

7:2

Matsubara, Katie

Interview

1981

(Naoka Nishimoto)

83/115

c

Has interesting description of
dilemmas of families

CHRIS: Correct, make 1 copy and send ~~XXXXXX~~ 1 copy to Dr. Hansen with attached note:

Dear Art:

I did not know Mrs. Nishimote was only ten years old while at camp, but I enjoyed talking with her Her description of her family's problems (on p. 6) is ~~isthananhn~~ interesting . I did not get this kind of data when I was at Tule Lake - or later.

ADD at A. Mrs. Nishimoto is the sister of the wife of ^{Ichiro} Jack Tsuruda.
^{Ichiro} Jack Tsuruda is the son of my Tule Lake respondent, Bob
Tsuruda.

add
A

NAOKO NISHIMOTO - January 10, 1982.
Lives in Richmond Calif.

Katie Matsubara

HELLO? Hello. Born Jan. 19, 1931
Kent, Washington

Look up name in
Jack Sumner
Nikki Tsuruda

RW: Hello. Is this Naoko Nishimoto?

NN: Yes.

RW: This is Professor Rosalie Wax and it was
who suggested that I get in touch with you.

NN: Oh yes.

RW: If you have a minute to talk, I can tell you about
it. How do you feel?

NN: Yeah, I have a minute. I don't know if I can give
you any good information or not.

RW: Well, it's more of a biography that you just tell
me what happened to you, and of course, I won't use your
name on it, and I don't really intend to publish any-
thing at the moment. I just ^{will} write a report for the
Rockefeller Foundation on how the people are doing today,
~~you know.~~

NN: Well. You mean the war time, don't you?

RW: Yes. You see I was in Tule Lake myself as a
student from the University of California. And I got
to know ^{Bob Tsuruda} Jim T. very well. He was a fine man.

NN: Oh, I see.

RW: And so, I have a fine history of all he told me,
which is very, very impressive.

NN: Well, I was only 10 at the time.

RW: Oh, I see.

NN: So I can't really tell you too much.

RW: Well, it would just be the views of a 10 year old,
which are kind of different from others, and if you have
any impressions.

NN: The first impression that comes to my mind was I

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^h
Had so many friends to play with.

~~RW: I didn't catch that.~~

~~NN: I had a lot of friends to play with.~~

~~RW: Oh when you?.~~

~~NY:~~ In this war relocation center in Tule Lake. I was also there too.

RW: Yes.

NN: That was where my sister was born.

RW: Yes, oh ^{Nikki} ~~Tule~~ is your sister.

NN: Yes. She is my sister right below me.

RW: And you were 10. Let's see..you were not sent to an assembly center then?

NN: Yes, we were.

RW: Oh..

NN: That was in ^lW~~a~~lgerga. And from there we were sent to Tule Lake.

RW: Did you have more friends in ^lW~~a~~lgerga or in Tule Lake[?], which did you like better?

NN: ^aWal~~l~~gerga was ^lshort term, so I had friends.. Of course you made friends being that age. But in Tule Lake we stayed there longer and went to Japanese school in morning, and English School in the afternoon - so that anytime that you wanted to leave, you could continue in a public school. That's what they had in mind. It was just required subjects like ~~M~~ath, ^lEnglish and P.E. I guess it was. I can't remember too well, but..that was my first impression because I didn't know all these emotional and worries and financial status and things like that..being a 10 year old. ^{it} ~~n~~ didn't come to mind. But the nicest part I think to me was I had a lot of friends

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to play with because living out in the country, ~~we~~^{you} couldn't.
And then we didn't go to church regularly, we couldn't.

RW: What did you play and where?

NN: Oh just around ~~the~~^{our} block ..games, whatever.

Nothing special and of course they had a recreation..in every block they had a recreation barrack, so there were things to do. I guess they were donated..there were ping pong tables, and baseball bats, whatever. That sort of stuff. I don't know where it came from - money-wise.

RW: Some of it was donated by, you know, church people and so on.

NN: Things like that I don't know, but it was there.

RW: You just played and generally..

NN: ^{and} studied.

RW: Yeah, and studied. And can you think of anything that happened then that..

NN: Something that really frightened me was the riots.

RW: Oh ~~yeah~~^{yes},

NN: Because, never involve anything..I never saw anything, or read anything..that really frightened me and I thought to myself, "gee, we're all Japanese and some people are so violent." I couldn't believe that. Because I was told that Japanese were very kind, shy and all this. My parents you see, said a "woman never smoked" and we were suppose to be quiet people and that's the impression I got, and then to see this riot..and see different kinds of people that I have never encountered before..

RW: Was this..now I want to make sure that I know which one you are talking about..because..

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NN: In Tule Lake..

RW: Yeah, ^{.. which} but ~~a~~ particular ~~kind of~~ riot or fuss.. There was one after a farm worker was killed.. there was this big demonstration ^{with the} ~~and~~ Daiyo sha kai. Maybe as a little girl you wouldn't know.

NN: I don't know what the riot was about. It could have been that.

RW: And then later, on there were these people who marched and said ~~wa sho~~ ^{"Wash-sho"} and wanted to show that they were real Japanese.

NN: Yeah, well we weren't that (laughter).

RW: No, you weren't that.

NN: Because our parents wanted us to continue our English education, you know, that was a must.

RW: ^{Yes.} ~~Yeah.~~ I was wondering.. I think.. you correct me now.. what ^{may} ~~most~~ have impressed you was maybe when... ~~I know what happened.~~ some young boys went up and made a big fuss at the administration building and the project director turned the ~~thing over..~~ turned the authority over to the army and then tanks came in.. is that what you remember?

NN: No, I don't remember that at all.

RW: Gee, what do you remember that scared you. I'm just curious.

NN: I just know that it was a riot. And all these people fighting, and I don't know if they had anything in their hands. ~~That~~ that I don't remember.

RW: Gee. You saw people fighting?

NN: Well, it was called a riot, not just two people fighting.. you know, just groups of people. And I kind of think it was the group that ~~wa sho~~ ^{Wash cho} group and the other group. The ~~wa sho~~ ^{Wash} group were. They had intended to go back to Japan, regardless of the war, and I think that was what it was about.

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RW: Yeah.

NN: A lot of friction I remember.

RW: Yeah. That was really scary.

NN: And that's the thing I remember that was frightening, because I had never seen that before.

RW: Yes.

NN: Especially among your own people.

RW: There was a kind of..banging around between the ~~wa-sho~~^{wash sho} group and some of the people who were with the ~~oldie~~..well, I don't know just what they called themselves.

NN: I don't either. (laughs)

RW: (laughs) But it's hard to remember when you're ten..

NN: Scenes like that were vague. And then I remember when they came to search our barracks..was a funny feeling.

RW: Oh, this will help, was that after the riot?

NN: Probably.

RW: Yeah, I see what you mean. Did anything happen when they searched your barrack?

NN: No, we didn't have anything. They confiscated radios and stuff like that. But we didn't have anything valuable, you know, like short wave radios, things like that.

RW: I suppose weapons, knives..

NN: Yeah, and things like that, but we didn't have anything. And anything Japanese, that we did have, you know, the few that we did have, I think my parents burned it before we went into the camp. Because we were told that you couldn't keep it. As I recall the only thing that my mother had was some Buddhist, religious things, but she burned those.

RW: And she had to burn those?

NN: Yeah, she burned those.

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~~RW: Afraid, gee...well that was scary.~~

~~NN: Yeah, for a 10 year old, it was.~~

RW: You remember anything else that was scary?

NN: No, I don't. Of course, the kind of living was different you know, you had community bathroom and the showers and stuff like that, which I had never experienced, but other than that I can't really..going to school and studying kept my mind busy, so you kind of got used to the routine..didn't think too much of it.

RW: You sound like you were a very studious, hard-working little girl.

NN: Well, not really. I like to play. I remember playing *a lot.*

RW: What games did you play?

NN: Oh, you know [✓]girl's games (like)..you know, we'd go to the bathroom because it was cement and play jacks in there and we had a basketball court...well, each block had one, so we played basketball, volleyball..the usual stuff. I remember playing ping-pong.

RW: When you left the camp, did you still keep in touch with these girls that you played with or have you kind of..

NN: Yes, one. Just one. She lives in Sacramento now.

RW: And she is still a good friend of yours?

NN: Pardon?

RW: She is still a good friend of yours?

NN: Yes. In fact I'm going to see her Tuesday. She's going.

RW: That's very nice.

NN: The rest of the girls, they just stopped writing..we just lost touch, but this particular one..we just did because..I guess distance..we live so close. Sacramento isn't too far away, and I can always call here or we write to each other.

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We see each other at least 2-3 times a year on our way to Reno. ^(laughs) So she is the only one.

RW: ~~I'm~~. This is the first time I've talked to somebody who was just 10.

NN: She may have a different impression what she thought. Because..we never really discussed it..but the Redress..the hearings that they had on TV? I don't know remember all that heart break where these old ladies were speaking and ^{they were} crying you know. I guess it was really emotional and a trauma, but you see I didn't know this..and so when I was watching parts of this. It was very interesting. I didn't get to see all of it.

RW: I ~~am~~ myself was older and I know a lot of people who had very terrible and frightening experiences.

NN: Yeah, because one lady said that they searched her body. Well they didn't search me, of course, being little, but I don't remember that.

RW: Let's see, I'm trying to think like a 10 year old, so I can ask you, let's see..what did you get the most kick out of doing?

NN: Oh gee..there wasn't really too much that you could do, you were ^{so} confined. We enjoyed hiking though. We ~~were able~~ used to hike the mountains there as you recall.

RW: Yeah, there is that high mountain.

NN: That was kind of nice because you couldn't do anything else, and they showed movies later on, that was kind of nice because when I was little we didn't get a chance to see ^{too many} movies ^{being} out in the country. That was kind of nice. And of course, there were the canteens and well they were to go buy ice cream which I thought was nice because we couldn't get ice cream too often being out in the country. We only

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got to buy it when we went to town... [before the evacuation]

~~RW: You were allowed to go to town.~~

NN: ~~The canteen, you know to buy ice cream. Because they sold that.~~ We couldn't spend too much money because of our finances.

~~RW: You mean you gave people money and then they went to town and bought you the ice cream?~~

NN: No, they had a canteen in the camp.

~~RW: Oh yes, that's right they did.~~

~~NN: Later on they did.~~

RW: ~~Oh yes I remember that.~~ I was just curious..it was your father, and mother and you in camp and how many children?

NN: Oh my mother, father, 2 sisters and 2 brothers I had.

RW: And then Tule was born there?

NN: Yeah. I'm counting her too because she was born there.

RW: It sounds to me the way you talked that you must have had very fine parents who kind of sheltered you.

NN: Well, my father was stubborn..well, they didn't do too much talking..if they did..it was when I wasn't there or being in Japanese I ^{probably} didn't understand. I really didn't know what was going on.

RW: I beg your pardon?

NN: I said I really didn't know what was going on except that it was the war.. What's a war?

~~RW: Yeah.~~

NN: Two countries, fighting, you know? (Laughs)

~~RW: This is wonderful. I haven't talked to a...I like to talk to women, I'm going to see that I get some more interviews with women.~~

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~~NN: Oh yes.~~

RW: you know, because it should be balanced.

~~Unless you can think of something you'd like to say.~~ If you could tell me a little about your life and about leaving Tule Lake, if you remember any of that?

NN: Okay..They had this "yes and" no business. You remember that?

RW: ~~Yeah.~~ Yes.

NN: The "nos" went to Japan and ^{the "yes's"} ~~theyes's~~ stayed. My father ~~was~~ very stubborn, ~~he~~ wanted to go back, but my brother said "one left" with his disapproval..

RW: What?

NN: My oldest brother left..see I had one in Japan you see.

RW: Oh, ~~one~~ ^{your} oldest ~~brother~~ brother did go to Japan.

NN: Yeah, he was there. ~~The war broke out.~~

~~RW: THE what?~~

NN: ~~The~~ The war broke out. He came to visit us and he went back to Japan. I have an older brother living there. He was born here, but he was left in Japan. He came to visit us and he went back and ^{right} after that the war broke out. And after this ^{all} yes and no business, the second brother, which is the oldest here in the United States said "no" he wasn't going back. My father wanted us to go back, and then my third brother said "you're getting older and we'll be taking care of you so he said we can't make a living in Japan, we don't know the language. So he talked to him and said, "No, we can't go back." And so he listened, my father listened to him and then we decided to stay and so my other brother, the second one who is oldest here, he didn't want to sign any kind of paper yes or no and so then he left and got married. And so then

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my third brother ^{that} ~~who~~ said, "No, Dad we got to stay here because we can't support you in Japan," he stayed on ^(at Tule Lake) for some reason.

I guess he renounced his citizenship. He was underage, but he did what his father said. Okay?

~~RW:~~ That happened.

NN: He didn't want to but he obeyed his father and did this. So then, the brother that left and married called us said, "It's Ok, ~~okay~~, you can come."

RW: Can I ask about the brother who left? He relocated in the United States?

NN: Yeah. He just left and moved to Utah, that was..because we couldn't go back to where we were before because we didn't own the land and we couldn't go back to it so he had a buddy ~~who~~ ^{that} lived in Utah, so he went over there first and ^{then} shortly after that..I guess everybody was leaving anyway now..they were closing up I think, okay, ^{so I think that's why the decision} ~~the~~ (213) was made, that we were to leave, but the brother that denounced his citizenship could not leave; people like that. So there were a bunch of them left. And then, so we left.

RW: And you went to Utah?

NN: Yes, we followed ^{my} ~~our~~ older brother and left and we lived there for a while. And then after that, ^{when} they said they really were going to close the center, then my brother he came and ^{then} he joined the army because there was no job. He really wanted his citizenship back and he ^{thought,} ~~felt~~ perhaps, that way he could get it back.

RW: ..by joining the army?

NN: ^{yes, and} ~~And~~ he couldn't go to college. He was bright but he couldn't go, because we were in the camp.

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RW: Did he get it back?

NN: I think he did. I think you automatically do.

RW: ..when he joined the army?

NN: Yeah, and he told them what had happened because the questionnaire^s ^{will} ~~would~~ say, certain questions that, "did you renounce your citizenship" or whatever about this relocation center, and he was very truthful and he said "yes". And ²⁵ I think he did get it back.

RW: That really makes me feel good. It seems that ~~all~~ of you and your family that you made out quite well in ⁶ difficult time and situation.

NN: Yeah, considering that we are not rich.

RW: Yeah, you did real well.

NN: We're making a go of it.

RW: Where did you go after Utah, did you go to California?

NN: Let's see after Utah, I graduated high school there and then we came back to California. Because this other brother he came back to California because his in-laws had a place to farm and so he went there with his wife ^{and} ~~to~~ farm ^{ed} and then he called us over there again. My sister and I were both working. Of course ^{Nikki} ~~Fale~~ was still going to school yet, So then we came back to California and then, I don't like country farming, I'm allergic to the dirt or whatever and I just couldn't do that kind of work, stooping over, and so I decided that I would come to San Francisco and work a little bit and go to some kind of a school. So that's what I did.

RW: What did you study?

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NN: Well, jobs were hard to come by then, because people were still prejudiced yet. So I went to a, let's see what was that called, a key punching type of school, and then they place you.

RW: Key punching..

NN: Yeah, it was a key-punching. Of course, they didn't have computers then. But it was a key-punching school and then they would place you.

RW: ~~They would place you.~~ Did you get a job?

NN: Yes, I did get a job.

RW: Good!

NN: Yes, for an insurance company.

RW: And so now I guess you're married, do you have children?

NN: Yes, I do.

RW: How many.

NN: I have 2.

RW: Good. I'm very happy for you.

NN: I married late, so my children are still young yet.

RW: I hear the noise. Well, this is a ~~nice~~, really nice talk we've had. I have ^a very short questions I'd like to ask. Could you give me the place where you were born and the day of birth[?] ~~you know.~~

NN: Sure. I was born in Kent, Washington.

RW: In Washington State?

NN: Yes. Kent.

RW: And you birth day.

NN: January 19, 1931.

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RW: And do you know anybody else who was in Tule Lake who might be a little older and who wouldn't mind having this kind of talk with me?

NN: Let's see..older..can't think of any body older.

RW: If need... '

NN: No, I can't think of anybody older, even if I did I wouldn't know where they are.

RW: Yeah, you're living now where there aren't many Japanese Americans around, is that right?

NN: There are, ~~but~~ because we have our Japanese American Citizens League, ~~But~~ our age differences is a little different and they're not from Tule Lake.

~~RW: They're not from Tule Lake and not old enough.~~

~~NN:~~ A lot of them are from other centers.

RW: Well, then I'll say give my love to ^{Kimiko.} ~~Tule~~. I've got to phone her one of these days and just chat. She was so nice to me. ~~Well, she really cheered me up so. And then 2f.~~ She gave me the names of a number of people who had been at Tule Lake. I haven't reached them yet, but..well I have some, but I'll keep trying.

NN: Well, if I think of anybody, I'll get your address from her and let you know. I'll keep thinking about it.

RW: That's very kind of you. Thank you.

NN: Oh thank you for calling.

RW: Thanks a lot. This was really fun. ~~You'reif I may call you that.~~

NN: ~~Sure.~~

RW: ~~Okay,~~ Thank you and if you do hear of anybody, that really would like to talk, I would just love it.

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NN: Oh, you know there is this one man, I don't know camp he was in, but he kept all those tags and ~~such~~^{at work}. You know the numbers that we had and all that.

RW: Yeah, numbered like animals.

NN: I told him, he's a member of our church, I told him I'd like to see them, because I don't know what happened to ours. I never thought of keeping that.

RW: You know, I never knew they put numbers on you. Where was that?

NN: Oh yeah, every family had a number.

RW: I see.

NN: You should talk to him. Because he's older though.

RW: Well, that would be fine, but was he at Tule Lake?

NN: That I don't know. I'll have to check with him. If I think he did, then I'll drop you a line and tell you.

RW: That would be real kind.

NN: Okay.

RW: Thanks so much.

NN: Thanks for calling. It's been great talking to you.

RW: It's a pleasure.

NN: Okay, good bye.

RW: Good bye.

End of interview # 312

January 10, 1982

NAOKO NISHIMOTO

19th 1931

Mrs. Nishimoto was born January ~~19th 1931~~ in Kent, Washington. When she was ~~xxxxxxx~~ ten years old, she ~~xxx~~ and her family were evacuated to the Walerga Assembly Center and from there to the Tule Lake Relocation Center.

RW: Did you have more friends in Walerga or in Tule Lake? Which did you like better?

NN: Walerga was a short term, so I had friends. . . Of course you made friends being that age. But in Tule Lake we stayed there longer and went to Japanese school in morning, and English School in the afternoon - so that anytime that you wanted to leave, you could continue in a public school. That's what they had in mind. It was just required subjects like Math, English and P.E. I guess it was. I can't remember too well, but. . . that was my first impression because I didn't know all these emotional and worries and financial status and things like that. . . being a 10 year old. . . it didn't come to mind. But the nicest part I think to me was I had a lot of friends to play with because living out in the country, you couldn't. And then we didn't go to church regularly, we couldn't.

RW: What did you play and where?

NN: Oh just around our block. . . games, whatever. Nothing special and of course they had a recreation. . . in every block they had a recreation barrack, so there were things to do. I guess they were donated. . . there were ping pong tables, and baseball bats, whatever. That sort of stuff. I don't know where it came from - money-wise.

RW: Some of it was donated by, you know, church people and so on.

NN: Things like that I don't know, but it was there.

RW: You just played and generally. . .

NN: [and studied.

RW: Yeah, and studied. And can you think of anything that happened then that. . .

NN: Something that really frightened me was the riots.

RW: Oh yes.

NN: Because, never involve anything. . . I never saw anything, or read anything. . . that really frightened me and I thought to myself, "Gee, we're all Japanese and some people are so violent." I couldn't believe that. Because I was told that Japanese were very kind, shy and all this. My parents you see, said a "woman never smoked" and we were suppose to be quiet people and that's the impression I got, and then to see this riot. . . and see different kinds of people that I have never encountered before. . .

And that's the thing I remember that was frightening, because I had never seen that before.

And then I remember when they came to search our barracks. . . that was a funny feeling.

R. Wax: Did anything happen when they searched your barracks?

N. Nishimoto: 2 No, we didn't have anything. They confiscated radios and stuff like

that, but we didn't have anything. And anything Japanese, that we did have, the few that we did have, I think my parents burned it before we went into camp. Because we were told we couldn't keep it. The only thing that my mother had was some Buddhist, religious things, but she burned those.

R. Wax: Do you remember anything else that was scary?

N. Nishimete: No, I don't. Of course, the kind of living was different, you know. You had community bathroom and the showers and stuff like that, which I had never experienced, but other than that I can't really . . . going to school and studying kept my mind busy. So you kind of got used to the routine. . . ~~xx~~ didn't think too much of it.

R. Wax: You sound like you were a very studious, hard-working little girl.

N. Nishimete: Well, not really. I like to play. I remember playing a lot.

R. Wax: What games did you play?

N. Nishimete: Oh, you know, like girl's games . . . we'd go to the bathroom because it was cement and play jacks in there and we had a basketball court. . . well, each block had one. So we played basketball, vellyball . . . the usual stuff. I remember playing ~~xxxxxx~~ ping-pong.

RW: When you left ~~xxxx~~ the camp, did you still keep in touch with these girls that you played with or have you kind of . . .

NN: Yes, one. Just one. She lives in Sacramento now.

RW: And she is still a good friend of yours?

NN: Yes. In fact I'm going to see her Tuesday.

- NN: The rest of the girls, they just stopped writing. . .we just lost touch, but this particular one. . .we just did because. . .I guess distance. . .we live so close. Sacramento isn't too far away, and I can always call her or write to each other. We see each other at least 2-3 times a year on our way to Reno. (laughs) So she is the only one.
- RW: This is the first time I've talked to somebody who was just 10.
- NN: She may have a different impression what she thought. Because. . .we never really discussed it. . .but the Redress. . .the hearings that they had on TV? I don't remember all that heartbreak where these old ladies were speaking and they were crying you know. I guess it was really emotional and a trauma, but you see I didn't know this. . .and so when I was watching parts of this. It was very interesting. I didn't get to see all of it.
- RW: I myself was older and I know a lot of people who had very terrible and frightening experiences.
- NN: Yeah, because one lady said that they searched her body. Well they didn't search me, of course, being little, but I don't remember that.
- RW: Let's see, I'm trying to think like a 10 year old, so I can ask you, let's see. . . what did you get the most kick out of doing?
- NN: Oh gee. . .there wasn't really too much that you could do, you were so confined. We enjoyed hiking though. We used to hike the mountains there as you recall.
- RW: Yeah, there is that high mountain.
- NN: That was kind of nice because you couldn't do anything else, and they showed movies later on. That was kind of nice because when I was little we didn't get a chance to see too many movies being out in the country. that was kind of nice. And of course, there were the canteens and, well, they were to go buy ice cream which I thought was nice because we couldn't get ice cream too often being out in the country. We only got to buy it when we went to town. . . We couldn't spend too much money because of our finances.
- RW: I was just curious. . .It was your father, and mother and you in camp and how many children?
- NN: Oh my mother, father, two sisters and two brothers I had.
- RW: And then Nikki was born there?
- NN: Yeah. I'm counting her too because she was born there.
- RW: It sounds to me the way you talked that you must have had very fine parents who kind of sheltered you.
- NN: Well, my father was stubborn. . well, they didn't do too much talking. . .if they did. . .it was when I wasn't there or being in Japanese I probably didn't understand. I really didn't know what was going on.
- RW: I beg your pardon?
- NN: I said I really didn't know what was going on except that it was the war. . .What's a war? Two countries, fighting, you know? (laughs)

RW: Could you tell me a little more about your life in Tule Lake, if you remember any of that?

NN: Okay. . . They had this "yes" and "no" business. You remember that?

RW: Yes.

NN: The "no's" went to Japan and the "yes's" stayed. My father was very stubborn. He wanted to go back, but my brother said "one left" with his disapproval. . .

RW: What?

NN: My oldest brother left. . . see I had one in Japan you see.

RW: Oh, your oldest brother did go to Japan?

NN: Yeah, he was there. The war broke out. He came to visit us and he went back to Japan. I have an older brother living there. He was born here, but he was left in Japan. He came to visit us and he went back and right after that the war broke out. And after this "yes" and "no" business, the second brother, which is the oldest here in the United States said "no" he wasn't going back. My father wanted us to go back, and then my third brother said "you're getting older and we'll be taking care of you so he said we can't make a living in Japan, we don't know the language. So he talked to him and said, "No, we can't go back." And so he listened, my father listened to him and then we decided to stay and so my other brother, the second one who is oldest here, he didn't want to sign any kind of paper yes or no and so then he left and got married. And so then my third brother said, "No, Dad we got to stay here because we can't support you in Japan". He stayed on (at Tule Lake) for some reason. I guess he renounced his citizenship. He was underage, but he did what his father said. Okay? He didn't want to but he obeyed his father and did this. So then, the brother that left and married called us said, "It's OK, you can come."

RW: Can I ask about the brother who left? He relocated in the United States?

NN: Yeah. He just left and moved to Utah, that was. . . because we couldn't go back to where we were before because we didn't own the land. ~~we couldn't go back to it~~ So he had a buddy that lived in Utah, so he went over there first and then shortly after that. . . I guess everybody was leaving anyway now. . . they were closing up, I think, okay, so I think that's why the decision was made, that we were to leave. But the brother that denounced his citizenship could not leave; people like that. So there were a bunch of them left. And then, so we left.

RW: And you went to Utah?

NN: Yes, we followed my older brother and left and we lived there for a while. And then after that, when they said they were really were going to close the center, then my brother he came and then he joined the Army because there was no job. He really wanted his citizenship back and he thought, perhaps, that way he could get it back.

RW: . . . by joining the Army?

NN: Yes, and he couldn't go to college. He was bright but he couldn't go, because we were in the camp.

RW: Did he get it back?

NN: I think he did. I think you automatically do.

RW: . . .when he joined the Army?

NN: Yeah, and he told them what had happened because the questionnaires will say, certain questions that, "did you renounce your citizenship" or whatever about this relocation center, and he was very truthful and he said "yes". And so I think he did get it back.

RW: That really makes me feel good. It seems that you and your family made out quite well in a difficult time and situation. ✓

NN: Yeah, considering that we are not rich. ↗

~~RW: Yeah, you did real well.~~

~~NN: We're making a go of it.~~

RW: Where did you go after Utah, did you go to California?

NN: Let's see after Utah, I graduated high school there and then we came back to California. Because this other brother he came back to California because his in-laws had a place to farm and so he went there with his wife and farmed and then he called us over there again. My sister and I were both working. Of course Nikki was still going to school yet. So then we came back to California and then, I don't like country farming. I'm allergic to the dirt or whatever and I just couldn't do that kind of work, stooping over, and so I decided that I would come to San Francisco and work a little bit and go to some kind of school. So that's what I did.

RW: What did you study?

NN: Well, jobs were hard to come by then, because people were still prejudiced yet. So I went to a, let's see what was that called, a key punching type of school, and then they place you.

RW: Key punching? ~~mm~~

NN: Yeah, it was a key-punching. Of course, they didn't have computers then. But it was a key-punching school and then they would place you.

RW: Did you get a job?

NN: Yes, I did get a job.

RW: Good!

NN: Yes, for an insurance company.

RW: And so now I guess you're married, do you have children?

NN: Yes, I do.

RW: How many?

NN: I have two.

RW: I'm very happy for you. This is a really nice talk we've had. I have one more question I'd like to ask. Do you know anybody else who was in

Tule Lake who might be a little older and who wouldn't mind having this kind of talk with me?

NN: Let's see. . . elder.. can't think of anybody elder. . . Oh, you know there *

is this one man. I don't know what camp he was in, but he kept all these tags and stuff. You know the numbers that we had and all that?

He's a member of our church. I told him I'd like to see them, because I don't know what happened to ours. ~~um~~ .. you should talk to him.

RW: That would be fine. Was he at Tule Lake?

NN: That I don't know. I'll have to check with him. If I think ~~xxx~~ he did, then I'll drop you a line and tell you.

RW; That would be kind.

NN: Okay

RW: ~~Thank~~ Thank you so much.

NN: Thanks for calling. It's been ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ great talking to you.



LONGITUDINAL HISTORY

Naoko Nishimoto

January 10, 1982

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p. 8.*

*p. 4 - first part
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reis for the
collection table*

Naoko Nishimoto - January 10, 1982 -1-

Lives in Richmond, California

Mrs. Nishimoto is the sister of the wife of Ichiro Tsuruda. Ichiro Tsuruda is the son of my Tule Lake respondent, Bob Tsuruda.

Born January 19, 1931, Kent, Washington

Naoko Nishimoto: Hello?

Rosalie Wax: Hello. Is this Naoko Nishimoto?

Naoko Nishimoto: Yes.

Rosalie Wax: This is Professor Rosalie Wax and it was Nikki Tsuruda who suggested that I get in touch with you.

Naoko Nishimoto: Oh yes.

Rosalie Wax: If you have a minute to talk, I can tell you about it. How do you feel?

Naoko Nishimoto: Yeah, I have a minute. I don't know if I can give you any good information or not.

Rosalie Wax: Well, it's more of a biography that you just tell me what happened to you. And of course, I won't use your name on it, and I don't really intend to publish anything at the moment. I just will write a report for The Rockefeller Foundation on how the people are doing today.

Naoko Nishimoto: Well, You mean the war time, don't you?

Rosalie Wax: Yes. You see I was in Tule Lake myself as a student from the University of California. And I got to know Bob Tsuruda very well. He was a fine man.

Naoko Nishimoto: Oh, I see.

Rosalie Wax: And so, I have a fine history of all he told me, which is very, very impressive.

Naoko Nishimoto: Well, I was only 10 at the time.

Rosalie Wax: Oh, I see.

Naoko Nishimoto: So I can't really tell you too much.

Rosalie Wax: Well, it would just be the views of a 10 year old, which are kind of different from others. . .and if you have any impressions.

Naoko Nishimoto: The first impression that comes to my mind was I had so many friends to play with. In this war relocation center in Tule Lake. I was also there too.

Rosalie Wax: Yes.

Naoko Nishimoto: That was where my sister was born.

Rosalie Wax: Yes, oh Nikki is your sister.

NN: Yes. She is my sister right below me.

RW: And you were 10. Let's see. . .you were not sent to an assembly center then?

NN: Yes, we were.

RW: Oh. . .

NN: That was in Walerga. And from there we were sent to Tule Lake.

RW: Did you have more friends in Walerga or in Tule Lake? Which did you like better?

NN: Walerga was a short term, so I had friends. . .Of course you made friends being that age. But in Tule Lake we stayed there longer and went to Japanese school in morning, and English School in the afternoon - so that anytime that you wanted to leave, you could continue in a public school. That's what they had in mind. It was just required subjects like Math, English and P.E. I guess it was. I can't remember too well, but. . .that was my first impression because I didn't know all these emotional and worries and financial status and things like that. . .being a 10 year old. . . it didn't come to mind. But the nicest part I think to me was I had a lot of friends to play with because living out in the country, you couldn't. And then we didn't go to church regularly, we couldn't.

RW: What did you play and where?

NN: Oh just around our block. . .games, whatever. Nothing special and of course they had a recreation. . .in every block they had a recreation barrack, so there were things to do. I guess they were donated. . .there were ping pong tables, and baseball bats, whatever. That sort of stuff. I don't know where it came from - money-wise.

RW: Some of it was donated by, you know, church people and so on.

NN: Things like that I don't know, but it was there.

RW: You just played and generally. . .

NN: [and studied.

RW: Yeah, and studied. And can you think of anything that happened then that. . .

NN: Something that really frightened me was the riots.

RW: Oh yes.

NN: Because, never involve anything. . .I never saw anything, or read anything. . .that really frightened me and I thought to myself, "Gee, we're all Japanese and some people are so violent." I couldn't believe that. Because I was told that Japanese were very kind, shy and all this. My parents you see, said a "woman never smoked" and we were suppose to be quiet people and that's the impression I got, and then to see this riot. . .and see different kinds of people that I have never encountered before. . .

RW: Was this. . .now I want to make sure that I know which one you are talking about. . . because. . .

NN: In Tule Lake.

- RW: . . .which particular riot or fuss. . .There was one after a farm worker was killed. . . there was this big demonstration with the Daihyo sha kai. Maybe as a little girl you wouldn't know.
- NN: I don't know what the riot was about. It could have been that.
- RW: And then later on there were these people who marched and said "Wash-sho", and wanted to show that they were real Japanese.
- NN: Yeah, well we weren't that (laughs)
- RW: No, you weren't that.
- NN: Because our parents wanted us to continue our English education, you know, that was a must.
- RW: Yes. I was wondering. . .I think. . .you correct me now. . .what may have impressed you was maybe when. . .some young boys went up and made a big fuss at the administration building and the project director turned the authority over to the army and then tanks came in. . .is that what you remember?
- NN: No, I don't remember that at all.
- RW: Gee, what do you remember that scared you. I'm just curious.
- NN: I just know that it was a riot. And all these people fighting, and I don't know if they had anything in their hands. That I don't remember.
- RW: Gee. You saw people fighting?
- NN: Well, it was called a riot, not just two people fighting. . .you know, just groups of people. And I kind of think it was the group that Wash sho group and the other group. The wash-sho group were. . .They had intended to go back to Japan, regardless of the war, and I think that was what it was about.
- RW: Yeah.
- NN: A lot of friction I remember.
- RW: Yeah. That was really scary.
- NN: And that's the thing I remember that was frightening, because I had never seen that before.
- RW: Yes.
- NN: Especially among your own people.
- RW: There was a kind of. . .banging around between the wash sho group and some of the people who were with the. . .well, I don't know just what they called themselves.
- NN: I don't either. (laughs)
- RW: (laughs) But it's hard to remember when you're ten. . .

- NN: Scenes like that were vague. And then I remember when they came to search our barracks. . . was a funny feeling.
- RW: Oh, this will help, was that after the riot?
- NN: Probably.
- RW: Yeah, I see what you mean. Did anything happen when they searched your barrack?
- NN: No, we didn't have anything. They confiscated radios and stuff like that. But we didn't have anything valuable, you know, like short wave radios, things like that.
- RW: I suppose weapons, knives. . .
- NN: Yeah, and things like that, but we didn't have anything. And anything Japanese, that we did have, you know, the few that we did have, I think my parents burned it before we went into the camp. Because we were told that you couldn't keep it. As I recall the only thing that my mother had was some Buddhist, religious things, but she burned those.
- RW: And she had to burn those?
- NN: Yeah, she burned those.
- RW: You remember anything else that was scary?
- NN: No, I don't. Of course, the kind of living was different you know, you had community bathroom and the showers and stuff like that, which I had never experienced, but other than that I can't really. . . going to school and studying kept my mind busy, so you kind of got used to the routine. . . didn't think too much of it.
- RW: You sound like you were a very studious, hard-working little girl.
- NN: Well, not really. I like to play. I remember playing a lot.
- RW: What games did you play?
- NN: Oh, you know like girl's games. . . you know, we'd go to the bathroom because it was cement and play jacks in there and we had a basketball court. . . well, each block had one, so we played basketball, volleyball. . . the usual stuff. I remember playing ping-pong.
- RW: When you left the camp, did you still keep in touch with these girls that you played with or have you kind of. . .
- NN: Yes, one. Just one. She lives in Sacramento now.
- RW: And she is still a good friend of yours?
- NN: Pardon?
- RW: She is still a good friend of yours?
- NN: Yes. In fact I'm going to see her Tuesday. She's going.
- RW: That's very nice.

- NN: The rest of the girls, they just stopped writing. . .we just lost touch, but this particular one. . .we just did because. . .I guess distance. . .we live so close. Sacramento isn't too far away, and I can always call her or write to each other. We see each other at least 2-3 times a year on our way to Reno. (laughs) So she is the only one.
- RW: This is the first time I've talked to somebody who was just 10.
- NN: She may have a different impression what she thought. Because. . .we never really discussed it. . .but the Redress. . .the hearings that they had on TV? I don't remember all that heartbreak where these old ladies were speaking and they were crying you know. I guess it was really emotional and a trauma, but you see I didn't know this. . .and so when I was watching parts of this. It was very interesting. I didn't get to see all of it.
- RW: I myself was older and I know a lot of people who had very terrible and frightening experiences.
- NN: Yeah, because one lady said that they searched her body. Well they didn't search me, of course, being little, but I don't remember that.
- RW: Let's see, I'm trying to think like a 10 year old, so I can ask you, let's see. . . what did you get the most kick out of doing?
- NN: Oh gee. . .there wasn't really too much that you could do, you were so confined. We enjoyed hiking though. We used to hike the mountains there as you recall.
- RW: Yeah, there is that high mountain.
- NN: That was kind of nice because you couldn't do anything else, and they showed movies later on. That was kind of nice because when I was little we didn't get a chance to see too many movies being out in the country. that was kind of nice. And of course, there were the canteens and, well, they were to go buy ice cream which I thought was nice because we couldn't get ice cream too often being out in the country. We only got to buy it when we went to town. . . We couldn't spend too much money because of our finances.
- RW: I was just curious. . .it was your father, and mother and you in camp and how many children?
- NN: Oh, my mother, father, two sisters and two brothers I had.
- RW: And then Nikki was born there?
- NN: Yeah. I'm counting her too because she was born there.
- RW: It sounds to me the way you talked that you must have had very fine parents who kind of sheltered you.
- NN: Well, my father was stubborn. . .well, they didn't do too much talking. . .if they did. . .it was when I wasn't there or being in Japanese I probably didn't understand. I really didn't know what was going on.
- RW: I beg your pardon?
- NN: I said I really didn't know what was going on except that it was the war. . .What's a war? Two countries, fighting, you know? (laughs)

RW: Could you tell me a little more about your life in Tule Lake, if you remember any of that?

NN: Okay. . . They had this "yes" and "no" business. You remember that?

RW: Yes.

NN: The "no's" went to Japan and the "yes's" stayed. My father was very stubborn. He wanted to go back, but my brother said "one left" with his disapproval. . .

RW: What?

NN: My oldest brother left. . . see I had one in Japan you see.

RW: Oh, your oldest brother did go to Japan.

NN: Yeah, he was there. The war broke out. He came to visit us and he went back to Japan. I have an older brother living there. He was born here, but he was left in Japan. He came to visit us and he went back and right after that the war broke out. And after this "yes" and "no" business, the second brother, which is the oldest here in the United States said "no" he wasn't going back. My father wanted us to go back, and then my third brother said "you're getting older and we'll be taking care of you so he said we can't make a living in Japan, we don't know the language. So he talked to him and said, "No, we can't go back." And so he listened, my father listened to him and then we decided to stay and so my other brother, the second one who is oldest here, he didn't want to sign any kind of paper yes or no and so then he left and got married. And so then my third brother said, "No, Dad we got to stay here because we can't support you in Japan", he stayed on (at Tule Lake) for some reason. I guess he renounced his citizenship. He was underage, but he did what his father said. Okay? He didn't want to but he obeyed his father and did this. So then, the brother that left and married called us said, "It's OK, you can come."

RW: Can I ask about the brother who left? He relocated in the United States?

NN: Yeah. He just left and moved to Utah, that was. . . because we couldn't go back to where we were before because we didn't own the land we couldn't go back to it so he had a buddy that lived in Utah, so he went over there first and then shortly after that. . . I guess everybody was leaving anyway now. . . they were closing up I think, okay, so I think that's why the decision was made, that we were to leave, but the brother that denounced his citizenship could not leave; people like that. So there were a bunch of them left. And then, so we left.

RW: And you went to Utah?

NN: Yes, we followed my older brother and left and we lived there for a while. And then after that, when they said they were really were going to close the center, then my brother he came and then he joined the Army because there was no job. He really wanted his citizenship back and he thought, perhaps, that way he could get it back.

RW: . . . by joining the Army?

NN: Yes, and he couldn't go to college. He was bright but he couldn't go, because we were in the camp.

RW: Did he get it back?

NN: I think he did. I think you automatically do.

RW: . . .when he joined the Army?

NN: Yeah, and he told them what had happened because the questionnaires will say, certain questions that, "did you renounce your citizenship" or whatever about this relocation center, and he was very truthful and he said "yes". And so I think he did get it back.

RW: That really makes me feel good. It seems that you and your family made out quite well in a difficult time and situation. ✓

NN: Yeah, considering that we are not rich.

RW: Yeah, you did real well.

NN: We're making a go of it.

RW: Where did you go after Utah, did you go to California?

NN: Let's see after Utah, I graduated high school there and then we came back to California. Because this other brother he came back to California because his in-laws had a place to farm and so he went there with his wife and farmed and then he called us over there again. My sister and I were both working. Of course Nikki was still going to school yet. So then we came back to California and then, I don't like country farming. I'm allergic to the dirt or whatever and I just couldn't do that kind of work, stooping over, and so I decided that I would come to San Francisco and work a little bit and go to some kind of school. So that's what I did.

RW: What did you study?

NN: Well, jobs were hard to come by then, because people were still prejudiced yet. So I went to a, let's see what was that called, a key punching type of school, and then they place you.

RW: Key punching. . .

NN: Yeah, it was a key-punching. Of course, they didn't have computers then. But it was a key-punching school and then they would place you.

RW: Did you get a job?

NN: Yes, I did get a job.

RW: Good!

NN: Yes, for an insurance company.

RW: And so now I guess you're married, do you have children?

NN: Yes, I do.

RW: How many?

NN: I have two.

RW: ~~Good.~~ I'm very happy for you.

~~NN: I married late, so my children are still young yet.~~

RW: ~~I hear the noise.~~ Well, ^I this is a really nice talk we've had. I have a very short question I'd like to ask. ~~Could you give me the place where you were born and the day of birth?~~

NN: Sure. I was born in Kent, Washington.

~~RW: In Washington State?~~

~~NN: Yes. Kent.~~

~~RW: And your birth day?~~

~~NN: January 19, 1931.~~

RW: ~~And~~ do you know anybody else who was in Tule Lake who might be a little older and who wouldn't mind having this kind of talk with me?

NN: Let's see. . . older. . . can't think of anybody older.

RW: If need. . .

NN: No, I can't think of anybody older, even if I did I wouldn't know where they are.

RW: Yeah, you're living now where there aren't many Japanese Americans around, is that right?

NN: There are, because we have our Japanese American Citizens' League. But our age differences is a little different and they're not from Tule Lake. A lot of them are from other centers.

RW: Well, then I'll say give my love to Kimiko. I've got to phone her one of these days and just chat. She was so nice to me. She gave me the names of a number of people who had been at Tule Lake. I haven't reached them yet, but, . . . well I have some, but I'll keep trying.

✓ NN: Well, if I think of anybody, I'll get your address from her and let you know. I'll keep thinking about it.

RW: That's very kind of you. Thank you.

NN: Oh thank you for calling.

RW: Thanks a lot. This was really fun. Thank you and if you do hear of anybody, that really would like to talk, I would just love it.

~~Thank you and~~
NN: Oh, you know there is this one man, I don't know what camp he was in, but he kept all those tags and stuff. You know the numbers that we had and all that.

RW: Yeah, numbered like animals.

- NN: I told him, he's a member of our church, I told him I'd like to see them, because I don't know what happened to ours. I never thought of keeping that.
- RW: You know, I never knew they put numbers on you. Where was that?
- NN: Oh yeah, every family had a number.
- RW: I see.
- NN: You should talk to him. Because he's older though.
- RW: Well, that would be fine, but was he at Tule Lake?
- NN: That I don't know. I'll have to check with him. If I think he did, then I'll drop you a line and tell you.
- RW: That would be real kind.
- NN: Okay.
- RW: Thanks so much.
- NN: Thanks for calling. It's been great talking to you.
- RW: It's a pleasure.
- NN: Okay, good bye.
- RW: Good bye.

January 10, 1982 -

NAOKO NISHIMOTO

Mrs. Nishimoto was born January 19, 1931 in Kent, Washington. When she was ten years old, she and her family were evacuated to the Walerga Assembly Center and from there to the Tule Lake Relocation Center.

RW: Did you have more friends in Walerga or in Tule Lake? Which did you like better?

NN: Walerga was a short term, so I had friends...Of course you made friends being that age. But in Tule Lake we stayed there longer and went to Japanese school in morning, and English school in afternoon - so that anytime that you wanted to leave, you could continue in a public school. That's what they had in mind. It was just required subjects like Math, English and P.E. I guess it was. I can't remember too well, but...that was my first impression because I didn't know all these emotional and worries and financial status and things like that...being a 10 year old...it didn't come to mind. But the nicest part to me was I had a lot of friends to play with because living out in the country, you couldn't. And then we didn't go to church regularly, we couldn't.

RW: What did you play and where?

NN: Oh just around our block...games, whatever. Nothing special and of course they had a recreation...in every block they had a recreation barrack, so there were things to do. I guess they were donated...there were ping pong tables, and baseball bats, whatever. That sort of stuff. I don't know where it came from - money-wise.

RW: You just played and generally...

NN: And studied.

RW: And can you think of anything that happened then that...

NN: Something that really frightened me was the riots.

RW: Oh yes.

NN: Because, I never involve anything...I never saw anything or read anything... that really frightened me and I thought to myself, "Gee, we're all Japanese and some people are so violent." I couldn't believe that. Because I was told that Japanese were very kind, shy and all this. My parents you see, said a "woman never smoked" and we were suppose to be quiet people and that's the impression I got, and then to see this riot..and see different kinds of people that I have never encountered before. And that's the thing I remember that was frightening, because I had never see that before. And then I remember when they came to search our barracks...that was a funny feeling.

RW: Did anything happen when they searched your barracks?

NN: No, we didn't have anything. They confiscated radios and stuff like that, but we didn't have anything. And anything Japanese, that we did have, the few that we did have, I think my parents burned it before we went into camp. Because we were told we couldn't keep it. The only thing that my mother had was some Buddhist, religious things, but she burned those.

RW: Do you remember anything else that was scary?

NN: No, I don't. Of course, the kind of living was different, you know. You had community bathroom and the showers and stuff like that, which I had never experienced, but other than that I can't really...going to school and studying kept my mind busy. So you kind of got used to the routine... didn't think too much of it.

RW: You sound like you were a very studious, hard-working little girl.

NN: Well, not really. I like to play. I remember playing a lot.

RW: What games did you play?

NN: Oh, you know, like girl's games..we'd go to the bathroom because it was cement and play jacks in there and we had a basketball court...well, each block had one. So we played basketball, volleyball...the usual stuff. I remember playing ping-pong.

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NN: Yes, one. Just one. She lives in Sacramento now.

RW: And she is still a good friend of yours?

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RW: I myself was older and I know a lot of people who had very terrible and frightening experiences.

NN: Yeah, because one lady said that they searched her body. Well they didn't search me, of course, being little, but I don't remember that.

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NN: Oh gee...there wasn't really too much that you could do, you were so confined. We enjoyed hiking though. We used to hike the mountains there as you recall.

RW: Yeah, there is that high mountain.

NN: That was kind of nice because you couldn't do anything else, and they showed movies later on. That was kind of nice because when I was little we didn't get a chance to see too many movies being out in the country. That was kind of nice. And of course, there were the canteens and, well, they were to go buy ice cream which I thought was nice because we couldn't get ice cream too often being out in the country. We only got to buy it when we went to town...We couldn't spend too much money because of our finances.

RW: It was your father, and mother and you in camp and how many children?

NN: Oh my mother, father, two sisters and two brothers I had.

RW: It sounds to me the way you talked that you must have had very fine parents who kind of sheletered you.

NN: Well, my father was stubborn...well, they didn't do too much talking...if they did...it was when I wasn't there or being in Japanese I probably didn't understand. I really didn't know what was going on.

RW: I beg your pardon?

NN: I said I really didn't know what was going on except that it was the war... What's a war? Two countries, fighting, you know? (laughs)

RW: Could you tell me a little more about your life in Tule Lake, if you remember any of that?

NN: Okay...They had this "yes" and "no" business. You remember that?

RW: Yes.

NN: The "no's" went to Japan and the "yes's" stayed. My father was very stubborn. He wanted to go back, but my brother said "one left" with his disapproval...

RW: What?

NN: My oldest brother left..see I had one in Japan you see.

RW: Oh, your oldest brother did go to Japan?

NN: Yeah, he was there. The war broke out. He came to visit us and he went back to Japan. I have an older brother living there. He was born here, but he was left in Japan. He came to visit us and he went back and right after that the war broke out. And after this "yes" and "no" business, the second brother, which is the oldest here in the United States said "no" he wasn't going back. My father wanted us to go back, and then my third brother said "you're getting older and we'll be taking care of you so he said we can't make a living in Japan, we don't know the language. So he talked to him and said, "no, we can't go back." And so he listened, my father listened to him and then we decided to stay and so my other brother, the second one who is oldest here, he didn't want to sign any kind of paper yes or no and so then he left and got married. And so then my third brother said, "No, Dad we got to stay here because we can't support you in Japan". He stayed on (at Tule Lake) for some reason. I guess he renounced his citizenship. He was underage, but he did what his father said. Okay? He didn't want to but he obeyed his father and did this. So then, the brother that left and married called us said, "It's OK, you can come."

RW: Can I ask about the brother who left? He relocated in the United States?

NN: Yeah. He just left and moved to Utah, that was...because we couldn't go back to where we were before because we didn't own the land. So he had a buddy that lived in Utah. So he went over there first and then shortly after that...I guess everybody was leaving anyway now...they were closing up, I think, okay, so I think that's why the decision was made, that we were to leave. But the brother that denounced his citizenship could not leave; people like that. So there were a bunch of them left. And then, so we left.

RW: And you went to Utah?

NN: Yes, we followed my older brother and left and we lived there for a while. And then after that, when they said they were really going to close the center, then my brother he came and then he joined the Army because there was no job. He really wanted his citizenship back and he thought, perhaps, that way he could get it back.

RW: ...by joining the Army?

NN: Yes, and he couldn't go to college. He was bright but he couldn't go, because we were in the camp.

RW: Did he get it back?

NN: I think he did. I think you automatically do.

RW: ...When he joined the Army?

NN: Yeah, and he told them what had happened because the questionnaires will say, certain questions that, "did you renounce your citizenship" or whatever about this relocation center, and he was very truthful and he said "Yea". And so I think he did get it back.

RW: That really makes me feel good. It seems that you and your family made out quite well in a difficult time and situation.

NN: Yeah, considering that we are not rich. We're making a go of it.

RW: Where did you go after Utah, did you go to California?

NN: Let's see after Utah, I graduated high school there and then we came back to California. Because this other brother he came back to California because his in-laws had a place to farm and so he went there with his wife and farmed and then he called us over there again. My sister and I were both working. Of course Nikki was still going to school yet. So then we came back to California and then. I don't like country farming. I'm allergic to the dirt or whatever and I just couldn't do that kind of work, stooping over, and so I decided that I would come to San Francisco and work a little bit and go to some kind of school. So that's what I did.

RW: What did you study?

NN: Well, jobs were hard to come by then, because people were still prejudiced yet. So I went to a, let's see what was that called a key punching type of school, and then they place you.

RW: Key punching?

NN: Yeah, it was a key-punching. Of course, they didn't have computers then. But it was a key-punching school and then they would place you.

RW: Did you get a job?

NN: Yes, I did get a job.

RW: Good!

NN: Yes, for an insurance company.

RW: And so now I guess you're married, do you have children?

NN: Yes, I do.

RW: How many?

NN: I have two.

RW: I'm very happy for you. This is a really nice talk we've had. I have one more question I'd like to ask. Do you know anybody else who was in Tule Lake who might be a little older and who wouldn't mind having this kind of talk with me?

NN: Let's see...older...can't think of anybody older...oh, you know there is this one man. I don't know what camp he was in, but he kept all those tags and stuff. You know the numbers that we had and all that? He's a member of our church. I told him I'd like to see them, because I don't know what happened to ours...You should talk to him.

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RW: That would be fine. Was he at Tule Lake?

NN: That I don't know. I'll have to check with him. If I think he did, then I'll drop you a line and tell you.

RW: That would be kind.

NN: Okay

TW: Thank you very much.

NN: Thanks for calling. It's been great talking to you.

Naoko Nishimoto

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Naoko Nishimoto was ~~nine~~/years old when her ~~father's~~ family was evacuated from Washington. From the Assembly Center they were sent to Tule Lake. ~~Being a child,~~ She herself appears to have had a fairly untraumatic ~~existence~~ existence ~~at~~ at Tule Lake, but she ~~xx~~ gave me an interesting ~~xxx~~ account of ~~xxx~~ her family's difficulties in leaving. Her oldest brother, she said, had been sent to Japan and was in Japan at the outbreak of the war.

After this "Yes" and ~~#No#~~ business, the second brother^s, which is ~~xx~~ the oldest here in the United States ~~xxxx~~ said, "No," he wasn't going to go back (to ~~Japan~~ Japan).

My father wanted us to go ~~back~~ back. And then my third brother said, "You're getting older^d and we'll be taking^{care} of you. We can't make a living in Japan. We don't know the language." So he ~~xxxxx~~ talked to him and said, "No, we can't go back."

So my father listened to him and we decided to stay.

And so my other brother, the seonc^d one who is oldest here, he didn't want to sign any paper, Yes or No, and so he left and got married. . . My third brother, he stayed on ^{at} Tule Lake[?] for some reason. I guess he^f renounced his citizenship. He didn't want to, but he obeyed his father and did this.

c Then the brother who left and married called us and said, ^{It's} ~~OK~~ "OK, you can come out."

RW: Can I ask about the brother who left? He relocated in the ~~United States~~ United States?

NN: Yes. He left and went to Utah. That was because we couldn't go back to where we were before because we didn't own the land./ . . He had a buddy ~~xxx~~ that lived in Utah, so we went over there first.

But the brother that denounced his citizenship could not leave. . . and then, when they said they were really ~~going~~ going to close the center, my brother, he came, and then he joined the Army because there was no job. He really wanted his

citizenship back, and he thought, perhaps, that way he could get it back.

RW: By joining the Army?

NN: Yes. He could go to college. He was bright, but he couldn't go because we were in camp.

RW: Did he get it back?

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RW: Where did you go after Utah?

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RW: What did you study?

NN: Well, jobs were hard to come by then, because people were still prejudiced. So I went to a key punching school and then they would place you.

RW: Did you get a job?

NN: Yes, I did get a job, for an insurance company.

At the end of the interview I asked Mrs. Nishimoto whether she knew anyone else who had been at Tule Lake who might be willing to ~~xx~~ talk to me.

She responded, "There is this one man, I don't know what camp he was in, but he kept all those tags and stuff. You know ~~xxxxxx~~ the numbers that we had and

all that? . . I told him I'd like to see ~~him~~ them , because I don't know
what happened to ours. / . . every family had a number."