

I want to get a job as an accountant, but I don't know what luck I'm going to have. So far, the WRA hasn't been able to find anything. The man says that he thinks it's a hard case and then he tells me about some fellows who went out and got their own jobs. I don't know whether he's trying or not, but he give you a pleasant story. I decided that it wasn't much use to rely on the WRA. So I went to a private employment agency and the man there told me that he would try. In the meantime I got a job from the WRA to do some clerical work in a printing company. It's not particularly hard work and I can stay alive until something better comes along. There was one job open the other day, and if it weren't for the guy at the employment agency, I might have gotten it. It was an accountant's job, but the fellow told me that if I waited for a few days he was sure that he could get me placed at Goldblatts. I know that he tried awfully hard, but it just didn't work. So I am still out of work as far as a decent job is concerned. I think I'll just keep on working where I am until this fellow in the private employment agency finds a good place for me. He's been swell so far and I think he'll keep working because I'm paying him for whatever he finds. It's worth his while to find me a good job, and all his efforts will be wasted unless he does succeed. He knows Chicago better than I do and he ought to be able to do a better job in his own field than I could.

I got my B.S. from Cal by correspondence. I had to quit school and go home a little early and I had only a few units to go. I wrote them and they told me to take a few courses by correspondence. I finished up by examination and got my degree in Jerome.

I'm living on Drexel with some friends. I met the fellows when I was down in Jerome. They had this place so I moved in with them. There is a fellow with a room and four of us are in another room. We all work together to keep up the place and we all eat together. We get along O.K.



Field Notes: Free Association  
Document CH-108  
Oct. 5, 1943  
Shibutani

Willie Mayeda (psued.)

"I've been having a pretty tough time getting a job as an accountant. I got my degree from Cal. I had four units to finish up and I took it by correspondence, and so I'm going to get my degree from Cal this next commencement. I've tried the WRA, JACL, the Friends, the USES and three private employment agencies. All of them tried but they didn't have any luck. One of the guys in a private agency strung me along and he told me he could get me a job over at Goldblatts. Those guys take about two-thirds of my first month's salary and I thought they would try. It didn't come through. I was offered another job but didn't take it because I thought I'd get this job at Goldblatt's. I'm taking a job as a clerk as in a book binding company for the time being but I'll keep looking for a better job.

"I'm living with five fellows in an apartment over at Drexel. I stopped down in St. Louis for a visit before I came here. Somehow I don't like this place altho some guys have gotten along pretty well. George Tajima is married now and living here in town. He went to work some place doing some menial work and is now doing some research in engineering.

"I guess the draft is inevitable. If we're called there's nothing we can do about it. I guess I'll have to go.

"I guess most nisei want to go back to California. I know that it won't be the same but in a way I'd like to go back home too. I don't know what I'm going to do there but I guess I'd like to go back.

"I'm taking an accounting course now. The University of Chicago and Northwestern are closed so I'm going to the Central "Y"



college. There are a lot of nisei there and I talk to them but most of the guys are not very concerned about the issues in politics or about the Japanese. I guess it's because they've never been interested in those things before."



October 11, 1943

Willie Mayeda (pseun)

"I'm living with a group of five fellows in an apartment house on 46th and Drexel. One fellow has a room of his own, and the other four are staying in the room I'm in. Some of the fellows know Chieko (See Document CH-110) and she comes over sometime to cook for us. They all call her 'big sis'.

"All the fellows stay home at night. We don't do much. We just sit around, listen to the radio, and sometimes go to a show. I'm going to the Central Y. College and am taking a course on income taxes and spend a little time studying that.

"I couldn't get a job as accountant yet. I'm going to keep trying though. I think the private employment companies are O.K. because they really plug away for you. I guess it's worth it to them since they take such a big cut out of your salary. I'm working as a check clerk right now for a publishing firm. I just look over the stuff that comes through and then check with what's supposed to come. It's quite different from proof-reading, but it's a responsible job. It's not bad, and I don't mind it so much. I suppose that if I stick it out there might be some possibilities for promotions, but I'm not counting on it.

"I had four units left to go at Cal when I evacuated, and made it up by correspondence in the center. It wasn't so hard.

"Somehow I can't see myself staying in Chicago very long. I just don't like the place. I guess it could be worse, but I'd prefer to be somewhere else."



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Field Notes: St. Louis  
Sept. 10, 1943  
Shibutani

Alfred Doi

"Well, there are a lot of people here in St. Louis who are trying to help the boobies in their adjustment. I think the most important group is the Inter-American Club. That outfit is sponsored by the Christ Church of St. Louis. I guess that its main work is recreation for the evacuees. I was one of the first ones in the organization and I remember the times way back when we considered coordination among all the agencies to handle housing, job placement, socials and news. I think a lot of the ministers are griped because this coordination plan did not go through. I think the Church Federation brought up a plan and at the same time tried to build a hostel. At that time the WRA refused to cooperate and the Friends didn't come through with the money they promised for it. That's why the Church Federation and Haack's outfit at the University took over all the housing. The WRA took over all job placement so there was nothing for the Inter-American group to do except to work on recreation. That's why we haven't been doing anything but putting on these socials every Saturday night. For a while they were considering putting out a news sheet for the nisei but nothing has happened about that so far as I know.

"I think the second most active group is the campus YMCA. This is mostly for students and they have a Cosmopolitan Club which sponsors picnics and swimming parties. Haack is really a nice guy and very understanding. And that's why most of the boobies even if they aren't students, go to him when they get into trouble.

"The F.O.R. has been helping out but they haven't done too much. I think they felt sorry for the nisei and gave a few dinners and parties to build a social life, but that's about all.



"The Quakers are interested in the nisei too, but they are more intellectual and talk about exchange of ideas and things like that. I think that Mas Yamada could tell you a lot about them, but I don't know what they are doing.

"The Third Baptist Church, through the Baptist Students Association is trying to give the boochies some chances to meet Caucasians. They've been doing some pretty good work.

"The WRA is a stinky outfit and I don't think many of the people think much of it. I went to see Kennedy the other day to see if I could soften him for you and he told me that he hated all sociologists and thought they were a bunch of dreamers who couldn't do anything anyway. I think Kennedy's heart is in the right place but he is a halluva blunt guy and I don't he realizes how much he hurts people's feelings by what he says.

"I think the reason why St. Louis is so good now is that a lot of advanced work was done before the boochies came in in large numbers. A lot of us were here as students and so we worked together with Haack and gave a lot of speeches before the boochies arrived. I think that Ted Ono and Matsunaga did the best work as far as propaganda goes. We really got a break last May when Justice Rutledge of the Supreme Court gave a swell speech for us. I think Haack was the guy who lined him up and I think Ted Ono had a long talk with him. Anyway, Rutledge gave a talk that was very sympathetic and it was given wide publicity. Matsunaga has written articles for the local newspapers which were pretty good. The good thing is that Thrask of the Post Dispatch is a friend of a WRA man in Bbwer and knows all about the relocation program. All of the publicity, therefore, in this paper has been very favorable. We didn't hear



very much about the Dies committee stuff.

"I don't think anybody knows how many boochies are in St. Louis. I know the WRA doesn't know. I don't think they know anything. I've met most of the people who came here and know most of them personally. (A number of other nisei have confirmed this statement. They stated that Doi makes a practice of meeting everyone as they come in on the train and see them off when they leave.) I think there are about 250 to 300 boochies including about 80 who are working out in Chesterfield on the farm. I guess about a 100 are students in the schools around here.

"I guess I miss the nisei society but I can get along without it. The religious groups and the WRA make arrangements to get friends ~~wie~~ for anybody who complains about loneliness. A lot of us go boat riding on the Mississippi, to the show and ~~th~~ the Saturday night socials and some of us went to night clubs. We haven't had any trouble and we can go anywhere, even to places where we couldn't go back home. I think some of the fellows go out with their fellow employees. I think the greatest problem is that there aren't enough girls. I think there's about 4 to 1 ratio or maybe if there are more girls, they live in the suburbs and nobody ever sees them. For a long time Washington U. was the center of nisei life and for about nine ~~about~~ months there were nine girls to about 45 fellows.

"I think the girls around here are on guard and they won't play around with boys unless they are introduced formally. These domestics are so isolated that there is no way you can be introduced to them. Around here the domestics are taken in as part of the family and so when the boys go over they are introduced to the others. I think the fellows are kind of bashful about this.



"You ask about news traveling around. Well, I think the grapevine is pretty good. When a good looking girl comes to town the news gets around in about a week. (Four other men who were present agreed that this was the case.) You see, the nucleus of the nisei is the campus. Most people here know someone on the campus. The boys get together in gangs and they just talk about these things and the news gets around.

"We have an agreement around here and we don't go around in big gangs. You seldom see more than a double couple. It's sort of an unwritten understanding around here and most of the fellows are fairly intelligent and know that it's a good idea. I think that the people are too scattered to get together for too many gatherings and so they just take out dates and are lone wolves. Hell, supposing, George and I wanted to go on a double date. I'd have to go to one end of town to get my girl and he's have to go to the other to get his. By the time we got together it would be 10 o'clock. And when we take them home we'd be separated again and we'd get home about 2 or 3. And so we get in about 2 or 3 dances and that's not so hot.

"I think there were about 4 boochies here originally. We haven't had any serious problems. When anything comes up either Maack or Miss Phillips take them up and the Caucasians take care of everything. Things are pretty smooth around here.

"The dance started in a funny way. I think that Dr. and Mrs. Ed Nakata started it. Dr. Nakata just graduated from Washington U. dental school and both he and his wife were active in the local Episcopal Church. They talked to a Miss Phillips and she went to see the bishop to see what they could do to combat loneliness. The bishop agreed that it was a good idea and gave them the whole building for



Saturday night. I think Nakata is now at Shelby. A steering committee of Negroes, hakujin and boochies was selected and I was one of them. We appointed the cabinet officers to do all the work. I think the idea of assimilation was pretty hot when we started and some Austrian refugees, especially one elderly couple, did a lot to help us. The dances used to be good but they're lousy now. Now all the Cal kids get together and all that S.C. bunch get together and they discuss their own problems. There used to be an almost equal number of Caucasians and Negroes, but now they are practically all boochies. Most of the Hakujin come once and they never come again."



Field Notes: St. Louis  
Sept. 10, 1943  
Shibutani

Alfred Doi

"I really went through in evacuation. My mother was sick and had just lost her baby and my father was interned. The reason why I was so nasty to you was that my father told me that your old man had squealed on him. My mother said that that wasn't true, because your pop wasn't that kind of a guy. I didn't think so either, but I was so upset that I couldn't think straight. Now that pop has had his hearing, we know that it isn't true, but at that time, it was pretty hard for me. There were a lot of stooges in Stockton. I remember that a couple of weeks before pop was arrested, that dirty bastard, Komuro, came and told him that he was been accused and for \$500 bucks he could fix him up. My pop told him to go to hell and that if he was charged for anything that he would rather go to jail than bribe himself out. It was really hell, looking after a sick mother and two younger ~~me~~the kids and with pop in jail. I think I almost went nuts. I'll never forgive the dirty bastards for what they did to me. Especially DeWitt, Komuro and the dirty guy at the WCCA who gave me the run around. As long as I live I'll remember this and some day I'll get even with them. I don't hold it against the American people because I know that most of them didn't know anything about it but there are a few of these bastards that I'm sure going to get.

"I don't know what's the matter out here in St. Louis, but something is not complete. I think there is something missing. I have friends here, among the boochie and hakujin and they are all very nice but they're not dependable. It's not the same as it was in-U- in you and me and in Allen and Pallo were going around together. In Stockton the guys were dumb but they were real friends,



the kind that you could go to when you were down to your last penny. My friends in Stockton, I could really trust and I depended upnn them. But the guys out here just use you as long as you're useful. I have a feeling that a lot of guys around here are good to me because I know a lot of hakujin and am a big looie around the campus. But I think that if I were down and out they'd just step on my face and laugh at me.

"You know, there aren't very many people that I can talk to like I used to talk to you guys, because somehow I don't trust them. People used to think that I was a good for nothing bum and every time I said anything serious they used to laugh at me and say that I was crazy. My pop was that way too, and he used to get pretty nasty and I told him I wanted to be a doctor. My mom was the one who always stood by me, but those other bastards just laughed. Now, I'm holding down a responsible position but a lot of guys still think that I'm a good for nothing bull-shitting his way through.

"In the long run, I want to devote my life to serve humanity. I figure it this way. We only live once and when I die I want to be able to look back over my life to feel that I did something and that I accomplished something that was satisfying to me. If I just go out and have a good time, I think that when I die I'll feel that I didn't accomplished anything. I remember when the four of us used to go out in my car and have some cokes and then drive out in the country for a bull session. We used to have some pretty serious talks and when I came out here I thought about them even more and missed them a lot. Allen and Pallo are both in the Pacific area in the front lines, fighting the Japs and Goddammit, I would rather see the whole island of Japan sink than to see anything happen to those two



fellows. When I think of the things we used to talk about, I feel that I'm wasting my life. We talked about a lot of high ideals but when I sit down to think about them, they're not so dumb after all.

"You take a guy like Ken Iwata. He's making some money drawing plates for two bucks each and selling them to students. He's going to graduate pretty soon but he hasn't any plans. He doesn't know where in the hell he's going and he doesn't know what he wants to do. All these boochies are like that. All they think about is making a living for themselves and that's all they want out of life. I think that kind of thing is very dull and empty.



Field Notes: St. Louis  
Sept. 11, 1943  
Shibutani

Afred Doi  
Free Association

I had a long heart to heart talk with Doi until 5:30 in the morning. He was disturbed about all sorts of things and really let his hair down.

"I don't know what's come over me lately, but I just can't touch a girl. I never was like this before. Well, you know how Stockton was. We used to go to those dances and after them the least we did was to neck the hell of the girls. I started going around with Mich because I heard that she passed it out. The first time I went out with her, I gave her the works and found out that the rumors were not true, because she was a virgin. You should have seen what a mess the back seat of my car was. It's a good thing I had ~~what~~ waterproof cover over the seat. After that I went steady with her for three years and we did it every time we went out. She really like it and she had to have it because I hear that when she was in the center her brothers had to watch her all the time. You remember when I used to go home over the weekends from Berkeley? Those days used to be spent in wild orgies. We used to stay out all night. Once when her boss was away on a vacation I just went over her place and lived with her. Boy, she scared me a couple of times when her period was late in coming. In all my life I think I've broken in only three virgins. After I started going around with Mich I didn't horse around much with other girls.

"Last month I heard that Mich married some other guy. I guess it really hurt because I was sick for a couple of days. After what I did to her I thought the only right thing that I could do would be to marry her, but she married this other guy. He's a nice guy but sexually very naive. I think she's going to miss it



because we worked out ~~from~~ some tricks . When I did those things she just went wild and couldn't help herself. After she got married she went up to Savage with the guy and then on her way back to camp she stopped and stayed in St. Louis for a week. I almost went crazy trying to keep away from her. I went to school early in the morning and stayed in the parts where I never showed up and she could never find me. I went back to the hotel late at night and just stayed for a few hours. I knew that if I ever saw again we would just go to a hotel and live together. I don't know what I'm going to do when I visit my folks in Rohwer because I don't see how I'm going to avoid seeing her.

"Here in St. Louis I haven't even kissed a girl. Around here when a guy takes out a girl, the girls get together afterwards and talk over what happened. And if I kiss a girl it will get around town too fast. So far, I have a reputation of being a gentleman and so all the girls will go out with me and I can't afford to let that reputation go. I know everybody here and I'm a big loogie and I can't afford to get caught off-guard. You can't tell about these gals you know."

If this is ever released for any purpose, please change the names, localities and the statements concerning the position of the individuals. Keep confidential.



Field Notes: St. Louis  
Sept. 12, 1943  
Shibutani

Alfred Doi

"A lot of this stuff that the Dies committee has been talking about may be true. I was a member of the Butoku Kai and I remember that the North American Butoku Kai was affiliated to the Bototu Kai of Japan. Mitsuru Toyama was the head of the East-Asia Bototu Kai. It was just a kendo club and not much more to it, but some dumb bastard put out a book and put Toyama's picture on the front page, then some dirty stool pigeon turned the book over to the F.B.I. and everybody listed as an instructor was arrested. I guess ~~I-ma-~~ they may have had 10,000 members at one time although that seems like a pretty large number, but it's possible though. I remember that Stockton had about 500 ~~members~~ at its peak and I heard that there were about 2,000 in L.A. I guess it might be possible that there were 10,000 members but it was nothing more than a Kendo Club.

"I'm just waiting for the breaks. I don't know if I should ~~play~~ for the future or not. The main thing I want now is the stay out of the Army. Maybe I'll go into defense work. I want somebody to talk to who can give me counselling but I don't want to talk to the dumb bastards around here. I figure it this way. The guys who get ahead are the guys who get the breaks. You have to know how to bull shit your way through and get yourself a job. Once you're in you're on your own and it's up to you to hang on. But you have to know how to bull shit to get in. Those who are too honest never get a chance because nobody will ever get to know anything about them."



Field Notes: St. Louis

September 17, 1943  
Shibutani

Alfred Doi

"I think I'll apply for that job teaching Boochie at Chicago. It's better than anything else I know of. The thing that gets me is that I'd hate to leave St. Louis because of all the contacts I've made here. Contacts make the difference, you know. Some of these dumb bastards think that they can just be good and get ahead, but I figure that knowing the guys makes all the difference in the world. That's why I got into so many activities and cultivated so many guys. In the long run, I think my best chances are here because of these contacts with hakujin.

"I guess if things don't pan out here in St. Louis I'll take that job in Chicago because they don't pay enough to live on here. It's once a night at \$.50 a hour. I'd rather earn more than that. But it seems like a pity to leave all these contacts for nothing."



October 7, 1943

Doi phoned up at 9:30 and said that he was at the bus depot. I told him to sit tight at the depot and that I would go after him because it would be more trouble if he got lost. He came over and cleaned up and shaved over at our place. He came over to the office to see Charlie and then went upstairs to see Halpern. He got the job. His first impression was:

"Chicago is full of people who are in a hurry but don't know where they are going. The place is too noisy. I get a funny feeling of tenseness as I stand around. Nobody is easy-going around here. I guess they just don't know how to enjoy life.

"I don't know what to do now that I got the job. I don't start work until November 15, and I guess I'll have to do something in the meantime. Maybe I'll go over and work at the Cunéo press or something. Maybe I'll go back to St. Louis and stick around for a month. It's a hell of a lot nicer there. Halpern said he would find something for me to do, but he wasn't sure."

October 8, 1943

"We don't know anything about what happened in the internment camps. My father told me about one incident that has really been hushed up. I don't think anybody knows about it, but it really happened. I don't think anybody's supposed to know about it so keep still. When that group of internees got off the train in New Mexico they had to walk a mile to the camp. Two of the men had T.B. and were weak. They lagged behind and one was bayoneted. The other one got scared and he began to run. The guard thought he was trying to run away and machine-gunned him. The Issei who were there saw the whole thing, but they said nothing and didn't do anything because they weren't able to do anything. They remembered, though%.

"I guess I'll go out on a date tomorrow. Tamio said he could fix up a date for me with a musumesan. I guess Chicago's O.K."



Doi dropped in this evening about 8:00 o'clock. This was the first time he'd visited us. "I was just passing by, and I noticed your house number, so I came in to see what kind of a place you have," he remarked as he entered. We settled down to an evening of conversation, and although we passed rapidly from one subject to another, I picked up bits of information which I thought might be of interest in any longer report of his career. The following are some of his remarks reported as closely as memory permits as he said them.

Myself: How's the teaching (in the Japanese language dept.) going?

Doi: Oh, it's all right. I've got a pretty good class. The hardest part is getting up to make the eight o'clock class. I never can seem to make it. I've been spending my whole day at the University; Uratani and I are the only ones who spend as much time at the office. The rest of them aren't around very much. Right now I'm working on a vocabulary list for the boss (Halpern), and I'm also working with Uratani in making up lessons for the next quarter's classes.

Myself: I thought you were working with that kibeI fellows, Suzuki, on the lessons?

Doi: I started out with him, but I couldn't get along with him so I got Uratani to work with me. He's a bastard, that Suzuki. Just like a lot of kibeI. I don't think he's had much education---I think he probably finished the freshman year in college in Japan, and right now he's starting in at Illinois Tech---, but, God, he thinks he knows everything. He used to get on my nerves. You know how those guys are; they think you don't know a damn thing, and they know it all. I pity the men who have to learn Japanese from him; they won't learn very much. He's all right in Japanese, but he doesn't know very much English. Uratani-san is all right though. I get along with him fine. He's from Kyoto and speaks the soft Kyoto dialect. I like the way Kyoto people speak, and I'm going to learn it from Uratani-san.

Michi: By the way, what ken are your folks from?

Doi: My folks are from Hiroshima. My mother's from Hiroshima-shi. (Michi mentioned that she had thought he were from Okayama from the way he spoke the other evening.) Okayama's in that general area, right next to Hiroshima, isn't it? The Hiroshima people speak the Kansai dialect. I think that the Kansai dialect is softer and easier to listen to than Edokko (Tokyo standard language). Edokko is harsher; personally I like to listen to Kansai people speak because it's easy on the ear and pleasant to listen to. All these prefectural groups have their dialectical differences. Then there's the California dialect, too. Like, sabui (cold) for samui. I didn't realize that I could have made a study of the changes in the language while I was in California until Halpern pointed it out to me when I was talking to him about the changes. I used to hear that stuff all the time, and now I'm sorry I didn't keep notes on them. I'm



going to make a study of it one of these days. (I inquired whether it would be still possible now that the people were so scattered.) Oh, I can get them anytime. I know where they are. There's a colony of people near Denver where I can get all the kens. Then I know where there's a bunch of Aichi-ken people. And Hiroshima people you can find almost anywhere. Those linguistic changes are really very interesting.

Myself: Are you planning linguistics as your specialty then?

Doi: Yeah, I've always been interested in languages, and I think I'd like to specialize in the subject. I find it a fascinating field. I've got my basic Japanese, I've got my English because that's what I majored in at college, and I'm planning to study Chinese and possibly get some Burmese, and I'm studying Korean now. If I get all those languages, I'll have the whole Pacific area. The Pacific is bound to be important from now on, and if I have all the important languages of that area, it ought to come in handy if I go into business or if I were to teach. I've got my Spanish, too, and I know German, though of course that may not be so important.

Myself: How about Russian?

Doi: Well, yes, Russian too. There's a fellow in my class who's Russian, and he's having a hard time with it in Japanese. He asked me to give him some extra help on his Japanese, so I'll give him that in exchange for lessons in Russian. Then Uratani-san wants help in English and German, so in exchange for helping him on those languages, he's teaching me Japanese. Then I'm getting Korean from Halpern. Sure, Halpern knows Korean. He knows Korean, Arabic, and a bunch of Indian tribal languages, and..... No wonder Japanese must have been a cinch for him. That guy knows his linguistics, and although he may not know as much Japanese as Uratani-san or Wakukawa, he can explain better than they what the structure of the language is. Halpern wants to bring in more nisei into the teaching, in fact, he wants to make them all nisei if he can. The issei know Japanese, what proper Japanese is, but they can't explain as well and they don't grasp the linguistics point of view.

Myself: How is it he's trying to get all nisei for his teaching? Does he feel that the issei don't teach as well?

Doi: Well, for one thing the issei and nisei don't get along. You bring an issei and a nisei together and their ideas don't mix. Right now there are two of us nisei, Ichiyasu and myself, who are teaching. I don't know very much Japanese, but I think the boss feels that we're doing all right. At least the class is learning to handle the language.

Myself: Don't you think, though, that a solid training in linguistics alone isn't adequate for teaching languages. You have to know the language too. Halpern may know his linguistics, I'm sure he's respected by the men in his field, but isn't he likely to be led astray



if he follows strictly the linguistic forms?

Doi: Yes. The other night I was with a girl who's interested in getting a position teaching the language. She was brought up in Indiana, but spent eight years in Japan and finished jogakko (girl's school), and college, over there. She really knows her Japanese, and speaks both English and Japanese beautifully. I knew her down in St. Louis where she's doing secretarial work, and so she wrote asking me to meet her when she was here over the week end. Anyway, we were talking about the Japanese language, and I said something which was correct but was in archaic form, and she was surprised.

Myself: Tom was telling me a little about this girl from Indiana. What's she like?

Doi: She's rather an attractive person. Her family in Japan is supposed to be rather prominent---her grandfather was the first person to own a bicycle in Nagoya, or something like that---funny isn't it what gives distinction to people, like his getting prominence because he owned the first bicycle---, and I think her father was interested in Japanese culture and wanted his daughter educated in it. She got a very good training in the language and the culture. She came back on the last boat before the war broke out, I believe. She's quite capable, and would probably make a good teacher, but Halpern feels that the staff is getting overbalanced with girls and he wants more men.

Myself: Where did you pick up your Japanese, Doi?

Doi: Well, I went through koto-gakko (grammar school) and chu-gakko (high school) of the language school in Stockton, and I used to attend the summer school near San Francisco where we had to use Japanese all the time. The language school doesn't mean anything because no one ever learns anything there. Of course, I was interested in the language and that's why I stuck it out. I was nineteen when I quit going. There were only two fellows in the graduating class at chu-gakko, because all the other fellows dropped out long before, and the only reason I stuck it out, I think, was because I was interested in the language. I used to have a heavy schedule in those days. I'd go to college in the morning, I was attending the College of the Pacific then, and then get back for the language school about four o'clock, and then go back to college for evening classes.

It was at the summer camp that I really learned to use the language. No, it wasn't really a summer camp, because at camp you can enjoy yourself, but this was really a school. We'd have to turn out of bed at 6:00 in the morning, then there would be kendo, and judo, and then lessons in geography and history of Japan and all that stuff. That's where we used to get propaganda about Japan. Those boys used to give it to us right down the line, all about the Japanese spirit and all that stuff. We couldn't use a



word of English because if we were caught using anything but Japanese, we'd be put on latrine duty. That school used to be a racket. We had to pay \$1.65 a day, and then we had to do all the dirty work around the place because they didn't hire anybody to take care of things. We had to pitch in and do it ourselves. The head of the school was the guy who was making all the money. He had a neat little racket.

Myself: I'd never heard of the school. What school was it?

Doi: You know, it was the Hokubei-Butokukai (North American <sup>Japanese</sup> Fencing School). You've heard of the Butokukai. We used to get kids all the way from Seattle to San Diego. There would be about 150 of us during the summer session. We used to have the school in a place out from San Francisco on land owned by the X (caucasian) Co. and there was nothing else around so that we had to use Japanese all summer and do the things we were told at camp. The funny part of it is that until the time I started going to school, I used to go to the Boy Scout camp during the summers. Gee, what a contrast. We had one kind of training at the Boy Scout camp, and then at the school it was just the opposite. Hell, I didn't want to go, but the old man wanted me to attend the school.

My old man has always been interested in Japanese culture, and he was in the Butokukai and used to teach fencing. In Stockton at the kendo school he held a pretty high rank---he was second in rank of the officers---they called him kyosha (meaning teacher, but Michi suspects Doi thought this was a word referring to rank), and everybody used to treat him as if he were top dog. He got taken into the internment camp by the FBI because of his activities in the Butokukai. It really wasn't anything, though. They got the thing mixed up, is all. They got the Butokukai mixed up with the Heimushakai; those are the boys whom they could have gotten something on, but, you know how it was, the Government people didn't really know anything about the Japanese communities back there. Hell, when I was back there, I used to get an earful of all the things that were going on, and I know which organizations weren't, well, entirely in the clear.

Myself: When was your father taken by the FBI, then?

Doi: Oh, it was around March. He'd been expecting to be picked up from two months before, but it wasn't until March that they came around. My father's only forty-five yet, you know, and my mother's forty-three. Gee, I'll never forget that period. My mother had just had a miscarriage, and she was hanging between life and death. No, it wasn't because of the anxieties after the war that the miscarriage occurred, but she'd had a glandular operation about six months before, and it led to complications that caused the miscarriage. My mother is a quiet person, and she takes the lesser role in the family just as most issei women do. But I couldn't help admiring her for the way she stood up during those awful months. Here she was weak and sick, but she never let out one word of complaint, and you could never tell by her face that she was worried



about anything. It was her courage that carried her through those months.

Ever since then, I've had a different conception of issei women than I had before. There's something strong about Japanese women. I've decided that when I get married, I'm going to have a wife who's been trained in that way. Not one of the inakappei (country wench type). Most nisei girls haven't got it. They're neither American nor Japanese, but some vague thing in between. They're nothing in particular. I see a lot of nisei girls around here, but there isn't any among them that I'd be interested in marrying. Hell, you can't talk to them and they don't have any kind of personality. All they're interested in is in getting their hands on some man. Most of these girls are out here to get married, after all that's what they think is their future, and the first thing you know they start talking about getting married.

I've talked to a lot of girls around here, and I figure that they're more badly adjusted to the life here than the fellows. You hear a lot of talk about how the girls are more contented with life here than the fellows, but I don't think that's true. I find that most of the girls will tell you they don't like a city this size and prefer a smaller town. Oh, for the first few months of course Chicago has its glamor for them because most of them have never lived in as big a city before, but that soon wears off. They find that it's hard to make social contacts in a big city like this, and there's no settled feeling about living here. They come out here thinking they'll have all kinds of opportunity to meet fellows and find someone suitable to marry, but they find that all the nisei are scattered all over and that it's almost impossible to meet any number of fellows. All the girls I've talked to are thinking about having a family and a home, and having a settled life. That's why they prefer a smaller community rather than a city like this. I mean a place like Stockton, where it doesn't take more than fifteen minutes to drive in from the suburb, and the main drive is the main drive running straight into town. Sure, that's the kind of place I want to settle down in. I wouldn't care to live here.

Myself: (banteringly) Well, when are we going to see you married? I suppose you've got some nice little chicken lined up somewhere?

Doi: Naw, I'll never get married. Now girl will get interested in a guy like me. (Jokingly, but half seriously). Hell, if I were an intellectual like you or Shibs, or had the line you guys have, I suppose I'd be able to pick up a nice gal for myself, but not me. You know, people like you and Michi, and Tom and Tomi, all look contented and happy; but when I see what's happened to George Yasukochi and Earl Yuusa, I begin to have my doubts. I hate to have a married life like theirs, and get tied down by girls like Bessie and Mamie. You've met Bessie, haven't you, Michi? What do you think of her?

Michi: Well, I only met her once, and I really didn't have a chance to get to know her.



Doi: Well, I met her only once, but that was enough. Gawd, George and I were sitting in their place with her, and we'd been talking about people that we all knew, and everything was all right, but when I started talking to George about books, she gets up and goes into the kitchen and starts to cry. I never felt so uncomfortable and unwanted in my life. Once was enough. Halpern's afraid to send in a recommendation for George concerning his application for the fellowship in the linguistics school at Yale. The boss has no doubt about George's capabilities, and as far as George is concerned, he's got the fellowship right now. But the boss is afraid that he won't be able to make good with Bessie along; anyway, he's not sure. Couple of others have the same trouble. They've applied for a fellowship, but Halpern's afraid that because of their Caucasian wives, they may not fit into this particular program.

Michi: That's true. It's too bad when a wife can't be a hlep to her husband, but is rather an anchor on him. That's too bad about George.

Myself: The thing for you to do, Doi, is to get yourself the right kind of wife, and cut down on your income tax.

Doi: Aw, hell, a wife costs more than the difference. I can't afford one. I almost got married once. It was about the time Tom and Tomi got hitched. I'd been going around with a certain girl and I almost decided to marry her. We almost had plans laid out. That's the closest I've ever come to it.

Myself: Yeah, Tom told me about that, of how you turned the girl down.

Doi: Turned her down, hell. I would have married her if my father didn't object. My parents didn't like the idea, and they wanted me to finish college first. He waved a \$1500 check in face and said take this and go to some college in the east instead of getting married. It was a choice between getting married and getting the \$1500. I'm never one to turn down a check that size. I was Japanese enough to obey my father; I couldn't go against his wishes. My folks have always wanted me to become a doctor and they wanted me to finish my pre-medics work. I've had three majors in college. I've been in English, pre-law and premedics. I was finishing my first year in the med. school at Cal when the evacuation came.

I was never very much interested in medicine, but I guess my father was just extending his own interests to me. You see, my great-grandfather was a doctor in Japan, and he wanted my father to become a doctor, but my father never got around to it. That's why my father wanted me to become a doctor.

Myself: By the way, what was your father's business.

Doi: (hesitating momentarily) He was a barber just before the war, but Before that he was in all kinds of things. He came over to this country when he was sixteen. His father, my grandfather, started potato farming down here, and my father went through grammar school



and high school in Stockton. He attended the old Fairfield High School. The school had all hakujin in those days. My father was up in Seattle for a while too. He worked in a sawmill in Seattle. Then he came back down to California and helped his father to farm. Besides that he operated a merchandise store for a while.

We had a home in a district where there weren't any Japanese around. In some ways our home was very Japanese and also very American. It's strange how the two things were mixed in our family. My father always had a lot of interest in Japanese culture, and in the living room on one side there would be an obutsu-dan (Buddhist home shrine) and on another wall there would be a picture of the Tennoheika (Japanese Emperor). Then right in the middle of all these things that interested my father, I had a shelf of books all in English. He knew Shibs' father quite well. They used to get together often to talk about their gardens; they're both interested in gardening. Tom's mother was something of an expert on crysanthemums.

Michi: Where are your folks now? Do you have any brothers?

Doi: I've got a younger brother and a younger sister. I'm the oldest son. My father and mother are still in Rohwer; he's been paroled. The kid brother and sister are now out working. I visited the folks only a month ago. When I was down there, I told them that I planned to bring them out and take care of them. My father laughed when I told him that, but I think my mother was pleased to hear it. I think when they relocate, they'll probably go out to Denver, or somewhere out that way. But I still have in mind taking care of the folks. I'm the oldest son, and they expect it of me. That's one reason I'm not thinking about marriage yet.

Our family has all kinds of ties. The Doi clan is really something. We've got relatives all over the place, and there are plenty of them in Japan. One day I was driving along near my home in Stockton, and I saw ~~and~~ a Japanese fellow walking. There aren't many Japanese out our way, and I thought I might be able to help this fellow so I picked him up and asked him where he wanted to go. He started by asking me if I knew of a Doi family out in this direction. I said I did. Then he started asking me, 'I hear they're pretty well off?' Well, I didn't say anything to that, but I drove him up to our house, and dropped him off, and drove off. Later that day I asked my dad who it was that had come in during the afternoon, and he told me it was one of our numerous relatives who had come to town and had come out to our place to put a touch on my dad. My dad once wrote out a list of relatives and told me that these were the ones worth knowing, and that the rest weren't worth anything, and not to pay any attention to them.

Michi: Where is your grandfather now?

Doi: We sent him back to Japan in 1939. He got so troublesome that we had to send him back. When he got old, my father started taking care of him. My dad's a pretty thrifty fellow, and he's saved quite



a bit during certain periods of his life. When we bought our home, dad sunk everything in it because he felt we should have a decent place to live in and we'd settled down in Stockton. We even built a special room for my grandfather, and tried to make him as comfortable as possible. But he got the idea that he owned the whole place, and he always wanted to get money off my dad. You know how the Japanese idea is, the father or head of the house owns everything. My grandfather disturbed our family so much this way, that we finally had to send him back to Japan. We sent him to the honkei, (main branch of any Japanese family) in Hiroshima. They didn't want us to send him back either because he was the black sheep of the family.

I never had to work for myself while going to school. We always had enough money, and my dad paid my way all the time. He even bought a car for me, a Buick, when I started college. I used to go around with the "Garage Gang". I suppose Shibs told you I was one of the rowdies down in Stockton?

Myself: It seems to me he mentioned something like that. Oh, yeah, we've got a pretty good idea of what your background is, what a rowdy you used to be.

Doi: Oh, hell, Shibs himself taught me everything I know about the facts of life. That guy is pretty cagey, and he knows a lot that he doesn't let on he knows about. I started going around with the "Garage Gang" when I got the car. There were two fellows I went around with particularly. One fellow is now worth about \$150,000 and the other's worth about \$100,000, so you can see what advantages I had in going around with them. We used to go around having a good time. I got in with the Bussei kids too. I'll tell you, though; it was in Seattle that I first ran into real fast nisei girls. One time I went around there for ninety hours without any sleep. Geez, what an experience. I had friends in both ends of the town, and I kept driving from one end to the other. We took a couple of girls out to the Oasis one night. They had a strip tease act, but it didn't phase those girls a bit. As blasé as I was, or might have been, I was embarrassed at having brought girls to a strip tease act, but those girls didn't seem to think anything of it. Then from the Oasis, we headed all the way down to the other end of town where the Chinese Pheasant is. By god if those girls didn't sit there drinking, and the girls didn't seem a bit surprised to see the other drinking hard licker. Most nisei girls hesitate about drinking, but not these girls. I never saw anything like it. They were fast girls.

(Doi went on to tell of his experiences in college at Cal. The discussion had mostly to do with the "gang of queers" he went around with. One remark that amused me was when he was telling of the nocturnal arguments he would have with Tom who was his roommate. Said he, "One thing I've never been able to get over is the way Tom knows the books he reads. When we're arguing, he'll give me the title, author, chapter, paragraph and page number of a quo-



tation, and tell me that my argument is refuted by such and such an authority. Goddamit, he'd have the book memorized. I'd argue rationally, but Tom would say that a certain authority says the contrary, and the authority should know more than I did.")

Myself: You were the only one of your family, then, who evacuated voluntarily?

Doi: Yeah, I was the only one, and the rest of the family went to Rohwer, except for my father who was interned and later paroled. I came out to Washington University, and got into the language teaching there. I mixed with the highest as well as the lowest classes of people there. I had to get a well rounded education, didn't I. There were a couple of fellows there with whom I got pretty friendly, and we used to go down to the beer tavern and sit around drinking beer. St. Louis is a pretty swell little city. The people are really friendly there, and they don't make you feel unwanted. I got to know some of the most important families in the city. I had a certain girl student in my class and she wanted to have me meet her father. This father, by the way, knew the Mayor of St. Louis, and she wanted to have him take me around and meet him too. I knew a woman down there by the name of Phillips who knows Hutchins personally. Hutchins is a St Louis product you know, and his father, Dr. Hutchins, is still down there.

I never did get to meet the President of the University. Some of the profs there were old fossils, but I used to go around with the younger faculty men in the English department. We'd go to a faculty meeting, and start kidding around among ourselves, and making a lot of noise, and the old guards would frown on us.

(We got off on a discussion of Negroes somehow, and Doi remarked:) "Down in St. Louis-way we call 'em Niggahs. (There is no doubt from numerous conversations with Doi, that he holds a definitely superior attitude towards the Negroes.) I think St. Louis is really a place where the Japanese would enjoy settling.

(Somehow the conversation again drifted back to the subject of girls.) Doi: You know this girl that came up from St. Louis to apply for the teaching position. She didn't know how to get in touch with Halpern. This Miss Phillips who knows Dr. Hutchins, called him and he called President Hutchins here, to find out how to get in touch with Halpern. They couldn't trace down Halpern's name because he wasn't listed. I'll have to tell Halpern about that one.

Anyway, when she came up here, I didn't get a chance to sleep for thirty-six hours. The night before we stayed up and played poker until about five in the morning. I went home and took a shower, and then I had to meet this girl at 6:30 in the morning at the station. Then she wanted to go around town, so I couldn't leave her alone, and she stayed around till 1:00 in the morning. Gawd, it wasn't until 1:30 that I got to bed. The next morning I had to be at class at 8:00. Was I tired.



Myself: (Joking) You know, Doi, after listening to you talk all evening, I've finally come to the decien that your type of fellow who would let his wife take all kinds of advantage of you. I'd say that it would be best for you not to get married.

Doi: Do you really think that? No, joking aside, do you seriously think I'm the kind of fellow who would be taken advantage of by his wife. If I had anythought of getting married, what advice would you give me?



Field Notes: Free Association  
November 18, 1943  
Shibutani

poi and Tamio

"The Japasapa boys really gripe me. Our boys go to work in coats and ties and change when they get there. But some of these goddam boochies don't have any sense. They go to work in filthy work clothes and they sit right next to hakujin who are dressed up. Naturally the hakujin don't like it. They wouldn't eve like it even if another dirty hakujin sat next to them. Some of these boochies never grwo up and don't realize that they are not back home anymore. I can't see how they can be so dumb after going through evacuation, and all that. They still think they're back in skidrow and they think that people will laugh at them if they wear neckties. They make fun of each other if any of the n~~ation~~-jins go in coats and ties and say that they are snooty or that they always want to be dressed up. It's guys like that that are going to wreck our chances in Chicago."



Reminiscence Dance  
Nov. 20, 1943

The following is Alfred Doi's description of the "Reminiscent Dance of Relocation Days" held at the West Room of Ashland Auditorium, 328 S. Ashland Blvd. on Nov. 20:

Boy, the dance was a riot. When I got there, two guys came staggering out. Inside the "keto" were handling the money. I walked in with my date and two cops stared right at us. They were there to collect the money. The dames there were a bunch of bags, most of them anyway. A lot of the yogores had been drinking, you could smell it all around the room. Some of them put empty whisky ~~the~~ bottles on the floor. There was a check room there and a Caucasian person checked the stuff in. The hall was small. It was about one and a half times the size of a recreation hall in camp.

The dance was quite crowded. I would say there were about 200 there. It's hard to say for sure because there was a flow in and out. The hall was located on the second floor. There was a bowling alley on the first floor. I guess there were about 60 girls and a hundred boys. It wasn't quite two to one but there was a lot of stages. There were also seven stagettes there; there were at least seven I knew.

I met more people there that I knew from before. I was embarrassed because a lot of them said "hello" to me and I didn't even remember their names. I knew them from camp and from before. Kaz Susuki of Seattle took me around and he introduced me to a lot of dames. There was also a Sacramento boy that I knew and he took me around too. Then some of the women I knew there also introduced me around. I had a good time because I went there to raise hell anyway.



The orchestra was a Caucasian one and it was lousy. There were nine to eleven pieces in there and they didn't have a vocalist. They didn't announce anything during the evening except the last dance.

The odd thing about the dance was that some low crust "keto" and Mexicans were there. There were three hakujin women who looked low crust too. Some of the nisei boys brought good looking Caucasian women and they were of the better type. I would say that I saw about eight Caucasian women there. Three of them came alone and they were low crust. I saw three Mexican fellows there but I don't know who they came with. There was one Mexican who was a zoot suit boy. I was astonished that there weren't so many Japanese zoot suiters there as I had expected. The funny thing was that five or six nisei wore overcoats while they danced. They had their collars put up. It wasn't because they wore work clothes on either because they all wore slacks.

There was a lot of tagging on the popular girls. There was almost a fight once when two smarty pants laid whisky bottles on the floor expecting it to be kicked around the floor, but a smart boy picked them up. There were about 30 nisei Army boys there. They said that the civvy boys looked dirty and needed haircuts. The nisei soldiers behaved themselves. There was also quite a few nisei from the northwest and they mixed pretty well.

The funny thing was that the Stockton bunch was divided into four groups of five or six. That's because they lived with each other. They bunched in their little groups because they didn't have common interests with the others.

There were some women from the Edgewater Beach Hotel. I would



say that most of the zoot suiters came from the Rohwer center. They were the Stockton bunch. One of them, Minki, got married recently so that his bunch quieted down. Most of the people there were from Rohwer, Stockton and L.A. altho Seattle was fairly well represented.

I think I knew about one-fourth of the people there. I don't say this to be bragging, but I think over half of them there knew me. There weren't many married couples there. There were five or six of the JACL type there. They were the small town type and they had their JACL pins on their coat lapels.

I didn't see Fujimoto at all. I looked around for him, hoping to get something from him. He is the one who was supposed to have sponsored their dance. They charged \$1.00 for stags and \$1.50 per couple. The cops were there because everybody was anticipating trouble. The fellows who had been drinking were all stags but they didn't go in and out for drinks. There were a lot of yogores downstairs who came stag and they argued loudly whether they should go in or not. Some of them didn't go in at all.

The thing I noticed was that most of the girls wore red and black dresses. Some of them were dressed rather gaudily. They were all in street dresses, although three of them had corsages.

They had a hot dog stand and a soft drink bar there but you had to pay for it. I don't know what they charged as I did not buy anything there. The place looked too dirty.

I took a date there but it was one of those last minute dates. She was a very popular girl and she knew many people. I had a good time there and I was happy to see all my friends. The dance ended about 12:30 and we all went to an all-night show after that. My



date was one of those cosmopolitan type and she draws a line before she will let you neck her. That was sad.

I think that most of the people there enjoyed the dance. There were four or five fellows I saw who didn't dance all evening. Stags crowded all over the place and it was hard to dance. Whenever they had the real fast music only about 15 couples went out on the floor to jitterbug. People were tagging in all evening. It didn't matter whether they knew the girls or not. The girls didn't mind although some of them acted kind of cold. I cut in on a few and they thanked me for rescuing them.

There were a few girls there who didn't have such a good time. I saw four girls who were wall flowers most of the time. You know how the nisei fellows are about these sad cases. They just ignore them because they don't want to be stuck. The popular girls were always getting cut in, that's why the stag line kept on squeezing up most of the floor and there were lots of changing of partners.

The only big complaint I heard was that the orchestra was lousy. The hall was too small too.

The funny thing about the dance was that there was a tense feeling in the air at first. Everybody expected something to happen but the dance ran smoothly and the people eased up after that. The Army boys all cut in and they were well behaved. None of them were drunk.

The type of nisei who came were mostly of the unskilled workers. There weren't very many professional people like me. There were machinists, workers in paper and cardboard factories, workers at the Edgewater Beach Hotel and other unskilled type of this sort. A lot of the stags couldn't get dates because they worked late and they



didn't know the girls.

I'd say the average age of girls there was about 20 and the fellows ranged from 17 to 25. There wasn't any great demarcation in the age group as it was mostly the young group. The fellows had a tendency to take girls they knew in camp or those they knew back home.

I think the dance served a useful function. It established some feeling of stability among the nisei. They had missed all of their friends and this was a chance to see them at the dance. There was a lot of communication going on and all the fellows were taking down addresses and phone numbers, even of boys. I got five or six addresses of girls and they told me to drop up. I don't think I'll ever get around to see all of them, at least I'll have some place to go.

When the last dance came the stags did not all go home as they usually did before. They all hung around. I guess they wanted to talk to their friends afterwards. I don't know what they did after the dance. A lot of them went to Chinatown to eat. Many of them went downtown too. We went in a car so that I don't know how the feeling was on the "L" when so many nisei go on. I know that as we were walking down the street my date said she was glad it was dark because the people couldn't recognize the Japanese then. It was a pretty quiet district and the dance hall was located in a respectable spot.

There's no doubt that the sponsor made money on the dance. I don't think he paid much over \$100 for the orchestra and he must have taken in two or three times this amount. The dance turned out well although I had expected to see trouble. It was going full



swing when I got there because our party, a double couple, arrived about 9:45. One of the girls hesitated ~~just~~ just before we went in and she wanted to go home. She had refused a couple of dates before and she thought it would be embarrassing to go in at the last minute.

The dance differed in some respects from those held back home. The dances back home were not as crowded and people wouldn't think of coming so far for it. The respectable church type of girls just weren't at the dance. Most of the girls who were at the dance were the more experienced ones who got around or the very popular type. There were more yogores at that dance than what used to come to the dances back home. I was surprised because the northwest nisei and California nisei did not split up.

After the dance we took our dates to an all-night show. We went double date in a car. I didn't roll in until six o'clock in the morning. It was rather stiff and dull in the car after the dance because the girl would not let me neck her.

I don't know if I will have a more satisfying life they they have more of these socials. I only went because I knew that Tom would back out at the last minute. I went there with an altruistic mind. I know that there will be more clamor for these ~~dances~~ dances after this. It will be up to Fujimoto or somebody with gumption enough to sponsor these dances. If he made money at the dance Saturday, he'll probably do it again. I wouldn't be surprised if they would draw a much larger crowd if they had a nisei orchestra there. Now that the nisei have found out that these dances won't cause any riots, they will surely clamor for more and the next time more people will show up.



Vogue Tea Dance  
Nov. 21, 1943

The following is Alfred Doi's account of the second tea dance sponsored by the Vogue School of Fashion Art and Interior Decoration specially for the some 30 nisei students enrolled in this school and their friends. It was held at the school located at 116 S. Michigan Ave on Sunday afternoon, Nov. 21, 1943, at 2:30 o'clock.

Sunday afternoon I went to the Vogue tea dance which the nisei girl students put on. It started at 2:30 but I didn't get there until 5 o'clock. It was a small group but it was held in a darn good place.

They plan to have another party in December and I got an invitation. I'll see if I can get Frank and Michi and invitation because it is a nice sort of party that they could go to. I'll try to get an invitation for Tom and Tomi too.

There were about 60 to 90 people there yesterday; more girls than boys. They were all dressed up and well mannered. I cut up a little bit just for the hell of it.

They gave us coffee and cake for refreshment. The atmosphere was very good and there was a nice lounge there for people to sit in. The school paid for all the expenses.

~~I don't know if I will have a more satisfying life if they have more of these parties. I only went because I knew that Tom would back out at the last minute.~~