year. I don't know when the trucks or something went by, it must have startled them and... (Laughter)

MI: What other kinds of wildlife?

CK: Umm, the horned toads, I remember. What else did they have? I know...

MI: Things we heard? Do you remember?

CK: But we didn't see them in the camp. Probably, that's things outside the camp, but I think the duplexes, between the duplexes was a long building. I don't know whether that was—it was like a community. I don't know whether it was a laundry room or whatever it is, but it was a long building, and the roof was like, triangular. And so, they used to play the game called alley-alley over. They'd throw the thing over the roof and then run around and catch it on the other side or something.

MI: Which building? Is that on the map?

CK: Let's see. Nothing, yeah. I wonder if that was [section] A. I thought it was in this Section C. I thought it was near our house. But it was a long building.

MI: Do you remember the swimming pool?

CK: No.

MI: You don't remember the swimming pool?

CK: We didn't go to the swimming pool.

MI: You knew there was a swimming pool?

CK: Not really.

MI: Really. Why?

CK: I guess our parents never took us there. (Laughter) And the Japanese school was here. Federal High School. I didn't know it was so close.

MI: So, you didn't explore the whole camp?

CK: Not really. We just kind of, school, home, played around in the neighborhood, played with friends, went to the community activities. I remember my sister's friends, but I don't remember any friends.

MI: Your sister was how old?

CK: My sister was...

MI: Was she younger or older?

CK: Older, she was about two years older than I am, I remember.

MI: She went to the English school?

CK: No, well, she also went to Japanese school. She probably knew more Japanese than I did, I mean. And I don't know if this was because I was put with the primary grades, the younger ones, that I didn't make sense. So, I remember her friends, but I just tagging along with her, all over the place. (Laughter) So I remember her friends, like....

MI: Wait, you made your own friends there?

CK: Not really.

MI: Really?

CK: I don't remember any friends. I mean so called....

MI: At a young age, you don't recall any friends?

CK: Yeah, we just played with whoever was around, yuh?

MI: But, so outside of school, but when you went back to your true friends, you just stayed with the family. You folks didn't play with other children?

CK: No. We played with the, with the...

MI: So aside from the ones who came back to Hawaii, ((?)) you don't remember, you don't have friends who from those days on the mainland?

CK: No. Like I remember Tomoko Izumi because she was my sister's friend. Yoshie Tamekuni, they were both from Hawaii. There was a girl who was from Seattle, but they were more my sister's age group and...

MI: Anyone who gave you trouble?

CK: No. So, it was like a normal life.

MI: For you, it was.

CK: Yeah. So...

MI: How was it for your parents?

CK: It was more stable there, but, you know, it must have been hard on them before.

MI: Were they happy that they made the decision to have you folks join the family?

CK: I think so. And I—so I really don't have any negative memories of camp.

MI: When you talk to the other people ((?)) they had similar experiences, or do you think this was because you were young or you had more pleasant experiences?

CK: I think the older ones...

MI: ((?))

CK: The older ones in high school or whatever, I think they have, they knew what, were more aware of what camp was and what was happening. And, you know, they can remember more of what, how they were treated before the war, after the war, in the camps.

MI: You didn't have any...

CK: Because it seemed like they do have some negative memories, yeah?

MI: You don't have any negatives memories?

CK: Actually ((?))

MI: Now, so when you folks came back to Hawaii, what did your parents do, first or...?

CK: Well, we went back to my grandparent's house.

MI: You didn't go back to Molokai?

CK: No. Then, my father had to look for a job. Apparently, he had learned how to cook when he was in camp.

MI: Did he cook for the family?

CK: Umm.

MI: I guess he had several years of, or no, he was...

CK: Because you know that he was in Santa Fe, right? And...

MI: That was cafeteria-style.

CK: Probably. So, that must be where he learned to cook because in Crystal City, I think he was teaching Japanese school. But I remember him saying something about how he learned how to bake from the Germans. So, I don't know whether Santa Fe had any Germans or not or it was here in Crystal City that he learned, you know....

MI: Okay, so he came back and was looking for a job. What did he end up doing?

CK: So, he, we started out in Kahuku sugar plantation.

MI: Wait, wait.

CK: He was the cook. Kahuku sugar plantation and so...

MI: Doing what?

CK: Well, he was the cook. He became the cook. He became the cook for the family. And so they provided a home, you know. You know, they had a separate cottage for help. (Laughter) So that's where he started. Then, later, umm, my mother got sick so then he started selling vacuum cleaners and things like that, door to door sales.

MI: Because he needed a better income or...

CK: Well, we left, he left the—by then we were, let's see, on the Big Island because the

plantation manager had moved to the Big Island.

MI: Oh, so...

CK: He went, yeah, we went with them and my mother got sick. So, he left [sugar plantation] working for them and then...

MI: On the Big Island?

CK: And we were in Oloa at that time. But then after we left the landlord's place...

MI: Wait, but you were in intermediate or high school?

CK: I was intermediate. I was in the ninth grade. My sister was in high school and was going to Hilo High School. I was going to Oloa Intermediate School because I was going to ninth grade. And I had a year at Hilo High. I wonder, did I go to eighth grade? And then so when my sister was going to the University of Hawaii, we moved out to Honolulu.

MI: But when she graduated, the whole family came with her.

CK: Uh huh. And my father started working for, you know, they had Aloha Airlines at that time. From there, he went to Pan American Airlines and, I think, he became manager of, when they started the Japanese department.

MI: How do you think the whole—did the [internment] affect your father? Thinking back to when he was a teacher in Molokai.

CK: Well, the letters said that...

MI: Bitter or different man?

CK: It was a bitter experience. But he was very amazing. He was able to adapt to change. So, he was able to adapt to changing conditions and whatever. It's like he started from ground zero after coming back. And then by the time—after he joined Pan American Airlines, he was the Director of Sales for the Japanese Department for the Pacific Region Division because he was, knew English and Japanese. He promoted a lot of tour groups and things to go to Japan. And he had a very good boss, Albright. (Laughter)

MI: How did he feel about working with Japanese who were one-time enemies of this country?

CK: I think in his heart he was still Japanese. Umm, and he did not become naturalized.

MI: He chose not to.

CK: He chose not.

MI: And then they allowed him to come back to Hawaii...

CK: Umm huh.

MI: Even though he was not a citizen of—he did not renounce his Japanese citizenship?

CK: I don't know what the "process" was...

MI: Wait, he never became an American citizen?

CK: After moving back here, he did not, but he would tell us, you're going to be an American so...

MI: How about your mother?

CK: I think...

MI: She was born here?

CK: Right. My mother had a rather bad experience living in Japan.

MI: At what age?

CK: I don't know. She went to school there, but I don't know if it was intermediate or high school that she was in Japan. But there was a general emphasis for quite a while. I think it was in Tokyo. But, you know, she—it was not a happy experience for her.

MI: Because she was American?

CK: No, because she's from Hawaii, right, Japanese from Hawaii. And I don't know if they kind of looked down or whatever. So, after my father retired, he decided to retire in Japan. But my mother refused to go back to Japan because of her experience she had there. And I was talking to one of the ladies we used to play golf with. She's *Nisei*, from the Big Island. Her husband, she met her husband—he was like a reporter for one of the newspapers, but she was bilingual. And he wrote for the English paper or whatever. So, they got married, they lived in Japan with their in-laws. And she was telling me that she was, aww, she was really unhappy because, I think her parents, her in-laws had a kimono shop or something. They were like merchants. They looked down on her because she's from Hawaii and, I guess, a lot of the people from Hawaii were laborers when they came. And so, she was telling us some of the things that happened. She sent the children back to visit the grandparents but she herself did not go back again. They moved back here but her husband died here. When they went to Japan she did not go with them. So, maybe, I know my mother was not happy in Japan when she was there. And she, of course, and we were here, right, the two girls were here, so she decided not to go [to Japan with my father].

MI: Did your sister, is your sister still alive?

CK: No, she's deceased.

MI: Did she have a different experience at Crystal City than you?

CK: I think she socialized more with all the other people in the camp.

MI: It was more positive; she had more friends. It was not a negative experience for her.

CK: I don't think so. Not really that amazing. Just like when we went over on the *Matsonia*, my mother and I were seasick, she (her sister) was the only one who was not. She was going all over the ship, went into the dining room, you know.

MI: Now, I'm curious, coming back on the *Matsonia*, were you given the family ((?)) or your father...

CK: I don't really know. I was so seasick I don't remember coming back. I was so seasick. My father is prone to seasickness. My mother was probably seasick too. But they were

like, either 100th Battalion or the 442nd, some of the soldiers were on that ship coming back. That I remember. But it was really crowded. It was not like going over on the Matsonia, totally different kind of ship, right, a troop ship, and it was very, very crowded. But because I was so seasick, I don't remember that much. (Laughter) But like Clifford was remembering he doesn't remember leaving Crystal City and coming back and I don't either. I have no memories of, except for, on the ship. (Laughter)

MI: So, were you throwing up?

CK: I guess most of the time I was sleeping, right? But was really, really crowded, but I don't understand why I can't, don't have any recollection of, you know, of coming back at all, because I remember going over...

MI: Maybe because you were not upset...

CK: Uh?

MI: Or it wasn't unpleasant, so you don't have a recollection—if it was something bad or...

CK: Right. If it was something very bad. Going over, I remember...

MI: That was probably the same desire that...

CK: It's so funny. Coming back, my memories. (Laughter)

MI: So, from that point, you probably never talking much to him.

CK: Not about him.

MI: You don't, never learned much about Santa Fe?

CK: No.

MI: What had happened to him?

CK: Although he brought back, he had souvenirs made like the petrified rocks.

MI: ((?))

CK: You know the petrified rocks, or I remember all kinds of rocks polished, sanded...

MI: That he polished or he had polished?

CK: I don't know whether he did it but, or it was like an ashtray and it was kinda big with some stones all around it. And he also had petrified wood, but a cross-section of a petrified wood about this big with a bark and everything.

MI: He brought it back all the way to Hawaii.

CK: Yeah.

MI: He kept it and could...

CK: Umm huh.

MI: Do you still have that?

CK: I have that. I still have the petrified wood. I don't have the ashtray anymore, but, I think, my cousin got it, but the petrified wood looks, you know, it looks exactly like the tree. (Laughter)

MI: Sounds like a big...

CK: Yeah. It's this big. Brought it back. (Laughter)

MI: Okay.

CK: But I have no pictures of camp.

MI: So, people had cameras there? Did you folks have cameras there?

CK: I don't know. I have no idea. No, I don't have any pictures of camp.

MI: Like drawing or sketches or...?

CK: The only other thing other than the sampler, the stitching sampler and the blue song book that I, you know, cannot find.

MI: Okay. I'll go see if Marcia is here. I just want to talk to her about this. I find it real interesting that they had bylaws and...

CK: Right. This is the chronology and this...

MI: I'll keep that.

CK: These are some of my memories. I'll give you.

MI: What I'm going to do is, I don't know when I have a whole bunch of these things that I am going to type up these things. Some of them I did but I'm going to type up, give them back to you to read over or then edit and give them back to us. All these things, we'll put them together in a folder for ((?)) so that people want to learn.

CK: Right.

MI: But you have a chance to decide what you want to give to us.

CK: Even about Crystal City, I didn't know until—that, while we were there we had no idea that we were going to be repatriated to Japan.

MI: You didn't understand the whole process?

CK: No, so our father said we went to Japanese school, so we just went. I mean, we were so obedient, we just did what they told us to do. (Laughter)

MI: Okay.