ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Shigeo Robert Muroda (SM)

and

Shizume Muroda (ShM) (Mr. Muroda's wife)

April 2, 1980 and October 17, 1980

BY: Michael Gordon (MG)
assisted by
Gail Honda (GH)

Note: Comments in brackets **[ ]** are by the transcriber. Inaudible words or sections are identified by **((?))** in the transcript. This transcript has been edited to remove pauses, repetitive phrases, or false starts as well as extraneous conversation.

[Interview begins on April 2, 1980.]

MG: When were you born?

SM: 1905.

GH: You lived here all your life, or did you ever go back—go to Japan, or . . .?

SM: Oh yes. I went to visit Japan, a few times. And the last one I went was 1978.

MG: Do you remember where you were, what you were doing, when Pearl Harbor was attacked?

SM: Oh yeah. I was working.

MG: Over where?

SM: Maili [Leeward Coast of Oahu]. That was on Sunday and I had a part-time job, you see. And I had about six of us, I think. We were working, building a house.

MG: Oh, carpentry?

SM: Carpentry. I'm a carpenter, you see. So, well, we were working and we didn't know that anything had happened, you see.

MG: You couldn't hear anything?

SM: Airplane climbing and all that, but we didn't know anything, so [we continued] working. So was about two o'clock, I think. Then one of my friends brought this boy I used to take care of—he came over and [said], "You don't know?" "What I don't know?" I said. "Get war, you know!" "What?!"

[Laughter]

MG: It was shocking?

SM: Shocking! So I figure, "Let's get our tools together. Let's go home." We knew that the airplane was flying around, see.

MG: You hear them and see them?

SM: Yeah.

MG: Just thought it was practice or something?

SM: Practice or something. We were busy working, anyway.

MG: You were building a house or something?

SM: Yeah, building a house. So after coming home—you know that bridge there? Passed that bridge and then came back. Before the highway was on the beach side, you see—now there is a beautiful highway now right on the beach side. I was coming down and the sentry stop us. [Laughs] "Where you going?" "Oh, we going home." "Where you been?" "Oh, I was working." But he says, "Show your ID card." So I showed him. "Yeah, but, you know, you cannot go in there." "Why not?" I say. "I'm going home." And we were arguing for a while and the manager of the plantation—he's happened to come around. He says, "What's the trouble, Muroda?" "Ah, this sentry won't let me in."

MG: This is at the gate of the plantation?

SM: No, not a gate, just a highway. And they just stopping all the traffic and the people, they just stopped. And he says, "Oh!" Then he talked to that sentry. And he said, "Okay, then, you can go."

MG: Was there a lot of people on the road or up and around at that point, or was it pretty much deserted?

SM: They were all home. Oh, God! [Laughter] Only we don't know, you see.

GH: Why didn't they want to let you back this way?

SM: Well, I don't know. Maybe they thought we were from some other place and try to come in here and they were very careful, you see.

MG: Very nervous.

SM: But fortunately this manager came out and so we came home. Then I happen to be raising some pigs, you see. On plantation land get all kinds. We raise chicken and pigs and all that. They give us land so we just can work on it.

MG: You have your own house up there, too?

SM: No, we never had—we have a little shack for our feed and things. Those days was good, nobody going to bother us. [Laughter] Today, I figure that the way how we were living those days was better than . . .

MG: Yeah?

SM: Better.

GH: Why was that?

SM: Well, you see—now, very few law-abiding people that go with the law. Lot of these boys—Hawaiians call it "*kolohe*" [rascal] boys. [Laughter]. Lot of them are on ((??))

MG: Didn't have to lock your doors back then.

SM: Didn't have to. Any mischief is done then, the plantation would just—they get out.

MG: Too strict then?

SM: Very strict, and they have their own guards, policemen, go around. And like today, I see kids around, they no go to school. But those days, no. You don't go to the school, policemen, "Come on."

MG: Go to school?

SM: Go to school. They say, "Boy, you not from here? He doesn't go to school." They say, "Why don't you go to school?" He say, "I know. I know what I'm doing." [Laughter]

MG: You just work hard on the plantation or go to school.

SM: Yeah.

MG: No time to goof off.

SM: No time. So it's very safe, you know. We did not have to lock up our place, our place night time. Yeah. Very good, those days.

GH: What were you doing when they came to pick you up? When was it that they came to pick you up?

SM: The following year. 1942. I was working on the plantation those days.

GH: Did you have to go [in for] questioning from time to time?

SM: No. After they came to pick me up, they just pick me up and take me to town and I stay there. [Laughter]

MG: Do you remember when that was in 1942?

SM: September. I think it was on the 21st or 22nd. September.

MG: Because we talked to Mr. Urata and Miss Nishikawa and they both said that for a while they would have to go down for questioning and they would come back and they would go for more questioning. [Laughter] It was kind of a back-and-forth process for a while. But that wasn't in your case?

SM: No, no, no. They just came and picked me up and then . . .

ShM: Oh, they handcuffed him.

SM: Yeah, yeah. They even didn't give me enough time to change. [Laughter]

MG: Really? They came to your house?

SM: They came to this—my working place, plantation.

MG: You remember what you were doing when they came and . . .

SM: I was in the shop, you see, company shop, and I don't know exactly what I was doing. [Laughter]

MG: Yeah, long time ago.

SM: [Laughter] So long ago. And, anyway, the office called me to see the plantation office. And so I went there and [they] say, "Hey, people are looking for you." "For what?" "I don't know." They say, "They don't know."

MG: Were they soldiers, or…?

SM: No.

MG: FBI?

SM: FBI. They say, "Let's go." "Where we going?" "Downtown." "Well, let me change then." He said, "Ah, okay." And come home and look. My house was—searching around for something, you see. And my wife, but I have—only have girls, you see. No boys.

MG: They had come to your house?

SM: Yeah, they came, they were looking around. My wife said, "You can go ahead and look [at] everything." "And what is inside there?" "You can open."

MG: They didn't say what there were looking for? They just looked?

SM: They just pull the drawer out and then they see all girls' belongings. [Laughter]. I have five girls. Well, that's it.

GH: They were looking for what? For some kind of evidence that you were doing something with Japan?

SM: Yeah. Maybe they were looking for that, but I was just an ordinary workman. [Laughter.]

MG: Nothing to hide.

SM: Nothing to hide.

GH: So they didn't give you any reason why they were taking you?

SM: No.

GH: Do you know why they did? I mean a lot of the other people we talked to said that they were leaders in their community, just like . . .

SM: It's a big thing, of course—my family here is, especially my mother. She was a midwife, you see. And those days, we don't have these maternity hospital, just have at home. But she was gifted with that. She can take care. So there was a lot of kids that my mother take care, so we have a lot of friends. So not sure if—how people gonna look on us, so they figured that we can lead these people. And for the club activities that I was with, the YBA [Young Buddhist Association]. And worked with the YBA—among the young boys, young kids, I can be the leader for them, you see. That's all.

MG: But when you say you are a carpenter—were you, like, any kind of boss?

SM: Yes.

MG: What position did you have?

SM: I was the shop foreman.

MG: Foreman, yeah. That was probably why, that too. At work and the community.

SM: I had sixteen guys, men, working under me. That was taking care of the mill and all the buildings.

MG: Oh, when they break down, you repair something?

SM: Yeah, yeah. Those days no equipment, but we just used to move around houses and all that, you see. That is all our job.

MG: I figure that would take a lot of work.

SM: Oh, lot of work. Another group of carpenters—but these people were just taking care of the field and irrigation, the flumes.

GH: It was just a combination of all things, your mother, you, and the YBA.

SM: That's all. [Laughter]

MG: When they came, when the FBI guys took you, did they take you to Sand Island, or…?

SM: They took me to Immigration Station.

MG: For how long?

SM: For one month. I mean, one night.

MG: One night?

SM: One night.

MG: Then what happened?

SM: Next day, they say we all going to move to Sand Island, and let's go to Sand Island. They took me to Sand Island.

MG: And from there you went to Honouliuli?

SM: Yeah. I was in Sand Island until next year March. April, I think, we went to Honouliuli.

GH: Were there buildings at Sand Island when you were there or was it just tents?

SM: No, buildings. Very good buildings.

MG: Did they have to build those buildings or were they already there?

SM: Some of them they were building because not enough. And then I don't why, but they moved us to Honouliuli, see. Over there they built up a new camp.

MG: At Honouliuli? Completely brand new?

SM: Brand new. And those building over there is not like Sand Island. Sand Island was, like, big—something like apartment, barracks. Big ones. But Honouliuli is small, 16 by 16, total.

MG: I thought that some of the buildings at Honouliuli were already there?

SM: They built it just for internment purpose. They having these war prisoners, you see.

MG: I thought it was an old plantation there.

GH: You were one of the first people to go to Honouliuli?

SM: Oh yeah.

GH: You were one of the first?

SM: Yeah. In fact, I was the first one. [Laughter]

MG: First one in the camp?

SM: First one in the camp. The reason is because I was with a—I was mess sergeant there, see. Taking care of the kitchens. So for moving to another camp, the first thing I did is, how we going to feed the people? [Laughter] So the mess officer there took me there, and they

asked me how I wanted it to be set up and what do you want. And all the kitchen utensils and things, food, got to ship it before we can take the people there. So I was there and then we set up and then we came back. And these people and I was the last one to leave Sand Island. [Laughter]

GH: Oh, after you came back?

SM: Then I had to stay at Sand Island, I think, until eleven o'clock. People were working the kitchen.

MG: After everybody was done eating, they left.

SM: They left and we have to clean up the rest.

MG: So you were mess sergeant at Sand Island, too?

SM: Yeah. So I have to take care that and we all went there. [Laughter]

MG: We heard that living at Sand Island and living at Honouliuli, it was a lot stricter at Sand Island than it was at Honouliuli.

SM: Yeah. I think so. Because when I went it wasn't so strict, but you know there was all this organized . . .

MG: People had already been to Sand Island for a while.

SM: Yeah, so, it wasn't so bad. But Honouliuli, it's just right in a gulch like this. So I don't know, they feel that it is safer. 'Cause my friend from Waianae, he was at Sand Island and he was mess sergeant, you see. Then when I went, he said "Oh, I'm going to relocate to the Mainland. I think you can take care of my kitchen, so you take care the kitchen. I'll tell the camp commander." So, I think I have to do something anyway.

MG: Speaking of the camp commander, do you remember who it was at Honouliuli?

SM: Honouliuli, we had this Sakamoto. And Sakamoto, he died. Mura—I forgot his name. He became this certain county officer after he came out from . . .

GH: But they were both local?

SM: Because Honouliuli, most of them is local and second generation.

MG: In the military?

SM: No, in the internment camp.

MG: But wasn't the guy, the commander in charge of the camp, military?

SM: Military? Yeah, that was military.

MG: That was Sakamoto?

SM: No, no, no. You see, in the camp, we have our own government. We select our captain, the lieutenant and our sergeants, you see.

MG: So, Sakamoto was in charge of your own . . .

SM: Yeah, that's right. Inside the camp. But for the whole thing, the military, this—I forget all the names. This person was taking care—what was his name? Major—I think Shizuka. Nishikawa used to remember all those names.

MG: Do you remember Mr. Loveless? Sergeant Loveless?

SM: Yeah.

MG: That was one name.

SM: He wonderful man.

MG: Is he still around here? Do you know?

SM: I don't know.

MG: Do you know his first name?

SM: No. Well, Loveless is a—that man, a really good man.

MG: Was he local?

SM: Local boy. Local boys are good, you see, because they know . . .

GH: They know you guys are not going to . . .

MG: They not afraid or nervous or, yeah? Because when we talked to Mr. Urata last week, he said there were Mainland recruits—would come in right on their way to some place in the Pacific, right. And they would be really nervous. Do you remember anything like that? Nervous guys?

SM: No. Because before I was interned—well, a lot of soldiers I knew because they trained here. And after they trained here, then they were shipped out. Like this area here by the 442nd barracks, that was all camp. We have about 25,000 soldiers train here, I think. Waianae.

MG: Oh, I never heard of that.

SM: And the training places at Makua. They do this landing training, you see.

MG: Coming up the beach.

SM: Yeah. They come up the beach and shoot over there. They have bombing . . .

MG: You could hear them making all kinds of noise?

SM: Lot of people got hurt. Lot of people died.

MG: Just practicing?

SM: Just practicing. Like this one—Waianae Pokai Bay. This bay is the safest bay. I lived here for seventy-four years now. This the seventy-fifth year. Not one person drowned here. Then I remember only one person who committed suicide. He jumped over there and he died. But during the war, I don't know how many. This, we don't know. Because it's just, you know, the sirens comes and they come up because they try to—the landing ship comes here and they try to go there, practicing to board the ship. And with their heavy gear, they are coming up that rope ladder. Some of them fall and they—those things are too heavy. They sink.

MG: They drown? Was this going on when, after the war started but before you were taken to camp?

SM: Yeah, they were already training. After the war started, they were training, so…

GH: Where were you transported from Sand Island to Honouliuli? Did you go in Jeeps? When they took you to Honouliuli?

SM: No. This big Army trucks.

MG: Troop transport.

SM: Yeah, troop transport.

MG: Did they have armed guards?

SM: Oh, yeah.

MG: They never put handcuffs or anything, though, did they?

SM: Oh, no, no.

MG: They didn't think you were going to run away.

GH: So how were you assigned to your—could you choose who you wanted to live with?

SM: Yeah, yeah.

GH: How many were in one of those houses?

SM: Eight.

GH: Oh, eight of you.

SM: One, two, three, eight. Eight of us in one barrack.

MG: On army cots?

SM: No, in bunks.

MG: Bunks? Oh, stiff?

SM: No, low and high. They have four of that in one barracks, you see. Mr. Low and [Mr.] High. I have to get the lower one all the time because I get up early in the morning.

MG: How early in the morning did you have to get up?

SM: Well, I used to get up about four o'clock in the morning. Then I go to the kitchen and then I start to cook there. Well, I don't cook, but I had to give them all the supplies, you see. The cooks, they give me coffee and hot cakes for my breakfast, you see. We had to feed ourselves before the people come in.

MG: How many people were in the camp?

SM: Well, sometime about 500. Sometime 300.

MG: It varies?

SM: Varies.

MG: People would go to the Mainland?

SM: Yeah. They came certain period, then they ship them away to the Mainland.

MG: Why? Do you remember why some people stayed and why some went?

SM: Well, that—the first generation, the aliens, they have to be taken away. They take them.

MG: But you guys can stay?

SM: Yeah, they cannot move us because we are citizens. It's against the Constitution. They did in the early part of the war, you see. They got our list. The Senator Abe, Judge Yoshikane, all those people. Sakakibara. They took them all to the Mainland, but when they found out it was against the Constitution of the United States, they had to bring them back. So they bring them back.

MG: I have to check on that one. I was always confused why some were here and why some went, came back, went, came back. You know, the government, they moved people all around.

SM: Because they cannot hold the citizen as a war prisoner. But the aliens, they can. And at the camp, well—I'm an easygoing person, so I see these boys, you know, the soldiers—they stay on guard all night. So every, I think, every eight hours or so, they have shifts, you see. When I go to the kitchen ((??)) I used to get coffee and some toast or hot cake or something and take it to this guard right at the entrance of the kitchen outside. And I would help a couple of them going inside the camp, walking around.

MG: Walking around?

SM: Just walking around. Those people come to the kitchen. They come to the kitchen, I give them coffee, you see. Because I no like this coffee.

MG: Yeah, cold outside.

SM: Cold outside. Then the camp commander, he found that out, somehow, you know. And he says, that lieutenant—he says that Japanese people, he give them coffee, you see. He says, "That some good idea." So at midnight then, they start to serve coffee to all the sentries around the camp. [Laughter]

MG: That's owing to you. I bet you were—you must have been pretty popular among the guards, yeah?

SM: [Chuckles] They were all right to me.

GH: So actually it was pretty friendly between the guards and the men?

SM: Oh, yeah. We got no grudge against each other. [Laughter] We only doing our duty. They want to take us away from the community and then keep us there. It's okay with me. Only my family is going to suffer.

MG: You didn't feel upset?

SM: No, no.

MG: Sort of having to accept it.

SM: Just accept it. And I figured to myself, had to make the best out of it.

MG: It's war and . . .

SM: Don't worry. Just keep on going.

MG: The war will end soon enough.

SM: The war will end. So they let us spend thirteen dollars a month and they give us—the Red Cross gives us ten cents a day. And we work, we get ten cents an hour. So I stay in the kitchen side working and so they paid me.

MG: So you must have made, from Red Cross, ten cents a day.

SM: Ten cents, three dollars. Ten cents an hour for working the kitchen.

MG: For working the kitchen?

SM: Kitchen and all kinds of work that they have. If you got to go farming, like Honouliuli—we can go farming, you see. They give you ten cents an hour.

MG: How much were you making outside before the war?

SM: Oh, outside before the war, on the plantation, I used to make about seventy-five dollars.

MG: A month?

SM: A month. [Laughter]

MG: At Honouliuli—let's see if my arithmetic multiplies out—not very much. You remember how much it was a day? Whew! Not very much at all.

SM: I can spend thirteen dollars a month.

MG: A month? That's what it came out to?

SM: Yeah. I can spend thirteen dollars.

GH: So, actually, that was only in coupons, right? Was it real cash or you could only buy at their store, yeah?

SM: No, no. No cash.

MG: You couldn't give it to your family outside?

SM: No, no. But they have this PX. I can go to the PX and buy things.

MG: What kind of things in there?

SM: Well, I used to get these school supplies for my children.

MG: Had visitation.

SM: Visitation. And the PX boy was my friend, too. He was a local Waianae boy, too. [Laughter] "Eh, get me some fountain pens for my girls." He said okay because he can get . . .

MG: How many girls do you have?

SM: Five.

MG: Do you have any other kids?

SM: No.

MG: Just those five girls?

SM: And, oh yeah, and I had my mother with me.

MG: How old were you, when—let's see 1905 and 1942 . . .

SM: Thirty-something.

MG: The guy that was in the PX—he lived around Waianae?

SM: He was Waianae boy.

MG: What nationality was he?

SM: Portuguese.

MG: Portuguese? In the Army?

SM: Yeah. He was.

MG: Is he still around here?

SM: No. That's a little bit . . .

GH: Can you tell us a little about when you first got there and what you had to do with the food? Because I remember Nishikawa [Dan Nishikawa] saying something about he was thinking it was funny, because when you first went to Honouliuli, all of you got a lot of chili beans or something. Is that true? Like, had a lot of chili beans and you weren't getting a lot of other food. And it turned out that the guard or somebody was keeping all the good stuff and giving you the chili beans. Is that right? Do you remember? It's like they bring the food supply and you're supposed to check the list and see what—if the list matched with what you got. But he never bothered to check and then he wondered why everybody always had chili. And everybody complained in the camp, because they said, "Chili is okay but hard to eat every day like that." And it turned out that the guard . . .

SM: That Mr. Nishikawa, he took over the kitchen after I left, you see.

MG: Maybe that's why.

GH: Oh. You were before him.

SM: Before him.

MG: How long were you at Honouliuli?

SM: Honouliuli? I was interned fourteen months and then—that was from September. October, November, December and—six months—about seven months, I think. Seven months. December 7th I came home.

MG: Nineteen . . .

SM: Forty-two. 1943.

GH: They must have tried to pull that on him [Mr. Nishikawa] because . . . [referring to the story above about the guard taking the good food intended for the internees]

MG: They knew he was different.

GH: He was the new one and they figured . . .

SM: Well, you see, when I first went in the kitchen, my former person is Yamasaki. He was in the kitchen. Every morning, he make me squash, crush this bread—about thirty to forty loaves of bread. Every morning he say I have to do that and put it in the garbage can. [Laughter] Crush them up. I say, "Why I have to do this?" He say, "Well, if we don't get

rid of the food like this they won't give us food, you see." I say, "Wait a minute." Of course, that guy was interned December 7th.

MG: Oh, so he was at Sand Island.

SM: Yeah, Sand Island. So he doesn't know the condition of the outside world, you see. So he thought everything was just like how he was here, before the war. But, no. Things had changed. Less food and less everything for us outside.

MG: So you want to hold on to it.

SM: Yeah, everything. Even bread.

MG: Scarce.

SM: Scarce. So we had to be very careful with our food. And here I see these guys all crushing this bread—thirty, forty loaves, ho. And then after he left, I taking care of the kitchen, and then I say, "No, I don't want to do this." So I kept this bread—kept them in the kitchen warehouse. Then this camp commander, he came around to inspect. Then he saw this bread, and then I was in the back sort of resting. This was about two o'clock. So, early in the morning I go to work. So, I was in the back and I was playing with my checkers and all that, and then they call me. So, I went to the kitchen and he said, "You know this ((??)), why you keep all this bread?" "Well, I want to make some bread ((??)) for the people, you see." He said "No, no. You don't do that. Looks like you got too many bread." "Yeah." He said, "You can replace something else for the bread." I said, "Yeah, if we can get rice, I think we gonna be very happy."

[Laughter]

MG: And you got rice?

SM: And he said, "I'll send over this mess officer." So he talked with them and tried to get something. So after he left, then this mess officer came and then we talk it over. "About how many rolls do you have over?" he says. "Oh about thirty rolls a day." Then, "What about I give you three bags of rice—that is 300 pounds a day, every other day, in place of this bread? Would that be all right?"

[Laughter]

MG: How soon did you get the rice then? The next day?

SM: Yeah. Cut the bread. Now I happy cause I don't have to crush the bread, too! [Laughter] We get lot of rice, and my stock pile on this rice came up. So I can give them Japanese, you know, the *okai* [rice gruel] on those days we had sick people. So they were happy and I was happy too because I give rice to the people. [Laughter] And, we don't eat potatoes, you see. So we had a lot of potatoes and that stuff would spot. The eyes would come out. But I didn't want to throw them away, so I gotta do something with this. So this delivery boy, he comes around every day. I told him, "Hey, I want to do business with you." He said, "What?" "You have some more rice in your kitchen?" He said, "Yeah. We don't want rice." "What do you want?" "Bread and potatoes." "Oh, you want potatoes? I give you potatoes, you give me rice." [Laughter]

MG: The delivery guy was for the rest of the soldiers?

SM: Yeah.

MG: They had their own kitchen?

SM: Yeah. Because the menu of the soldiers at the internment camp, same every day. We eat the same stuff.

MG: Two different cooks though, huh?

SM: Oh, yeah. They have their own cooks, and we have our own cooks, but the supply—food—same kind of food. So we were treated well. We were fed well. Not only enough food, but—the only thing that the Japanese and the *haoles* [Hawaiian for Caucasians]—they have different foods ((??)). Like chili con carne and all those things. It's very good for the white people but for the Japanese, no. They don't like that. They rather have fish. Well, potatoes I get, I give them and they give me rice.

MG: Everybody happy.

SM: Everybody happy. And then chili con carne and all those canned food that we don't eat—I tell them, "You have some fish cans over there, mackerels or salmon?" They say, "Yeah, I got some mackerels." "Okay. I get this much chili con carne. You wanna swap?" They say, "Sure, sure." [Laughter] And that's what I used to do, you see.

MG: The delivery boy did that, saying that?

SM: Yeah, the delivery boy, you see. And they were happy and I'm happy too because . . .

GH: Yeah, works out good for everyone.

[Laughter]

SM: Then we moved to this Honouliuli Camp and then we start to farm, you see. And get some potatoes, especially lettuce. Lot of them, they can raise, so they bring that to the kitchen. Okay, but you know we cannot eat all the things they raise, because we have no storage room to keep—no ice box or anything you see. And so, then we have to—this thing gets rotten, so we have to throw. I say, "Oh, this one ugh." So I tell the delivery boy, "Eh, you want some lettuce?"

MG: We trade?

SM: "Sure!" He says, "Where, well, what over here?" "You bring something else, I give you this." "I get some fish cans. I bring them." "Oh, okay, okay. Good." We used to swap them. But then the farmers who are out in the field, they learn that I didn't use all their—oh, they got sore with me.

MG: Yeah, how come?

SM: Well, you know, not everybody's friendly with the soldiers, you see. Especially all these interned people.

MG: Some more bitter than others?

SM: Bitter. "Oh, you don't have to feed them." I said, "No, I don't have to feed them, but I think I don't have to throw this away either."

MG: Plus you're getting something, too. Did you tell them that?

SM: Yeah. "You folks working hard. And you folks getting something. We feed ourselves and we cannot eat all this." I say, "You want me to throw this away, or you want me to give to other people who is going to enjoy that?"

MG: What do they say? The people that were mad?

SM: Then they finally say, "Okay, okay." I think it's better to be friendly with these officers and so it's . . .

MG: You gotta be there.

SM: Yeah, we gotta be there and we gonna have an easier life. And where we have to ask them to do this and that—you know, like *miso* [soybean paste], *shoyu* [soy sauce], and all those things, they won't supply us because they don't eat those things. But we have to buy all that. But they are good enough to go to the market and purchase it and they give to us.

MG: Did you ever go with them to get the . . .

SM: No, no, no. They . . .

MG: Because I think maybe it was later on—Mr. Urata was in the camp. You said you were in Honouliuli until '43, right?

SM: Yeah.

MG: Mr. Urata was in the camp later on, from '43 on, right? And he said they could—people would got out to get stuff, but sometimes they could go with them to get some. So maybe after a while, they realized, I mean, that they could go out and get stuff without any problem. Maybe that's what it was.

SM: Well, everything started loosening up, you see. The war started to be in favor of the United States, so naturally—and the war starts to go far away, so they didn't bother.

MG: At the beginning in Honouliuli, it was—or in Sand Island, too . . .

SM: Sand Island, kinda shaky. But in Sand Island, a lot of this war prisoners used to come in, you know. Oh, these hard heads, stubborn people. [Laughter]

MG: In the P.O.W. camp?

SM: Yeah.

MG: P.O.W. camp next to you guys, yeah?

SM: We take care of them, you see.

MG: Oh, they would eat same place?

SM: Yeah, we feed them.

GH: From where? From all over?

SM: Yeah, all over, but we had certain group that in the early part—there were very few war prisoners, very few. But later, after I left the camp, then they used to come out in big bunches, you see. Those people from the South Seas and all that. But while—only a few of these ((??)) people.

MG: They were living in your camp?

SM: But they were in a compound.

MG: Oh, separate?

SM: Separately.

MG: And they would just come to eat?

SM: We carry tray to them.

MG: Oh. You guys had three meals a day?

SM: Yeah. Good meals, you know.

MG: So, you work in the kitchen all day long?

SM: Yeah.

MG: Every day?

SM: Every day!

MG: Seven days a week?

SM: Yeah, seven days a week. And I rather stay in the kitchen then stay in the camp. Less hard work for me. [Laughter] I hear all these grouches.

MG: What did other people do outside?

SM: Oh, well, they play games and all that.

MG: Play guitar?

SM: Play guitar. They make their own booze. [Laughter]

MG: Oh, yeah? Pineapple Slice?

SM: They get these kegs, yeah. Make wine. They steal my sugar. They steal my—everything to make wine. [Laughter]

MG: Was it any good?

SM: No. They start to make so much noise at night, the guards began to suspect on them. They came to check. Oh, yeah, boy. They were having a grand time.

MG: What happened then? They didn't let them make any more?

SM: No. They took everybody out of the camp and took them to the mess hall, you know. And, what they gonna do? I said, "I don't know." And I see one company of soldiers came riding into the compound, the barracks. They check all the barracks. They picked up about fourteen gallons of wine. [Laughter]

MG: You guys had a regular—must have been a regular still. [Laughter]

SM: No, just to ferment that thing.

MG: Oh. Fourteen gallons! A lot.

SM: They had some in my kitchen, you see.

MG: You didn't know.

SM: I didn't know. Then one of my assistant [said], "Hey, Muroda, what is this?" I say, "What is that?" He says, "Hey, looks like wine." I smell it and I say, "Oh yeah, wine." "What we gonna do?" "Dump it in the sink!" "Yeah, but they gonna get mad." I said, "The hell!" I says, "We don't want to get into trouble for just a few of these people. I get so many to feed here. I don't want that. Dump 'em in there. I take responsibility for that. Dump 'em in there." I dumped the whole thing. But they didn't say anything. Afterward they got caught. They got caught and then their visiting days were cut off. No visitors for them.

MG: What time was breakfast and dinner?

SM: Breakfast about seven o'clock. Six, seven o'clock. Same thing like . . .

MG: Like regular army?

SM: Regular army.

MG: Reveille and everything?

SM: Yeah, that's right.

MG: Someone go out there and blow the horn?

SM: No, no, the army. From the camp, you see. From the army camp. They have reveille.

MG: Oh, they have microphone?

SM: Yeah.

MG: Six-thirty or . . .?

SM: Six-thirty. And their retreat, they have it again, and the army have to go to bed.

MG: What time was lights out?

SM: About eight o'clock.

MG: What did people do in the evening before lights out?

SM: Oh, they have all kinds of games. Play games, roll dice, cards.

MG: Gamble?

SM: Gamble. [Laughter] Some of them enjoy reading. They have newspapers that come in.

MG: What kind of—you had lights?

SM: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

MG: Must have been kind of dark, but?

SM: No, regular. Nice, lighted.

MG: Was it cold in the barracks? Were they pretty breezy barracks?

SM: Yeah, it's all open. Breezy. But still they have enough blankets. If you think you cold, you ask for more blankets. They give it to you.

MG: Mosquitoes come in?

SM: Mosquitoes? No, this all screens, so . . .

GH: In the barracks, they just have the four bunks and the bathroom on one side?

SM: No. Bathrooms outside.

MG: Separate building?

GH: No tables or chairs?

SM: No. You want, you make your own. [Laughter]

MG: People made their own?

SM: Yeah, made your own, you see. And when you want to do writing, you just put it across the bed, board across the bed, and you write on that or sitting on the floor. Very simple life. [Laughter]

GH: What were your visits like? Did your whole family come to visit you?

SM: Well, they allow only two—my wife and my child.

MG: Every two weeks, yeah?

SM: Every two weeks.

MG: Did the whole camp go two weeks or was one group every two weeks and another group every two weeks?

SM: No, they had visits every week, but different groups gonna be every two weeks.

GH: Did they bring you things when they came to visit you?

SM: Yeah, yeah. They gave me things. Smuggle in things.

MG: Oh yeah?

[SM laughs]

MG: Shake hands and you pass. Did the guards ever search you or nothing like that?

SM: They found out that they were smuggling in booze and all that whiskeys and . . .

MG: Sounds like the booze was a popular topic. [Laughter]

SM: They start to give a warning that says if anything is going to continue then what they are going to do is they are going to strip the bases. Well, we don't want that to be done, so some of them, you know, they bring flowers and right in the flowers they put it in.

MG: It's not water, it's whiskey.

SM: Yeah.

MG: You know, when you have these reunions ,were they sad, or cheerful, or somber? do you remember, when your family came and you sat down and talked and said . . .

SM: Well, we not happy. [Laughs] You know, knowing that how my wife had to struggle.

MG: Had a lot of problems outside?

SM: Yeah, a lot of problems. Like, I had not only my children, you see. I had my parents, too—my wife had to take care. So she had plenty work to do.

MG: How did she get money?

SM: Oh, she works and a . . .

MG: She worked on the plantation?

SM: No, no. She did the laundry—laundry for the service people.

MG: She had place where she went and did it?

SM: At home. They bring the laundry.

MG: To the house?

SM: And then they come pick it up.

MG: How much laundry? I mean like . . .

SM: Oh, she used to do six hundred dollars a month.

MG: That's pretty hard work.

SM: Hard work, yeah, but I have all girls, so the girls help.

MG: Help out, too?

SM: And I have pigs, so my father take care of the pigs.

MG: Sell the pigs and . . .

SM: My nephew helped them take care and go around the camp and get all the garbage, you see.

MG: Tough, but. Tough life.

SM: Tough life, but they were all hard workers so—they work themselves.

MG: If they work hard they can survive.

GH: How did they get down to see you? From Waianae?

SM: My nephew used to drive them all. Yeah, those days, I had a truck, you see. A sugar truck for gather my garbage and food for my pigs. And my nephew had got this old Model T roadster. [Laughter] Sometime he take my wife on this roadster instead of the truck.

MG: What happened to your Chevy truck when you went to . . .

SM: No, he took care. He took care of it and then he came around with my wife and child ((??)) he took them this reservoir in that area, close to the camp and went fishing there. He used to go to the beach.

MG: Go fishing then come back.

SM: One of my daughter got married with him later. Yeah, he's pretty good now.

MG: But only two people could come in at one time?

SM: Yeah.

MG: You mentioned that mister—Sergeant Loveless was a real nice guy. What kind of things did he do that made him a nice guy?

SM: Well, he doesn't bother people, but he helps.

MG: How?

SM: Well, if they want something, and requests in general.

MG: Like shoyu from outside?

SM: Yeah.

MG: What other things?

SM: All kinds of things.

MG: He got demoted, they said in the article.

GH: He was too nice.

MG: Where was he from—where around Hawaii?

SM: I don't know. I don't know from where he was.

MG: But he, he knew local people so he was . . .

SM: Yeah, he knows local people.

GH: You don't know his first name?

SM: No, I don't know his first name.

MG: Who was his boss? Who was his commander? Spillner?

SM: Spillner and Springer. Yeah, that's right. Springer and Spillner.

MG: Springer?

SM: Springer. Ah, no. Springer was the camp commander, I think.

MG: Do you remember his first name?

SM: He was major, you see. Yeah, that time.

MG: You just said, "Major Springer."

SM: Major Springer.

MG: We were trying to find these guys but its hard, we don't know their names. [Laughter]

SM: I think that Springer is with that—the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

MG: Hawaiian Homes Commission?

SM: Yeah. If he didn't retire.

MG: Thank you. We'll try that out.

SM: They were all local people so they were nice to me, to the . . .

MG: Some of the guards was from different outfits?

SM: The mainland.

MG: The private guards.

SM: That's right. They were kind of nervous, you know, but they—they didn't know Japanese anyway. They come from the mainland and they were really afraid of each other. [Laughter]

MG: What was the average age of people in the camp? Do you remember?

SM: The youngest that I know was fifteen years old.

MG: Most people, like yourself, were in their thirties?

SM: Most of them were less than me, younger than me. Because they were what you call *kibei* [ethnic Japanese, born in Hawaii and educated in Japan]. Those people went to Japan. They studied in Japan and came back, you see.

MG: Did you study in Japan?

SM: No, I didn't.

MG: Because you were—just stayed here.

SM: Yeah, just here.

MG: But I know Mr. Urata had done that.

SM: Those people, they call them kibei. They not allow those people because they suspected that they came in with something with the Japanese government and . . .

MG: They didn't know what they were doing and so, suspicious.

SM: And those that came back to the war—those were the ones mostly interned, you see.

GH: Were there any religious activities in the camp, like was there church on Sundays?

SM: Yeah, they had.

GH: They had church? Christian?

SM: Christian and they had Buddhist, too.

GH: Who led the services? Were there the men in the camp that led the services?

SM: Yeah, had the reverends.

MG: There were priests in the camp?

SM: Yeah, priests. You know, the variety—how they set up. Later I realized that every—so many people in the camp. They had to move these people out, you see. At that time, when they move the people out, then they have to take one doctor with them and then one religious man and cook. And they just ship them out together.

MG: You had doctors in the camp in case—in case the people got sick at all the camp?

SM: They had. We have this hospital barracks, you see. They get sick, they stay there.

MG: Did people get sick a lot, or. . .?

SM: No, no.

MG: Pretty healthy?

SM: Pretty healthy. Only those old people.

MG: There were some—how old was ((??))?

SM: Some of them were in their seventies and eighties.

MG: Oh, but not too many of them?

SM: Not too many of them. It's not a good ((??)) when they figure that there is no doctor in the camp, they ((??)). [Laughter]

GH: Gotta have.

SM: Yeah, that's right.

MG: People do get sick, every now and then.

SM: Dentists.

MG: They had dentists?

SM: Sure, dentists. Work on your teeth.

MG: Do you think you were better off in the camp—in the Hawaii camp—than people on the mainland were?

SM: Well, mainland, I don't know, but in Hawaii also I think this is all right.

MG: You went to mainland camp?

SM: No, no. I didn't go so . . .

MG: You just came out in '43, yeah?

SM: I went in there 1942 and came out 1943. So I don't know, but only thing was—within me was—"Well, I'm here. I have—can make best out of it. Make myself happy and work myself." So I didn't bother nobody. Just keep on working. Try to help the people.

MG: What was the general feeling in the camp, the morale?

SM: Well, as I say, I'm not with the people all the time, you see. I'm in the camp mess kitchen so I don't want to bother them, so . . .

MG: Does it get hot in the kitchen? Stay in the kitchen all day long, it gets kinda hot?

SM: Oh, no. I'm in the kitchen and then the mess hall, you see. So it is very cool and all open. For my nap I just go across the bed, lay across the table and. . . [Laughter]

MG: Take a nap every day?

SM: Take a nap every day.

MG: After lunch.

SM: After lunch. Working hard, come out and help the cooks.

GH: Didn't you have like really good cooks? Like ones who used to work in restaurants, like that—really good chefs, no?

SM: Yeah. They were first-class cooks.

MG: How many worked in the kitchen?

SM: Well, we had shifts, you see. About three in the morning, three cooks would come in, and lunch, maybe about four. And supper, another three.

MG: But you had to stay there all day?

SM: Yeah. Because I had to give them supplies and watch the people, you see, because one time they got hurt carrying the rice. And then, sweep the floor, all of them hot rice. Those things happen.

MG: You gotta make people safe.

SM: I gotta watch the floors. If the floor wet, get these KPs mop the floor because somebody else can get hurt.

GH: But you liked it better that way, yeah?—to stay in the kitchen, mind your own business and don't hear all the stories and things going on in the camp, yeah?

SM: I tell you, even men—when they in that kind of situation—I think they worse than *wahines* [Hawaiian for women]. So damn grouchy. Blaming . . .

GH: But there weren't any women in there, or they were in separate, different kind of . . .

SM: Different camp. If put women in there, I don't know— [Laughter] Different camp. They had this . . .

[Short break in audio recording to switch tapes.]

[Inaudible]

SM: Some of them was with their wives, you know. And here we had these women. At first, this—they had their own kitchen, but they didn't want to work ((??)), so the mess sergeant got so tired, you know, that they said they were going to close that. They feed these people, mixed people, [in] the army kitchen. And then these wahines, they put them together and brought them over to our side, but we gave them special. They were fed before the whole people and then after they went back.

MG: Oh, I see. About how many wahines were there?

SM: About five. So that—not too much trouble with them. But my assistant used to tease them all the time. "Eh, you keep away from her!" [Laughter.] But they lucky. They didn't have to work.

GH: Did they go out and work? Do you know?

MG: If they wanted to?

SM: If they wanted to, but they don't go out. They better not. Better to stay in there, the camp. Safer that way, you see. Even in the mixed kitchen, the mess sergeant and the mess officer came and said, "Muroda, we going to close the mixed kitchen, so if you need anything you better pick it up." So I went with him, look. There was bacon, a slab of bacon, yeah. Ho, they get so many cannot leave it there. And kitchen utensils, grease about that. [Laughter] And some of the canned foods that they had, we picked it up, but the rest, somebody else.

MG: No need.

SM: No need and too much work to clean them up.

MG: Did you ever go back and visit people at the camp when you were outside?

SM: No. No.

MG: When you were—because there were people still left in the camp when you left.

SM: Yeah, yeah, plenty. But I think . . .

MG: So you never went back to visit? Did you make any friendships in the camp that are still lasting friendships?

SM: Yeah, yeah. Like Mr. Nishikawa. I meet him every week. Once a week.

MG: What? You go downtown?

SM: When I go downtown, my wife goes to sewing with his wife, you see.

MG: Oh, what is this? Up in Manoa?

SM: Manoa. And I get this friend—this person. He died. From Haleiwa, Mr. Miura.

MG: Mr. Miura?

SM: And I met this ((??))

MG: Yeah, he didn't want to talk to us. I called him up and he said, "Oh no, no."

SM: I meet them every now and then.

GH: Someone told us—didn't someone tell you [addressing Mike Gordon] that—don't people meet every now and then? Some kind of club?

MG: Reunion?

SM: Yeah. Honouliuli reunion, they have this—mostly these aliens, you know.

GH: Oh, the aliens?

SM: Yeah, they do that. But we were doing our turn, beginning part. But now we don't, you see. Now they want us to get together with the aliens and do a New Year's party or something.

MG: Most of them speak Japanese. Do you speak Japanese?

SM: I speak Japanese but sometime ((??)) comes afterwards. [Laughter]

GH: Mr. Urata said that if we ever got a hold of Mr. Loveless, we want to throw party for him, if we ever found him. He was young guy?

SM: Not too young, but he was in . . .

GH: Around our age?

SM: He was in the service, so maybe he was in his late twenties, I think so. Nice guy.

MG: Yeah?

SM: Everybody liked him.

MG: Yeah?

SM: And after him, one haole—he's a Jew, you know—he came in. He's all right, too, but . . .

MG: From mainland?

SM: From mainland, you see. This guy—you know the Jews, you know how they do things a little different, and they don't eat certain stuff, like pork [laughter]—so when they have pork at the army camp, he comes to my place. "Eh, Muroda, got something to eat?" I said, "Ah, pork again?" [Laughter]

MG: What was his name? Do you remember his name?

SM: I don't remember his name. So I used to feed him in my kitchen and the boys used to say, "Why you going to feed him here?" "It's all right. You not paying for it." But this guy Jew and he doesn't like his pork, so. . . And before he goes to work, he stop over the kitchen and he gets his coffee.

MG: Everybody came by to get coffee, yeah?—it seemed like.
When you came back out, when you came out of the camp, was it difficult to return to the community?

SM: No, no. Not bad. I was welcomed here, you know. And I found out later that—why I was taken out of the camp for a short time. That I found later.

GH: Why was that?

SM: See, that was through the plantation. The plantation needed me so they got me out. ((??))

MG: Who was in charge of the plantation? You remember?

SM: Mr. Fricke.

MG: First name, you remember that too?

SM: Fricke, Fricke. We just called him Fricke. He's German, you know. Mean guy. [Laughter]

GH: But he wanted you.

SM: Maybe the engineer wanted me back. This engineer, Mr. Simpson, he's a Englishman, you know. Smart man. Good engineer. He fixed up about, he was saying, thirteen mills in the Philippines. Sugar mills. But he came back and then he was pretty old . . .

MG: Was it sugar plantations or . . .

SM: Sugar. They wanted this cane cleaner. And how was cane—before was, they were carrying, but now they go with a grabber machine, so all kind of things—the foreign things—would come in with the cane. And we would have to segregate the cane and the stones and other things. So they want to put out this gadget, and we call that the dry cleaner because they have no water. Little water in Waianae so we cannot wash, so we have to just whip it and get this all separated from the cane. The cane goes one way and the rubbish goes down, you see. And they put up these trucks that are about forty feet high. They want I do that and they were waiting for me.

MG: How many years were you a carpenter?

SM: Ever since eighteen years old. Eighteen years old.

MG: And you worked until—how old were you when you stopped?

SM: Seventy.

MG: Very impressive.
Did he think that if you were in the position of the United States and they were in your position, would you have done the same thing?

SM: I think so.

MG: Do you think maybe that it was justified in a sense?

SM: Well, they got me in as "internal security." That's what they said, see.

MG: You got a letter, too, like this?

SM: Yeah, something like that.

MG: Something like that?

SM: After, yeah, yeah. I think I got something like that. And, but—you have to, have to, because it's for the people. We didn't want any trouble and you have to do something. So, well, we were—I don't know, lucky or unlucky. [Laughter] I rather be there.

MG: Just have to accept it.

SM: Just have to accept it. So, now I tell the people, especially the young ones. They say, "Oh, I make so much one hour, this and that, you see." "Yeah, good. Good for you to make $10, or $15 or $20 an hour. Very good. But remember it is not how much you going to receive in one hour, you gonna make one hour, you see, but the idea is how much you going to save." In internment camp I worked for ten cents an hour.

MG: You saved a lot?

SM: And then when I came back—when I went in I had $16 in my pocket, and when I came back, they sent me a check for $254.

MG: Oh, so what you had they cashed in?

SM: Yeah, you see every month—besides I spent every month $13, you see. That's why I told you previously—and then they had under my account two hundred and fifty and so many dollars. They sent me that check.

GH: At ten cents an hour, too.

SM: Ten cents an hour!

[Laughter]

GH: Wow, I can't imagine.

MG: That's a lot of savings.

SM: Lot of savings.

GH: So when you look back at the camp days, you don't have any bitter feelings or . . .

SM: Ah, no. I don't have any bitter feelings. In fact, maybe, I shouldn't say this but, in fact, I'm happy.

GH: You went?

SM: The way that I feel—that they gave me chance. These people gave me chance to help them. I can do that and I did that and, well, I'm happy today.

MG: You got to help.

GH: Gave you good feeling.

SM: Yeah, good feeling.

MG: Help the people in the camp and help the people, the U.S. government.

SM: If I help the people in the camp, I help the U.S. government, because it's less trouble for them, you see. [Laughter] But if they didn't give me a chance, if they didn't give me ((??)) to do that, well, I couldn't do it.

MG: Your life is a little bit better maybe for it?

SM: Yeah. You see, a good experience for me. I always say this: You can judge people with their wealth, their knowledge, schooling and how much they know, and maybe their figures—athletes and all that. But when you get that person stripped—the person to knock you, when you cannot rely on all those things, just the person himself, then you know the value of the person, how much he's worth, what kind of people.

MG: And thrown in the camp you can see everybody is equal.

SM: Everybody's equal. And with that, some of them, they living only for their money—might be dollar. Some is only living what they know, you see, doctors or whatever it is, you know. But some common people—but still very nice and very strong people and big-hearted people—they try to help. What we call the compassionate people. You can get all those people ((??)), you can see them.

MG: In the camp, were there some people that were really upset. but not angry. . .

SM: No.

MG: I mean, that were—just like, they were having a really hard time. . .

SM: They were bitter in certain ways, but still they know that they can't do anything. But they cannot think that. They have to make the best out of everything while they were interned because they couldn't do anything. What they gonna do? They going to fight the army? They cannot do that. Might as well just go along with them and get their help and help yourself and help the rest of the people, you see.

MG: Yeah.

SM: That's how I worked in there so maybe it made it difficult for my successors. They cannot do things the way how I was doing, so the soldiers, the guards, they feel kind of different and maybe they got bitter with these internees.

MG: Things were different.

SM: Things have changed, but the future, I don't know, because I was out already.

MG: Do you remember the people, the guards—were they marines, or army or. . .

SM: Army people. See, when I was released I didn't know a darn thing about this. I was in the field, I left the kitchen. I was in the kitchen for twelve months, I think, thirteen months, and these people start to give me trouble with that lettuce and all those things. [Laughter] You people, you run away. Anyway, I rather go in the field and someplace and try to set up something. So I was in the field working, and this guy, Loveless, he came around and he said, "Muroda." "What?" "They want you at the office." "Okay." So I got my tools and, "Let's go back," and we walked back. "So what happened now?" "Eh, looks like good news." "What good news?" "You can go home." I said, "What?!" [Laughter] And then, he said, "Okay, you can pack up and tomorrow morning we take you down." So I packed and then the next morning they take me in this jeep, two guards. And they take me to the Immigration Station. And the commander, Spiller—Springer—he was there and he received me and he said, "Oh good! You can go."

MG: He took you home?

SM: And then, "So you have your account here, and you have some money coming to you, but we ((??)) to you, but you can go today."

MG: They made you walk home?

SM: No, "We take you back. From Immigration Station to Waianae, we get you home, so no worry." So these two guards that took me down. He says, "You two, take him back to Waianae." They said, "Okay, ((??))" [Laughter] And they all coming up and he say, "Wait, wait, take off your arms." So they had to take off their arms, their pistols, there and leave it there. "You go."

MG: Why, were they afraid or something?

SM: No, no. It's their duty, you see.

MG: To take off their guns?

SM: I'm free. So I don't have to be guarded.

[Laughter]

MG: Yeah, you're not a prisoner anymore.

SM: I'm not a prisoner anymore.

MG: Was your family—did they know that you were coming back?

SM: No! They didn't know.

MG: Surprised?

SM: They surprised.

MG: What did they—what happened when you came up the door? What happened?

SM: My wife was just stunned. And I tell the guys, "Hey, you don't have to go back yet?" He says, "No, we don't have to go." But I know them, you see, so, "OK then, come in. Let's have coffee before you go." They say, "Okay, okay." I was living on the other side at that time, so—so they came in and we gave them some beer and all that.

MG: They had a good time. Oh, my goodness.

SM: Then they went home, and then this manager from the plantation, he just said, "Man, tomorrow you come work." "What's the matter? I just came home!"

[Laughter]

GH: You would think you would have a vacation, yeah?

SM: No vacation. "When my vacation?" He say, "You had fourteen months off!" ((??))

[Laughter]

MG: They thought that was a vacation?

SM: Nah. He was teasing me.

MG: So you had to go back to work the next day?

SM: Yeah, I went back. The engineer, he said, "Welcome home."

GH: Felt right back in, yeah?

SM: Yeah, and then—he had a blueprint with him ((??)) "I give you a gift." "What's this?" He gave me the blueprint. "They started that already. We gonna do this job."

MG: Present?

SM: Present.

MG: You know, one thing that I was curious—in the camp, they said they didn't have any refrigerators?

SM: Refrigerators? No, we had.

MG: Had some?

SM: Yeah, we had some. Small ones.

MG: Small ones?

SM: Yeah. No more the big ones, walk-in and all that, you see. If we had that then we can preserve lot of food, but the army doesn't want to preserve. What they give you today, you eat all that.

MG: Yeah, they just bring it in every day. Some place else had the big refrigerator.

SM: They supply you, you see. Maybe they had in their kitchen. But not in ours. So they supply us.

MG: Was the camp really neat?

SM: We had a lot of that too. One of the neatest kitchens in the whole United States. [Laughter]

MG: Yeah, Army award?

SM: Army award.

MG: Not? [expressing disbelief]

GH: The whole nation?

MG: The rest of the camp too was, like, people would take care of their area? In front of their. . .

SM: Because Japanese are neat people. They are not good housekeepers, though. Especially the wahines today. [Laughter] I say this because girls of Hawaii, they know how to keep the house. They know how to use all these mops and things, but these girls from Japan, no.

MG: No?

SM: They neat, they are really neat. But the way how they do things is something different. Different. So I was taking care of all these apartments. I see these wahine come in and they don't mop the floor. They get a rag and go on the floor and they scrub. [Laughter]

MG: Make it harder for them, huh?

SM: Same thing for the jalousie. They don't know how to clean that. They are very neat but they don't know how, you see. The toilet things, you know, they don't know how to clean those things, and we have to teach them 'cause they don't use that in Japan.

MG: So, naturally, in camp then it would be really clean in the camp. People would take—even the men, take care.

SM: The men take care themselves, you see. And they spend so many hours a day just to clean the camp.

MG: Nothing else to do anyway, huh?

SM: The kitchen, too. Especially Honouliuli, when we moved there—oh, the floor, that thick with dirt, you know.

MG: They built it, but they didn't clean it up.

SM: They built it right during the rainy season, so naturally this mud washing through the kitchen and the floor, so all dirt, you know. We had some time to clean it. Took about three men on the floor. They had to strip all the mud. Otherwise, it's slippery and they get this old hollow tile pieces and things, you know, stone—rub on the floor. Because we don't have no sand or things to clean.

MG: Whatever you can find?

SM: So, we have use our elbow grease. [Laughs] Clean up the place.

MG: Were you there during the rainy season?

SM: When we went to Honouliuli it was the later part of March. So they built it just before that.

MG: Because I was curious if later on you had problems later on because of the rain, keeping things clean.

SM: No, no. Because then we know how to take care the place and make ditches and all that to get all the water to wash off.

MG: Outside the camp.

SM: Outside of the building. But in the camp, it's all right. But this was in the kitchen.

MG: You had to make ditches? Where around?

SM: Around the building. See this—the building and water wash in there and mud set in there. So on this side, where the water falls, we make the ditch so the water goes somewhere else.

MG: It really came down that heavy that it would kind of flood?

SM: Yeah, because of the gulch, you know.

GH: Were there a lot of mosquitoes?

SM: Yeah, no, not many mosquitoes. But sometime, sometime in the year, there would be mosquitoes.

MG: Would it ever get really hot sometimes?

SM: No, the place wasn't so hot.

MG: Because the wind would come down on top of the . . .

SM: It comes through the gulch and just a little space there, when you are walking, you can see Pearl Harbor. Otherwise, the places are really enclosed. [Laughs]

MG: Were the buildings pretty close to each other?

SM: Yeah.

MG: I mean, like you would feel crowded?

SM: No, not that, but we have to walk 500 feet or so to the kitchen from the barracks.

MG: That's pretty far away. Pretty big camp then, huh?

SM: Yeah. And there's a gulch here, and they had this flume across the gulch for the plantation area. And on top of the flume they had this thing boarded and get our walkway, cat walk to get to the kitchen.

MG: I guess Mr. Nishikawa had said that some people played baseball in there, and the guards—but that the guards always won, or something. You played some baseball too when you were . . .

SM: No. I didn't play any baseball.

MG: But a lot of other people did?

SM: A lot of people did. Yeah, I had to take care of these POWs, you know. Some of them were—especially a group there—really hard heads.

MG: Why is that?

SM: They go on hunger strike. They won't eat.

MG: Mr. Urata said that every morning he would get up and he would see them doing calisthenics. And you guys couldn't talk to them.

SM: No, we had to keep away and just feed them. But then they won't eat, maybe one day and part of the next day, they don't eat and we have to report that to the office.

MG: What happened to them?

SM: Then the guard will send a doctor to check on them, and [if] doesn't eat about three days, they take them to the hospital and give them treatment. They get a little strong then they come back. [Laughs]

MG: Same thing again.

SM: Finally, they took them to the mainland, to Wisconsin, I believe it was—camp. Over there they went after this guard and got his machine gun and they shoot it off. All of them, six of them.

MG: They never had any riots or disturbance at Honouliuli?

SM: No, no. Honouliuli, no disturbance.

MG: Just calm.

SM: Calm.

MG: Well, that seems to be all about—you answered all of our questions, and more.

GH: Oh, thank you so much. Do you know, offhand, of anyone else that we could talk to? We already talked to Nishikawa, Sumida, Tsuchima at *Hawaii Hochi*—I don't know if you know him. . .

SM: Yeah.

GH: Mr. Urata. . .

SM: Urata, the musician?

GH: Yeah, yeah.

MG: Mr. Oi doesn't want to talk to us.

SM: Mr. Nishi—well, he died.

MG: Mr. Okada? How about—is he still around someplace?

SM: I didn't see him for a long time. Sakakiwara . . .

MG: He's not here either, I hear.

SM: He's not here, eh? Sumida. . . [Pause.] This man was in the camp when I went there, first time when I went in—what you call—Sand Island. He was camp commander at that time. And Arakawa. And especially Okada.

MG: Can look him up in the phone book. I want to find a hold of Mr. Loveless.

SM: Yeah. That person, I'd like to meet him, too. If I meet him I want to really say hello to him. [Laughs.]

MG: And we'll see what we can do. You've helped us. I don't know where he is or if we can find him, but we'll try. Mr. Springer, maybe he might know.

SM: He might know.

MG: You say he's with the Hawaii Homes Commission, maybe.

SM: And I think Springer was at Hawaiian Pine or something. After the war. But I don't know where he is now.

MG: We found a whole bunch of documents but they are all in Washington, D.C. I wrote a couple of letters to some people in Washington, and there's all this stuff—lots and lots of stuff—but the only way we can get it is to go there.

SM: Oh, oh, I see.

MG: So we're trying to figure out how we can get the money to go there from school. The school might give us some money to go on a trip to Washington, D.C., to get the stuff. There's a lot of stuff. They didn't even know it was there until we wrote 'em a letter and they looked and they found the stuff.

SM: Martial law ((??))

MG: When we're going over our tapes and we have some questions, we can call you back, if there is something we're not clear on?

SM: Sure. Anytime. Most of the time I'm home except Saturdays and Sundays. Saturdays I go to my flower classes, arrangement classes. I'm doing these flower arrangements.

MG: Oh, you teach flower arranging or you . . .

GH: Oh, very nice. Where is this? In Waianae?

SM: Yeah, in Waianae and then in town.

GH: You know my father, yeah?

SM: Your father is. . .

GH: Honda, the dentist.

SM: Dentist?

GH: They good friends with the Nobuharas.

SM: Nobuhara is my daughter.

GH: Even Hanabusa, too, is your daughter? Isn't that your daughter?

SM: Yeah, yeah. That's right.

GH: Small world. Every time we talk to somebody we always know somebody.

SM: Your grandpa was an intern?

GH: Honda grandpa? Yeah. He was in Honouliuli.

SM: Yeah. I think I know him. He's a big man.

GH: Yeah. Really big, tofu, yeah. Oh, he was there same time as you?

SM: Yeah. When you say, "Honda," I say, "Hey, you know, I wonder if that is that Honda from Wahiawa that was interned with us? Yeah, yeah. He's from Wahiawa."

GH: That's my grandfather. Small world, really.

SM: Big family!

MG: This whole island, big family. Same like Kailua. I'm from Kailua. Everybody knows everybody.

SM: You know somebody, too?

MG: Yeah. Lived here all my life, so far. Almost twenty-one years.

SM: Local people and people from mainland is altogether different.

MG: That's why I like rice better than I do potatoes. Oh, I don't think so.

GH: Sign of a local boy.

SM: Really. When I got rice for the people they were so happy.

MG: Oh, but I like fresh bread though.

SM: One time I had to fight in the kitchen.

MG: Over. . .?

SM: Over bread.

MG: Yeah? What happened?

SM: Well, you see, these people come in line to get their food, see, their tray. Well, this guy—this smart guy—we have this bread all lined up. You know, if you take it from the top it's all right, but this guy, he wants the best part of the bread so he just grabs the center.

MG: What happened? You got in a fight with him?

SM: So I was—first time, I didn't say anything but the third time he did that, so I say, "Why you want to do that? These people, they want to keep things presentable and I arrange this nice and you come here and just grab the center and take it out." "Yeah, but that is the best part." "We know that's the best part so if you want the best part why don't you figure that out and come in line so you can pick up the best one." He got upset, you see. So I told him, "Nah—look, there's not only you in this camp, you see. You still young. There are older people here. Maybe some of them, they have bad teeth or they don't have teeth."

MG: They could have the softer bread.

SM: "Why don't you give them the softer bread and you eat the harder part?" He looks at me and says, "Why ((??))" I say, "Don't do that next time." Some of the people tell you—so I say, when you look at the people, you can see what kind of people they are.

MG: When they are all on the equal level.

SM: So then you find out what kind of people they are.

MG: The great equalizer, the camp. I'm sure it was. What an experience.

[Break in recording.]

[Inaudible conversation.]

SM: …after dinner. And then I heard this woman singing. "Hey, who that guy?" I was away in solitary, you see, and then I was put together with the rest, so then I found out that he was singing. And then this other—the woman that was singing was with that woman compound, and she was a singer too.

MG: And they just sing?

SM: Sing. So they entertain the people.

MG: Sit around and then sing, talk story. . .

SM: So now he's a judge for this ((??)).

GH: Who?

SM: Nishikawa, he's the head judge.

GH: Oh, yeah? I used to sing like that, when I was small. That's what I told Mr. Urata.

[End of April 30, 1980 interview]

[Interview continues on October 17, 1980]
[Tape is missing the beginning of the conversation.]

SM: I was born here and raised all my life here so . . .

MG: Please excuse me if, somehow, if I make a mistake and we overlap on something we talked about before. And I'm trying to remember the right things. So I wrote a bunch of things down. One of the things—just sort of as a note, when I was in Washington and I was looking at those files that I have to get permission for, I said, "Can you look for Robert Muroda?" And they looked and they looked and they said, "No, we don't have. We have a Muroda, but it's not Robert Muroda." And I thought, I can't remember the name—I didn't write it down—but your middle name begins with S, right? And is "Robert" a nickname or something?

SM: Yeah, Robert is nickname. My Japanese name is "Shigeo."

MG: That's the one it was—something—yeah, yeah. And I said, "Well, I bet you that's it." And what I did was, I went and looked at a phonebook. I called up Senator Inouye's office and

looked at a phonebook and I said, "Is the middle initial S?" And they said, "Yeah." I bet that's it. So "Robert" then is a nickname? Do most people call you by that?

SM: Yeah, some of them used to call me that name, but I go with Shigeo Muroda.

MG: They're going to—when you sign this thing, could you print out your middle name, too, so that they know?

SM: Ah, no. I don't ((??)) but, anyway. .

MG: Well, that's what they said. That's what it was, and they were saying, "Oh, we have a Robert Muroda?" "No," but had Shigeo Muroda.

SM: They have all that? They have other documents up there?

MG: They have a whole bunch of documents.

SM: Gathered from Hawaii?

MG: They have about—you're not going to believe this, because I still don't believe it myself, but there's about almost 27,000 feet of boxes—all this wide, just 27,000 feet. Row upon row of the military government during World War II. And a lot of that pertains to the military government in Hawaii. Not all of it—you know, there's military government on the mainland, things like that. But a lot of it is from Hawaii. And when I went there to look at it, no one else had ever looked at it before. I was the first person and they were surprised that someone came all the way from Hawaii to look at it, and they were really amazed and as a result they were really helpful. They didn't know too many things about where things were, so they kind of had to stumble through it together. But when I came across the name problem, I was going, "Gee, I wonder if that was a nickname, you know?" Some people had a nickname. Why did you change it to "Robert?" Was it—I remember hearing stories about . . .

SM: I didn't change it. [Laughs]

MG: It's in the phonebook.

SM: It's in the phonebook. Even the phonebook, they put "Robert." But people doesn't call me "Robert." All, my Japanese name.

MG: That's misleading, or I interpreted it wrong, because I thought—I remember reading in a book that lot of school teachers, haole school teachers, had a hard time . . .

SM: Right.

MG: …pronouncing names, so they said—so students would just—is that what you did in class?

SM: Yeah, and even in pronouncing names, Japanese names—there's—like, I call myself "Muroda" here, but it is not "Muroda" in Japanese.

MG: It is—in what? I don't understand the difference.

SM: It is "Muro*ta*." [Emphasizes "ta."]

MG: Oh. That pronunciation where you enunciate . . .

SM: Because the character "ta," which is "rice field" in Japanese. They call it "ta. " It is "ta" when you use it as a noun. But then they can call you "da" because in Japanese it just sounds with the same character.

MG: Same character but different sounds.

SM: Different sounds.

MG: Oh, I see. What does "Muroda" mean?

SM: "Muro" means "room," a "room," and "ta" is a "rice paddy." So not as a little rice paddy.

MG: A little rice paddy? Wow.

SM: That's something right? Something like that. But when you say "Murota" then it's hard for people to pronounce, so my cousin and myself say, "Ah, more better we call ourselves 'Muroda.'" It's easier.

MG: Have you—did you do that for a long, long time?

SM: Yeah, ever since I started to school.

MG: Oh, like in elementary school? Did they have problems with your first name, too, then? They must have had problems.

SM: No, first name, it wasn't so much. But I can say that they have problem because none of them—they cannot pronounce my name.

MG: What did they call you? Did they just . . .

SM: They call me, "Shige, Shige." [Laughter]

MG: I guess that would be easier for them. Kind of a different way of saying. . .

SM: Then the old Hawaiians they call me, "Keiki Shige."

MG: I don't know . . .

SM: *Keiki* [Hawaiian for child] means "little."

MG: When you were growing up, were your parents very traditional Japanese in the way you lived? How was that?

SM: They spoke Japanese.

MG: They speak Japanese at home?

SM: Yeah. They cannot speak English so they have to speak Japanese.

MG: Oh! So you learned English. . .?

SM: And Japanese.

MG: How did—who did you learn English from?

SM: English, I went to school.

MG: Oh, they taught you English in school?

SM: Yeah.

MG: Must have been tough.

SM: Oh yes! Very tough, because in my days there are very few children. Our student body here, at that time, was only about 150 in Waianae.

MG: Waianae High School?

SM: Waianae Elementary.

MG: Waianae Elementary? How many people, how many children . . .

SM: Oh, we had a lot of—about 500 Japanese. And about another 500 Chinese and Portuguese, Hawaiians, and all that—but not very many children. Only Hawaiian and Portuguese, they had some, but Japanese very few, because all young. They didn't have their wives, you see. Later, they got their wives from Japan, you see.

MG: So this is all when they were still working on the plantation, early days? Maybe thinking about making a lot of money and going back.

SM: That's right.

MG: How many kids were in your family?

SM: Only myself and my brother, that's all.

MG: You the oldest or your brother the oldest?

SM: I'm the oldest.

MG: How much older are you than your brother?

SM: Four.

MG: Four years?

SM: And he died young, so. . . I had another brother, but he died when he was six years old.

MG: So there were three brothers, but you're the only brother left now? Was there a Waianae High School here then, too? Just Waianae Elementary?

SM: Elementary up to sixth grade.

MG: What happened after that?

SM: After that, then they start to increase the grades. Seventh, eighth. . .

MG: So they only planned for the first six years that they had and when the person got older. . .

SM: More children coming up, you see.

MG: So when you got to the sixth—how far in school did you go?

SM: I went to the seventh grade and then I left school.

MG: Learned how to become a carpenter?

SM: No, not exactly. I wanted to be a carpenter, but still I have to work, you see. My father was not too healthy so I have to work and help him. So I started to work.

MG: What did your father do?

SM: My father was a fish peddler. He was working for the plantation but he cannot take it because his health, so he had an excuse and he started doing his fish peddling.

MG: Did he go out and fish or just . . .

SM: No, he buys his fish from the fisherman.

MG: And then sells it?

SM: Yeah, he used to do that.

MG: I see. You had lots of fish, then, around the house?

SM: Oh yeah! Those days, like not now. You'd be surprised.

MG: Yeah?

SM: In this stream back here—when we were kids, we used to go there and then get this—I don't know what it's called—we called it *o'opu*. Black fish with a big mouth, fresh water fish.

MG: And there were lots?

SM: Yeah, there were lots. And we picked them up and we string it about that much. And this Chinese, they really liked it, so we go to them and sell it. [Laughter]

MG: How much did you sell it for?

SM: Oh, we sell it for about twenty-five cents. [Laughter]

MG: That's a lot of money.

SM: Oh, that's a lot of money those days, you know.

MG: Go to store and buy candy or something?

SM: Yeah.

MG: So you were, then—okay, like you mentioned before, you were dual citizens because you were Japanese. You were automatically Japanese, but you were going to stay in Hawaii then, and not go to school in Japan. . .

SM: All my life here.

MG: Because I know, like, Mr. Urata, he went to Japan.

SM: Yeah. Those people went to Japan and studied in Japan. They are kibei but I'm not.

MG: Is that more city people that did that?

SM: Oh, no, no.

MG: All over?

SM: All over. And there's a certain condition in their family, you see.

MG: He said he was the oldest one, too. That's why.

SM: Yeah, he was the oldest one. The parents, they were so ambitious and they wanted to do more work and this child is in the way, and so they sent them to the grandparents.

MG: But your parents needed help.

SM: Yeah, my parents . . .

MG: You and your brothers would help out more. [Pause]
Um, we just sort of touched on it very briefly—you said that it was a very traditional Japanese household, with traditional Japanese values. How did *shikata ga nai* [it can't be helped] fit in? Was that sort of a big part of your lifestyle? Because I was trying to think before I came down, driving over here, I was trying to think—in reading in history books,

there's a lot of mention, in the books, whoever wrote them, there was sort of, just an accepted part of the Japanese, that was sort of traditional, that belief.

SM: Yeah, it was. Their custom.

MG: It was? That it was a Japanese custom brought over from Japan.

SM: Yeah, that's right. And their religion, too.

MG: It was—was it kind of used a lot around, in Hawaii?

SM: Oh, yeah.

MG: I mean everybody was—it wasn't something that was brought over and then forgotten?

SM: No, no, no. Until today, Japanese custom.

MG: Is it really strong today?

SM: Oh, yes. Japanese custom. Like my way of living—I was brought up with Japanese custom, Japanese way, Japanese family. And still I am an American citizen. But I take what is beneficial for me from these Japanese custom and then from the Western American custom too. That's how I living today.

MG: Sort of take the best of both worlds.

SM: That's right. That's what I think and I tell my children.

MG: Do you consider *shikata ga nai* your life? Is that still a part of your—even today?

SM: Even today. *Shikata ga nai* is a Japanese word, but it came from Buddhist ministers. It's a Buddhist word.

MG: Yeah? Buddhism came from all over, different places.

SM: Yeah but the Japanese Buddhism, that's the one that gets all these things. And Chinese Buddhism, there's more Confucius. But *shikata ga nai* doesn't mean that you gonna give up or retreat. No. But for you to see the truth. That's what ((??)).

MG: Then you wouldn't take everything for granted or accept everything, then?

SM: Oh no. Cannot.

MG: There's some things you just wouldn't accept?

SM: No, wouldn't accept.

MG: What might that be? Maybe, well—in the internment camp, I guess, a lot of people just went. I guess you could say that was . . .

SM: Well, what can we do? If you were picked up you can't do anything. You cannot fight the government.

MG: It can't be helped.

SM: So it can't be helped, so you go. At that kind time you can say, "*Shikata ga nai*." Or "*Shō ga nai*."

MG: What was that?

SM: "*Shio.*" [should be *Shō*] Same thing.

MG: So—you're a Buddhist then, Japanese Buddhist?

SM: Japanese Buddhist. Yeah, that's right.

MG: So was that a spoken teaching then, when they taught you at home? Japanese Buddhist, you would say, "This is *shikata ga nai*"? And this is what it means, and everybody knew about it?

SM: Yeah, everybody knew. Their language and their way of living, you see. Buddhist way of living.

[Further conversation clarifying the meaning of the phrase "*shikata ga nai*" omitted here.]

MG: That's clearer now. I had a sort of a narrow understanding. I wasn't quite sure because the way it is presented in the book, it doesn't come off like that. That's why, "Let's talk about it," because I am curious what it was.

SM: Yeah, there's a lot of Japanese language that, literally, you cannot understand because it comes from religion, Buddhism. So the words, the language, that the Japanese use daily, 90 percent of them is from Buddhism. So who doesn't understand Buddhism, hard for them to understand and to accept what it stands for.

[Further conversation clarifying the meaning of the phrase *shikata ga nai* omitted here.]

MG: Do you think that it helped the Japanese in Hawaii, as immigrants when they first came here, the Issei and some of the Nisei, to put up with the plantation owners?

SM: That helped them plenty. Plenty. That one where *shikata ga nai*—that one word kept them going.

MG: Really? Keep your parents going?

SM: Yeah, keep them going. Not only my parents but the whole . . .

MG: Sort of when a problem comes up . . .

SM: Yeah, problem comes up, and they are tired and they want to rest but they cannot, you see. They are always pushed to work but instead of getting mad, or getting sore about it, say, "Eh, *Shikata ga nai*." And then they realize, you see, they realize the reason why they get this—this kind of hardship. So they say, "Well, I chose to come to Hawaii to work so I have to go through all this hardship so, *shikata ga nai ne*." So they say. *Shikata ga nai*.

MG: Is that feeling—prevail in Japan, too, do you think?

SM: Oh, yeah.

MG: There's a lot of *shikata ga nai* in daily life, even today? [Pause]
Were you born in Waianae, too? [Question directed to Shizume Muroda]

ShM: Yeah, yeah. Waianae. I am from Waianae.

MG: How did you meet your husband?

SM: We are close neighbors, you see.

MG: Oh, so you are childhood sweethearts.

SM: [Laughter] Played together.

MG: Really? Oh, wow.

ShM: You know, I was married to him, I get kimono on, I walked to his house. That near we was. [Laughter] Not a car or anything else.

SM: About three houses away. [Laughter]

MG: Really? And you have known each other since small kid time? Wow! That's a long time.

ShM: Yeah, we married fifty-four years.

SM: Fifty-five!

ShM:: Oh, fifty-five years. My children made for us a golden anniversary and they gave the money to go Japan so we went '78.

MG: Really?

ShM: Because the grandchildren get married so I cannot go to Japan that time. Couple of years and then we went.

MG: I don't know your first name. I'm so embarrassed. What is your name?

ShM: My name is Shizume. Now my children, they all have English names but our days, you know, the parents are Issei so they don't put the English names. My children, all get their English names.

MG: You were always from Waianae then?

ShM: I'm born here.

MG: Tell me if I'm out of line, when were you born?

ShM: 1915?

SM: 1916. She's one year younger than me.

ShM: When he was interned, I had—you know, I had ten in the family—I get six children and I get the in-laws with me. Yes, one pastor man was with us, so had I ten when he was interned. But his father and mother backed me up, see. And my oldest daughter was going to start McKinley [High School in Honolulu] and the second one was going to start Waipahu High School when she say—that girl said, "Oh, Grandma—Mommy—I quit school." After Daddy comes back, then she says she's going school. And his mother said, "No. You go, because without education, it's not good." She didn't have education, you see, but she can sew anything, everything! Nearly everything because, you know—the olden days, the parents said when girls get the education, they no work and they only read and—you know, that is really old-fashioned. If my mother is living under so much—his mother—that's why she said, "No. I want you to go school, and if she get sick or I get sick, then you come down from school and then you wait until Daddy come back. But while I'm all right, then I help Mommy." And his father was helping me and she was helping me.

MG: You folks all live—still—three houses away, like that?

ShM: No. We was living together.

SM: Together. Yeah. She was living together with my in-laws, my parents.

MG: Even before you were interned?

ShM: Yeah.

MG: Oh, all in one house?

SM: Yeah, that's right.

ShM: Yeah, and—his brothers were—I was taking care. And he volunteered to the service because he went Japan as a ((??)) FBI questioned him and ((??)) After that, volunteer. He was a boxer, see?

MG: Oh yeah?

ShM: Yeah. That's why he volunteer. Then they took him away from us and then Red Cross said—about one month, I didn't meet him yet—that Red Cross said, "You folks going evacuate to the mainland." You know, I cannot. I cannot just go like that. And I looked at the paper they brought. It's only my family, and I get that boy with me, and his [Shigeo's] parents with me. So I said, "I cannot leave this Waianae." I said, "Where should I go to report this?" Then he said—the Red Cross man said—"Go to the FBI office and report that to them." But I went to the lawyer, too, you know, to case this, you know—but that lawyer was my father-in-law's best friend. "Ah, Muroda, you no fight this kind because you going be loser." And one lady before me, the lawyer said she did, but she lost.

MG: She lost?

ShM: And she was orphaned. She went to Kaneohe. You know, those days, I think you better go see the FBI. So I went. That time it was, Captain Gregg? Captain Gregg.

MG: You remember his name?

ShM: Yeah, I know that. Then he said, "What can I do for you?" And that time, his brother was with me going over there, his brother, yeah? He had uniform, so he said, "What the cause of you folks came over here that his brother tell us." So I don't have to talk, the brother talk.

MG: Yeah.

ShM: And then he said, "Oh, did you meet your husband?" "No, this Sunday I'm going to meet him." "Well, you meet him and come back to us."

MG: That was when he was still in Sand Island at that point?

ShM: Yeah, yeah. Then I said, "Oh, okay." Then I met him. "They never tell you evacuate?" "No, they never tell us, tell me, nothing." "They said you have to evacuate, you know." "No, they never tell us—tell me—nothing." "Oh yeah?" Then I have to go back tomorrow, and his brother had a haole girlfriend. He was separate with the wife and he had a haole girlfriend, and she brought me to the FBI office. "I take you go."

MG: She had a car?

ShM: Yeah. "I take you go." Then he said, "No need, you don't have to go." "Oh, thank you." Because myself all right, but I get in-laws, and his father was weak. He had every time chills and all kind sick, that's why I cannot go that cold place. And, "Oh, you don't have to go." And his brother said, "His son with me too," he said. "Oh, you don't have to go then. You and your husband don't have to vacate." "Oh, thank you." But I get ready his stuff already, you know to—I told him to go. If they tell you go, you can't help us, so you go, but

I stay back. Because with the children, and they cannot go school. I said, "No." "No, you don't have to work," Captain Gregg said. I said, "No. I don't want to go."

MG: But the kids would never . . .

ShM: Yeah. Because the children just high school, that's why I don't want to move. Both of them, they would evacuate, they ((??)) go school. I never go, so I was lucky, with my children.

MG: Did your friends go? Some friends went?

ShM: Yeah. Plenty went. But I didn't go.

MG: I had a number on how many people from Hawaii went to the mainland. I think it was like almost 2,000 people. A lot of people.

ShM: Yeah, my brother-in-law went. He was a sailor. That's why. But he is second generation so they cannot force them to go. Once they went, second generation, they sent them back.

MG: Some came back?

ShM: Because they get the right as citizens . . .

MG: Like Mr. Sumida here. He came back, but Mr. [Dan] Nishikawa, he didn't go to the mainland at all. Did he?

SM: No. He came later, then.

ShM: But we was all right, you know.

MG: But it wasn't rough times? Or was?

ShM: I had rough time, that time. But that time, *shikata ga nai*. You have to think that way, with the children. But my children helped me. Not like you folks. You folks have education. Our days, we don't have that education so I was laundry for this sailor, radio-station sailor.

SM: Lualualei.

ShM: Lualualei.

MG: Oh, yeah.

ShM: The officer used to bring—and they was so nice, but—I appreciate that, you know. We don't have chocolate candy bars, but they put them in the laundry. And one boy—he's a German, I think—but he put plenty chocolate in. Then I said, "What this? Plenty candy in my, the laundry." "Oh," he said, "to give you children." "Oh, thank you!" [Laughter.] We cannot buy those things.

MG: Did you get chocolate inside the camp?

SM: Yeah.

MG: That was Red Cross package, yeah? They gave chocolate and . . .

SM: No, we buy.

MG: Oh, you can buy?

SM: Yeah. They had a concession there and they selling, you see.

ShM: But it was not bad. They did not treat you bad. That much . . .

MG: That's what—that was what was different about the Hawaii experience. ((?)) that the treatment in Hawaii—but there was . . .

SM: Not only myself, the rest said the same. They are not treated badly. [Laughter]

MG: I remember you mentioning that . . .

ShM: Twice a month . . .

MG: You went down.

ShM: But when he was interned, the boy that I was taking care, he broke his arm, and he no come back. And he said, "Oh, Mommy, I broke my arm."

MG: What did he do?

ShM: He was climbing the plumeria tree and he fell down and he broke his arm. And just then his friend came and, "Oh, Shizume, I take him go." "Oh, please, then take him go." And my youngest one had ((ringworms??)) in the hair and all bald head. Aww! And the second one had appendicitis. Black out!

MG: Yeah, everyone had to have all of the their shutters closed.

ShM: Yeah, all of our windows, all closed.

MG: You went over, and when you went to Lualualei for the Navy guys' laundry . . .

ShM: No, no. They bring. And they come and pick it up.

MG: A lot of laundry for one guy or for lots of guys?

ShM: An officer comes and . . .

SM: She used to do for about ten, fifteen?

ShM: Yeah, about fifteen people.

SM: It's piece work, you see.

MG: They come there, like, once a week or something?

SM: They was nice person. They never bother us. They was nice. And the officer said, "If the sailor bother you folks, you report to me. I tell them."

MG: All haole sailors? All haoles?

ShM: All of the sailors. But they didn't come and bother us. But I think, two, three sailors, they went [to the] front. So I said, "You going front?" "Yeah, next week." "Oh, then I give you some ((??))." I invite them and. . .

MG: Really?

ShM: …give them a drink. . .

[Break to switch tapes]

MG: Sometimes I hear the bad stories. You don't . . .

ShM: No, those days was better then nowadays. Now days is more no good. [SM laughs.] Those days, they didn't bother us. I was kind of scared because I have only girls. Only the boy—the brother's boy is a boy, and the rest is five girls.

MG: That's the boy with the broken arm—the brother's boy.

ShM: Yeah. But they didn't bother us.

SM: He's an engineer now.

ShM: If I get education, I don't have to work that hard and I can get good money or what, but . . .

MG: You didn't go to elementary school or something?

ShM: Only elementary.

MG: Yeah, just, and then—but you [addressing Shigeo] kept on going.

SM: Yeah, I kept studying on my own.

MG: And then you became a carpenter.

SM: Yeah.

MG: How old when you started to become a carpenter?

SM: Well, let me see. Fifteen—about seventeen, I think.

MG: Seventeen? And it was always for the same plantation?

SM: Yeah.

ShM: Now he can go, was, but his father start ((??)) yeah?

SM: I get, what do you call . . .

MG: But when you were seventeen, you became a carpenter? For—what was the name of that sugar plantation?

SM: Waianae.

MG: Waianae. And then you worked up to shop foreman, you said.

SM: Yeah.

MG: But that was—took a while though, huh?

SM: No.

MG: No, not that long?

SM: Not that long. Not long. I took home-study course in carpentry and business.

MG: Really?

SM: I graduated, so different carpenter then the rest, you see.

MG: Because you had that extra knowledge?

SM: So I did all the planning, drafting—and later years, the plantation—what do you call—bookkeeper, the accountant that works in the office. This white man, Gentry. "Muroda, you help us on this?" "What's that?" "For our tax purpose, you go out then and check our property."

MG: You must have known a lot of math then—pretty good in math?

SM: I went house to house and I have to report for our tax purpose.

MG: For the . . .

SM: For the plantation.

MG: On how big everything was.

SM: I even went to the tax office, to the tax examiner there, and get his request for what he wants.

MG: That's pretty neat. Not many people did a lot of extra things. That's pretty good. And you lived on the camp too, on the plantation, so ((??)).

[short break in recording]

MG: When you were growing up was there a lot of—like, was your childhood fun? Would you call it fun?

SM: A lot of fun.

MG: See, the reason I ask—these questions may seem really strange, since we're talking about the internment camp—but the reason I am asking this because I am trying to get a picture in my mind, since I am only twenty-two, what life was like back in the 1920s and '30s and leading up to . . .

SM: 1920s and '30s is all right. It was good.

MG: Good fun to grow up here?

SM: But in the '10s, you know—now, I born in 1905. And the first thing that hit me, I remember, was when I went to school. I didn't speak much English because my friends all are Japanese. They all speaking Japanese.

MG: All little kids, small kids.

SM: Little kids. Even the small kids we all speak Japanese instead of English, you see. Because our parents doesn't know, so they don't use English. Only some of that—Hawaiians, or the policemen that comes around—they start to speak English. But we picked up English faster than the old people because we young, so we can . . .

MG: What if you had to go to the store?

SM: It's all Japanese. [Laughter] So when I went to school, the first grade, they have this alphabet. This is an apple, this is a car and all that, you see. But we didn't see no apple. We don't know anything.

MG: There are no apples in Hawaii . . .

SM: No. No apples.

MG: Yeah, no apples in Hawaii. You never had an apple to eat? Really?

SM: No, no. Not those days.

MG: How old were you when you had your first apple?

SM: I had an apple when I was a kid but because my father's friend used to come from downtown all the time.

MG: But most people didn't, huh?

SM: No, they didn't—they didn't know what was an apple. So one day my friend came and he brought us a basket of apples so I took a couple and I asked my father to give me. He asked, "What you going to do?" "I'm going to take them to school."

MG: Show and tell?

SM: I'm going to show the children what is an apple.

MG: How old were you then? Like first grade?

SM: Yeah, first grade. About six, seven years. I gave it to the teacher and the teacher said, "Let's put it on the desk,"

MG: You guys all cut it up and let everyone had a piece?

SM: "This is an apple." She showed the apple to the class. [Laughter]

MG: That's different.

SM: Different. Something completely different.

MG: Because you don't have as much ships and planes—no planes—coming to Hawaii.

SM: No, no, no.

MG: Like they do now.

SM: Well, they had in town, Honolulu, they had, you see. But not in the country.

MG: This was country, country.

SM: Country. And we had our ways to communicate. Is just the railroad that passed through here twice a day. Two comes and two goes back to town, see.

MG: Did you ever go to town?

SM: Yeah. About once in five years. [Laughter]

MG: Really?

SM: Oh, that was good, see. We didn't have shoes.

MG: No slippers?

SM: Slippers we had but . . .

MG: *Geta*? [Japanese clogs]

SM: Geta, but we go to school barefooted. But now, it's alright because they have good roads and all that, but in our days, no. And Waianae is not like other place. Waianae get a lot of these *kiawe* [native Hawaiian tree with spiky thorns] trees. You step on them, oh man. And the homes are not like now, you see.

MG: You had a big house or small house?

SM: Those days used to be shared apartment. Long apartment and cut up in so many rooms, you see. And one family gets one room.

MG: That was on the plantation, right?

SM: On the plantation, one room. And the kitchen is outside, away from the . . .

MG: From where you live.

SM: …from where you live. And you have to walk, because they had enough road, roadway, for a wagon to go through, you see.

MG: Oh, so another small building, everyone had a community kitchen?

SM: No.

MG: Everyone had a small kitchen?

SM: Yeah, small kitchen. And a community kitchen is for bachelors.

MG: Oh, if they didn't want to eat plantation dinner?

SM: Yeah, plantation, they goes over there.

MG: They can cook their own, huh?

SM: No, they don't cook their own. They goes to this community kitchen and then . . .

MG: Cafeteria?

SM: Yeah, cafeteria. They pay so much a month.

MG: Yeah. How long did you live on the plantation, though, as a kid? Because your father was a fish peddler.

SM: I lived on the plantation. Oh, my father was a fish peddler, still, when I started to work the plantation.

MG: Oh, really? Even though you weren't working on the plantation they let you live there?

SM: Yeah.

MG: Was there any reason for that?

SM: Yeah, because my mother was a midwife, you see.

MG: Oh, for the plantation kids?

SM: The plantation. Help the plantation, so they give us privilege to live. And then a few years, my father went out of the plantation and went to this west camp here. They had these Hawaiians living there, and we leased a house there and were living there for a while, but then we gave that up and we came back to the plantation.

MG: Was that right by the beach, that house?

SM: Yeah.

MG: So you could get fish—he would buy fish from them, huh? And then, did he sell only to Waianae people? Or did he go to town to sell fish?

SM: Cannot!

MG: No? Long way?

SM: Even to Ewa! [Laughter]

MG: Fish would be junk by the time he would got there.

SM: Yeah, man. I remember one time, in this Lualaulei Valley there's a big reservoir, seventy-five acres. And then stormy winter season it rains and all the water comes into the reservoir ((??)), and ((??)) they pump the water out and then irrigate the cane fields, you see. But after they pump this water out, naturally, the water is going to recede, and all this area getting dry. These farmers are all growing watermelon. I tell, you, a lot of watermelons. Then this, you know, this goldfish—we call *funa*. Not the real goldfish—you can eat. Big one like this.

MG: It's a big carp.

SM: Yeah, carp. It's a carp, between carp and this goldfish.

MG: F-U-N-A?

SM: Yeah. Oh, that's a good fish to eat and it comes—maybe some of the streams up there in the mountains they have this, you see. And during the rainy season, it wash down and then come to this ((??)) and they grow in this reservoir. And one year's time, they grow big, and sometimes tons of them. People goes over there and then pick up this fish, cleaning up, dry.

MG: Did you father sell those fish, too?

SM: No, we don't sell those fish.

MG: Too many. Everyone can just go up and get?

SM: But they get this watermelon, you see. One time my father got a wagon for—you know, those days, horse and wagon, see? No automobile.

MG: No cars.

SM: So he got a wagon for us and said, "Let's go. Let's go to Ewa." We started off from Waianae to Ewa, took us whole day to go and come back.

MG: You sold the watermelon?

SM: Yeah, we sold the watermelon, but the ride!

MG: How much would a watermelon cost?

SM: Oh, this size maybe only about twenty-five cents.

MG: Not a big watermelon though?

SM: Oh, big!

MG: Oh, okay. The small one would be twenty-five cents.

SM: The big one would be about a dollar.

MG: Expensive watermelon.

SM: Expensive.

MG: But worth it. Tastes good.

SM: They like it—and once a year, once in three years. . .

MG: Who would your father buy fish from?

SM: These Hawaiians.

MG: They had fishing, from that same fishing village?

SM: Yeah, the whole beach here. Lot of Hawaiians and Japanese fishermen.

MG: With their own boats and all?

SM: Yeah. But those days was mostly Hawaiians.

MG: You said there were not that many Japanese.

SM: Not that many.

MG: And like even a smaller amount went to school. One hundred fifty, you said.

SM: That's right.

MG: Everyone had to go to school? Or your parents wanted you to go to school?

SM: Not only the parents. It's the law. You know, they didn't have these child laws, see. Now they have child laws, from sixteen—you have to be sixteen and over to work. But those days, no. You can work from young, you see. But the plantation, they have their own policemen, they have their own law, and they doesn't want the children to be roaming around.

MG: Go to school.

SM: Go to school—and if any children playing on the road or something, these policemen just pick them up.

MG: Take them to school.

SM: Sure, they have to get education, and keep 'em out of mischief is one thing. Good to have them go to school and good to have them work, you know. Like plantation days—you come to fourteen, fifteen, and you can handle a hoe, they hire you, you see. You go to work.

MG: But you also can read, too.

SM: Yeah.

MG: That way if you ever want to do something else like home study, like you said to become a better carpenter—because you can only learn so much about carpentry from someone telling you, learn little more at home.

SM: Home study. Even my Japanese, I used to go night schools, study.

MG: Japanese studies?

SM: Yeah, Japanese.

MG: What did you study?

SM: Japanese language, Japanese characters. So now I read Japanese but hard for me to write.

MG: Takes time to write.

SM: Yeah, because—we doesn't use that all the time, you see. Now I read all this, I can read all that but. . .[Lengthy pause]

MG: That's right. Because I remember you said you taught—teach—flower arranging, so you went to school to learn that too?

SM: Yeah.

MG: Did you teach flower arranging back—during, before the war?

SM: No.

MG: That was later on?

SM: Later on. I started to learn—the reason I started to learn flower arrangement is through my granddaughters. I have to babysit my granddaughters, granddaughter and grandsons. But, during the weekdays, all right, they go to school. I don't have to worry about them, they go school, they can take care of them. But weekends, Saturdays and Sunday, it's the time, you know, they start to get in trouble, see. And when my granddaughter came intermediate—seventh, eighth grade—then it's one thing, because she's going to have a lot of time. And if she goes into any kind of trouble then you going to be in trouble. And they want to go to town every weekend and then, you know, drop in a show and all, you see, and so. . . [Laughter] So, I talk with my wife, "Hey, we better do something." And she say, yeah. Then I ask my granddaughter, "You want to come to town every weekend, your father gave you money so it's okay. But now, just run in town and come to show, like that—no make sense, you see. You should try to learn something."

MG: Yeah. You should make use of your time and learn.

SM: Learn, and then after that then we go to—everything closed.

MG: Oh yeah, everything closed up.

SM: So what? So I tell 'em, "Well, music or—you want piano, or Japanese music or *koto* [Japanese string instrument] or flower arrangement?" "Hey Grandpa, flower arrangement's all right."

MG: When was that?

SM: That was '64, 1964. Then we start up and my granddaughter, my grandson, I left them at the class. Then I had to wait for them, see, and I say, "Hey, this is long." So I say, "Eh, we better start up, too." So I start to learn how to arrange flowers with the children, see.

MG: Instead of waiting outside. Take the class, too.

SM: Yeah, my instructor says, "Ah, that's good." But before then, soon after the war, 1945, our Buddhist temple—during the war, the military took that over and used . . .

MG: This, this? [meaning their house]

SM: No, our church.

MG: Oh, I thought you were pointing over here.

SM: And that Japanese language school, the building, the military used it for USO [United Social Organizations]. They renovated and then used it for USO so we don't have anything. We had our temple, but during the rainy season like this, we had about 25,000 soldiers out here, you see, and some ((??)). But when rain and then come the flood. So they come out from there and then went in my temple. Nobody was there, so. . .

MG: Did you help build that?

SM: The temple?

MG: Because you were a carpenter.

SM: No, no, no.

MG: It had been there a long time?

SM: Yeah. A carpenter from Japan.

MG: Because I remember you said that you helped build some houses, like you were helping to build somebody's house—a friend's house, or something—on Pearl Harbor?

SM: No, up Maili.

MG: Up by Maili? But when Pearl Harbor was attacked?

SM: Yeah. That's right. Well, at that time, during the war, all these things were going on. Soon after the war, 1945, when the war ended, then the military gave back that—the building. The building was for the plantation, you see. They gave it back.

MG: Was it on the plantation?

SM: Yeah, they gave it back to the plantation. And my friends working in the office, they know what's going on and so tell me, "Hey, they going give back our school building. The plantation gonna get it back. So what are we going to do?" We gotta get it back 'cause we're going to need it. "Well, let's go see the manager." So we went to the manager 'cause I was construction foreman and supervising all the construction and the boys in the office and the other department heads, we went to the management department. [They said] "Sure, sure!" Saying we want to lease that place for one dollar a year. So, okay. Then—until then, all the first generation ((??)). They were running this organization, you see. But they say, "Hey, times change. We better leave it up to the second generation."

MG: The Nisei became—ran the church?

SM: So they want the Nisei to run it and they say, "Come back and help us." And they chose me to be the president of this organization.

MG: What was the name of the organization?

SM: Waianae Hongwanji Mission. [Laughter] From that time, I started up. Then, you see, I had to keep—we didn't have a minister here, you see. Our minister used to come from Waipahu because the congregation here is too small. We cannot keep a minister, so the minister from Waipahu had to. And I had to take care of the temple. At that time, you know, you see the flower arrangement and all that art on the altar. I don't know how. I just get the flower and stick. [Laughter] I did that.

MG: Long time later that you learned how to do that.

SM: Yeah. Then the worst one that—I was real embarrassed—was that, when the chief abbot from Kyoto came over and then he visited our temple. . . [Laughter]

MG: And then the flowers were all . . ..

SM: I don't know how good that was, but then my teacher, he was a reverend, too. He came. I said, "What about the flower we made that I did? Is that all right?" He said, "Oh, that's okay. That's okay." [Laughter]

MG: He gave a pass?

SM: He passed it. Oh, man.

MG: That kind of raises an interesting question. When you said that when war broke out and the military took everything away—all the Japanese things—did you folks have a lot of Japanese things that you got rid of or something, because people would . . ..

SM: Yeah, some of them. They got rid of—some of them even got rid of their passports, which was really crazy, you know.

MG: Did you guys do anything like that?

SM: No. Not my father. Doesn't care. I came here on this passport.

MG: Still had like art things and . . .

SM: Yeah, and then another thing they got rid of was the emperor's portrait.

MG: Oh, you guys did that?

SM: No. My father didn't have one.

MG: But because that's one thing that I read and I was curious. Like they said that people would get rid of—like, say, things that were hanging on the wall, or signs—they were afraid that if they kept it around the house, then . . .

ShM: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

SM: FBI comes around.

MG: And they would be suspicious.

SM: Suspicious. And then trouble, you see. But, those things are . . .

MG: You guys didn't have very much?

SM: Oh, maybe not.

MG: I'm kind of confused. So you guys didn't lose a lot of things, then, because of the war, as far as Japanese things in your home.

SM: No, no, no. Because, you see, Japanese are queer nationality, you see. Very queer. Why I say this is—see, we Americans—we believe in one God. But Japanese, no. Japanese, their national Buddhism is Shinto, you see. Still they believe in Buddhism.

MG: But different sects of Buddhism.

SM: Yeah, yeah. Buddhism is divided into different sects. But this Shintoism is another thing. Shintoism is something like god, you see. God of the earth, god of ((??))—like, Shintoism is god of light, you see.

MG: How do Shintoism and Buddhism relate? Like two different . . .

SM: Two different things.

MG: When you were in Honouliuli, did they have Buddhist priests in there that…

SM: Oh, yeah.

MG: …had services? They did, huh? Once a week?

SM: Ah, no . . .

ShM: He was lucky.

SM: No, no, not once a week but—you see, the way how they operated the camp is—is this, you see—maybe you have two hundred in there, and always there's a reverend, a doctor, and a few cooks. Always they have that.

MG: People from professional trades?

SM: And when they relocate these people, especially the aliens—they have the power to relocate them. . .

MG: The Issei?

SM: The Issei. Well, when they go, they take these reverend and these cooks and this doctor with them, you see. Then in place, another set comes in.

MG: Were there more Issei in the camp than Nisei?

SM: Later was Nisei. But in the beginning Issei.

MG: And you were there from the very beginning, you said.

SM: Nineteen-forty—'62, not '61 [*sic*]. We were about the first Nisei to go in there. But, of course, there are more of the Nisei that went in there like Sakakibara and Senator Abe. Big Island big shots were over there. They are Nisei.

MG: But for a while, there were mostly the older Issei, like teachers and priests.

SM: Reverends and . . .

MG: I see.

[MG thinking out loud about whether he has any more questions he wanted to ask]

SM: Yeah, the earlier days, the Japanese immigrants, they really worked.

MG: Even during the war?

SM: During the war, too. I think Japanese, they never give up.

MG: Strong, huh?

SM: Strong.

MG: *Shikata ga nai*.

SM: *Shikata ga nai*. They gotta do it. [Laughter] And the early immigrants, it's another thing. When was that, these people from Japan? They came to study about these immigrants, too, see. And they were here asking me questions.

MG: Yeah?

SM: Yeah. Somebody, one of my friends, referred them to me, so. . .

MG: Talking about early life in . . .

SM: In Hawaii. When I was thirteen years old, the Spanish influenza that they got in Hawaii—boy, I tell you, people dying—everyday, we having notice. No medication. No doctors, you see. They don't know how to control the disease. And then, my mother, being a midwife, she had a lot of these women gave birth, after maybe one month or so. Those are the people really was hit, you see. And the family used to have two parents, father and mother. And all

the children left—lot of them like that. And I was just thirteen years old, but since my mother used to go around and help these people, so I used to go around and help her, too. Even the manager of the plantation, he saw my mother and he said, "Wait." And then he got a carton of his cigarettes. "Mama-san, you smoke this? I think this going help." You know, those days, we rolled Bull Durham. [Laughter] The manager gave her cigarettes.

MG: You smoke cigarettes?

SM: No, no. I was lucky. I was really lucky because I was healthy.

MG: Yeah?

SM: I didn't get that, the fever.

MG: What, cigarettes helped, helped the thing?

SM: That's what they say, but I don't believe in that. [Laughter]

MG: I never heard of that before, that cigarettes making you feel better when you're sick because I don't smoke cigarettes at all.

SM: But maybe they think it's going to keep the germs away. [Laughter] I don't know.

MG: But she took the cigarettes anyway. Did she smoke 'em?

SM: She smoked them, but—my mother used to smoke, you see.

MG: Oh. So good cigarettes then.

SM: Oh, the manager was so thankful that she goes around and help the people. Every day. And we get funeral—those who are taking care of the funeral, all sick. Every one of them sick, you see, so even to dig a grave, plantation has a . . .

MG: Hard work when you can't work when you're sick.

SM: They have to get all these healthy people up there and then dig 'em up.

MG: You had a very helping household, then. I mean, you know, you learned a lot about people and caring for people then.

SM: Yeah.

MG: 'Cause when we talked last time, you mentioned how the camp experience taught you a lot about people. How you helped people. See people and how you helped them in their daily life, and it sort of carries over from when you grew up, 'cause your mother was a midwife and she would help people. So it just comes natural.

SM: That's right.

ShM: After the Second War, that flu thing. Oh, plenty people ((?)) . . .

SM: Before the World War, the First World War.

ShM: First one?

SM: She's talking about the First World War.

ShM: Oh yeah. I thought it was the Second one. Lots of people—more those who get the baby—pregnant—those are the ladies go, you know . . .

MG: Yeah, they get sick and have miscarriage.

SM: Not only miscarry, they die!

ShM: Just born and the baby arrive, and the mother pass away.

MG: Orphans.

ShM: All kinds.

MG: Sad.

ShM: But now, all right—doctor advanced, that's why. That Hong Kong flu, or something like that, all kind sickness that . . .

MG: [Pause] Well, I think I have to get back. Thanks a lot for talking.

SM: If it helps you, I'm really happy.

Transcribed by Chris Imoto, Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai'i volunteer, with editing by Nelson Okino, Sheila Chun, and Marcia Kemble . Completed October 2016.