

Interviewer's code

Jack Satow  
(Johnny Misaki - pseud)Evacuation and Resettlement Study,  
February, 1944 (Revised)

## SCHEDULE FOR INDIVIDUAL RESETTLERS

Date of interview March 13, 1944 Interviewer C. Kikuchi1. Case number 33 2. Sex, ☒ M F 3. Marital stat. M ☒ S D W O  
Entered Left4. Present address 1930 N. Bissell5. Later addresses Minneapolis Date March, 1944  
" "  
" "  
" "  
" "6. Birthplace Detroit, Mich.7. Birthdate 1-10-248. Alien or Citizen citizen9. Nisei, Kibei or Issei nisei

10. Addresses between Dec. 1, 1941 and evacuation

	Date	Entered	Left
(a) <u>Los Angeles</u>	"	<u>1930</u>	<u>1941</u>
(b) <u>Pasadena</u>	"	<u>May, 1942</u>	<u>May, 1942</u>
(c)	"		
(d)	"		
(e)	"		

11. Assembly Center Tulare Date May, 1942 Sept., 194212. Relocation Center Gila Date Sept. 1942 June, 194313. Addresses since leaving Relocation Center  
(prior to "present address")

	Entered	Left
(a) <u>Lincoln, Neb.</u>	<u>6-1-43</u>	<u>6-15-43</u>
(b) <u>Denver, Colo.</u>	<u>6-15-43</u>	<u>12- -43</u>
(c) <u>Chicago, Ill.</u>	<u>12- -43</u>	
(d)		
(e)		
(f)		
(g)		

14. Family members living together on December 1, 1941.

Relationship to Resettler	Age	Sex	Birthplace	Occupation	Religion
(a) <u>Junjiro S. (f)</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>Japan</u>	<u>Hotel Mgr.</u>	<u>Baptist</u>
(b) <u>Hisako S. (m)</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Japan</u>	<u>Housewife</u>	"
(c) <u>Toshie S. (s)</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Michigan</u>	<u>Maid</u>	"
(d) <u>Jack (self)</u>					
(e)					
(f)					
(g)					
(h)					
(i)					
(j)					

CH-33



15. What members of family listed in 14 evacuated together to Assembly Center?  
Give symbols a, b, c, d  
What other related persons?

Relationship to Resettler	Age	Sex	Birthplace	Occupation (as of Dec. 1, 1941)
(a) Albert (b-i-1)	27	M	Montana	wholesale driver
(b) Dorothy (A's s)	21	F	"	student
(c) Donald (A's b)	19	M	"	"
(d) Otto (A's b)	18	M	"	"
(e) Teddy (A's b)	17	M	"	"
(f)				

16. What members listed in 14 or 15 above went together to Relocation Project?  
Give symbols a, b, c, d and #15 a, b, c, d, e  
What other related persons?

Relationship to Resettler	Age	Sex	Birthplace	Occupation (as of Dec. 1, 1941)
(a)				
(b)				
(c)				
(d)				
(e)				
(f)				

17. Family members living together in Chicago

Address symbol (see 13)	Entered	Left	Relationship to Resettler	Age	Sex	Birthplace	Occupation (at date of interview)
(a) Refer to CH-4 and CH-34							
(b)							
(c)							
(d)							
(e)							
(f)							
(g)							
(h)							

18. Educational history of resettler

Grammar schools (name and location)	Dates	Grade completed	
East First St. School, L.A., Calif.	1930-36	6th	
Hollenbeck Jr. High, L.A., Calif.	1936-39	9th	
High schools (name and location)	Dates	Grade completed	
Roosevelt High, L.A., Calif.	1939-41	12th	
Colleges, universities and vocational schools, (name and location)	Dates	Grade completed	Degree
Attendance at Japanese language school, location	Dates		
Baptist Japanese Language School, L.A.	1930-37		



19. Occupational history (begin with first job). Note periods of unemployment by entering dates continuously and writing "unemp" in Job column to cover such periods. Include employment in Assembly Center and Relocation Project and continue with employment since resettling.

Dates		Nature of job	Type of industry	Location	Av. mo. wages	Reason for termination
From	To					
		Odd jobs in high school				
6/41	8/41	Bus boy in Edwy Dept. Store		L.A.	\$60	quit
8/41	9/41	Apprentice in electric shop		L.A.	\$60	"
9/41	10/41	Clerk	Fruit stand	L.A.	\$18 wk	"
10/41	10/41	Packer	Banana Whsle	"	\$25 wk	"
11/41	12/41	Swamper at Robbins	Whsle Mkt.	"	\$25 wk	fired
12/41	5/42	Unemployed				
5/42	8/42	Rec. teacher	WCCA, Center	Tulare	\$8	reloc.
9/42	1/43	Warehouse crew	WRA project	Gila	\$16	quit
1/43	5/43	Net worker in camouflage		"	\$120	resettled
6/1	15/43	Unemployed		Nebraska		
6/15	7/43	Packer	Heartover's Pro.	Denver	\$35 wk	end season
8/1	15/43	Laborer	Foundry	"	\$25 wk	quit
8/16	11/15/43	Dishwasher	Chop Suey Cafe	"	\$25 wk	"
11/15	12/15/43	Unemployed - accident in job				
12/15	22/43	"		Chicago		
12/22	2/44	Furnace tender	Foundry	"	\$30 wk	quit
2/1/44	3/44	Reamer	Machine Shop	"	\$40 wk	"
3/17		Leaving for Minneapolis				

20. Political activities

Dates	Voted in what elections	For what party
	not of age	



2. Gila 8/26/42
3. Tulare 5/12/42
4. Temp. 453 Kensington Pl., Pasadena, Calif.  
Perm. 719 S. Central, Los Angeles, Calif.
5. Sato, Junjiro, Miyagi, Japan  
Masaki, Hisako, Hiroshima, Japan
- 5a. U.S. Hotel Mgr.
7. Grammar school, 1st St., L.A., Calif. 1930 to 1935  
Junior high, Hollenbeck Jr. Hi., Calif. 1935 to 1938  
High school, Roosevelt Hi., L.A. Calif. 1938 to 1941
- 7a. Bookkeeping major
8. None
12. 67 130 lbs.
13. No major defects
18. Single
19. Son
20. 1/10/24
23. No
24. H-4
25. Speaks Japanese
27. Light truckdriver, helper
- 27a. Bookkeeper
28. 8/42 WRA Mess Operation Warehouse worker \$16 mo.  
Rivers, Ariz.  
6/42 to 8/42 WCCA Recreation Attendant--taking care of  
Tulare, Calif. ball fields \$8 mo.  
12/41 to 3/42 Robert's Ranch Mkt. Swamper--loading and unload-  
L.A. (Wholesale) ing \$25 wk.  
7/41 to 10/41 Grand Mkt., retail Sales clerk--wait on customers \$18wk  
L.A., Calif.
29. Hobbies: Music, sports  
O.P. None
30. Christian
- 31.

Jack's sister, Toshiko Ikeda, see CH.4



Charles Kikuchi  
Evacuation & Resettlement Study,  
University of California  
March 20, 1944

CH-33  
~~John Ihara-(psued.)-~~  
John Masaki, (psued.)

Masaki,  
Johnny Ihara, 20, is a single  
nisei youth who has only been in  
Chicago for about three months. He  
moved on to Minneapolis on March 17,  
1944. This case is another example  
of a restless individual who has  
not been able to make complete ad-  
justments to resettlement due to  
vague uncertainties and fears.  
Cross references to this case are  
CH-4, CH-25, CH-34. Johnny is the  
brother of Mrs. Ihara (CH-4).

*I don't think  
that the  
agree adjustment is  
good.*



Johnny Masaki, 20, was born on January 10, 1924 in Detroit, Michigan. He moved to Los Angeles with his family around 1930 and his educational history is as follows: East First School, Los Angeles, 1930-1936; Hollenbeck junior high, Los Angeles, 1936-1939; Roosevelt high, 1939-41. Johnny also attended the Baptist Japanese language school from 1930 to 1937 and this completes his formal education.

Shortly after the outbreak of the war Johnny moved with his family to Pasadena to be evacuated with his brother-in-law's family (May, 1942). He was evacuated to the Tulare Assembly Center and later moved to Gila WRA Center. On June 1, 1943, Johnny resettled to Lincoln, Nebraska where he remained for two weeks. He then went to Denver, Colorado where he remained for six months. Near the end of December, 1943, Johnny resettled to Chicago at the invitation of his sister and brother-in-law. Recently he decided to go to Minneapolis to join his sister-in-law whose husband is at Camp Savage. Johnny is a member of the larger group which has been ~~under~~studied by the writer and references to him will be found in C.K. Diary and also in the cases previously listed.

Johnny has had a varied work career but he has never been fully satisfied in any of the positions he has held. He has some desire to become a bookkeeper and he feels that eventually he will attend college or some trade school in order to prepare himself further. He feels that all jobs held to date have been dead-end jobs and his ambition lie on a higher level. Johnny began his working career during high school when he worked at odd jobs and in the Japanese fruit stands around Los Angeles.



His first job- regular job was as a bus boy in the Broadway Department Store in Los Angeles for a wage of \$60 a month. He quit this job because he felt that the other workers resented his presence. In August, 1941, Johnny became employed as an apprentice in a Japanese electric shop for \$60 a month. He soon became dissatisfied with this job because his employer took advantage of his inexperience and required him to put in a great deal of over-time without pay. Johnny felt that he wasn't learning anything new so that he obtained a job as a fruit stand clerk at \$18 a week. In October, 1941, Johnny worked as a packer in a banana wholesale house for \$25 a week. He obtained this job through his brother-in-law. He quit this job in November to become a swamper at the Roberts Wholesale market. Through some difficulty with the employer he was fired. Johnny felt that it was the result of the war situation. He did not hold another regular job until the evacuation.

At the Tulare Assembly Center Johnny worked as a recreational attendant and he did this job throughout his stay in the assembly center. When he relocated to the WRA project in Gila, he obtained a position with the warehouse crew for which he received \$16 a month. With the opening of the camouflage net project at Gila, Johnny transferred to the net work with some of his friends. During the early stages of this work he made about \$60 a month clear but eventually his skill increased so that he was able to clear around \$120 a month by the time he quit. He had to quit this position because of the lint infection on his face and arms.

By this time he was thinking of resettlement so that he did



not take a job in the center. He resettled to Lincoln, Nebraska at the invitation of his brother-in-law. He was promised factory work but the job fell through so that after two weeks of unsuccessful job hunting, Johnny decided to go to Denver where he immediately got a job as a packer at Heartner's Produce Company. He made about \$35 a week during the short season. He then took a job as a laborer in a foundry for \$25 a week. He quit this position because he did not like the work after two weeks. Johnny then worked until November as a dishwasher in a Chinese restaurant. He was hurt in a boiler explosion in this job so that he was unemployed until mid-December. By this time he felt that there was not sufficient job opportunities for him in Denver that he accepted his sister's invitation to come to Chicago.

Johnny arrived in this city near the end of December, 1943, and he was unemployed for the first week. He then found a job in a foundry as a furnace tender for \$30 a week. He quit this job early in February as he felt that it had harmful effects on his health. He then worked as a reamer in a machine shop until March 17, when he quit his job to go to Minneapolis. Throughout his stay in Chicago Johnny was not able to find adequate adjustments to his life here altho he felt that it was much more satisfactory than during his stay in Denver. He felt that he had a family life which was previously lacking. The recent draft announcements was one of the chief reasons which motivated him to leave for Minneapolis at this time. He felt that he would have more opportunity to get into the language school at Savage if he were near it as he did not wish to be sent to the segregated unit at Camp Shelby.



"Johnny describes himself as a "reformed zoot suiter". He hung around with this type of gang in Los Angeles, but he apparently was never a close member of the group. By nature he is rather inclined to be shy and introvert altho he talks freely when one becomes acquainted with him. Johnny is about 5 ft. 7 in height and he weighs around 140 pounds. He is quite Americanized which may be due to the more liberal type of household in which he was reared. In spite of that Johnny admits that there was a great deal of Japanese cultural training in his home altho his older sister (CH-4) tended to minimize this factor. Most of Johnny's childhood memories begin with Los Angeles where he lived fairly close to the Japanese community.

Johnny feels that his ambitions have not come anywhere near the achievement which he desires. He is rather proud of his father's former success and he feels that he has to live up to it himself. He is rather discouraged by the fact that so many of the nisei are not working towards their future more intently at the present time. In spite of his desires to establish economic security, Johnny feels quite restless. He has made better adjustments in his social relationship which was ready made for him upon his arrival since he has a number of relatives in Chicago. He has been palling around with a younger brother-in-law and during his stay in Chicago, this was more or less his circle. It was composed of almost all nisei except for one Caucasian girl.

Johnny's own interpretation of his life story follows in greater detail. The interviews were conducted hastily over a period of a week altho contacts had been made since his arrival. Johnny was constantly apologizing for his inability to express



himself fully with more conviction, but he told his story fairly freely. Various questions were injected at certain points but in the following write-up, it will be recorded in continuity. The statements have been recorded as verbatim as possible. Johnny was extremely cooperative throughout the interview and he postponed his departure for Minneapolis for one day in order that the writer could finish up the interview. He will communicate at intervals to report his further progress. His story follows:

"Like all of the nisei, I don't know hardly anything about my parents' background. My father is quite a few years older than my mother and he is much less active than she is at the present time. They are still in camp but my father is retired. My mother is working at the camp hospital and she seems to be enjoying the center life. This makes it much more difficult to plan for family resettlement because they don't want to come out since they feel that I will be drafted soon anyway. They don't mind my going to the Army because I already have a brother at Camp Savage.

"My father has been around quite a bit in this country and he knows more about life here than a lot of the issei. The first place he went to was New York, I think. I know he has been around to a lot of the different states but he never told me much about it. I don't even know when he came or when he got married. He went to Detroit after he got married and he worked for Henry Ford for a while and then he opened up a factory of his ~~wer~~ own. My uncle was out there with him and we were about the only Japanese family in that section of the country. I don't remember very much about his battery factory in Detroit because I was young when we left. I know that we were pretty well off there because we had a



house all our own. We were quite comfortable, but later when we moved to Los Angeles we weren't so well off as my dad had some business reverses. He never confided much in us kids so I don't know all of the things he ~~th~~ went through. I still have an uncle and brother working in the Ford Company in Detroit.

"My mother was with dad ever since I can remember. They never talked about their early life to us. They got along fairly well but I suppose my mother was a little more conservative than dad. In spite of that, she was able to get along well with the Caucasians and she said once that she used to belong to quite a few of the Caucasian women's clubs in Detroit. I guess it was harder for her because she didn't meet as many Caucasians as my father. Even at that, she is definitely much more liberal than most of the issei women I have seen since then. My mother can speak English and write it pretty good for an issei. She writes letters to me in English. She speaks a lot more English than most issei because there wasn't much chance to speak Japanese in Detroit and we soon got out of the habit in our family. My father and mother got along fairly well but I guess it was a fixed marriage like most of the issei marriages. As they got older they understood each other better and now, they get along fine. They had the usual arguments, but there was never anything real serious. My mother usually left the important decisions to dad and she just paid attention to bringing us up correctly. The only time she really put her foot down was when she wanted to come to California. Dad wanted to come too so that was okay. I guess my mother was pretty lonesome to see other Japanese after being in Detroit all the time since she came from Japan. She is a quite lively



person and I guess my sister took after her more because they get along easier with people. Come to think of it, my parents must have been married in Japan for a number of years before they came to America because I think we have three other sisters who were born in Japan and they are all older than Tamie, my older sister here. She is the oldest of the children here and I ~~hav~~ am the youngest. I have two brothers besides that and ~~one~~ is in the Army now. I don't know anything about my relatives in Japan because I have never been there and I don't care to find out anyway.

"Dad was the more quiet kind and I suppose I took after him a great deal. He treated us kids all right and I was his special pet as I was the youngest. On week-ends in Michigan he used to take me out for long walks on the boulevards and buy me candy. We lived in a pretty big house in a nice neighborhood and I never saw any Japanese outside of my family until I came to California. The only Japanese outside of those in bur house was my uncle and he used to come and visit every once in a while because he was working for Henry Ford then.

"I don't remember much of Michigan because I left so young. I was only about six when I got to Los Angeles. I do remember one time when dad and one of his Caucasian friends took me fishing on one of the rivers in Michigan. They all caught fish and I was very disappointed because I didn't get any. Dad wanted to make me happy so he put a dead fish on the line and I had a lot of fun pulling it in. Another time, our whole family went to a hakujin friend's house near the lake and we stayed for several days. My brothers and I went out on the pier to look at the man's motor boat. We were standing near the edge of the pier when I suddenly



fell into the lake. I almost drowned before my brother pulled me out. After that I was always afraid of water so I didn't learn to swim like a lot of nisei kids did in Los Angeles.

"Our family moved to California about 1929. My dad went first as he heard that the prospects were good to start a battery box factory there. My uncle went with him to look around. Later they sent for the rest of us. My dad did manage to start a battery box manufacturing company. I guess he went bankrupt because some American fellows swindled ~~ea~~ him out. Maybe it was because of the depression. Anyway, we had to live a lot poorer after that. Dad didn't work regularly any more and he just puttered around more or less with his invention. My mother and brother had to take more of the responsibility for making money after that. Dad has been working on some kind of a dirigible idea and an electric car for a long time. He had some patents on his inventions but I don't know what he has invented. I guess it was a little unusual for an issei to be an inventor.

"My mother would have preferred dad to work regularly because she had to go work after that in order to support us. For a while she used to sew handkerchiefs for a company. Later my brother went to a C.C.C. camp and he sent money home every month. We had quite a hard time then. My mother didn't like it so much and she used to quarrel with dad because we fell down from the position we held before. We were even poorer than a lot of Japanese families in Los Angeles and my mother didn't like this so much because she was much better off than many of them in Michigan. It was partly her fault because she was the one who wanted to come to California the most. I used to hear my parents arguing mostly on financial



problems. All the people were poor that time because it was the depression. Later my mother had to go into domestic day work so that we would have enough to eat. We lived in a pretty good place and it wasn't nearly as bad as she thought. Eventually my dad ran some kind of a hotel but I don't know much about it. It wasn't in the Japanese section at all.

"Things picked up for us after a while and we made out okay. At first we lived in a 7-room house on the east side in Boyle Heights. There were Caucasian neighbors near ~~but~~ us but a little further down there were Japanese and Jewish people. Then we moved right in Boyle Heights where all Japanese lived. There were a few hakujin neighbors around our block. My mother liked it better in Los Angeles in spite of the loss of her former position because she made a lot of friends in church. Dad never talked about going back to Detroit either even though he didn't do so well financially in Los Angeles. He was getting older so I guess he thought more of retiring.

"In our family affairs around our home, my mother was more or less the big boss. She was the one who told us what to do and what not to do. My father just sat in the background when it came to rearing the children. My mother had pretty liberal ideas so that I didn't have too many fights with her. I guess my sister and older brothers went through it first and they softened her up. She wasn't nearly as strict as a lot of Japanese families were because she knew a little about American family life during the time she lived in Detroit.

"My mother has always been a little religious and she always told me to go to the Christian church and she wanted me to grow up



to be a preacher. I obeyed her very dutifully until I got old enough to rebel against that. Mom insisted upon us learning certain parts of Japanese culture because she thought it would be good for us, but she never was too strict in it. She wanted me to learn Japanese because she said it would be better for me in the future years to know it. She said I would have a better chance to get a good job if I knew the language. She never talked much about Japan or encouraged me in Japanese ideas. Once in a while she would talk about her relatives there but I never was much interested in that. My parents took a Japanese American language newspaper and they kept up on the news that way. They also read some Japanese books. They also read English newspaper and magazines so that they were able to find out about a lot of things. They never talked about political things to me as I was too young. I guess they weren't interested too much in it either. My mother wasn't too strong on a lot of Japanese things but she did say that we should speak Japanese to other issei and respect them. We even had to bow down to them when we first went to Los Angeles but we didn't do that very long.

"At home we had mostly Japanese style food. We used chopsticks most of the time except when we ate American dishes. We began to eat more and more American food as we got older. As a family, we got along fairly well altho us kids used to fight with each other as kids. I was the smallest one so I never got much say in anything. I just tagged along behind my brothers. I had respect for my brothers and sister though because they seemed to know a lot more than I did. They were the ones who really did most of the rebelling against the parents and I got the benefit



of it. They used to talk back to mother and dad about a lot of American ideas that they learned in school. It was a good thing that my parents were tolerant about it because they gave in a lot of times. They weren't like a lot of Japanese families where the parents were fanatic.

"As I got older I found I didn't like too much of the Japanese style things and I used to argue against my mother about it. At first my mother got her way but I won out as I got older too. She didn't say too much to any of us about Japanese customs after that and she just accepted the fact that we were growing up like other American kids. One of the hardest things that she didn't like to give in to was going out to dances. All the Japanese families were this way. I think she was influenced by living in Los Angeles because she didn't object to dances that much. Later on she gave in and accepted the fact. Another point I used to argue with her about was going to church. I didn't see any use in it so I stopped going when I was 15 and that was that.

"I guess our home life was a mixture of American and Japanese things. After my mother learned to stop yelling about Japanese ideas, our home life got more and more Americanized. She spoke in Japanese to us but we all answered in English. Later on she made attempts to speak to us in English and she got pretty good. Not many issei would give in that much to their children, I bet. She was much more Americanized than most of the issei I saw in Los Angeles. It was a good thing that she lived among the Caucasians in Michigan and associated with some of them because that gave her the ambition to learn how to read, speak and write English.

"Even after we got to Los Angeles my mother made friends among



the Caucasian neighbors. I guess most of the other issei women were afraid to do this because they ~~even~~ couldn't speak English so well. In spite of that, my mother went around mostly with the Japanese church group in the social affairs. My dad didn't belong with any particular group and he just followed mother. Both of them went around in the same group altho dad did have a lot of Caucasian friends who were helping him out on his inventions. They would visit back and forth many times and talk things over.

"My mother was more lonesome for Japan than my dad. She wanted to go back and visit her relatives. When my sister went over there, it was my dad who took her. My mother wanted to visit her mother and daughters too. She never talked too much about her daughters in Japan to us altho she wrote to them fairly regularly before the war. I guess now she is resigned to staying over here altho she still has some sentimental attachments for Japan. That's because she has relatives over there and there is nothing political about it.

"In my young days in Los Angeles, I hung around mostly with my brothers and a few of the Caucasian neighbor kids. I was the youngest of the whole group so I just followed them wherever they went. There was a steep hill near where we lived so that we would go sledding after school. We never got to play with Caucasian kids as long as we wanted to because we had to go to the darn Japanese school. Sometimes in Saturdays all of us kids would walk downtown and wander around. I never had much fights myself because my brothers always stuck up for me. I was more on the quiet side because my brothers got mad if I got noisy.

"At school I got reall good friends with one nisei boy as he



his folks were good friends with my parents in the church. I don't remember too much of my life in the elementary school. I just went like all the rest of the kids and I was one of those shy nisei boys. I guess I knew English better than most of the nisei kids who grew up in Los Angeles because my teacher in the first grade was impressed and she skipped me one grade. That is why I got out of school one year ahead. I didn't mind going to school at all and I didn't have such a hard time with English like the other nisei kids. I remember that a lot of them in the first grade hardly knew English and they would just speak Japanese among themselves. I never understood much what they said. Later on they began to pick up English pretty fast and then they didn't speak Japanese anymore except at home.

"I entered the Baptist gakuen (language school) about the same time that I started the public school and I went for seven years. I never did like it very much. I used to hang around with my Caucasian friends around a little candy store after school but I always had to leave them to go to language school for 2 hours. They never could understand why I had to do this when they got to play. The only thing I liked about the language school was to go there and play in the yard. I didn't care to study Japanese at all because the teachers were different from my public school teachers. The Japanese teachers were much stricter and they were always bawling us out. Mostly they taught us how to speak and read a little Japanese but they also taught us some of those Japanese ideas like bowing to the teacher. We had to read stories about Japan and all the school books were about ancient Japanese tales. Some of the stories were about the Emperor too and I re-



member my Japanese teacher always told us to respect him. I never thought about these things and I didn't think much of the Emperor.

"Occasionally we had Japanese movies and I liked them at first because there was always a lot of sword fighting and excitement. After I got to know American movies, I didn't like the Japanese movies at all. We used to celebrate a lot of the Japanese holidays at school. We would have plays and a regular program on Boy's Day and that was one of the occasions when all the parents would turn out to see how well we had learned our lessons at the Japanese school. Sometimes we had to recite speeches on the stage, but it was all memorized and we hardly knew what it meant. The school gave a big picnic once a year and all of us kids would go out and play all kinds of games for prizes. Our school was not so strict in the Japanese things like the other Japanese schools in Los Angeles, especially the Buddhist language school. The kids who went to the Buddhist school got a lot more of that Japanese stuff than we did. The teachers made them bow and everything and they even had to say things when they got in front of the Emperor's picture. Even at that, most of my language school teachers were pro-Japanese in their thought and a lot of times they liked to brag about Japan to us kids. Sometimes they would tell us that we were dumb compared to the little boys in Japan and that was supposed to make us jealous. I didn't care at all because I wasn't even interested. If we said anything at all against Japan, they got made. I used to learn certain things at school but if I said them at the language school, the teachers would tell me that the public school were not teaching us correctly. There was one Japanese teacher who was very strict and he used to hit me on the head because I



didn't pay enough attention and he thought I didn't recit seriously enough. One time I told him that I liked American things better and he got angry and said that I was not worthy to be a Japanese. I didn't know what it was all about and I even was ashamed that time. I got wise when I got a little older. I think that the Japanese language school turned a lot of the nisei against the Japanese culture because the public school was much more interesting in comparison to learning under those strict Japanese teachers.

"I know that I didn't like Japanese school at all during the time I went. I used to ditch Japanese classes a lot when I was about 10 or 11 years old and my mother got after me for that. She said that I should attempt to learn the language so I did it more because she wanted me to.

"I don't remember too much about the public elementary school I went to except that we played a lot. I got fairly good grades and I felt just like the other kids at school. We all mixed easily and even the Mexican, Negro and Jewish kids were accepted as a part of the gang. There wasn't any discrimination among us kids at all.

"When I got to junior high school, my family moved to another district so not so many of my old friends went to the same school as I did. I liked junior high quite a bit. I never was very good in athletics but the other nisei kids were good in it. I managed to make a lot of friends okay though. As soon as I got old enough, I joined the Boy Scouts. It was a Japanese troop and I liked it a lot. I put most of my time in between the Boy Scouts and my school life. I went around with some nisei fellows more after that and we did everything together. I liked the scouts a lot because of



the many camping trips we took out into the country and this reminded me of the outdoor life I had known in Michigan. We used to camp overnight and have weenie roasts and a lot of contests.

"When I first went into high school I liked it a lot. But as I got older, I got lazy in studying and I didn't do so well in my grades altho they were kept up to a pretty good level. I suppose I got diverted more to the social life. After I learned how to dance, I liked to go to the dances. I was too bashful to go to the high school dances but I went a couple of times with another nisei friend and we just stood around. Even at the nisei dances I was bashful and I was afraid to ask the girls so I just stood around and watched the rest of them. I was too shy to take girls out on dates during the time I was in high school.

"About half of my friends at that time were nisei and the other half hakujin. I had school friends among the Caucasians but I didn't see them much after school. The only Caucasians I knew real well outside of school were the young guys who lived in the same block as I did. For a long time I played around mostly with the Caucasian boys in our block. We would go out into an empty lot and play football or baseball. Later on I started to hang around more with the nisei fellows. I began to go more and more over to their houses to fool around instead of staying on my block and playing with the Caucasian fellows. I also used to be a drug store cowboy. We would just stand around the corner and talk about things in general and make remarks at the Caucasian and nisei girls as they went by. All of them stuck their noses in the air, but they liked it.

"After my second year in high school I had less time to play



because I worked for an aunt. She wasn't a real aunt but a close friend of the family. She had a ~~san~~ small restaurant which served Mexican dishes. At first I washed dishes and later I cooked tacos, a Mexican dish which was the specialty of the restaurant. A lot of Mexican kids used to come hanging around and I made friends with them. This was the first time I ever saw a zoot suit because they were wearing them a long time before the nisei took it up.

"I didn't take part in much of the school activities in high school. The nisei group at Roosevelt high stuck together. We had a Japanese club there but I didn't join it as I didn't like a lot of nisei fellows who ran the club. They thought they were pretty good and they only wanted their own clique to be in the club. I wasn't a part of this group and I didn't feel any special urge to be a definite part of it even though I did tend to go around with other nisei more and more in high school. The Japanese club at high school held a lot of socials and they led their own lives among the nisei students. They didn't mix too much with the other students except for a few who went out for athletics and other school activities. Most of the nisei were too conservative anyway. I guess I tended to be one of those more quiet kind altho I wasn't a bookworm like most of them were. There were some nisei who were the more rowdy type at high school and they didn't care about studies at all. They just spent their time being big shots in the Japanese club at school.

"It was in high school that I gradually became more aware that I was different from the Caucasian kids. I guess it was really the Japanese school which really brought this difference to my attention most. None of the Caucasian kids had to go to a reg special



school after their regular public school classes. Learning a lot of Japanese things, even though it may have been unconscious, made me feel aware of a certain difference. Another fact was that I was in closer contact with the Japanese community. I didn't feel inferior, only a little different. This feeling only came at special times and usually I enjoyed playing with the Caucasian kids much more than with the nisei. As we got older, a distance came between us and I couldn't understand why it was.

"A lot of the nisei were brought up different than I had been and they had more Japanese ideas. I know that a lot of them felt definitely Japanese and they tended to act more Japanesey. The Caucasian kids noticed this and they began to leave them alone. I felt much more Americanized than a lot of nisei in school. I was able to feel more at ease because I had always been among Caucasians more or less. I honestly believe that it was the other nisei kids who made me feel conscious of a difference because they kept to themselves more and they did not enter the school activities so much. I didn't care for the Japanese students' club and I didn't like a lot of things they did so I was a little distant from the nisei. I guess I was somewhere in between the Japanese club and the Caucasian kids.

"It was my associations with the Mexican kids that I got on the wrong side in high school. I began to hang around with more of the rowdy kids. A lot of the nisei kids were getting that way too and they appealed more to me than the others. We began to develop gangs and we used to go crash socials together. As I grew older I began to regret this kind of living. I learned that as long as I hung around with that group, I would not be able to



get into the nicer nisei groups. Our gang got a bad name and all of the nisei girls looked down on us. I let my hair grow long like the Mexican kids at that time and I began to wear drapes when it got into style among the nisei. I don't wear my drapes anymore now because it is too conspicuous and people give you a bad reputation if you do.

"One of the things I liked about high school was the school sports and I went to all of the games that I could. I was not able to participate in any of these school sports myself but it gave me some pleasure to watch others doing it. This was one of the most enjoyable things about high school. I finally graduated from high school in the summer of 1941 and I didn't exactly know know what I would be doing next.

"At that time I never gave my future a real thought. I did think about continuing on with my high school major of bookkeeping but it was not a definite desire then. I was thinking of going on to L.A.C.C. but my friends discouraged me in that idea. They said that the bookkeeping courses there were only a review of what I had taken in high school. Another reason ~~why~~ I dropped the idea of going on to college was that I felt I should work and help the family out as we still weren't too well off. I felt I could work for a while until I decided definitely what I wanted out of college.

"I started to look for a job right after my graduation. During the time I was in high school, I had developed the habit of going to the Japanese Employment agency where I could get week-end jobs in the Japanese fruit stands. I went to the same agency after I got out of school and the Japanese agent got me a job as



bus-boy in the Broadway Department Store which was downtown. It was one of the biggest downtown department stores and they had a cafeteria in it. I sort of felt out of place there among all of the hakujin workers. When I first began the job there, the lady in charge made a nasty comment about me getting a haircut and that made me feel quite self-conscious. The waitresses did not treat me too good either. Some of them thought I was a Filipino or a Mexican. They yelled at me more than they did to the other Caucasians. I thought they were doing this because of my race but that was due to my self-consciousness. But, they did think I was inferior and it did not take a very smart guy to get that impression. I was only getting \$60 a month and I felt funny when these occasional remarks were directed at me. I never got close with any of the other workers in the cafeteria so that I began to dislike the job. I was self-conscious all the time and I never said anything to fight back. I got more and more unhappy in that job so that after a month or so I quit.

"I next got a job as an apprentice in a Japanese electric shop in Little Tokyo. I felt that I would be at greater ease in that sort of atmosphere. I was getting \$60 a month there too. It only took me about two days to find out that I didn't like working for a Japanese either because the boss had the same sort of attitude against me. He promised to teach me all about the trade so that I could become an electrician but I soon found out that he was just using me as a stooge. He didn't trust me very much on any job and all I did was to hand him the different tools. He had a lot of Japanese ideas and I didn't like it very much when he worked me overtime without pay. He just took it for granted and I



was expected to work overtime without getting any extra pay. A lot of the Japanese employers were doing that. Out on the fruitstand they used to hire a lot of nisei fellows for 50 cents a day and make them work 10 or 12 hours. They all thought it was all part of the family and a nisei never protested much about it. Finally I got disgusted with my boss so I decided to quit my job. We were putting up all the electric lanterns in Little Tokio because the Nisei Week was coming. My boss wanted me to work about 14 hours a day in order to finish up. One day he pushed me around too much and I got sore and walked off on the job after he said I was lazy.

"In September, 1941, I got another job through the same Japanese employment agency, I was contacting. They only charged me 10 percent of my wage for each job and that was cheaper than what most nisei had to pay as the employment agent was a friend of my dad's. Anyway, I got a job in a Japanese fruit stand next. I was getting \$18 a week for this work. At first I didn't know much about the fruit stand work so I just waited on the customers. I began to do a little stacking later on. Gradually I learned how to trim and wash the vegetables and to display them neatly. I worked from 8 in the morning until 6 at night. I had to work 6 full days a week for that \$18. After I learned how to do all of these things the boss sent me to another small fruit stand of his and I took care of it myself. The boss did all of the bookkeeping himself so I didn't know how much profit he made.

"After a couple of weeks the boss began to forget to pay me my weekly wages regularly. I kept asking him for it and he would put me off with some excuse about business being not so good. I didn't like that so much so I finally quit that job and he wouldn't



pay me until-I-threa my back wages until I threatened to take it to court.

[<sup>in</sup>"The nisei were getting a bad break in the fruit stand work until it got unionized. The ones who weren't in the union got taken advantage of mostly. These were the guys who worked on week-ends and during rush seasons or else for the smaller employers who did not bother much about union regulation. A lot of the average nisei boys were doing this kind of work because there wasn't anything else that they could do. It was too hard for them to get work outside of the Japanese community. They were definitely limited and even the college graduate nisei had to do this kind of work. They did it well because they were much better mannered than the average Caucasian who were sales clerks. The nisei had much more of an education than Caucasians in that kind of work, but they were not able to advance as much as the Caucasians. I didn't think much of this fruit stand work because there was no future to it and I had more ambitions. It seemed to me that the boss made all of the profits.]

"By that time it really became my ambition to do some kind of a bookkeeping job but I was afraid to apply for this kind of a job with a Caucasian company. I didn't think I could get this kind of a job anyway during the time the college nisei had to go back to the fruit stands. I thought that I had better get in some kind of school and get more training, but there wasn't any opportunity for me then so I began to hunt around for another one of those average jobs.

"In October my future brother-in-law got me a job in a wholesale banana place as a packer. The company was run by Caucasians



and I got paid \$25 a week. The hours were much more regular on that job so I liked it better than working for a Japanese. There was another guy I was working with and we started to fool around so that after a month I had to quit because my boss did not think I was working hard enough. I guess I was fired from that job. That was the first time I really got the can.

"In November, just before the war, I got a job as a swamper at the Roberts wholesale market and I was getting \$25 a week too. My job consisted of going down to the citrus auction house with the truck driver. After the agent did all of the buying, we would load up the trucks and deliver it to the wholesale house or else to one of the retailers. I was working with another nisei, but there were not too many nisei in that company. We would deliver citrus fruits to the retail markets all around Los Angeles and some of the smaller suburbs surrounding it. We followed a regular route and I liked the work pretty good because I did not have to stay in one place all the time.

"I was just getting used to this job when the war came and I was just discharged as I could not go beyond the five mile curfew. We used to deliver to some of the neighboring towns and we could not do it anymore. The boss gave some other kind of excuse for firing us but I knew that it was all about. All nisei in the company lost their jobs that time. A lot of other companies fired nisei too.

"I was living this sort of life before the war and I was not conscious of the fact that there was going to be so many changes and this country would be on a war time basis. I was hanging around with a gang around Little Tokio and we were not interested

*in things*



in things outside of it. I had very vague plans altho I did want to continue on with my bookkeeping training some time. I wanted to get into civil service. I hadn't thought out things deeply as I was sort of drifting along.

"I was pretty young then. At that time I had a girl friend but I never thought of marriage or any of those things. That was too far in the future and I never gave it much of a thought as it did not occur to me. I was enjoying my life okay like all the other young guys. Sometimes I did think about what I would do in the future and I was a little worried about it because I did not have a definite trade. I knew I had to get some training but there was a lot of limitations to being a nisei. Other nisei had taken up different trades but they did not seem to fit in even after finishing their training. I didn't think I would be in that position myself, but I really did not know what I should train for and that is why I kept bookkeeping in my mind. I had had one experience at working for a Caucasian and it didn't turn out so good. I figured that I would have to get into something more skilled and then perhaps I could work for the Caucasians. I didn't particularly care to work all my life in the Japanese community. The outlook for most of the other nisei was not too good either. I heard a lot of about nisei getting out of school and they weren't able to get jobs. Some of them were too choosy. I guess the ones who came from the better off families got the best jobs in the Japanese community because their parents had pull. The fellows I went around with all worked in the fruit stands and they came from average families. They were contented to do this kind of work all the time. A few of them thought that they would eventually own their own fruit stands or



wholesale market jobs. That didn't interest me too much as I did not see a future in it.

"I never did think of moving out of Los Angeles permanently at all. I planned to settle down there eventually as I figured that it was the best place to live. All of my friends were around there too and I did not feel like wandering off too much. I was aware that there was some discrimination against the Japanese but I never thought too much of that because I rarely ran into it. I guess the nisei run into it more and more as they get older, especially when they are hunting for jobs. I just ignored discrimination as much as possible and kept out of their way. I never thought of Jap spies or anything like that because I didn't know what was going on.

"I wasn't interested in politics at all. I didn't even know that there was trouble coming on between America and Japan. My parents never talked about it and I didn't speak to very many of the issei. I didn't belong to the JACL or any nisei clubs like that so I didn't come into contact with any of these problems. I just lived in my own way and I thought I was happy enough in it. I never had anything against the JACL because I wasn't interested in it. I hardly knew that it existed except that it did sponsor the Nisei Week and some other social activities. I didn't go to any of the JACL dances or socials because only the older nisei went to them. The younger nisei had their own social clubs.

"I just hung around with a gang around Little Tokio. We didn't do very much except waste time after work and in the evenings. The fellows went to play pool and the pin ball machines a lot. After a while they took out pin ball machines as it was against the law. We passed a lot of time by visiting girls, but we



weren't too welcome. Just before the war a couple of us went to visit a nisei girl's place in Hollywood. When she came to the door, the girl asked us if we belonged to the Exclusive Twenty. We said yes so she told us that she could not go out with any fellows like us and then she shut the door right in our faces. It was after that that I began to realize more fully that it wasn't so good to go around with that gang because of the bad reputation they had.

"The Exclusive Twenties were just a bunch of fellows that hung around together. We didn't have any exact membership. There were about 20 or 30 of us and we were all interested in sports and dances. We just fooled around most of the time. We knew Mexican fellows and we were used to gangs and some of the members were always going around looking for trouble. A lot of them were starting to get drunk all the time and they would go crash nisei dances and try to start fights. After they started to go steady with girls, they gradually dropped out of the gang. Some of the fellows were pretty tough and when they had a grudge they would gang up on the guys. I wasn't a real member of the gang altho I did hang around with some of the fellows. They were a little older and I. I went around with a few of the younger fellows in the gang and we went around and crashed all the socials, but we didn't get drunk. The Exclusive Twenty had a pretty bad reputation as rowdies and a lot of nisei were trying to get into the gang. I quit going around with them all of a sudden just before the war because I was worried that I would get a bad reputation like them. I got to know another nisei fellow and we more or less became close pals.

"My friend and I went around to visit girls mostly and we also liked to go to shows, horseback riding, bowling, and pleasure



riding in his automobile. It was quite an advantage to have a car and we would take girls out and drive around Los Angeles to see the sights. Sometimes we would go down by the ocean with them like all the fellows did. We never tried to take advantage of any of the girls we went out with.

"I didn't have very many hobbies of my own. For a long time I was interested in stamp collecting but I didn't do so much with it after I started to go around with a gang. I didn't stay around home very much as I was usually out in the evenings. I hardly went to church any more because I was not interested in it. My mother did not want me running around like that and she would give me lectures. She didn't bawl me out so I began to listen to her because I knew that she was right and in many ways I tried to correct myself.

"If the war had not come along, I think I might have saved up some money to go to a trade school or business college. I was starting to save and I had some good idea of entering school the next year. I never got around to enrolling as the war came and changed all of these plans. At that time I was thinking a little more seriously and I wanted to get into a more definite job instead of drifting around on so many jobs. I didn't want to be a fruit stand clerk all my life either.

"I didn't know that Dec. 7, 1941 would change my life around and I never dreamt that I would be leaving Los Angeles. I was too stunned to realize anything at first and I really didn't think that it would affect me that much. After the Pearl Harbor attack, I began to notice the difference on my job and the people began to cuss us out as we drove around in our truck. I got to a point where



I almost hated the Caucasians as I didn't think it was right for them to take that attitude. One day, we went into a drive in stand to get a hamburger and nobody would wait on us. Other people came in later and they were served right away. We realized then that the waitresses were ignoring us. It made me feel very funny and it made me angry too. When I said something to the waitress, she called me a dirty Jap and told us to get out. I was so mad that I just told her off.

"I was in a movie when Pearl Harbor was bombed. I had gone downtown that Sunday to take in an early show. All of a sudden there <sup>flash</sup> was a ~~false~~ about Pearl Harbor over a loud speaker in the theatre. I had the funniest sensation and I didn't know what to think. I was really shocked and I didn't pay much attention to the rest of the show. I just sat there thinking and all kinds of crazy idease came into my head. I felt very self-conscious because I was of Japanese descent and I felt that all other people in the theatre were looking right at me. I was worried about how I would be treated. As soon as I got out of the show, I bought one of the extras which were already on the stands. As I stood on the street corner I noticed that people were giving me a dirty look already. It made me feel like hiding away in a hole altho I knew that I had nothing to be ashamed of.

"I went right home and I was plenty worried. My folks were as shocked as I was and my dad listened to the news continuously for the rest of that day. My brother had been drafted into the Army three months before the war and that made me feel a little better as I felt that it would be some protection. My mother was very worried about my brother as she thought that maybe something would



happen to him. We didn't talk too much as all of us were too numb. Everyone was shocked by the war news and we didn't know what to make of it. After a while I began to think a little clearer.

"It was then that I began to feel quite angry at Japan, and I knew that things were going to be pretty bad for the nisei because we would be put on the spot. I wished that I wasn't a Japanese because I knew that it would be taken out on us even though we were not to blame for anything. I felt that I was an American, but I was a little afraid that the Caucasians would not accept this. It made me more mad when some of those nisei brought up Japanese style <sup>said</sup> set things for Japan. They actually acted as if they were proud about the whole thing. I was surprised that a lot of nisei had no more sense than this. I got mad at a lot of them when they were all for Japan, it seemed. They tried to apologize for Japan and I didn't know why they did such a thing like that because they were all born over here too. I guess they felt sorry for the old folks and they really didn't know where they stood. I have always felt that I was an American and I couldn't understand why any nisei would even begin to doubt their position and think like that. I didn't think of volunteering into the Army at all as I was the only boy left with my folks. I thought I would have to look after them more than ever. Already that first day, they were interning a lot of the issei and Little Tokio was full of excitement.

"All of my main friends were just as shocked as I was about Pearl Harbor and they felt like I did. There were a few others that felt pretty good and they wanted Japan to win a lot of battles. They said that America really forced Japan to start the war because Japan was being choked to death by not being allowed to trade or



expand. I guess I got this from the old folks and they stuck up more for Japan. I don't think that they really meant to be dis-loyal but I didn't like to hear some of the remarks that they made. They really had no reason at all for doing this except that they had Japanese Blood and they felt that they should stick up for their own race because the Caucasians were prejudiced against them and they did not give them a square deal. I knew that my folks weren't pro-Japan like that as they had never talked about this sort of thing to us. They were sympathetic to the Japanese culture but that was something else. At the same time my parents were quite proud of my brother being in the United States Army and they always told me that I should serve too when I was called. They never said that I should ever serve for Japan. Naturally everybody was excited and upset during those first few days and they didn't know what to expect. That's why they were saying a lot of things and the nisei were very much on the defensive. Most of them immediately began to talk about how American they were, but that didn't sound sincere to me either. I think they were all mixed up and they never knew how they stood until the war made them take a choice. Almost all of the nisei felt that they were going to have a tough time and they were confused. The issei were twice as scared and they believed a lot of rumors which started out right away. There were a lot of stories about what was going to happen to all of the Japanese so that everyone more or less stayed at home because we were afraid of being beaten up by gangs if we went out at night.

"I went to work as usual the next day. I was very worried about what the attitude would be towards me when I got to my job. I guess I wasn't any too anxious to go out there because I didn't



know what to expect. Nothing much happened. There was a lot of talk about the war but they didn't say anything directly to me. I made myself as inxonspicious as possible because I could not get rid of the feeling of self-consciousness. I made a couple of attempts to explain my position, but it sounded pretty weak. I didn't feel that I had to go around explaining anyway because I knew where I stood. I only wished that other people would understand this. After the war started I didn't go out as much to hang around like I did before. I just continued on with my work and pretty soon a lot of the excitement died down. There were always rumors going around among the Japanese and a lot of stores were being closed up. It looked like we were going to be evacuated after a month or so because I heard that some of the districts in California were being restricted. Pretty soon the curfew and other regulations came up. I just accepted these things and I never questioned any of it. I didn't realize what it was leading up to. The newspapers sounded sympathetic to us at first, but pretty soon editorials about dangerous saboteurs, disloyal Japs, and demands for evacuation began to come out more and more.

"When the rumors of evacuation first started, I knew that it would be bad for all of the nisei. At first I didn't think that the nisei would be taken at all, but pretty soon it dawned on me that this was what was going to happen. I heard about some of the issei being sent to internment camp and I thought we would be sent to the same kind of place. Even then I wasn't too disturbed because I felt we would only be detained temporarily and then allowed to return to our homes after we were cleared. My parents began to worry quite a bit about the coming evacuation and they didn't know what to do



about their property. My dad had a hotel and a car and he didn't know what he should do with them. He wasn't worried about being interned at all because he didn't belong to any of the Japanese organizations. There were a lot of rumors going around about Filipinos prowling in the Japanese community at night and killing stray Japanese and I got scared so I never went out alone. I tried to avoid the Filipinos as much as possible and I didn't hang around Little Tokio too much as it was not healthy down there. By that time I was in another group ~~another~~ of fellows nearer my own age.

"I felt much more responsibility for my folks because I didn't know what would happen eventually. My father kept operating his hotel until he finally sold out his belongings and gave up the lease when evacuation became certain. I had to help my folks get rid of a lot of personal belongings and that took up most of my time. We never thought of voluntary evacuation at all because we were city people and most of the people leaving the area were farmers. I knew that I had to stick with the family so I never thought of breaking away from them. It gave me a certain amount of security to stick together. When evacuation was definite, I was going to volunteer to go with an advance group to Manzanar in March but I thought I had better wait and see what happens so I gave up that idea. I had a lot of time on my hands so I helped some of my friends get ready for evacuation. I hung around with nisei fellows who lived near me but I did not go wild.

"I felt sad about evacuation as all of my friends were splitting up and going to other camps. I figured that my family was going to Manzanar. My sister had just got married and she moved over to Pasadena in April. They were talking about joining her



husband's father there. We thought that we would go there too but rumors began to come up about us going to another camp so we got a little worried.

"In the meantime my mother was selling out all of her stuff in our home and I had to go around and collect all the debts that the Japanese people owed her. My mother said we should do this because we did not know if we were going to the same place or not and she wanted to get everything all straightened out before leaving. It was a tough job trying to collect those debts because all Japanese were worried about money and they weren't getting new income then. I had so many things to do that I was kept busy all the time so that I didn't have time to think and get into a bad mood. I didn't go in for drinking and gambling like a lot of nisei fellows did. They didn't have very much to do so they hung around the pool hall all the time and I think a lot of them got bitter during this time. I was more worried about what was going to happen with our belongings and that occupied me fully. Our family depended upon my sister's husband in Pasadena quite a bit. Finally we decided that it would be best for us to move in with them and go wherever they went instead of being separated. We were supposed to get a permit from the Army to move over to Pasadena but we didn't do that. We just loaded our things up and sneaked over there one afternoon. We lived with them for three days and then we were evacuated to Tulare. It was a good thing that we did that because otherwise we would have had to go with out district to Santa Anita.

"When I got time to do a little thinking, I was bitter against a lot of Caucasians for pushing us out. I thought it was mostly for selfish reasons altho I knew that the Army had to get us out



because of the danger of invasion. However, I felt that it was more discrimination than anything. After I thought it over some more, I knew that I shouldn't have that attitude. I felt that I had to take the evacuation as there was nothing else that I could do about it. I didn't feel close to Japan at all and I didn't like the way that the Japanese Army and Navy were winning all those battles. I didn't see how Japan could win the war anyway because I was confident that America would come out on top. My brother in the Army got a special furlough just before evacuation and he came out to visit us. He was in Camp Grant then and he said that he heard of a lot of nisei getting discharged from the Army so that he thought he might get discharged too.

"I knew I had to go to camp with nothing but Japanese all around me and I didn't like that so much. There wasn't anything I could do but make the best of it so I figured that I would have to get along with the people as best I could. This was the way I was feeling as we were evacuated.

"It was on May 12, 1942, that we were loaded up on a bus by the soldiers. Nobody was very happy about it except the young kids who were a little excited about taking a trip. I felt sad because I didn't know anybody in the Pasadena group and I was sort of lost. I was a stranger in that group and I hardly knew my relatives. I didn't see how I would be able to get along in camp not knowing anybody. I had a hunch that we might not see Los Angeles again for a long time so I felt depressed. I was used to Los Angeles and it seemed like home to me because I knew parts of it so well. I didn't like the idea of being kicked out of there as if I were not a part of it. My morale was pretty low and I didn't know what they



were going to do with us. I didn't know how long we would have to stay in camp so I had no plans at all for the future. I had a little hope that at least the nisei would be able to get out eventually. But this didn't look so good after we got into camp. It seemed that once we were out of the Caucasian community, nobody gave much thought to us anymore.

"When I first saw Tulare I felt funny when all of those strange faces stared at us as we came through the gate. A lot of the young guys hung around the entrance and they made cracks about more sad Japs coming into camp. They felt the same way I did, but after the first day they felt as if they were veterans around there. I didn't get a very good impression of the camp and it looked pretty sad. I tried not to take the attitude that it was a prison, but the fence and those soldiers and all of those lining up reminded me of jail. I had never been in a jail but I thought that this was what it was like. I felt funny when we walked from the train station to camp with the soldiers on both sides of us with machine guns. I noticed the barbed wire fence right away and I immediately felt all cooped up. We had to line up for everything right from the beginning and that was why my life at Tulare started with such a low morale.

"We didn't build too many things for our apartment since we sent for most of the things we needed. My brother-in-law made a few things with wooden boxes, but the rest of us didn't take much interest in fixing the apartment up. My sister and mother put up most of the curtains and things like that. At first there were 9 of us from the two families living together. Later some of my brother-in-law's relatives went on to Manzanar to join their father.

"We lived in a horse stable at first and it didn't have any



windows so we applied for another barrack and we got a better place after that. It didn't take us very long to get fixed up and we tried to settle down like it was a home as much as possible.

"I didn't like Tulare at all because I felt strange there. I started to go around with some of my younger brother-in-laws and I made new friends through them. They knew quite a few fellows because they lived in Pasadena for a number of years. I had planned to loaf all summer and have a fine vacation but I got tired of loafing after the first week so that I applied for a job. I got a job in the recreation department through my brother-in-law. I was a recreation attendant. We had to take care of the ball parks and the recreation lots. There ~~were~~ was a playground across the road from camp and we had to count the people who went across the highway so that they wouldn't wander away from camp. The soldiers stood around to keep an eye on them too. Other times we had to water the ball field and line it off. We did all of the maintenance work in the recreation department so that the other people in camp would have a place to play. I liked the job fairly well as it wasn't too hard and I got a chance to meet new people.

"After a while I started to play volleyball and some other sports and then I began to attend some of the socials which were springing up. We had a lot of dances at Tulare and that was about the only thing that the nisei were interested in besides sports. The funny thing was that I started to go to church every Sunday altho I still didn't believe in it too much. My mother wanted me to go and since there was nothing else to do on Sundays, I went to church to make new friends. I didn't meet too many girls and I never went steady while I was there. I used to go play cards with



one young family that I knew. The group I went around with was composed mostly of my brother-in-laws' friends and it was mostly fellows. I wore a zoot suit in camp for a while but I didn't let my hair grow long.

"After a while I didn't care ~~wh~~ for the camp life too much. A lot of the nisei stuck only to their own groups and they didn't want to mingle. One good thing was that there wasn't much of the pro-Japan stuff going on at Tulare and the issei were still scared and the kibe were laying low. The administration was very good and the people appreciated them because the Caucasians were always trying to help us out. In spite of this, I did not feel that this was a normal life. After I was there a while, I felt out of from everything on the outside and I missed it a great deal. I corresponded with some Caucasian fellows I knew but that dropped off after they were drafted into the Army. There were many days I felt quite isolated and I didn't know what to do with myself.

"A friend of mine went out on a furlough to work in the sugar beets in Idaho. He wrote me a letter and told me that it was great to have freedom and asked me to come out. I jumped at the chance so I applied to go out on seasonal work right away. But the administration told me that I had to have a letter from an employer guaranteeing a job and another note from the sheriff of the county saying that it was okay for me to go there. My friend got these letters for me and sent them right back but when I took them to the administration building the interviewer told me that the Defense Command had put Idaho in the restricted zone so I couldn't go out there to work. I was quite disappointed with this news as I had looked forward to going out and after that I could not see how I



could ever get out.

"One thing I enjoyed at Tulare was my job as a gate checker. I got to know quite a few of the M.P. that way and I found that they were mostly swell fellows and some of them were pretty young. They treated me good and acted very sympathetic. One young M.P. was from Hollywood so I used to go out there all the time when he was on duty and we would talk about Los Angeles. That was the only touch I had with the outside. Whenever I saw automobiles go by I felt sort of angry inside and I knew things were not right.

"Tulare was a very peaceful camp and we did not have any big gang fights and things like that. Once they collected all of the Japanese records and put a curfew on the camp and a lot of the people did not like that so much. There were other people in camp who felt just as restricted as I was. Near the Fourth of July, one fellow tried to escape through the fence and that caused quite a bit of commotion. He was caught just as he was going through the fence. When they asked him why he tried to escape, he gave the excuse that he wanted to go out to town and buy some liquor to celebrate the Fourth with. As a reward for his efforts, he was confined in a jail that they built in camp. When I saw these things it made me feel more than ever that I wanted to get away from the camp life. These periods of dissatisfaction came off and on and in the meantime I went back into the routine of camp and I got used to it. We just lived from day to day and it seemed like we were living a different kind of life than the one we had enjoyed on the outside. One good thing which gave some compensation was that people did not have to worry about the necessities of life because the government supplied it. A lot of times it bothered me not to have my freedom so I



could go out to a hamburger stand to get something to eat when I felt like it.

"When rumors of relocation came around, everybody got out of the peaceful mood and they were all excited. We didn't know where we would be sent to next. There were all kinds of guesses on that. Some said we were going to Manzanar and others said we would be sent to Tule Lake. Most of the rumors said that Arizona would be the place. We figured that it would be Poston then and some of the people in camp began to write letter to their friends in Poston. There was quite a bit of talk about the heat up there but it was pretty hot in Tulare so we were sort of used -2 to it. Finally they told us that we were being sent to Gila and that took us completely by surprise because nobody had even mentioned it before. There was a lot of talk that it was in the middle of the desert so that we were all discouraged. We heard that it was on a former Indian reservation so some people thought we would be treated like Indians after we got out there. I was excited about taking another long trip and I was not particularly anxious to remain in Tulare. We all ran around getting our things ready to go. Just before leaving we had a lot offarewell parties. Some of the people in Tulare thought they would never see each other again just because they were going in different groups. In a way I was happy to leave and in other ways I felt a little sad. I was getting established in Tulare in some ways and I didn't like the idea of starting all over again. At the same time I longed to get away from the small space of our assembly center where we could not even walk a half mile in a straight line because of the fences. My brother-in-law's mother came back from the internment camp and she took the rest of



her family on to Manzanar, to join her husband. We all wanted to go there but we were not allowed to because we did not have enough reasons. I knew more friends from Los Angeles down at Manzanar and I thought I would enjoy it more, but the WCCA told us that we would have to go to Gila with the rest of the group.

"When the time came to leave for WRA centers, the camp was divided into sections. A certain number of blocks went at a time and they asked for volunteers to help load the baggage. I helped do that as I wanted to get that feeling of getting out of camp for a short time even if it was only to go to the railroad station. It was quite a thrill to buy cokes and gum at a store on the outside.

"Then they asked for volunteers to stay behind and clean up the camp and my brother-in-law and sister decided to do that. It was mostly young single fellows who did this and they were promised good jobs when they got to the WRA centers. All of them were fools because by the time they got to the relocation centers, most of the good jobs had already been taken.

"When it came our turn to leave, we were pretty excited and I felt good to go on another trip. A lot of people felt they would never see their friends any more and there was a lot of weeping around. I don't know why they did this because they were all going to the same camp. I guess they thought the government would scatter them all out. The first train out was as rather exciting as I got a chance to see familiar scenery once more. The trip got boring after we got into the desert but that was after we left California. The first night we only left Los Angeles and I was glad to see it once more as I was not expecting to see it once more. I knew that this time I would not see the city again for



many months. I had a lot of fun pointing out the various familiar spots to the northerners who had never seen Los Angeles before. I felt like a native son even though I was in a locked train going out of California against my will. Most of the young kids were excited about the long train ride and they didn't know what was coming ahead for them.

"It took us 3 days to reach Gila and we were worn out because it was so uncomfortable staying on that train so long. We were not <sup>allowed</sup> even ~~ahead~~ to get out once to stretch ourselves. When we got to the railroad station at Casa Grande, we had to wait for hours while the Army trucks came to pick up up and take us to camp 15 miles away. It was one of the hottest days of the summer and we were practically wilted. Casa Grande was a one-horse town and all the people came out to the station to stare at us. They were just curious and none of them said anything nasty. On the way to camp it was hot and ~~dustry~~ and we had our first taste of a dust storm. I was very disappointed because I had pictured the desert as cactus scenery as something romantic and I was disillusioned when I really saw what it was like.

"When I first saw came I got more discouraged as it wasn't completed yet and it looked like a dirty, messy place. The only clean part of it was the barracks which were white and new. We were so tired out from the long trip that our first thought was to take a clean bath and go to bed. When we got right into camp, the first group from Tulare greeted us and they were all helpful in locating our baggage and our new barracks. We had to haul the cots and mattresses ourselves since there were not enough trucks available.



"The first thing we did was to sweep all of the dust out. The floors had wide cracks in it and the dust kept blowing in. We went out and picked up a few pieces of scrap lumber to cover the cracks with. My mother was afraid that snakes would come in through the holes and she would not rest until we filled every hole up. There was no running water in our block and we had to go about 3 blocks away to take a cold shower. The ditches were still open and we had to walk in dust about 8 inches deep. By the time we got back to our apartments again, we were as dusty and dirty as before.

"We tried to get a big apartment for our family but the camp was all crowded so that different families had to be put together. We did a lot of complaining about this and we finally managed to get a B apartment (20 ft by 30 ft) for the five of us. Another thing that discouraged me was the meals as we only got canned food for the first few days. This was not appetizing at all and we felt that we would practically starve there. It was too hot to be very ambitious so that we stayed indoors or in the shade as much as possible.

"In the evenings I went out exploring and I found that the whole camp had open ditches. They were still dynamiting on the far side and a lot of Indians and Caucasian workers were coming into camp every day. They used to have big containers of ice water and I spent a lot of time running back and forth swiping the ice. When we first got there we did not have any electricity at all. I had a long cord and I knew enough about electricity from my experiences at the Japanese electric shop in Los Angeles to connect the wires up. We were the only ones in our whole section to have any electricity for the first few days. The rest of the people all went to



bed early or else they lit candles.

"We got busy making furniture right away. Each day my brothers-in-law and I went out to steal lumber. It got harder to get the good pieces because they put Indian guards on the lumber pile. We had to go late at night in order to dodge these guards. The Indians did not care too much anyway because they were making more money for that job than they did in a long time. That's what one Indian guard told me. I talked to some of those Indians and they were very sympathetic. I felt that I had much more education than they did because they were rather simple. They had the idea at first that we were a bunch of foreigners and we didn't even know how to speak English. They were surprised to find that the nisei were better English-and- educated and knew more English than they did. They had the idea we were going to be kept on the reservation too.

"After a week I applied for a job as I didn't want to be loafing around too long. The employment office told me that the warehouse work was open so I got in there with some of the fellows I knew in my section. At first we had to work quite hard as there was a lot of food coming into camp and we had to load and unload it all. After I started working there, I never had to worry about food because all of us would take stuff home when the boxes broke. I never took any big things, but a lot of the fellows took whole hams and things like that home with them. It was a pretty good gang to work with and I got to meet some of the other fellows from other centers and we got along well. We used to compare the different centers and I discovered that we were much better off at Tulare than at some of the other camps. One fellow told me that they didn't



even have modern toilets at Turlock and I was amazed at that.

"Our warehouse crew went over to Camp I in trucks and I started to look around. I was surprised to meet some of my former Los Angeles friends there. They had gone to the free zone with their families before evacuation and were sent to Gila from Fresno. I was very glad to see them as this was the first time I had run across any of my old friends in months.

"I worked in the warehouse crew until December. I liked the job as we got to ride the trucks to the other camp every day. At that time Camp II did not have a canteen so it was an advantage to go to Camp I to buy soda water and other things. We used to knock a couple of hours off every time just to hang around the canteen and talk. Soon the fellows in our crew formed a sort of gang and we started to go around together. At first we didn't do much except go visiting. Later one we went to the dances in a group. Some of the fellows were pretty rowdy. I didn't wear my zoot suit anymore because I had reformed. I got along with most of the fellows in the warehouse and we began to play cards there when we didn't feel like working too hard.

"The routine got settled after a while and we would go around to the dances together and do almost everything as a group. At first we took hikes out into the desert but we got tired of that. Once we caught a five-foot rattlesnake. I made a cage for it and kept it at my house the first night. When my mother saw it, she became very frightened and she wanted me to kill our pet. My mother couldn't sleep as she thought that the rattlesnake would escape and come into our apartment. She got so nervous about it that I finally took it to the warehouse and we kept it there as a pet. Every day



the whole crew would knock off about an hour to catch kangaroo mice in order to feed the snake. The snake would never swallow the mouse when we were around but next morning we always noticed that it always had a big bulge in its belly. We called the snake "The Treacherous Jap". Sometimes we called it "Yamamoto".

"The reason for that was that there was a guy named Yamamoto in our block and he was very pro-Japanese. When I first started to work in the warehouse, he made up stories that we were a bad bunch from Los Angeles. He also passed rumors around that our family were inus just because my sister and brother-in-law used to have some of the Caucasian teachers come and visit them. Yamamoto would talk to the kibeis all the time and tell them not to work. They were always talking about Japanese ideas. He tried to influence us guys but he couldn't get any place with us because we laughed him down. He began to hate our family and he tried to take it out on us.

"When Dec. 7, 1943 came, Yamamoto and some of his issei pals from our block put the Japanese flag on the Butte. I'm pretty sure it was him. My mother was working in the mess hall then and she told me that early that morning Yamamoto and his crowd had gathered and they had gone off some place. They then came back <sup>to</sup> the mess hall and they had a picture of the Emperor and a Japanese flag which they put up. Then they sang a lot of Japanese ~~flag~~ songs and celebrated all the victories which Japan had won. There was a lot of commotion about the Jap flag on the mountain but the administration never found out who put it there. Some Boy Scouts took it down and they tore it up. I heard that they used it for toilet paper.



"Yamamoto seemed to have caused a lot of trouble in camp. We found out that the cooks were hoarding the food. We did not get all that we should have gotten at meal time. The fellows and I delivered to each mess hall and we knew that something dirty was going on. We reported it to the mess operations and they found out that the cooks were hoarding it in the block manager's office. After the questioning, it was found that Yamamoto was the leader. He claimed that there was going to be a shortage of food and they said that they were preparing for it so that the people in our block would not starve. Yamamoto was always spreading stories around about how the people were going to get starved and a lot of them believed him. Finally the FBI took Yamamoto out of camp during the time of registration. After they took him and a few others out they didn't have so much trouble in camp.

"At Gila I discovered that quite a few of the people were fanatic about being pro-Japan. There was one fellow in our block that I thought was okay during the time I was at Tulare. His name was Art and he had pleurisy. So maybe that was why he was so bitter against everything. In my talk with him at Gila, I discovered that he was definitely pro. He tried to tell me that I should lay low and go to Japan because this country hated all of us Japanese. He tried to influence me in Japanese ways and tell me that my citizenship did not mean anything. I had to avoid him and I didn't like him anymore. He hung around with the kibe fellows and they were fanatics too. They would go to the showers and brag about Japan all the time. They said that they would like to be in the Japanese Navy. Once they made me so mad that I told them off. I asked them why they didn't go back to Japan if they liked it so much.



After that I didn't talk to them anymore.

"It seemed to me that most of the issei in our block were "pro" too so I didn't get along with them either. The kibe were the worst and they started a lot of trouble. The nisei were a little hesitant because of all these influences. I guess they didn't think much about their own position anyway.

"In the meantime I had changed jobs in January into the camouflage net factory. At first I didn't think of going in but a lot of the warehouse boys went in. We formed our own crew and went in as a group. A lot of the issei didn't like the idea of the camouflage factory as they said it was helping out America. Many parents wouldn't let their children go out there to work and make more money than the WRA wages. Some of these families were pretty poor and they certainly could have used that money. Some of the issei in our block talked bad about us for going into the net work and they tried to take it out on us in the mess hall. The issei got the sorest when the ex-veterans went into the net work as a group. After a while, the net workers started to make anywhere from \$50 to \$100 a week so that the other people got jealous about it. They could have gone out there and worked too if they weren't so stubborn.

"The bad thing about camouflage was that a lot of guys never made so much money in their lives and it went to their heads. They started to go to all the big time gambling games and a lot of them lost quite a bit. I wanted to save up my money as the talk of resettlement was starting. The camouflage work was not too difficult, but it was bad to breathe that lint in. There were some rumors that we would get T.B. and a lot of guys were worried about that.



When it got hot, many workers got the rash and they had to lay off. I got the rash about May so I had to quit. I wanted to take it easy any way and rest up as I was definitely thinking of resettlement and I had started to make some of my plans. The camouflage project closed up at the end of May anyway because the guys were making too much money and they said it was discouraging resettlement.

"While I was working in the net factory, the Army registration came in February. In a way I welcomed the news as I thought that the nisei should get a chance to show where they stood. The only reason I didn't ~~was~~ volunteer was that I heard a lot of rumors that Shelby was not so good. I felt responsible for my family yet too. I answered 'yes-yes' in the questionnaire and I was willing to go if they took me. I wanted to wait a little while anyway as I had planned to get out and settle my folks before going into the Army.

"I was again amazed at the reaction of the nisei. They thought that they should answer 'no-no' to the question as they said we were being suckers and we would be put into a special camp and then sent to the front line overseas where we would be slaughtered. Everyone was saying that and I didn't know whether it was true or not. I didn't argue with them because it was no use. Most of the net crew felt like I did, but they did not care to volunteer. There were some kibeis working with us out there and they tried to oppose the registration but nobody would listen to them. They were discharged when they answered 'no-no' and they got pretty sore about that. They thought they were being kicked around again.

"A lot of the kibeis got into groups and they tried to agitate. They went to some of the meetings and they booed the Army team when



the speeches were given. Once I went to a secret kibe meeting in our block. I was just curious to see what they had to see. I couldn't understand the Japanese so well but I got drifts of what they were saying. It burnt me up when they talked against this country. They said they were being pushed around and they had to stand up for Japan to show their real blood. They said that they would be treated like pigs in this country and they had to do everything possible to help Japan win a place in a world. They talked like fanatics. After that the kibe club from our camp started to make trouble at all of the Army meetings on the registration. They would go to the meetings and call the nisei sergeant bad names in Japanese. They broke up one meeting completely by doing this. Some of the kibe threw rocks at the Army cars when they passed and then ran. Right in the middle of registration, the kibe called a mass meeting in the amphitheatre and they tried to get the whole camp to strike against the registration. After that martial law was declared and a lot of the issei and kibe ring leaders were taken by the FBI to jail. Yamamoto of our block was one of the first ones to be picked up. I didn't feel sorry for him at all because he had influenced the nisei wrong and he had also led a lot of issei who were peaceful into agitation.

"As a result of all this excitement, a lot of the nisei in our camp answered 'no-no' but they regretted it later when they came to their senses. Many of them went back and changed their answers. It ended up by having three-fourths of the nisei answering 'yes-yes' and one-fourth 'no-no'. That wasn't so bad because the kibe were included in the fourth which answered 'no' and they were almost all against the loyalty question. A lot of the young kids were in-



fluenced by their parents, but that was because ~~at~~ they were too young to know what they were doing.

"I was surprised because a lot of nisei felt that they had been shoved around and they were bitter like the kibeis. They did not care to be shoved into a combat unit after all that and they had all kinds of objections. There were only about a hundred nisei who volunteered from our camp and much more than that decided to go to Tule Lake with their parents. Over 2000 people signed up for repatriation from our camp so that it was a pretty conservative place.

"I began to think very seriously of resettlement after that. I wasn't too sure of myself because I was afraid of how I would be treated on the outside. I got more confidence when I read letters from other nisei who had left camp and they were all telling me that it was best to leave. The camp paper also stressed resettlement and they quoted letter telling how some of the nisei were going on the outside. I went to the relocation officer and I had a long talk with him. I still had quite a few doubts and fears about leaving camp. I didn't know exactly what kind of work I could do as I was still not trained for anything. The relocation officer said that it was up to me to help make a good name for the nisei. I knew he was right when he said not to hang around in large gangs. Another girl came in from Chicago for a visit with her family and she told me it was best not to wear a zoot suit on the outside and all those things. I had read of the zoot suit trouble in Los Angeles so I knew that she was right and I decided ~~not~~ to get into any of these groups when I resettled.

"After I quit my camouflage work in May, I definitely made up my mind to come out as soon as possible. I had been corresponding



with my brother-in-law's brother in Nebraska and he kept telling me to come out to Lincoln. I wanted to get out and start a new life because I saw that there was no future in camp. I would only be there for the duration and I had to start out sometime. I felt that I had to do something constructive for my folks before I went into the Army. I knew that sooner or later I would be called. I was hoping to get some sort of defense job so I could carry out my plans and also because I wanted to learn a definite skill.

"I heard stories that nisei were getting good money on the outside, more than they had ever made in Los Angeles. I thought that there was a good chance to prepare for the future if I went out and saved a little money. I had in mind that I would like to go to a night school after I got out to learn a trade or else take a business work. I still have some ambition of going to college some day. I was extremely bored with camp life then and I was in a rut. The thing that irritated me most was the attitude of the pro-Japan people because they were always talking against resettlement. Other families were against it because they didn't know how they could make a go of it. I think this was the biggest reason for not having more people leave the camp. A lot of the issei there are too old like my father and they could not hold regular jobs on the outside and take care of their children.

"I had quite a bit of trouble getting my release as I did not have a definite job offer. I just told them that I was planning to go to Lincoln, Nebraska to join my brother-in-law's brother and I would find a job by myself out there. After the WRA investigated all this, they finally gave me an indefinite leave. I got my transportation money and \$50 from the WRA to start out with. It



was just like leaving prison. I wasn't supposed to have any money at all in order to get the WRA money but I really had over a hundred dollars saved from the net work which I didn't tell them about. My brother-in-law was trying to get me a job in a contracting company. I thought sure that I would get it when I left Gila. When I arrived in Lincoln, I found that my brother-in-law had been laid off from his job and there was nothing for me.

"It was quite exciting to leave camp at last. I was excited like anything because I was going on my own for the first time. I was said too as I had made quite a few friends in camp and I didn't know what was ahead of me. I worried about what the reception would be and I hoped that there would not be any bad feelings towards me. I went out with another nisei who was on his way to a college in Wyoming. We went together as far as Denver. When I first got on the train, I was scared, but I soon got acquainted with a discharged soldier who was very friendly towards us. We also got to know another soldier who was on a furlough. After they found out that we were from camp they asked a lot of questions about it. They weren't mad at us at all. They said we were Americans too and they sympathized with us. They also said that evacuation couldn't be helped because there were a lot of Jap spies and I should not feel bitter about it. All the way to Denver we talked and ate together and we did not have any unplesant incidents on this trip.

"In Denver I stopped off for a couple of days to look up some friends, then I went on to Lincoln and I got there on June 5 (1943). I went job hunting right away. I had the feeling that the Caucasians were cold to us and I thought that they didn't like us. I was quite self-conscious because I had just left the camp. Later on I



lost that feeling after I got more used to being on the outside. In some places where I went job hunting, they handed me quite a line and they tried to let me ~~eff~~ down gently. Finally, I got a job in an ice place where I worked a couple of days. One fellow there didn't like us because ~~we~~ were Japanese so ~~we~~ decided to quit before he made it unpleasant. I started to look for a job again but nothing turned up. I didn't like Nebraska so much any way. One of my friends from Denver wrote and said the shed season was opening so I decided to go there. I landed in Denver in June 17.

(1) [ "I got a job in a vegetable shed right away at the Hearther Produce Co. A lot of farmers brought their vegetables there and we had to trim and pack them to be shipped east. It wasn't hard for me to do as I had had experience in this kind of work during the time I worked in the produce market in Los Angeles. The majority of the workers in that shed were Japanese but the bosses were all Caucasian. I was getting about \$35 a week but it soon became routine and I got restless. We worked long hours so that the only recreation was going to shows on week-ends. I made more money than that in the net project so I wasn't any too happy. At the end of July the season closed up so that we were discharged. ]

(2) "I started to look for another job with my room mate and we were hired in a foundry at \$25 a week. [ It wasn't such good wages but that was the best we could find. We did all of the dirty work at the foundry. After a few days the foreman taught me how to mold. I was never able to get used to this job and I got sick after two weeks. I wasn't used to all that heat and sudden cold so I caught the flu and I got dizzy. The boss wouldn't let me take the day off and he said that if I couldn't take the work, not to come



back. I got sore at that so I got my pay and quit. ]

"My room mate got a job in a chop su~~gy~~ restaurant right away. It was run by a Chinese American. I got a job in that place too. We only got paid \$25 a week plus meals. I washed dishes most of the time I was there. We got along with the boss very well and the other workers treated us good too. They were mostly Chinese Americans and we used to talk about the evacuation and my boss thought it was a lousy trick. There were three other nisei girls working there too and all the customers thought they were Chinese.

"I got acquainted with a fellow who collected the money from the juke machine and I got in the habit of having breakfast with him. He didn't like the Japs in Denver and he used to tell me how he would like to run them back to the old country. I let him go on thinking that I was a Chinese and I never said anything. The work wasn't too interesting and I got a little bored. I wasn't running around at all because I didn't want to get in any of the nisei gangs. I didn't have much of a home life and I missed that a great deal.

"Near the end of the second month in that restaurant, I had an accident. I went downstairs to light the heater one morning and it exploded right in my face. I had to go to the hospital and [The boss came out to visit me right away. He was afraid I would sue him so he said he would pay me my regular wage while I was not working and I could have my meals at the restaurant free. When it came time for me to get my workman's compensation, I found that I was only going to get only \$6 for the whole two weeks I was out. They told me that most of the compensation money went for doctor's bill. I knew I couldn't do anything about it so I quit the job in the restaurant and knew I could do anything there.]



"There wasn't any other job available in Denver except in restaurant work so I loafed around for couple of weeks. I wrote to my brother-in-law in Chicago and told me to come out there as there were plenty of opening for nisei. I didn't have any money so I borrowed ~~some~~ \$50 from them and bought a ticket to come out here on Dec. 15. Leaving Denver was not hard for me because it was a sad experienced and I didn't think that it was such a good resettlement. I thought there were too many Japanese congregated there. The nisei fellows all hung around in gangs and they just stayed around the pool halls and a lot of them were drunk all the time. I didn't want to get a bad name so I tried my best not to hang around that district. I didn't room in Jap town at all. It seemed that most of the Japanese in Denver lived on Larimer St. and it was just like the Japanese section in California before the war.

"The choice of jobs for the nisei were limited there and they couldn't even get into semi-defense jobs. Most of them were working in wholesale markets, the sheds or in cafes. A lot of the girls were in domestic work. Another thing that was not so good about Denver was that all nisei ~~chick~~ sexors came to town after the season and they made a bad name. They didn't work at all as they had lots of money. They just hang around and gambled a lot. They tried to act like big time because they had the dough. They did the same things that they did before the war when they went back to Los Angeles to hang around during the off-season.

"A lot of the young nisei girls came out to Denver alone and some of them went bad. The only kind of jobs that the girls got were waitress jobs in the Japanese cafes on Larimer St. Most of these places were broken down restaurants. Some of these girls



used to play up to the nisei chick sexors and other guys with money as they wanted a good time. There was nobody around to tell them not to go wrong. They all went to the nisei dances, and I guess they were pretty rowdy affairs. A lot of these stags went to the dances drunk and the city nisei from California always tried to start fights with the country nisei who came from the farms around Denver. There were a lot of real loud Los Angeles zoot suiters there and they had regular gangs. I don't think that Denver is a good place to resettle because a lot of prejudice is coming up against them and people are suspicious of Larimer St. There isn't much chance for job opportunity for the nisei there so that a lot of the young guys are getting to be yogores and pool hall cowboys.

"I was pretty glad when I left Denver. I knew I would have a better home life in Chicago with my relatives and I would be more settled. When I first arrived I felt completely lost because I didn't know the city at all. My brother-in-law and sister helped me get settled and I moved <sup>in</sup> with them. They told me how to go about looking for a job. They told me not to go to the WRA because it would only offer me cheap jobs. I had heard from other fellows in Denver that the WRA in Chicago was no good. I went down to the USES and I registered for employment. They sent me out on a job in a foundry right away.

"I got \$30 a week to start at the foundry as a furnace tender. It wasn't hard work but it was dirty work. There was one other nisei boy who came there to work after I was hired. The USES sent me to find out if the factory would accept nisei. I got along fairly well with the boss and the other workers. I did that job



until about the beginning of February (1944). I started to catch colds there as I was not used to the weather here so I decided to change my job. I thought I could work more money by working some place else as I heard of other nisei making \$40 or \$50 a week and I thought I could do the same thing.

"I got my next job through the USES too. I didn't exactly know what I wanted but I figured that I would like to get a job in a big company and be a stock room clerk. I thought that if I had this chance, I would be able to work my way up and eventually become a bookkeeper or something like that. I wanted to do work that had some connection with bookkeeping. I felt that I had to start on my real resettlement and I wanted to get into a place where I would have a place to advance. I wasn't able to get this in my second job out here. It was in a machine shop and not exactly what I had hoped for.

"After I started working I was surprised to find that most of the workers there were ignorant about evacuation and they always asked me a lot of questions during the lunch period. Some of them had funny ideas of the nisei and I had to argue with them on the point that the nisei should be allowed to go into all branches of the services without discrimination. The fellows were sort of suspicious of the nisei and they didn't seem to trust us too much. It made me feel good when the other workers began to stick up for my point. I was the first nisei at that shop and later on about 6 or 7 were sent by the USES. What made me feel funny was that the other nisei just quit right away and it made it look bad for the other nisei. The boss asked me one day if all the nisei were like that and I found that I had to apologize for these fellows who had



quit all of a sudden. I didn't blame them for wanting to get better jobs but I thought they should at least give more notice. It seems that all nisei were hopping around from job to job much more than I was and they were only interested ~~in~~ in the money. I was ~~also~~ interested in money too but I was also thinking of the future at the same time.

[ "I didn't like it at all when these other nisei started to come into the company. I wanted to be the only nisei in the place. It's not that I'm proud or that I feel superior but I felt that it was better for the nisei to scatter around for their own good. I didn't think that they should all concentrated in a few places. ]

The job opportunities are good here for the nisei as Chicago is in need of a lot of workers. Many of the nisei are getting into semi-defense jobs now and they are making good money. They have to work to clear themselves in the eyes of the public as well as to advance their own personal lives so I think that they should be very careful about how they act at work. I don't know how well most of the nisei out here are doing, but I do know that some of my friends are making darn good wages. I hear there are about 5000 nisei around here now but I never see any of them except for my friends.

"I got 70 cents an hour at the machine shop and I put in 10 hours a day. I had to work 6 days a week so I made between \$40 and \$45. I didn't care to work any more than that. A couple of the other nisei put in about 60 hours a week so that they get a good salary. I got pretty tired at that job and I soon lost interest. I was a reamer and I ran a machine in the shop. There were about a hundred workers altogether. The work got pretty mono-



tenous after a way and I was thinking of changing again. I thought that I could try the glove factory next. I wasn't completely satisfied with myself and I felt that there was still something missing.

"I made good friends with some of the Caucasian workers at the machine shop and a couple of them offered to show me around the city. I was usually too tired to go out on week nights after work so that after a while they stopped asking me to go out with them. I know I should have developed the friendship with them but I didn't have too much interest in it. I got bored with my job after a month because I couldn't see any chance for advancement at all.

"After the war had started, I had given a lot of thought about trying to get into the air corps or some mechanized unit in the Army. I felt that I could study about motors and cars so that I would be able to help my father in his invention and make them successful. I felt that he had some good ideas about electric cars and airplanes. After I got out here, I began to think these ideas again and I think that I should carry through with it. There are several things that I am interested in right now, but I am not sure about anything.

"I think that it is up to the nisei to buckle down right now and start their future while they have a chance. It doesn't look any too promising at present as the nisei out here want to run around more and get it out of their system. They are thinking too much of making money instead of the future. A lot of them don't even want to finish their education because they can make more money working right now. I think a lot of those guys doing the more unskilled work will lose their job after the war and they will



be at a disadvantage because they will not have anything special to offer in competition with Caucasian workers when jobs get more scarce.

"If I don't get taken into the Army, I plan to go on to either college or a trade school. I was just about ready to enter the 'Y' College here when I heard that they were drafting nisei left and right so I thought I had better wait and see what happens before taking definite steps for myself.

"I've had a more satisfying life here than in Denver and I think that I have learned to think for myself a lot more. I feel that this home atmosphere helps me to keep away from bad company. It keeps me occupied because we all take part in keeping the place up. I have to wash the dishes and clean the floors every Saturday. I do most of my own laundry and I also haul coal up and other things like that. There are five of us living here now and we have quite a bit of company, especially on week-ends. We seem to have a lot of relatives among the nisei out here and I didn't know most of them before evacuation. Most of these relatives are by through marriage.

"Since I have been out here, I have gone to several of the nisei dances. A couple of them were all right but it seems that some of them think that a dance is not successful unless they get drunk and have fights. Its getting to be just like some of those nisei dances in Denver. It gives a bad name to all of the nisei to have that happen here and I think that it is going to harm our chances to get well accepted if the public hears about this bad part of the nisei group.

"I haven't been lonesome out here at all because we have a lot



of company coming over to our flat. In Denver I used to get restless and lonesome quite a bit but I don't have that feeling so much out here. I have about 10 close friends and quite a few relatives that I see occasionally. I don't care to see a Japanese community out here. I don't think there will be one like in Denver because the nisei are pretty well scattered and the nisei don't have a chance to group together so much. In Denver they had housing discrimination and that doesn't exist so much out here so the nisei can scatter out here if they want to. In spite of that a lot of them are getting together though.

"I think that the nisei should try to associate more with Caucasians altho it is difficult for many of us. It's good to stick together at times, but the nisei should try to get more outside contacts so the people would understand us better. The nisei are Americans too and they should let the other people know that. We are going to live in this country all the time so we should not get off by ourselves too much. I don't think that the nisei would be very happy if they had to live only with other Japanese completely and not be permitted to mix like they can do now if they want to. I admit that I have not done my full share of this work but I have made a few attempts. At least I am not going in the other direction of a segregated nisei society.

"I haven't had too much activity out here because I don't have the leisure time. All I have been doing is to go to shows, sports events, and visiting friends. I know one Caucasian girl out here and I have been visiting her quite a bit lately. She lives with a nisei girl. We have private parties once in a while. My sister and some of her friends give parties occasionally and I go to them



when I'm invited. The only trouble is that they are an older group so that I don't get to meet the younger nisei girls so much thru them. I haven't time to go around visiting any more than what I have been doing so I don't miss it too much. I haven't read hardly any books out here because I am usually too tired at night. About all the reading I do is a quick glance to the newspapers. I do quite a bit of corresponding with my friends in camp and in the other cities. I write mostly to nisei now because my Caucasian friends from Los Angeles are in the Army now.

"The way I feel now, I would not get married for a long time because I couldn't possibly support a wife out here. I'm too young anyway and I have to get more settled with some more definite plans for a future. I have fallen down in some of my plans because I can't even think of resettling my parents like I would want to do. I think about it a lot but I feel helpless in trying to do it by myself. I'm not in a rut but I have become a little conscious that I may be drifting a little again without wanting it that way. I go out on dates once in a while but I am not too anxious about getting hooked because these other things are on my mind more. About all I do is go see a few girls I know and I don't make any attempts to know a lot of other nisei girls out here.

Sometimes it bothers me a little bit because I haven't got a steady girl friend like I had before, but I guess that can wait. I have a sort of a girl friend in camp but I have almost forgotten about her

"I quit my job yesterday (March 15, 1944) because I am going to Minneapolis. I've been thinking about that for over a month now. I'm going out there to help my sister-in-law out as my brother is in the Army. I guess that's only an excuse because I



want to move on. It's not that I am unhappy out here because I have had a pretty good home life and I've been fairly happy since I arrived. Maybe it's because I got a little wanderlust and I feel a little restless. I'd like to see a new place once in a while. I wouldn't have moved if the announcement about the nisei reclassification for the draft did not come out. I can't figure on anything definite for the future on account of that so I felt that I was free to move around a little now that I will be definitely be called into the Army soon. Another reason is that I've been getting sick too much out here and I think it is because of the city dust. I heard that Minneapolis is a lot cleaner.

"At first I figured that there were better job opportunities but I've found out since that it isn't any better up there than down here. However, I'm leaving on Friday (March 17) anyway. Another main reason for my going is that I'd like to be near Camp Savage in case I can't get into the air corps. I'm going to try my best to get into the air corps but I hear that it is closed to the nisei yet. Camp Savage ~~th~~ is better than going down to Shelby and I can work on that while I'm up there.

"Right after the reclassification of the draft came out for the nisei I wanted to go into the Army right away. Now I am not so anxious. I'll still go when I am called because it is a duty. I feel that I can't call my folks out as it will be too tough on them and I wouldn't be able to support them by myself so that maybe it is better for me to go into the Army. From the letters I get, my mother is happy working in the camp hospital and she has made a lot of friends. My dad has been old and he has been sick for a long time and he couldn't work out here anyway. I have to



get a job release from here before I can work in Minneapolis. I heard from my sister-in-law that the job opportunities for the nisei up there were not as good as down here but I'll still be able to make around \$30 or \$40 a week and that will be enough for me.

"Actually what I'm doing is killing time. I have a feeling that I will be drafted soon so I can't plan too much on what I will do up in Minneapolis. I will try to get into a semi-defense plant if I can. It doesn't matter too much what kind of work I do up there because I don't think I'll have a chance to work for the future. That will have to wait until I get out of the Army or I get rejected. I don't care too much to go to a segregated unit though. I heard a lot of rumors that Shelby wasn't any good. I wouldn't want to do my Army training below the Mason Dixon line because they have strong attitudes against the Negroes already. I'd much rather go into a Caucasian outfit but I guess it's not going to be that way.

"As it is, I hope that the war will end quickly. Naturally I want America to win as the consequences would be hard for the nisei and for the whole country if we lost. I just don't care for Japan and those who sympathize for her. I don't like the militaristic form of government that they have. There is no future for the nisei over there so they might as well quit dreaming about it. I know because my sister and other friends who have been there told me that the people of Japan look down on the nisei over there and they are very suspicious. My sister said they even drilled them around and all of the nisei over there were interned when the war broke out. I think the nisei chances are much better right here regardless of what happened. When I was younger, I wanted to go



to Japan to visit relatives but now I don't even care to do that. I never saw them anyway so I don't feel close to them.

"I don't know much about politics but I think that democracy is the best. Sometimes I have my doubts though and I don't know if we have it now. I don't even know for sure if we will have more democracy when we win the war, but this is the only way of living I know and I am willing to take the ~~chance~~ and fight for it in the hope that there will be a better democracy for allof us afterwards.

"My American citizenship means a great deal to me and I would never give it up. I'm glad that I'm an American and I don't go around apologizing for that at all. I'm able to have all the rights and do a lot of things I want even though the evacuation may have been a mistake. Only a democracy would be willing to admit the mistake and try to correct it like the government is trying to do now. Sometimes I read in the papers that they are going to try and take our citizenship away, but I think that they are crazy. The Hearst papers do this the most and they are trying to blame the whole war on the nisei even yet. I don't know why they want to pick on a small group for; I guess they are just trying to scare the people and raise their circulation at the same time. The only reason why I look at the Hearst papers is that they have good funnies.

"There are a lot of things that I want to achieve yet in order to make my way of living better. I don't know how much progress I am making now, but I don't think that I am in a rut. It's pretty hard to decide anything because things are so uncertain these days. I'd like to go back and visit Los Angeles after the war, but if I find a better place to establish myself out this way, I'd just as



soon stay around. I haven't anything special to go back to California for anyway. I haven't anything special to stay in Chicago or any other place yet as that will take time. After I know exactly what is going to happen in the draft, then I will be able to make the decision for myself. I may even go on to school in that event. I'd like to get my parents settled out here but I don't know how I can go about that with things so uncertain. I wouldn't want to leave them stranded. I will still be responsible for them after the war. If I find that they want to go back to Japan for their old age, I wouldn't try to stop them. I think that my folks would want to go back once more and see their relatives before they die. All the old folks have that idea but very few of them carry it out.

"When I left camp, I thought that I would be fairly well started on my resettlement in six months or so, but it hasn't turned out that way at all. I've shifted around to several jobs and I haven't made enough social adjustments. My sister seems to be doing it a lot better. Naturally I can't go ahead right now because everything will depend on the draft and things will change with time. I think that I'll continue to change my plans here and there as I get more experienced. It's too hard to decide anything for sure when things are unsettled. That is the way it is for most of the nisei out here. Some of them are almost going crazy because they worry too much. I'll just make the best of it and hope for the best."



Add to CH-33  
(COPY)

May 4, 1944

Dear Emi,

Just received your letter today so I decided to bore you with some more "hooey". Well, to start with I'm pretty disgusted at this place! Here it is May and we've been having rain, sleet, wind storms, and even snow!! Yesterday the temperature was down to 30 degrees. How's the weather man been treating you up in Chicago? Alice is still out with her cold. I even had to catch one! Mark is still heat up with his cold too. I guess it's just in the Satow clan!

I just found out yesterday, I passed my language test & now if I pass my physical I'll probably be taken sometime this month. I only hope I have a chance to go to Chicago before I am inducted. I guess they're pretty hardup when they start taking guys like me. Right now I'm pounding my "brains" out (what little I have. No cracks now!!) trying to dig up some boring news for you. There really isn't anything doing out here. On weekends all I do is go to a movie (none of them have stage shows either!) or to the reg. Sat. nite "juke box dance". Its really sad too. Gosh, I can't even find a date cause most of the "boochies" work in homes or are too "stuck-up". The ones that go to the dance are either married, taken, or sad!! There's a lot of caucasian dames around but the ones that go our are plain "main St." pickups and I wouldn't spend a cent on any! Well I gues I've said about "nuf" now so until---

Johnny Masaki

P.S. Tell Bette is she would have given me as much attention as Otto I might have dropped her a line!



May 18, 1944

Dear Emi,

Here I am again to bore you with some more sad news from "sunny Minneapolis". Guess what, all of a sudden the weather turned and we've really had a few sunny days. Right now it's not too bad but the wind is kinda blowing a little! Last week-end it was so beautiful out instead of going to sleep after coming home from work my room-mate and I went sight-seeing out to Lake Minidoka. It's about 20 miles from Minneapolis, and it's really a beautiful place. They have a small amusement park out there but to our disappointment it was closed. Slowly but surely I'm learning the different points of interest of Minneapolis.

As for my induction, haven't heard anything as yet from them. Still expecting it any day now. Tanio F. and several other boys are in already and will be in Savage by the 25th. Gosh, I only hope I have enuf time at least to visit Chi once more. Heard Tosh is kinda on the down and out.

Incidentally, I was over to Alice's last Sunday and Yuri and May Oshima, and Tamio were also there. We had quite an enjoyable afternoon and one of Alice's delicious dinners. May, who is in the cadet nurse's corps was telling us all about it. Isn't that what you're trying to get into? She says they are pretty strict out here cause they aren't allowed to be out after 10:00 p.m. She seems to enjoy her work tho. I sure hope you do make the grade. The only thing she says is they can't get married til their senior year which is the third year. Don't worry tho, you won't be an old maid yet!

Well, I'm cutting this one short now.

Always,

Jack



July 15, 1944

Dear Emi,

I'll be lenient with you this time but please don't let it happen again! Talking about sleep, here we only get an average of 5 hours per night. Like last week after a 5-hour hike in the morning I was put on guard duty and only got about 2 to 2 1/2 hours sleep. My shift was from 10:30-12:30 p.m. and again from 3:30-4:30 a.m. We had to try and catch a wink between those hours. Reveille was 5:00 a.m. So that goes to show you how we have to take a beating! On guard we have to walk around the company area and allowed to speak to no one! It really becomes lonely at those hours too! Then the next night we go on another night problem which lasted til 11:00 p.m. Last night too, we were on a hike up a steep mountain until 11:00 p.m. So you can see how our time is limited and precious! Tonight is our night off so instead of going out with the boys I decided to catch up on my correspondence! We did have a dance at the field house and Johnny Long and his orchestra was there. The music was really good but about 5 G.I. Joes to every gal! Even tomorrow, which is supposed to be out day off I've got loads of clothes to wash!-!?!\$ (Please excuse my French) Oh, oh, the lights are going out so I'll have to close until tomorrow. False alarm! They're letting us leave them on a little longer tonight.

I'm really glad to hear you are able to go to summer school though and hope you make good when you start nursing school. Who knows, maybe you'll save my worthless life one of these days.

I haven't picked up the full accent yet, but I'm sure getting to look like a typical darkie. I'll really feel at home around 47th St.!! Well, we've completed 5 weeks now and have about 3 more to go! We should be out of here by about the 10th of August. There's rumors that we might get a furlough at the end of this basic. I'm sure hoping for it! At least a few day stopover in Chicago! If I got a long enough one I was planning on trying to visit camp! Keeping my fingers crossed anyhow.

Gosh, sure wished I could have been there to see H.J. Just heard Chas. Spivak from Hotel Sherman. Sure hope both of you are able to visit Minneapolis. Even tho only a short time I know Alice and Mark will be glad to see you. Well, I'd better catch up on my beauty sleep! Be good now & my regards to all. My love to Mari too.

Always,  
Jack

P.S. Please write as soon as you find time.



July 24, 1944

Dear Emi,

You should be mighty thankful cause you're the only person I'm writing in. In fact I'm so dog-tired tonight I don't know how I'm getting up enough strength to write. We just had a really tough day of K.P.!! I mean tough too! A new mess sergeant just came in and he's an old timer of 15 years service so he's really strict! We used to be able to get at least a couple of hours of free time during the day when we were on K.P. before but today we were lucky to get enough time to smoke a cigaret. Tomorrow I have to be a table waiter too! It's almost as bad as a K.P. Oh well we only have about a week and a half more of this torture! (Thank heaven!) We're supposed to be out of this h--- hole around the 10th of August. I'm still keeping my fingers crossed for that (furlough?) to come. So keep hoping for me!

Say, do you mean to say I don't look any better than any soldier? (Hmph! What an insult!)

Do you know how far B.J.'s neck of the woods is from here! She was visiting in a town not far from here tho but I didn't know about it til a week later. I'm glad to hear that Bette is working and doing good. Don't worry about yourself tho. You'll probably hook some play boy.

I just received a letter from Otto and he told me all about the Aragon but he didn't tell me about the girl! "##%& I heard some yogores messed up and made it kinda tough on the mess there. I just received a letter from Mark too and he said he was going to be transferred to the M.P. detail at Ft. Custer, Mich. soon. Gosh I really feel sorry for Alice. Maybe it'll be better for him tho. Anyhow I hope everything turns out alright. Cause the M.P.'s come back to the states every so often.

Well, since I have to get up bright and early tomorrow I'd better turn in. Besides I really need my sleep. ~~TOMORROWNIGHT~~ ~~MAX~~ Tomorrow night we have to go out on a night problem from 8:00 p.m. til about 3:30 or 4:00 a.m. Probaly a long hike too! Well, please give my best regards to all and my love to Bette.

Always,

Jack

P.S. I hope you can make out my messing scratching!