

Interviewee: Hisako Shin Shinkoda

Interviewer: Lisa Uyeda

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SEDAI 
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*Note that this interview contains references to Anti-Asian, Anti-Japanese, and anti-^{ACY PROJECT} Chinese slurs, as well as outdated language regarding disabled people.

[interview begins at 0:1:09]

Lisa Uyeda: Can you tell us your first name please?

Hisako Shin Shinkoda: My first name is Hisako.

LU: And when and where were you born?

HS: I was born in Britannia Beach, British Columbia, on August the 10th, 1918.

LU: Almost your birthday. Happy early birthday.

HS: Oh, almost, yeah. I will be having my birthday on August the 10th. That's true.

LU: Yes.

HS: I will be 92 then.

LU: Did you ever have any nicknames when you were growing up?

HS: Did I ever have any-?

LU: Nicknames.

HS: Nicknames. Oh yeah. Gunny sacks.

LU: Gunny sacks?

HS: I don't know why. And I hated that name.

LU: Where did that come from?

HS: I guess because Sako, Hisako, sounds like a sack.

LU: [laughs]

HS: So, they called- Oh, I hated that. They always called me gunny sack. And I told- My great-grandchildren, when they came, when they were growing up, they didn't know what to call me because they have so many grandmothers, so many grandfathers, because my son- grandson's, wi-- girl- the girl that my grandson married, her parents had separated and remarried, so she's got, I don't know, one, two, three, four grand- And the children didn't know what to call me, so I told them about, when I was young and small, they called me gunny sack, so they call me Grandma Gunny. [laughs]

LU: [laughs]

HS: I hate that. I shouldn't have told them that, but there it is. That's where gunny comes from.

LU: Were you born in a hospital or in- ?

HS: Yes, I was born in a hospital.

LU: You were born in a hospital.

HS: I think that's very rare, isn't it? You know-

LU: Yes.

HS: My dad had a boarding house in Britannia Beach. I guess he was able to afford to have mom in the hospital, I guess. I don't know, we were both- My sister and I were both born in the hospital.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: But the rest of the children all were born at home.

LU: So, you have one older sister.

HS: I had an older sister.

LU: And how many other siblings?

HS: I have seven brothers and another young sister so there are ten, all [told?].

LU: Ten all together. Oh, my goodness. Was your family home in Britannia Beach? Did you stay there for a long time?

HS: I don't get what- Did I stay-?

LU: In Britannia Beach.

HS: My dad, my dad had a boarding house there. That's when my mother- My mother came from Japan as a bride to Britannia Beach.

LU: What part of Japan was she from?

HS: We are from Kagoshima, which is in southern Kyushu. Do you know Japan at all?

LU: Not very much.

HS: Kyushu is southern- Honshu, the big island, and then there's Kyushu. And Kagoshima is the southernmost part, part of that island.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: [nods] It is a very hot country, I would think, yeah.

LU: Do you know what her family was like back in Japan?

HS: How do you mean?

LU: Were they farmers or-?

HS: My dad's father was in- I don't know, he was selling stocks and bonds. I don't know what kind of-

LU: What part of Japan was he from?

HS: That's Kagoshima, same place.

LU: Same place. Oh wow.

HS: [nods] My mother's family had a- What do you call that one, rice mill? Is that what they-?

LU: Uh, rice?

HS: I guess, I guess it's a rice mill, yeah.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: They were both in business, that I know, my parent's side, both my mom and dad. But they were in the country, they weren't in the city.

HS: Dad went back and married her. And then she stayed in Japan for one year with dad's parents, and then she came out.

LU: Oh, wow.

HS: And then she had ten children. Poor mom. She was the only daughter.

LU: Oh, wow.

HS: She had two older brothers. One was 17, the other was 14, when she came along.

[0:05]

HS: So, you can imagine how she was brought up. Very spoiled and petted on. Her father really loved her, yeah. My mother came from a very loving family. My dad, too. But he had a lot of sisters and- I think his father died. No, he was there. He tells stories about his dad, so he must have been with him for many years, yeah. I am forgetting a lot now.

LU: What kinds of stories did he tell about his dad? Do you remember any?

HS: When they were growing up, how strict his parent was and-

LU: Oh, really?

HS: His father was very strict.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: My mother's family was different. They were very- She was spoiled. My mother was spoiled.

LU: Yeah.

HS: So, imagine coming from Japan, the only daughter, growing up in a- Not a wealthy home but, you know, not in poverty, but in a decent home. Coming here to a boarding house where they had- You know the miners?

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: They had fed and boarded all the miners. Britannia Beach is a copper mine, and he had this mine, a big building, and he fed them and he- What did I say, they had their- they boarded there. That was their business. They did that for, I don't know how many years before he married, before mom came, that he had the business. I've written a story here on my dad. And mother both. I've written about them both.

[flips through papers] Both in Japanese and in English.

LU: Oh, my goodness.

HS: See, I went to- This is- My, my mother, I called it our annus horribilis.

Remember Queen- She named, she said that she had an annus horribilis. I used that [unclear]. [flipping through papers] And my father, I wrote about my father.

LU: It's not very long. Did you want to read it?

HS: You want me to read it?

LU: Yeah, if you feel comfortable reading it.

HS: Okay, right now?

LU: Sure. Well, we've got the cameras, so-

HS: "My father. The person that I admire the most is my father. My father immigrated to Canada from Japan as a youth of 18. On landing in this country, my father realized that his first priority was to study the English language. With absolutely no knowledge of English, my father decided he had no alternative but to find employment as a live-in man servant at a Canadian home while attending night school. In time, not only was he able to communicate in English, but he acquired the art of Western cookery, and in 1911, he moved to Britannia Beach copper mines and operated a boarding house for the miners. In 1915, after absence of nine years, he went back to Japan and married my mother, and the two returned to Canada-" [speaking to LU] Which isn't really accurate, she came two year- a year later.

LU: Oh.

HS: [continues reading] "Within four years after that, my father exerted himself to such an extent that, although he was by now financially solvent, he was completely exhausted. He decided to relax a bit and rest his weary bones. So, with a family of two babies-" [speaking to LU] That's my sister and I.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: [continues reading] "-my parents moved about 30 miles from Vancouver to a small mining community called Whonnock. There, he purchased land with an existing home and started farming. My father was not a person to let matters run its course, and seizing the first opportunity, he started the Whonnock Logging Company in 1926. Subsequently, he built a sawmill and established the Whonnock Lumber Mills Limited. This lumber mill is still existing and is owned and operated on a very large scale by an occidental. Some 60 years ago, in Canada, racial prejudice was intensely rampant and we, of the so-called yellow race, were abused and treated as second best citizens. And life at times for the Japanese Canadians was unbearable. My father, with his indomitable spirit, did not give in to this abusive treatment. And while struggling for the existence of, by this time, a family of ten children, he put his all into bringing together the two cultures. By encouraging a mutual understanding of each other's culture and striving for a good relationship with one another, his one goal was that we, the Japanese Canadians, would become good Canadians and earn the respect of the people of our adopted country. My father also was highly respected as an adviser to his fellow immigrants. Regardless of how busy he was, he complied with any and every request, and assisted them in various ways, by troubleshooting, acting as interpreter, and looking after their correspondence and negotiations.

[0:10]

HS: "He also became very involved in community affairs and worked at various times in the capacity as President of the Fraser Valley Family Co-op, the school board, the Buddhist church, the Japanese Canadian Citizens Association, plus many other associations. I still have very vivid recollections of that during my school years. Not only struggling to make a living for us, but always at the beck and call of his fellow immigrants. My father was a man of few words. If I were to bring home a report card showing 98 percent, his only comment would be, 'What happened to the other two percent?' If we complained of being tired and were neglectful of our duty and idled away our time, we would be scolded mercilessly. But on the other hand, when I would be studying late at night, he would prepare a hot bath for me and gently urge me to go to bed, saying 'It's so late now, you must be exhausted. Relax in the hot tub and go to sleep.' My father's strict discipline has left a lasting effect on me and enabled me to overcome all trials and adversities throughout my life. My children have both matured and presently [live well?], leading a solitary but carefree and contented life. I am studying my studies- I am enjoying my studies in the Japanese language.

Taciturn and severe, but on the other hand, extremely tender and affectionate, my father, after a life-long struggle for the betterment of his family and the Japanese Canadian society, passed away in 1969 at the age of 79. With his tenacious and self-sacrificing spirit, he carried through to the bitter end, ending [unclear] for just and rightful purpose and left us this intangible inheritance. I will treasure this inheritance and endeavour to make it my goal in life to hand it down through all future generations of my family."

LU: That's perfect.

HS: I wrote that when I was- I went to U of T [University of Toronto].

LU: Oh, did you?

HS: Yeah, I got my BA [Bachelor of Arts] when I was 80.

LU: Wow. Congratulations.

HS: Yeah, after I retired from work, I went, but I didn't go every year because I went to Japan ten times during that period. So. when you go to Japan, you know, one term is lost. So, I don't know, I took it easy. I didn't go with the intention of getting a degree or anything. I wanted to study Japanese.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: So, I went to U of T to study Japanese and I ended up- I thought, well, I might as well get some kind of a degree then, so- When I was 80, when I was 80, that's my picture up there [points at a picture] when I got my degree.

LU: Oh, yes.

HS: I got my degree when I was 80, and that's my son, yeah. So, this, I wrote this when I was at the university, this, this article.

LU: What about the one about your mother?

HS: Pardon me?

LU: What about the one with your mother?

HS: Yeah, I have one of my mother, but hers is- Do you want me to read that, too?

LU: Yes, please.

HS: Oh, okay. I called it our annus horribilis. Have you heard it? It's Latin. I wrote this when I was 84. Lately, not too long ago. So, my English is- I don't know. 19- This is different, my mother's story.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: "1940 is a year I will forever remember as one of the most traumatic in my eventful life. It was just 23 months prior to the Pearl Harbor incident and ensuing- Is that a right word? Ordeal of forced evacuation and relocation of all citizens of Japanese descent by the Canadian government. It all started in January-" [speaking to LU] Now, this is very personal, about my mother. [continues reading] It all started in January, 1940, when dad cut his right foot with an axe, nearly severing his toe. He was rushed to the doctor for surgery, but the wound refused to heal for a month. Dad returned to the doctor for re-examination and it was found that the doctor left surgical gauze in his incision. The foot was operated on again and this time it healed. On March 24th, Eizo and I were engaged, and on May 4th, mother aged 45 gave birth to her tenth child, our youngest sister, Minako. One month later, on June 10th, mother came limping home from the strawberry field, ashen and complaining of an excruciating pain in her abdomen. I made her lie on a blanket but she continued to shiver and shake, claiming she felt so chilly. Dad came home and gave her a pill that caused her to vomit violently. During the summer months, we always moved to our summer home at the new farm where we did not have a telephone. So, Mas, that's my brother, ran a mile to the nearest neighbourhood who had a telephone to summon a doctor from Hammond. The doctor finally arrived and diagnosed mother's illness as an acute case of appendicitis.

[0:15]

HS: "The doctor rushed her to the Royal Columbian Hospital in New Westminster. They operated, only to find her appendix in perfect condition. After hours of exploratory surgery, they discovered peritonitis had set in and three quarters of the pus was extracted. For weeks, mother was in critical condition with a tube inserted into her abdomen for drainage. Dad hired three specialist nurses to work eight-hour shifts to care for her around the clock. On three separate occasions, we were summoned to the hospital because the doctors did not believe she would survive the

night. Each time, she managed to pull through. She was given four direct blood transfusions from Ritsu and Mas, who were the only adult members of the family that had mother's blood type. At that time, Mas was just recovering from tonsillectomy. I could still see him lying in the shade of apple tree, exhausted and weak after each transfusion. The doctors were amazed at my mother's stamina. All through her delirium, she refused to give up and continued to mumble, 'I no die. I no die. I have ten children.' She became as thin as the skeleton. Dad used to come home from visiting her would remark, 'Mother's so thin I could now [carry her?] in the palm of my hand.' But miraculously, mother survived. When she finally stabilized, her first thoughts were of the baby. She refused to rest until we brought Minako to the hospital bed and she was assured that the baby was alive and healthy. That was the day mother started on the road to recovery. When mother first got sick, it was the height of the strawberry season. Besides caring for an infant, cooking for and attending for the needs of nine members of the family, I had to care for four men and 14 teenagers who had been hired as live-in help on the farm. The day in June, after mother was rushed to the hospital, that day in June after mother was rushed to the hospital, I, with no experience of feeding an infant, had to pacify Minako, who would scream nonstop for her mother's breast. I rushed to consult friends with babies to learn about baby formula, feeding procedures, etc. Finally, after obtaining the necessary paraphernalia and getting the family chores out of the way, I was able to soothe the baby and satisfy her hunger. Thankfully, she fell asleep at 2 a.m. and at last, I was able to tackle the washing of the diapers and baby clothes. I couldn't sleep, though, as it was too silent after hours of hearing the baby crying. I kept getting up to go to the crib to check that the baby was still breathing. Eventually, Ritsu was able to come home for more responsibilities in Vancouver, and life became much easier for me. But the years weren't over yet. On October 3, Kaz took a phone call and was told that Nobuyoshi [?], mother's nephew, had died in a logging accident in Port Alice, Vancouver Island. Two days later, dad drove to Vancouver to accept Nobuyoshi's [?] remains and to make arrangements for his funeral. At home, as Ritsu and I were busy preparing for Nobuyoshi's [?] wake, we received a word that Kaz had been in an accident at work and had been rushed to the hospital in Mission City. Both his legs had been crushed. As soon as dad arrived home after making plans for Nobuyoshi's [?] funeral service and visiting mother at the hospital, we had to break the news about Kaz before rushing to Mission Hospital with dad. During the Nobuyoshi's [?] funeral, dad was very pale and shaky, and we worried that he would collapse. But he managed to get through the event and make his daily visit with mom, still concealing from her the news of Kaz's accident and her nephew's death. Mom kept asking why Kaz had not been to visit her. So, after a few weeks, we had no choice but to lie, telling her he was working a lot of overtime. After five long months, dad and Mas carried mom home from the hospital on November 4th. What

a wonderful homecoming for all of us, especially my younger brothers. It was great to have mother home with us again. But we still had to tell her what had happened in her absence. We just managed to tell her that Kaz was in the hospital, and we received a letter from Japan, informing us that Nobuyoshi's [?] father, mother's only remaining brother, had passed away. We also had to tell her about that and Nobuyoshi's [?] tragic death in October. At that time, she was still unable to walk and had to be carried daily from her bed to the rocking chair in the family room. After receiving all the sad news, she had a relapse and became bedridden again, but only for a while. With our family life now back to normal, my wedding date was set for January 5th, 1941. But as if to add insult to injury, I fell ill with measles on January 24th, and the wedding had to be postponed.

[0:20]

HS: "Family members and friends spent all night and the next morning cancelling the church, flowers, limousine service, reception hall and honeymoon arrangement, etc., as well as getting in touch with 150 guests. I was ill with fever and oblivious to it all. The wedding was rescheduled for February 22nd, and the wedding invitations had to be reprinted, prepared, and re-mailed. And I have an epilogue here. Mother was a woman of intelligence, understanding, patience, and exceptional stamina. She never failed to make time for each of us, and she taught all ten of us the importance of maintaining good relationships and of being honest and upright Canadians, but to always be proud of our Japanese heritage. After we all grew up and left home, she patiently nursed dad, who battled Parkinson's disease for seven years. After he passed away, she became very busy, traveling, writing haiku, knitting and crocheting many beautiful shawls, blankets and doilies, as well as serving as President of the Buddhist church, and growing her prized chrysanthemums, for which she received 20 trophies at the annual garden shows. At the age of 80, she survived yet another critical surgery for an aneurysm. She lived ten more fully enjoyable and youthful years. Mother passed away August 2, 1986 at the age of 90." This is her. [unclear] August 2nd. We are in July, aren't we?

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: That's, that's what I wrote about my mother. This, I did after I came to Momiji. I sat at the computer and typed it out so my English is, is, you know, my English is like-

LU: No, it's perfect. Oh wow.

HS: That's what I did. I don't know, I've written a lot of things.

LU: What else do you remember about your mother and father when you were growing up?

HS: Well, I've said a lot in there, haven't I? I don't know what I haven't said. Mother-My parents were very understanding. They were very respected by the other communities. I don't know, I think it's a wonderful thing for children to be proud of their parents. We were really proud of dad and mom. I remember, we had Japanese school, we used to go to Japanese school, after the regular English school. It would be like on a, I forget what days now, I think it was Monday and Thursday. I don't think, I don't think it was every afternoon, I am forgetting now. And then on Saturdays. What was I starting to say? See, see, my mind is gone. Anyway, he had to come up and lecture us because we were, we were- I don't know, Japanese school, we all misbehaved. I don't know why. We just did. We were very naughty. But at public school, we were the best students. Japanese got all the honours, all the- We all ranked up and top. And we got all the honours. But Japanese school, we just [went wild?], I don't know why, I can't explain it. My dad would come up and the teacher couldn't handle us, the Japanese teacher. So, he would call my dad at the office and dad would come up, and he would lecture us. I remember that. [laughs] I don't know why we were so naughty at Japanese school. It's funny.

LU: What else do you remember about going to school?

HS: Well, going to school, you mean- You see, because we lived in the country, I don't know, we were- The families, they were all very good to us, the Canadian families. They really treated us- they respected my dad, I guess. Lately, I have a friend that I grew up with. She's a year older than me, she's my sister's age. She now lives in New Westminster. When I go out to visit my daughter in White Rock, you know where that is?

Lu: In Vancouver?

HS: Yeah. My daughter lives in White Rock with her family and I go to visit them once a year. I always phone Elsie, this girl that I grew up with. Last year, too, she said, "I remember you dad so well. He's always dressed in a suit, he had a hat on," she said. [laughs] Even the *hakujins* respected my, my father. We were very, very proud of that fact. Very happy, yeah.

LU: So, your friend that you go visit in Vancouver, she's non-Japanese?

HS: Pardon me?

LU: She's non-Japanese? Your friend Elsie?

HS: No, she's English.

LU: Oh, she's English?

HS: Actually, she's Swedish, I think. Her parents, yeah.

LU: Oh. You kept in touch with her all this time?

HS: All these years, yes. I have a few friends like that.

LU: Oh, really?

HS: [nods] I have Canadian friends. I have a few friends like that, that I keep in touch with. They are all wonderful. And the girls I went to high school with- It was, four of us were Japanese in our class.

[0:25]

HS: Sakaye [?] is in, she lives in White Rock. Yacho [?], she was a dentist. She lives in Mississauga. And Kazuko [?], she lives in Hamilton. And me. Four of us, four Japanese, we went through high school together.

LU: Oh my goodness.

HS: Yeah. We still keep in touch.

LU: Oh, wow.

HS: Amazing, isn't it? I am 92 this year and my friends are still- I lost a lot of other friends but these four, we still remain good friends. Wonderful.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: And *hakujin* friends, too. I have a lot of *hakujin* friends that I still keep in touch with. But they are going one by one, you know, we are getting old now. Yeah, yeah. I have wonderful memories of my childhood. And we were abused and called Japs, yellow bellies.

LU: Yellow bellies?

HS: Oh, yeah. I don't know why yellow bellies, where that comes from. They used to go like this. [makes slant eye gesture] Chinky Chinky Chinamen, you know.

LU: Really?

HS: We are not Chinese. Chinky Chinky Chinamen, we used to be called. Oh, yeah.

LU: Oh my.

HS: Some families were like that. Others weren't. The ones that were really, I guess, close neighbours, they never treated us like that, yeah. In fact, my dad used to help out so many *hakujin* families. If they had nothing to eat, he would take them [bags of?] potatoes and- My dad always helped them out. I don't know, they really respected my father.

LU: Did you ever go over to their houses to play?

HS: Oh yeah, we played.

LU: And that was okay with their parents?

HS: We played with them, yeah.

LU: Oh yeah.

HS: [nods] In the country, I guess it's a little different, eh. Maybe it's a kind of people that were there, I don't know.

LU: I am not sure.

HS: What happened there? Let me shut it out. I don't know. Of course, you know, we had big family, we always played together, too. And at times, going home from school, they used to throw rocks at each other.

LU: Oh.

HS: I don't know. Japanese grew strawberries at that time, so we had strawberries- See, my dad was always in business, so our farm was never anything that big. Mother just ran it with, with some friends, not friends, relatives. Or dad would hire four Chinese men every summer, I remember, to help out. We always had strawberries, but then, I don't know why. I guess I was a bad girl. I took all my friends from school and we went into a strawberry patch of the neighbour, Japanese family next to the school. We are sitting in there, eating strawberries. So, we all got taken to the head of the class and we all got strapped. [laughs]

LU: Oh my goodness.

HS: Do they strap children here?

LU: No. [laughing]

HS: [laughing]

LU: Not anymore. Just on your hands?

HS: Yeah, teacher tells you to put your hand on and they strap.

LU: How many times?

HS: Pardon?

LU: A couple of times?

HS: I can't remember. All I know is it hurt.

LU: Oh yeah.

HS: I don't know why I did things like that. We had a lot of strawberries at home but why, why go into the neighbour's, you know- [laughing]

LU: [laughing]

HS: I guess I had the devil in me.

LU: What else do you remember about your school days?

HS: School days, I don't know- See, one thing we always did was try our best to rank high so we could hold our heads up and say that, you know- I know we always did that. We always ranked high so the teachers respected us. They were good to us.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: Yeah, there was no- I can't, can't remember if I've ever been- Once in a while, there are people that will call you yellow bellies, Jap, but wasn't that, really that bad growing up. I think it was because my dad was so respected and honoured in the community. And another thing, not long ago, I was speaking to an old, old friend. Gee, how many years ago? After I came here, I somehow found his phone number, or he phoned me, I don't know. And he said, you know, he said, "Your dad gave us all, gave our parents-" What's the word, jobs, work? I felt so proud when he said that. He

said, "Your dad always gave our parents work, we had work from your dad." So he was well-respected. [clock begins chiming] That's my clock.

LU: Oh.

HS: Every hour-

LU: Oh, really?

HS: -it gives a different tune.

LU: This one?

HS: Yeah, that one.

[0:30]

HS: Every hour, it gives a different tune. That's my son. He loves clocks. He buys me all these clocks.

LU: I saw a clock at my friend's house, and every time it goes to a different hour, it would be a different bird chirping.

HS: Oh, I have that, too.

LU: You have one of those, too?

HS: Yeah. I have it in the bedroom.

LU: I've been trying to find one of those.

HS: Oh.

LU: Yeah.

HS: Why, you want one?

LU: I will keep looking for one.

HS: I will give you one.

LU: No, no, no, it's okay.

HS: I don't need it anymore. It's in the bedroom. Go take it. Go get it.

LU: Oh no, afterwards.

[clock stops chiming]

HS: Yeah, okay.

LU: I've been looking for one of those.

HS: Every hour, it makes a different bird sound.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: I don't know if it really works. It's still there, I haven't touched it, I don't wind it or anything. But it must work.

LU: [chuckles]

HS: They have all kinds of clocks, don't they?

LU: Yes.

HS: Different things. That one, every hour, it has a new song.

LU: Oh wow. That's perfect. I guess, getting back to school, did you take bento boxes for lunch?

HS: Oh yes. That's another thing. We lived close to school. It was a ten-minute walk, fifteen-minute walk.

LU: That is close.

HS: Very close, so we always went home for lunch. But then, a lot of times, I don't know why, we like to be at school and eat with everybody else, so we'd take sandwiches. But the odd times, when there was no bread in the house, then mother would make onigiri. We would go way in the corner of the school, eat it, away from the *hakujin*.

LU: Oh, really?

HS: Yeah, that's funny.

LU: Did they ever come over and ask you what you are eating?

HS: No, they left us alone. Yeah. Isn't that funny? Now, they eat sushi and you know, all that- Another thing at home, we always wore *zōri*. What do you call little-? What do you call this? Sandals? Japanese slip-on?

LU: Flippers?

HS: Flip-?

LU: Flip flops?

HS: Flip flops. Yeah, yeah. We never wore shoes in the home. We always- When we got home, we took off shoes and put those on, you see. So then, if somebody came to the door, we would hide it right away. We didn't want them to know that-

LU: What would you wear in the house? Your shoes or bare feet?

HS: When they came?

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: I can't remember, we got into socks or something, I guess. [chuckles] It's funny, we always wore those slippers at home. And it was a custom, Japanese custom. You didn't wear shoes in the house. But *hakujin* didn't do that, you see? They wore shoes in the house.

LU: Oh, wow.

HS: Yeah. Now they take their shoes off, don't they?

LU: Yes.

LU: Yeah. See, they had taken the Japanese customs.

LU: [chuckles]

HS: Well, farmers, you know, you are working in the fields and everything, but we always changed. Yeah, I remember that. We used to hide that from the *hakujin*. We didn't want them to know that we wore slippers in the house.

LU: Yeah.

HS: Isn't that funny?

LU: How many Japanese students were with you in your class?

HS: How many Japanese students-?

LU: Were in the school?

HS: Oh God, I can't-

LU: Was it quite a few?

HS: Yeah, I guess there would be- The classes were small, you know. It's a country school. For instance, in high school, there was one, two, three, four, five, five of us were Japanese, the rest were all- [maybe, say, in first year, I remember about a?] 100 people.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: So, the Japanese were not that- Of course, in those days, not every Japanese child went onto high school. I guess the parents couldn't afford it.

LU: Especially in the country.

HS: I went on to high school.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: In the public schools- Gee, there's a picture of that. I don't have any here, but there are pictures of, you know, when they were kids, in the school pictures, there's quite a few Japanese.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: In the, in the pictures. I don't have any pictures of our school. Ryan, who's a friend of mine, his wife was a teacher, and she used to keep all- It's my brother, Mas' class, I think. He has pictures, I think. You see quite a few Japanese children in the pictures. But not half, less than half. There would be, maybe one-third.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: Yeah, there would be one half of the students. It was always a white teacher, you know. They never had- In those days, you didn't have Japanese teachers. I don't know. I think- I am sure a lot of Japanese went through a lot of prejudice. We did, too, but it wasn't really that bad for us. People respected my parents. Dad helped out the neighborhood children and everybody, so-

[0:35]

LU: Do you think you would have experienced more if you were living in the city?

HS: I don't know how they- See, the Japanese in Vancouver, have you spoken to anybody from Vancouver, any Japanese?

LU: A couple of people, but they are mostly out in the country, not the city part.

HS: I see, the ones who were in the city, they were on Powell Street. They all sort of stuck together, I think. They didn't have the association that we, in the country, had with the *hakujin* children, I don't think. I don't know. Maybe they did. So, I think there was a difference. I wouldn't know. I didn't grow up in the city. I grew up in the country.

LU: Did you have time to have fun?

HS: Oh, yeah. We used to- Like May Day, there was always May Day.

LU: What's May Day?

HS: Oh. Oh, yeah, they don't have that anymore. They would have a May pole. Have you seen pictures of that?

LU: No.

HS: There's ribbons hanging from it, and the girls would dance around. They put the pole around and around, the ribbons.

LU: Oh, I've heard that before.

HS: It was on every May Day. My dad would give each of us a quarter, for spending money. Imagine, 25 cents. You buy a chocolate bar for a nickel and a bottle of pop for a nickel, and I'd take 15 cents home. I spent 10 cents. [chuckles]

LU: [chuckles]

HS: Once a year, they would have May Day and- We did have Japanese school picnic, that was all just Japanese, though. What else did they have? May Day would be the 24th of May, I guess it's Queen's birthday. I guess that's-

LU: Oh, we still have that.

HS: Must be, yeah. I am forgetting all this now. Oh yeah, they don't do that anymore, do they? See, British Columbia is a real English community. Yeah.

LU: Yeah, that's right. What other games did you play?

HS: When we were small?

LU: Yeah. Did you ever do jump rope or hopscotch?

HS: Oh, yeah. We played jump rope and we played hopscotch. We played- What's that game where you go, you jump [makes hand motion], throw the-

LU: Jacks? Is it jacks?

HS: No, no. We played jacks, too. Oh, we used to play like a hundred of jacks, I don't know how we did it.

LU: Oh, really?

HS: Yeah, we were so good. Yeah, we did that, we played jacks. You know, in those days, school floor was not like it is now. It was all oiled. Country school floors.

LU: Oh.

HS: So, if you sat there and played, your hand's all black.

LU: [laughs]

HS: [laughs] I remember that, yeah. We used to play jack on the floor. We used to go like this. [makes hand motion] You have a ball going in one hand. How do you do it? You go like this, you pick up a jack or something.

LU: You throw the ball, you pick it up.

HS: Yeah. You pick a jack or something.

LU: And you have to catch the ball.

HS: Yeah, yeah. I remember that. We used to play that. And then we had all the regular like, football, baseball. We didn't play hockey because there was no ice.

LU: Soccer?

HS: No, we didn't play soccer. No soccer, no soccer. Football and basketball. I remember one girl, Carmen. Her name was Carmen Tubergen [?]. I don't know what nationality she would be. She was not very tall and her legs were like, really bold. Boy, she could run, she could- [chuckles] She would get [unclear] our high school principal used to come out and play with us, she would be under, between his legs, running with the ball. She was so good, Carmen Tubergen [?] [laughs]

LU: [laughs]

HS: See, we played along with *hakujin* kids.

LU: [nods]

HS: We did. Yeah.

LU: Tennis and badminton? Did you ever play?

HS: We could not afford things like tennis. And no, no badminton. It's country school.

LU: Yeah.

HS: Although there were- Rich people had a tennis court. They would be playing, but we never got to play tennis.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: That's- You need money for that. You have to buy a thing and-

LU: The rackets.

HS: Rackets, yeah. Isn't that funny, I am forgetting all my words. Yeah, that's true.

No, we never had- There were people, wealthy people had it, they had tennis.

LU: What about homework? Did you have lots of homework?

HS: Lots of- That was one thing we did, we really did well, you know. We really made sure we did our homework.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: I always had to make sure I ranked up there. I thought that if I kept ranking high, dad would send me to, let me go to university. This is why every report card, I ranked very well but- When I finished four years of high school, he couldn't, wouldn't- he didn't send- let me go to university. That meant going to Vancouver.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: And cost more money, why would I- You know, he would have to get a room for me, or something. With all these children, he couldn't afford it.

[0:40]

HS: That's one thing that I vowed. One day, I am going to get my university education. So, this is why when I retired, at 65, I registered at the University of Toronto. But as I told you, I couldn't go every year, every term, so took me years to do, but I got my BA when I was 80.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: I was determined to do it. That was fun. Going to university with young kids? You know, I am in my 70s and young kids are what, in their 20s? 19?

LU: Yeah. Early 20s.

HS: 20, 21, 22? They were really great. Sometimes, they said, "Come on, let's go for a beer." [laughs]

LU: [laughs]

HS: Yeah, they were good to me. The students. They were very good.

LU: What about when you were growing up? Did you help out your mother taking care of the younger siblings a lot?

HS: Oh, I had to. You see, my sister, my sister, when she was 14, she wanted to take opera lessons. And opera singer came to-

LU: Is this your older sister?

HS: Yeah. Opera singer came to Vancouver and my dad took her - What's the word? Anyway, she sang for the opera singer and she said, she thought my sister should take lessons. So, when she was 14, dad sent her to- This is one thing I will never understand. He sent her to Vancouver as a school girl, you know, working for a nurse?

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: She had to- Wasn't very hard work. She was a single nurse, she wasn't married or anything. She had to keep house for her. But she was able to go to high school, she went to King George High in Vancouver. And take her opera lessons and piano lessons at the same time.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: So, it cost dad a lot of money. I am only a year younger than my sister. My turn, I graduated public school, I thought I could go to university, but he couldn't. He couldn't afford it. My sister though took lessons for seven years and then the war broke out. And her teacher, she was an Italian teacher. She died. Her teacher died. And the war broke out. My sister had to come home because my mother had this little baby. You know, the baby I am talking about? And I got married. So, my sister came home, so there went the end of her- And then with the evacuation and everything, her training was lost. There was no more training for her. Yeah. So, then she got married.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: She died at 72. My sister died young.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: I don't know, my dad- No one else took opera lessons. Why opera? [laughs]

LU: I've never heard of that before.

HS: Have you ever heard- ? You know, you know, poor country, you know, we are not. Anyhow, she wanted opera lessons, so Dad let her go to Vancouver and get opera lessons, and piano lessons at the same time. We had piano lessons when we

were children. We had a piano in our house. I guess, our lives weren't that bad, you know. So then, she continued on with her piano and her singing. But dad couldn't afford it. And then there's seven boys growing up right behind me.

LU: And they eat a lot of food. They are expensive.

HS: Yeah, yeah. Let me tell you. There went my education. This is why I decided I am going to get my college education. I don't care what happens, I am going to get it.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: After my son got his, he's, as I said, a psychiatrist. Once he got out on his own, then I was able to start saving money for my own education so that's what I did. But in those days, when I first started to take, go to U of T, there was no fee for the seniors.

LU: Oh, really?

HS: [nods] The first few years. I can't remember how many. But you see, it took me so long to get there, and I didn't go every session. And then, they started to charge, we had to pay, yeah. By that time, I thought well, regardless, I am going to go on, going to pay and do it.

LU: When you were younger, what grade did you go up to in Japanese school?

HS: In Japanese school? Oh, I didn't- In a place called Whonnock where we grew up, they had started Japanese school when I was nine years old. When I was 12, I was in high school in a place called Haney, British Columbia, which meant going by bus, so there went my Japanese school. So, I had two, two or three years of Japanese, that's all. In a country school, you don't learn anything.

LU: What about at home? Did your parents speak only Japanese?

HS: Oh, yeah. If we had homework to do, my mother would sit and help us, you see. Dad was too busy, but mother always helped us. So, that was the extent of my Japanese. This is why I wanted to learn Japanese. I decided to go to university just to learn Japanese. I did that.

[0:45]

LU: Did your parents speak English?

HS: My dad did.

LU: Yeah.

HS: As I said in this thing here, he learned- As soon as he came to Canada, he realized that was the first thing he had to do. To study Japanese. The others- Like when you come from Japan, they go to fishing or lumber, what do you call it? Logging, some kind of a work.

LU: Logging camps?

HS: But he stayed in Westminster and worked as school boy and studied English before he left to do anything. And then somehow got into this, operating for the miners in Britannia Beach.

LU: And the boarding house.

HS: Boarding, yeah. So, his English was- My dad's English was very good. In fact, he's the one that taught me- like, when, when I was in Grade 8, I used to have to write business letters for him. I had no idea how to write business letters but he showed me how to write. [chuckles]

LU: [chuckles] Oh my goodness.

HS: It's funny. Did we have a typewriter? I did it a long time for him. All those business letters.

LU: Oh my.

HS: We used to have a typewriter. Dad did teach us a lot.

LU: Mm-hm. What else do you remember about growing up before the war?

HS: Growing up, in what way?

LU: Oh, just everyday activities.

HS: Oh, everyday activities.

LU: Or special events. What did you do to celebrate New Year's or birthdays?

HS: Oh, Japanese always had celebrated New Year's.

LU: Yeah?

HS: Oh yeah. We always had New Year's. Christmas, too. We had Christmas. You know, now- In those days, we got a little, little truck. Each child got a little truck. They are all boys, you see. And they were so happy with that, it's amazing, isn't it? Now, look what they get, you know. They gotta get TVs and-

LU: Video games.

HS: Video games, all that stuff. When my brothers were small, I used to buy each of them a truck or something, wrap it up and put it on the tree for them. At 3 o'clock in the morning, I'd hear them, they are whispering, "Let's go downstairs, see what Santa brought us." [chuckles] They would be so happy with their one little truck, you know. There's a difference to what the children are now. I mean, you give them a little truck, they will throw it in your face. [laughs]

LU: [laughs]

HS: No, children, in those days, we grew up with very little, we were happy with not having much but just being together. We had a lot of fun. We did a lot of- We were a very musical family. We always had a piano because both my sister and I- Before we went to Japan, I would be- how was I gonna say? I was 12 years old when I went to Japan. We had piano lessons. I think I had it for 11 eleven months, and I never carried on, I didn't do it after that, I should've. But my sister did in Vancouver. So, we always had a piano in the house. I don't know, one of my dad's cousins, I guess. He had a violin that he left at our house. I don't know how we managed to get a guitar.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: There's a guitar, too. So, everybody- One of the boys would use a harmonica. So, we were a very musical family. Every night, after we did our homework, we would sing and have a lot of fun.

LU: Oh my goodness.

HS: Yeah, we were very musical. I know mother always used to say, once in a while, she wished I would, not shut up, but you know, get a little quiet. [laughs] I love singing. And I'd be on that piano. Playing the piano and singing away. So, we were a very musical family.

LU: Did you have radios as well in the house?

HS: No. When I graduated high school and I couldn't go to university, dad bought me a radio. Big, big radio, not a table radio, and that was the first radio in our house. Yeah.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: It had- I am losing my memory. How do you call when you can get long distance on the radio? There's a word for it. Anyway, we could hear Japan on that.

LU: Really?

HS: Hawai'i, it was Hawai'i, really. Yeah, Hawai'i. So then, certain occasions, neighbours would all come to our place to hear it. Broadcast from Hawai'i, yeah. I remember that, yeah.

LU: Was it Hawai'ian music and-?

HS: Japanese.

LU: Oh, Japanese.

HS: [nods] Yeah. I remember that, yeah. Dad bought me a big radio to keep me quiet.

[0:50]

HS: I wouldn't beg to go to university. [chuckles] That was the first radio in our house, yeah. Yeah, that's true.

LU: Do you remember any of the stories they would broadcast from Hawai'i? What would they talk about?

HS: Oh, from Japan?

LU: Yeah.

HS: You mean on, on- I used to listen to- Isn't that funny, I am forgetting things now. They have the serials that go on every day? Isn't that funny, I just knew it until recently and now I've forgotten. I don't know, it goes on- Like they have now, too. Stories that go on day after day?

LU: Soap operas?

HS: Yeah, soap operas. They had in those days too.

LU: Oh.

HS: What were they anyway? When I was doing the housework, I would listen to that.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: Just like now. We had to know what went down with Sally or what, what happened to Amy or whatever. [laughs] They had those in those days too. You call them soap operas, that's right.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: Yeah, they had them. That goes back to- Let's see, I went to high school in 1932, so in the early 1930s. 1930s. Yeah, we had those things.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: And trouble with our house- We lived on up and top of a hill and we had no electricity. But dad, because he was in business, he got his own poles and he put his own poles up, and we had a telephone.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: He had a telephone connected to our house. So, we were the only ones that had a telephone. People would come to use our telephone. You see, how limited we were in those days?

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: We had no electricity. We had gas lamp- You know little lamps, you put gas, gasoline, or coal- Kerosene.

LU: Kerosene.

HS: They used to put kerosene in, yeah. That was one of the jobs- One of the boys would have to do, fill all the lamps every day in the morning and clean all the, you know, the shades, like that. [points at the shades]

LU: Yeah. Oh, yes.

HS: Clean all the shades and-

LU: Glass globes that went around them.

HS: [nods] Yeah, we had to have that cleaned every day. Chores were different in those days. I remember dad bought a cow when I was in Grade 8. So, I was dedicated to milk that stupid thing. [laughs]

LU: [laughs]

HS: I was in Grade 8 so how- I mean Grade 12- Not Grade 12- Grade 8, yeah. So, I would be 11, 12, 12 years old. And being the oldest, my sister was in- She had already gone to Vancouver? She never met the cow, so she must have been in Vancouver. Anyway, I got to milk the cow. I used to hate it because it smells, you know, cow smells. It smells. It had a cow smell. [laughs] Every morning, I had to milk that cow, before I had breakfast or before I got ready for school or anything. A cow has a long tail, you know, and he swishes it. You know, it has to [swish it from the flies?]. So then, I used to get it around my neck sometimes, a wet tail. One time, I took a brick [?]and tied it onto the tail. He tried to swing it, he couldn't. [laughs] The

cat- not the cat, the cow. She, not he. So, what did she do? She put her foot in the bucket and spilled the milk.

LU: Oh no.

HS: [laughing] I used to hate milking that cow. Then, when I got into high school, we had to go to a place called Haney by bus, every morning. So that meant I had to leave the house earlier than going to public school. Then, my oldest brother had to take over, milking. So, they had to take turns, milking. We all hated that thing. Yeah, I remember that.

LU: Who taught you how to milk the cow?

HS: Pardon me?

LU: How did you learn how to milk the cow?

HS: Oh, the neighbour, her name was [Mrs. Buy?]. Isn't that an odd name? Mrs. Buy, she was a lovely neighbour. She came over and taught me how to milk the cow.

[laughs]

LU: Oh my goodness.

HS: We had nice neighbours. We had nice neighbours, yeah. I remember that.

LU: Did you ever go to church?

HS: Oh, yeah. That's one thing dad insisted on, we go to church. Every Sunday, we went to church. But we didn't have- Dad and mom were Buddhists by, you know, by birth. But there was no Buddhist church in those days, but there was, there was Anglican, there was United. So, we went to United Church every Sunday. And dad used to say, "It doesn't matter. As long as you go to church," he said, "it doesn't matter what denomination." So, we went to United Church. So, I am still United, although my parents were Buddhists. I never did convert to Buddhism. When I graduated high school and I couldn't go to university, I thought, I will study Buddhism, see what it's like but it just didn't do anything for me. I couldn't quite understand. [chuckles] So I didn't turn Buddhist. I've been United all my life. Yeah, we did go to Sunday school.

[0:55]

LU: I guess that's why you have Christmas, too.

HS: Pardon me?

LU: That's why you celebrate Christmas as well.

HS: Oh, well, we always celebrated Christmas. We always celebrated Christmas. In those days, we used to have candles on the Christmas tree. That's dangerous, you know?

LU: Oh, yes.

HS: On New Year's Day, when friends came over and they'd be feeling high, you know, they had [a lot to?] drink, we had to make sure we didn't put the candles on because you could put the tree over, when they get drunk.

LU: Oh, yeah.

HS: We used to have candles. Real candles on the tree.

LU: Oh my goodness. Did you make Christmas decorations to put on?

HS: [nods] We used to get popcorn. All by hand, you know, we decorated that tree. As I say, we had candles. Now, you have electric lights, but we had candles.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: My brothers- I don't know, every year, they would have their eye on the tree somewhere on the farm. And they would get the- We would get the best tree. It's a shame to cut those trees down, isn't it?

LU: Yeah.

HS: For Christmas? It really is. That's true, we had, we had nice Christmases. We'd pull, make candy and we'd tell stories. We had a lot of fun. And sang. We were very musical. We all, we all loved singing, the whole family.

LU: And Christmas carols?

HS: Christmas carols, yeah. Yeah, we had that. In those days, you could hear- They had it on the radio, too.

LU: Oh, yes.

HS: Christmas was celebrated as Christmas. New Year's, it would be a different sort of a celebration.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: They'd get the wild parties. The grown-ups. The grown-ups' turn. [laughs]

LU: Do you remember anything else about any other activities you used to do? Or going shopping at the general store?

HS: Oh, there was only one, two, two stores in our little community where we were. So, if you needed meat or bread or whatever, you either went to one or the other. And there was one confectionery store, I remember. So, there were three stores. It's a small farming community. Or, there was a Japanese merchant that used to come from New Westminster. He would come by van and he would take an order and then he delivered the following week. Or, I don't know if it was once a month, I can't remember about that anymore, but we used to get Japanese food in that way.

LU: Oh.

HS: He would deliver it.

LU: Would you order rice and shoyu?

HS: Yeah, rice. Rice, dad used to go to Vancouver and buy rice by the sackfuls. But other things like tofu or whatever, yeah.

LU: Yeah.

HS: Because you don't get that type of stuff in a regular country store.

LU: And miso?

HS: [nods] So we had a very simple life, you know. We didn't grow up in the city.

LU: Your dad had a car?

HS: My dad always had a car, yeah. He always had a car. I remember going way back- Way back in the early 20s, he had a Ford. I could still see him when he was learning how to drive, he looked so scared. In those days, you had to crank the front?

LU: Oh, really?

HS: Yeah, you had to crank the front to get it started. So, one morning- Dad was always away on business, he was never home. So, he was always getting dressed to go out. Anyway, this one morning, mom was sick in bed, I remember. He went out to crank the car. He got all dressed, ready to leave for Vancouver and he went to crank the car. And the thing, instead of going this way, [makes hand motion] came back on him and it broke his wrist here. I could still see him, coming in the house with his wrist broken. Now you start a car, you just push a button and or you stick a- [chuckles]

LU: Yeah, put the key in, that's all.

HS: In those days, you had to crank it.

LU: You had to do work to get the car started.

HS: Yeah, you had to work to get it. [chuckles] I remember when dad used to go to Vancouver for business trips, the odd times I would go with him. There's so much fog there in the British, in the Pacific coast. For miles, I'd have to walk in front of the car, just so that his light would reach me. I'd just walk very slowly and he'd come very slowly behind me. We did that for miles until he got out of the fog. And then he could get going. That's Vancouver coast. I think it's like that in England, too.

LU: Yeah.

[1:00]

HS: But you don't seem to get that here.

LU: No, no.

HS: You wouldn't know about fog, would you?

LU: No.

HS: Vancouver, you'd get it.

LU: Well, sometimes it gets a little foggy when you are driving and-

HS: Oh, Vancouver, it's so-

LU: -if it's really bad, you would pull over for a while.

HS: Yeah. In BC, on the BC coast, it's so dense that you just cannot drive. I remember as a child, I don't know how old I was, I used to walk in front of the car for miles. I don't know how long, until dad got out of the fog.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: Yeah, I remember that. It's different out there.

LU: I guess as a family, you never all went out together at once.

HS: Oh, we did. One time, we got- Every Sunday, dad would pack us all in the car and we would go for a picnic. We always did.

LU: After church?

HS: After church, yeah. [nods] We'd go.

LU: How did you fit in the car?

HS: I don't know. I don't know how. [laughs] We did.

LU: Sat on each other's laps, I guess.

HS: Yeah, I guess. But that's before there was ten of us though, when we used to go. By the time we were ten, I don't think we, we did anymore. Dad was busy with other enterprises. I can remember, when I was still very young, every Sunday, dad would get us all in the car, take us- We'd go to- Well, you don't know the Vancouver area, do you?

LU: Well, name-

HS: We'd go to Lulu Island or somewhere for a picnic, I remember. In those days, a flat tire was something we got every time we went out. [laughs]

LU: Oh, really?

HS: Oh, yeah. It was tube- You don't have tubes now, do you? In the tires?

LU: No.

HS: In those days, it was a tube, you see. They would- [sound effect] So then, we'd have to stop the car at the side of the road and he would have to change the tire. You know, you always had an extra tire.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: Then, roads are so narrow so dad used to make us go on the other side, near the fence like, jump over the ditch and go on the other side. And we'll all stand there so that we don't get hit by cars that are coming.

LU: Just in case, yeah.

HS: Yeah, he'd change the tire, I remember that. So often it would happen, yeah. That's true, we used to go- I don't know, I don't know if other farm children did that. We had a different type of life, I guess. We had fun. We really did. That's right, we used to go on picnics. Mother would make a picnic lunch.

LU: Did you ever go swimming?

HS: No, that's one thing we never did. I don't know how to swim. In fact, my dad had a logging camp up in a place called Salt Spring Island. I can remember going up there. I don't know how many years he had that logging camp but we went up there in the summer. Ross and Roy, [points at a picture] the one on dad's knee, it was him.

LU: Yup,

HS: He was a baby. He and Ross were young ones at that time. I remember mom went swimming and they just sat there, crying and crying on the beach. They

thought she was drowning. They had never seen, you know. They had never seen anyone swimming. I remember that, yes.

LU: Just going to switch-

HS: We had a lot of experiences. Dad, because of his business and everything- If you give me those pictures over there.

LU: Oh, sure. [walks across the room]

HS: On, on the chairs. It's in the plastic bag.

LU: Oh, yes. [hands pictures to HS]

HS: I will show you my dad. What did I have here? [looks through pictures]

LU: Let me switch this tape here quickly.

HS: Oh, yeah this is- See, dad had a gasoline boat that he used to have. This was on [unclear]. He used to drive up to Nanaimo, Victoria, go down the coast of Cumberland and get on that, his own boat, and go to the island. [unclear] logging camp.

LU: You must've been very well off.

HS: Well, my dad was always in business somehow. He was a- My dad liked to be dressed. He was a neat dresser.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: See, here's the strawberries. [hands a picture to LU]

LU: It says 1928.

HS: Once we started making, farming, that's what he did. Those are strawberries. He did it, he did it really in a big way, you know.

LU: That's a lot of strawberries to pick.

HS: Isn't that a lot of strawberries?

LU: Yes.

HS: This is a picture of one of the logging camps that he had. [hands a picture to LU] It's not a very good picture.

[1:05]

LU: Oh wow.

HS: See, my dad- This is one of the other farming countries on the other side of the river, other side of the Fraser River. He used to visit all the other farmers, I don't know, I don't know what he did. Helped them out, I guess.

LU: Yeah.

HS: [nods]

LU: Look at all the chickens.

HS: This is the prince Japanese- [hands a picture to LU] You know the Japanese emperor was here this year?

LU: Yeah, yeah.

HS: That's when he was a child. He came to-

LU: Really?

HS: [nods] He came to Toronto and my dad made the speech. My dad should be in that picture somewhere. See, this is, this is, when he was, when he was a- At that time. Now he's- [laughs]

LU: He looks the same.

HS: He looks the same?

LU: Yeah, yeah. Just with grey hair, not black hair. Oh my, he must have been like 20-

HS: Very young.

LU: Very young.

HS: Let me see that picture. Did I see my dad? He must have been, say 19 or something? Very young. There's my dad right there.

LU: Oh, yeah.

HS: You can see his white hair.

LU: Yeah.

HS: My dad had a moustache and white hair. This is a picture of, near our farm. [hands a picture to LU] They went bear hunt. Dad used to go hunting. Got a mother bear and two little cubs there.

LU: Really?

HS: You see the bears?

LU: Yeah. There's the other little one.

HS: Dad used to go hunt- Every morning, he would take his gun, that's how we always had a pointer, a dog.

LU: Oh, yeah.

HS: And he'd take-

LU: Is that the dog, dog there?

HS: Oh, I didn't realize- No, that was Mr. Morishita [?'s]s dog. Where's dad's dog, anyway? That would be part of dad's logging, logging crew.

LU: Did you have these photos up at the Centre?

HS: [nods]

LU: Oh.

HS: My brother took them up there. And I had them brought back because I thought they would get lost.

LU: Oh, yeah.

HS: I think we lost a few.

LU: Did you?

HS: They were put up at the Centre, yeah.

LU: I am sure they are still there.

HS: Did you see them?

LU: We have boxes of photographs.

HS: Yeah, my brother went up and brought those. That much, he was able to find that and bring it home.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: We didn't want it lost.

LU: The Shin farm.

HS: Yeah, the Shin farm.

LU: I might have seen pictures. I will look and see. Are these the originals?

HS: Pardon me?

LU: These are the originals?

HS: That's original, yeah.

LU: Glued on the boards?

HS: My brother, Roy, had a showing of all the pictures. I took all mom's pictures and we thought we had lost them, but my brother was able to find that many.

LU: Oh wow, that's great.

HS: [nods]

LU: Does the centre have copies of these ones?

HS: Not anymore.

LU: No?

HS: They might have others, that we didn't find.

LU: I wonder if they have ever made any photocopies of them.

HS: See, they are fading, aren't they?

LU: Yeah.

HS: So, you know, they, they enjoyed life. You know, they went bear hunting [they went this, they went that?]. That's my dad there.

LU: Were your brothers active in sports?

HS: In sports, I don't know, when we were growing up, what did they do anyway?

No, not really. At that time, when they were growing up, I don't know, dad was trying to run the farm and he was making them really work hard. And my brother, Kaz, he didn't even finish high school.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: See, the berries- All the neighbourhood berries, all the neighbourhood farmers' berries had to be picked up by truck and taken to a place called Mission, British Columbia where they had- I don't know what you call, where they put all the berries together and send it East, or wherever. You know, my brother wouldn't get home until 3 o'clock in the morning. So, he just didn't get a chance to do any homework. So he just quit one day. I felt so bad because he never had high school education. He was so bright, too.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: God, he used to get a 100 on physics.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: Yeah, he was very bright. He just quit. He's the one that has the broken leg in the picture somewhere. When I got married, he had a broken leg, yeah.

[1:10]

HS: He died when he was 75. He was such a bright boy. So, my brothers didn't get much chance for- I don't know, my dad- There's a part of dad I couldn't understand. My sister was able to get opera and piano lessons. To me, it's more important that the boys get some sort of education. But it was time for them to go to high school, dad just made us work so hard, there was no time for high school, you know. I don't know, he changed somehow. I can't quite explain that. Whatever dad did, he had to do it big. I think he decided he's going to have a big farm then, just then. And that's when the boys were growing up, that was a bad time, yeah. Whereas my sister was ready for high school, my dad was still in business. He just couldn't- There just wasn't the money anymore when you start this new venture. He had to do everything big. He started hops, you see.

LU: Hops?

HS: Yeah, he was trying to find something- You know, Japanese, they struggled with these strawberry farms. Didn't make money because if it rained, the strawberries rotted. [You send it to market and rotted?], you don't get any returns, any money. So, farmers were always poor, we always worked so hard for nothing, it seemed. Then, he started to look into hops. He had the farmers plant hops.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: Every farm would plant hops. I think they got- War started in 1942? 1940, 1940. Anyway, I think they got one, one year of good hops. But when it was time to harvest the hops, the government had said Japanese had to be evacuated. So, dad went to, I don't know where he went, and got it arranged so the farmers could stay and harvest the hops. They couldn't stay in their homes, they were sent to a place called Mission, I don't know where they, where they put the- Anyway, they harvested the hops, dad made sure they harvested. So, they had one good year of hops.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: I think it was a very- The farmers would have been, you know, making a good living after that, but then the war broke all that up. There was no more.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: There's nothing in the Fraser Valley now. No farms, you see, our farms looked like- And you know how Japanese kept their farms. You wouldn't find a weed even to the road. You know, everything was so beautiful.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: We wouldn't, we wouldn't let weeds grow, even to the road, even to the- You wouldn't call it road, what would you call it? Yeah, road, I guess.

LU: Road, yeah.

HS: Now, we go to visit, like this year too- last year, when I went back to BC, my daughter took us down to see- Oh, it was my son. He came up for Christmas, that's right. He said we will go out and see the old farms. So, we went. [shakes head] Don't recognize it.

LU: No?

HS: It's all- We kept it so clean and nice, you know. Now, there's nothing there. There's nothing there. All those farms that were so beautifully kept, there's absolutely nothing there. There's no one to run them.

LU: Oh my goodness. You mentioned before, when you were 12 years old, you went to Japan?

HS: Went to Japan. Yeah, went to Japan when we were 12- November the 1st. We left Vancouver on November the 1st.

LU: Do you remember what year?

HS: November the 2nd.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: And we got to Japan on December the 8th.

LU: It took that long?

HS: That's how long it took, yeah, because there were small boats at that time.

LU: Oh.

HS: They had- Now, we go by airplanes. At that time, there was Arabia Maru and- I forget the name of the other boat that brought us back. Anyway, they weren't the [huge liners?]

LU: Oh, okay.

HS: We were on the sea. God, how many days were we on the sea? Were we sick. Oh my God, the small boat just goes [swings arms] At that time, dad was in business, so he put us on first class. So, we were up on, you know and water would come over the top. [laughs]

LU: Oh my goodness.

HS: Yeah. Isn't that funny, I am forgetting. We left on November the 8th and we arrived in Japan, December the 2nd. There, coming back to me.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: So that's almost a month. Traveling on the high seas.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: I remember, the night we left, it was so exciting for us, you know. We've never been on a boat before; we were on first class.

LU: Mm-hm.

[1:15]

HS: Then we had to go to bed, so we all went to bed. Let's see, we had- My sister and I had one standard room. Mom and dad had another with one, two, three little children. A double standard room with three little children, mom and dad. And the two boys were in another room. So, there was one, two, four rooms, I guess. This is on first class. Anyway, we weren't all in the same- So my sister and I were in one. So, we went to bed and we thought- I remember now, the next morning, we thought we would have a lot of fun. We got up, you think we could, [shaking head] couldn't even- The boat was going like this. [swinging arms]

LU: Oh my.

HS: We were crawling, we were crawling on the deck. We had to go back to bed. It was bad. I remember that, yeah.

LU: That was your first visit to Japan?

HS: That was, yeah. When I was 12 years old.

LU: Why did your parents decide to go to Japan?

HS: Oh, my mother's mother was ill. My mother's mother was dying, so mother wanted to go. She's the only daughter, she wanted to go see her. So, we went. Her mother, that's our grandmother, came to the station. Do you call it station?

LU: Mm-hm. Or-

HS: Train station?

LU: Yeah, train station.

HS: Train station. It was a train station, she came there to greet us. It's amazing, she got out of a sick bed.

LU: Oh wow. She must have been so excited.

HS: Pardon me?

LU: She must have been very excited.

HS: Well, that's her only daughter, you see. Mother finally had to tell her we are going back to Canada. We got to Japan on, as I said, December the 8th and we left to come back around April, I think. So, we were there for, I don't know how many months. Mother told her mother that she had to go back to Canada. Her mother took straight to the bed, I guess.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: And then she died. That summer, she died.

LU: Oh, just after you left?

HS: It's amazing how, you know, she got enough strength to get up and go and greet her daughter.

LU: Isn't that amazing, yeah.

HS: Yeah, I have fond memories of Japan. It was so different. Everywhere we went, we'd have a string of kids following us. Japanese kids.

LU: Japanese kids?

HS: Yeah, because you see, we were strange, you know. [laughs]

LU: Did you have different clothes?

HS: We are in, we are in our dresses and- In those days, they had little kimonos, you know. This is back in 1930- 1932? 1930, yeah.

LU: So, you had like the 30s dresses?

HS: [nods] Everywhere we went, we'd have a string of kids following behind us. That's so funny. That was a good experience. We went to hot springs. In Japan, it's a thing to do, you know, go to a hot spring.

LU: Yeah. Were you able to speak Japanese with the other kids?

HS: Oh yeah, because we spoke at home. It wasn't good Japanese but it was enough to converse with the-

LU: Yeah.

HS: That's right, we went to Japan. We had a lot of fun. One thing grandma didn't like was the fact that, in Japan, an older brother or an older sister, you say *neisan*, *niisan* [address term for older sister and older brother, respectively]. Do you know that word?

LU: No.

HS: Oh, you don't call- Life, if you have an older brother, say his name is Bill. You don't say Bill, you have to say Bill-*niisan*

LU: Oh, *niisan*

HS: Meaning older brother. If you had an older sister, say her name is Anne, you say Anne, *neisan*. You don't just say, "Hey Anne, let's go play". You say *neisan* let's go play. So grandma, oh, she was shocked that we were calling each other by our names. [laughs]

LU: Really?

HS: Yeah, she thought that was terrible. I remember that, yeah. There were so many of us. And the first time we went to Japan, we got there. Mother, mother had two brothers, two older brothers, that's all mother had. They are much older than her. He was so happy to see his younger sister. He got drunk and he was having a whale of a time. The house was, the house was shaking, they were having a lot of fun. And us kids, there was- Ritsu and I, Kaz, Mas, and Roy, it was five of us. Yeah, five of us at that time. We were so tired. At first, you are not tired, you are so excited, you know.

LU: Yeah.

HS: I went through the house looking for my bedroom. There's no bedroom.

LU: [laughs]

HS: I thought, where am I supposed to sleep? There's nothing there. There's no living room, there's no Chesterfield. It's all tatami. You know what tatami is, on the floor?

LU: Just the mats?

HS: Matting, yeah. It's just tatami on the floor. There's no furniture, there's no chair, there's no sofas. There's no kitchen table. Nothing.

LU: Nothing?

[1:20]

HS: Japanese room, there's nothing in those days, you know. At night, they put mattress on the floor. You all sleep- Your living room becomes a bedroom at night in Japan. You don't have like here, bedrooms, living rooms, kitchen. Everywhere, you sleep everywhere. You get a mattress and put it on to sleep.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: I remember that night, they were having so much fun, they kept partying and we were so tired. I remember that. I kept looking around for a bedroom, wondering where we are supposed to sleep. That's true. Yeah, it was, it was a different experience going to Japan. And you know, the roads are so narrow in those days. I remember the taxis, that took us to the house, would hit the side on the hedge, you know.

LU: Oh.

HS: It was that narrow. Country, country roads.

LU: Oh my goodness.

HS: It was different, very different.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: I remember, mom and dad, mom with her mother and I don't know who else, they took a taxi and went home. But the rest of us walked home from the station. I remember walking with an older aunt, I didn't know they were aunts at that time but later on. We were going on a street, I guess you would call it, from the station, going home. And one of my aunts would go into a yard, she'd turn her back, pull her thing up and do her business, on a pile there of something, I don't know. [laughs] Woodpile, or whatever. I thought, I thought, "That's strange". That's the country for you. Isn't that awful? [laughs]

LU: [laughs]

HS: Things like that, I found very strange, yeah.

LU: What about the food? When you arrived there, did you think the food was different?

HS: Food, well, we always ate Japanese food. Mother cooked Japanese food so that was, wasn't strange to us.

LU: That's good.

HS: You see, when we were on first class, they fed us, you know what *yoshoku* is? Canadian meals.

LU: Oh.

HS: [nods] On first class.

LU: I've never heard of that before.

HS: Whereas the third class, you get Japanese food. So my older brothers, they always went down to the third class to eat their food every day. [laughs] They were used to Japanese food, you see.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: We used to get turkey and things like that. My dad was a good cook.

LU: Oh, wow.

HS: That part was, we could eat either food. I don't know, somehow, we preferred Japanese food. How about you?

LU: Japanese food.

HS: You do?

LU: I prefer it. I don't always eat it all the time, but maybe five days out of the week.

HS: Do you cook it yourself?

LU: My dad likes to cook.

HS: Oh, your dad. [laughs]

LU: You know what, he's very good at it.

HS: Is he?

LU: So that's fine, he can cook. I will learn. I know how to make simple stir fry and-

HS: Oh, I see. Your dad likes to cook.

LU: He loves it. And he's good at it.

HS: Is he?

LU: And I liked to eat it, so it works out well.

HS: My dad was good at cooking. A lot of men like cooking, don't they?

LU: Yeah.

HS: They do, you know.

LU: Yeah, they really do.

HS: My dad was a good cook. He was a very good cook. I remember once, my sister and I, we were trying to make a lemon pie. And dad was sitting there and he was so critical of what we did. [laughs]

LU: [laughs]

HS: We weren't doing anything right. My dad was very good. He was a very good cook. On Christmas, Christmas morning, mom and I, we'd have to get out of the kitchen after breakfast. He'd go in the kitchen, and the first thing he did, he'd clean up the whole kitchen, sharpen all the knives, and then he'd start making Christmas dinner. We stayed out of the kitchen all day, mom and I.

LU: Yeah.

HS: It was dad's day. He used to make turkey, everything. From the night before, he would make pudding.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: What do you call that pudding?

LU: Yorkshire pudding?

HS: Yeah, some kind of pudding, he'd have it. When it was ready to be served, he would put a flame to it.

LU: Oh.

HS: Yeah. Dad made the real stuff. And he'd get the clams from the market and he'd make clam chowder, for soup.

LU: Oh.

HS: Yeah, we had a real Christmas dinner. And every year, we would invite one- You know, the Japanese didn't know how to make turkey in those days so we would invite one Japanese family for Christmas dinner. Dad would invite, yeah. I remember that. Yeah, he used to do that. It's funny how men, men are good cooks.

LU: Oh, yeah. They are very good cooks. They should do all the cooking. [laughs]

HS: [laughs] Let them, let them.

LU: They are very good.

HS: [laughing]

[1:25]

LU: So, what else do you remember about your trip to Japan?

HS: Oh, trip to Japan, well, I remember sitting in school, because I was already in Grade 8 in Canada, dad stuck my sister and I in Grade 5.

LU: Oh, yeah.

HS: But it was very hard because we didn't have Japanese education, we had very little. Grade 5, students are, how old? They are six- Gee, they would be 11 years old, wouldn't they?

LU: Yeah, I think 10, 11?

HS: But we were in Grade 8 in Canada. Anyway, they were much smaller kids and we were sitting with these- you know, us two, we are so big. I was big, anyway. School room, it's not heated. It was so cold and our hands would be so cold. My sister and I, we would put gloves on and hide it under the desk like this. And the students would, [raises hand] "Sensei, sensei" — Sensei, that means teacher — "Canadian, Canada—" What did they call us? The returnees from Canada, that's what they called us.

[laughs] "They have gloves on their hands". They are tattling on us.

LU: You weren't allowed to wear gloves?

HS: No, no, not in the school room. I remember that. Schools in Japan were different. Boy, they did everything so thoroughly.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: You know, the students did all the cleaning of the schools.

LU: Really?

HS: Classrooms, blackboards. Japanese schools are built so that the schools are like this. [drawing on a paper], this is school and this is all open.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: So, then this would be all open, the students would line up here, with a broom in their hand, they would go all the way down to sweep it, every day.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: Yeah, I remember that. They keep their schools very clean.

LU: Oh, wow.

HS: They scrub the walls, and blackboards. They are very clean. It was a different experience, going to school in Japan. Not really understanding every bit of the language, you know. I don't know, everywhere we went, as I told you, we'd have a long line of kids following behind us.

LU: [nods]

HS: It was like, I don't know, as if we were some strange animal or something.

LU: Did you have school uniforms when you went to school?

HS: Yeah, they all had school uniform. That's one thing we didn't have in the country. When my children were growing up in Montreal, I had to buy uniforms for them.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: So, some schools, they wear uniforms, don't they?

LU: Yeah, some still do. That's right.

HS: That's hard, isn't it? When you have to buy uniform. Cause they have to come home and get out of it so it would be nice for the whole year.

LU: Yeah.

HS: Every year, you would have to make a uniform.

LU: Yeah. So how long were you in Japan for?

HS: Oh, we went to- As I said, on November the- December the 2nd, we arrived in Japan. We came back here in the spring. I can't remember when it was, it must have been in April, May. May, because I had a thing in my head. I don't know what happened, I got a sore in my head. Mother had to shave my head completely to cure it. I had all kinds of sores in my head.

LU: Really?

HS: When we went to Japan, we had all kinds of sores in our body. I think it was a change of food or what?

LU: Water?

HS: We all got sores, yeah. Especially two, us two girls. When I came, I had, had a sore in my head and mother had shaved so I couldn't go back to school. Whereas my sister went back right away. So, it must have been in April, 'cause we graduated and went to high school in June, June 30th?

LU: Oh wow.

HS: Yeah, and I didn't make it. That thing, I guess I will remember until my dying day. I always ranked first in my class.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: And come to graduate Grade 8, I failed that.

LU: Oh.

HS: I really did, I failed that. I just sat there and cried. I cried to myself so bad.

LU: Well, you worked so hard in the previous years.

HS: Yeah. And then I got- I was always ahead, anyway. I caught up to my sister. I forget what grade, Grade 2 or Grade 3. So, we went through the school together, in the same grade. So then, it really didn't matter that I failed, but to me it did matter. [clock chimes] It really did. I can still remember, how I failed [?] my parents, when I failed. But then when I finally got to high school, a year later, I made very good friends. Four very good, lasting friends and we are still friends to this day. So, I think to myself, well maybe[unclear].

LU: Yeah, yeah.

[1:30]

HS: Yeah, we are still good friends, four of us. We went to school together. There's my clock.

LU: Yeah. We will just wait until it's done, I guess.

HS: Maybe you wouldn't know these tunes.

LU: They sound familiar.

HS: [nods]

LU: I like to listen to classical music every now and then.

HS: Do you?

LU: Yeah.

HS: We got a lot of that when my sister used to sing opera songs.

LU: Oh, yeah.

HS: One of my brothers, he still goes to opera. He and his wife, they travel all over the world. Opera.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: We love opera in our house, yeah. So, they still go. They just got back from Austria. Opera tour.

LU: When you got back from Japan and you went back to school, and then what happened? How old were you by then?

HS: How old was I?

LU: Grade 8 and then, I guess you started high school.

HS: Because I failed that year.

LU: Yeah.

HS: So, then I was 19- Gee, I knew everything so well. You know, at this age, I am starting to forget. Anyway, I got behind one year but I was ahead one year so actually, I wasn't behind.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: Because I was always ahead one year. So then I failed that year and I went into high school. I finished my four years of high school. I always thought if I did well in school, dad would send me out to university, but it didn't work out that way. I never got to go to university. So then, I did it on my own.

LU: And the war started after that?

HS: The war started when I was in- No, it started in 1940.

LU: 1940-?

HS: 1941?

LU: 1941.

HS: When did Japan bomb-? December the 7th, 1941, I think.

LU: 1941.

HS: No, that was- We got back from Japan in 19- 1932. 1931.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: So, it was nine years later that the war started. There was no war at that time.

LU: Yeah, yeah.

HS: Yeah, that was 1940. I thought it was 1941 that Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. And that was the start of evacuation.

LU: Did your parents know that they would have to be evacuated soon? Did your dad have any idea that he might lose everything?

HS: Way back then?

LU: Yeah.

HS: I don't think so. The war was- Wasn't it a sudden, sudden thing?

LU: It was pretty sudden, but some people knew, as soon as Japan went into the war, that it might-

HS: I remember this Elsie[?] that I am talking about, that I grew up, that I see still? Last time, she was saying, she was teaching school at that time and my brother, my brother, young brother, youngest of the boys, he's- He had a Master's in engineering, and he worked at engineering for 25 years for Atomic Energy. The day mother died, he quit his job, and he gave all his money to, he's a Catholic, Catholic church and he went back university that year and he got his Master of Divinity. He is now a Catholic priest. My brother, Gene, yeah. Now, why did I start about him? Anyway, oh yeah. He was in Grade- Let's see, when was Gene born? 1933, war started- He must have been in Grade 2. You know, apparently, he came- Elsie [?] tells me that he came to school, his eyes big as a moon, saying, "Japan bombed Pearl Harbor!" He announced to the whole class. Elsie[?] said he was the first child that came and said that, no one else knew about it.

LU: Really?

HS: Yeah, he said Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. She was telling me that on the phone when I was in Vancouver. That brother of mine is a Catholic priest now.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: When I first met [Elsie [?], after all these years, she said, "Did Gene-?" His name is Gene, G-e-n-e. "Did Gene follow his-?" Follow? Following? How do you say it? And I said, "Well, I didn't know he had a follow-" She said, "He was very good at drawing. Every time I told stories, he would get on the board and draw pictures of me."

[laughs]

LU: Oh wow.

[1:35]

HS: So, I said, "No, all my brothers are good drawers." My sister was a good drawer. I can't draw.

LU: Oh, runs in the family.

HS; They are all good drawers. And my granddaughter did the same thing. So, I said, "No, he didn't become an artist. He's a Catholic preacher." [chuckles] She was surprised. He changed his religion and became a preacher.

LU: What happened to your family during the war, after the bombing of Pearl Harbor?

HS: What happened?

LU: Yeah, what happened?

HS: How do you mean? They were on a farm. Mother was still- Let's see, after Pearl Harbor bomb, how was it now?

LU: This is when you just had planted the hops?

HS: Pardon me?

LU: You had just planted the hops and your dad convinced-?

HS: Oh, yeah. That's when the war started, isn't it?

LU: Yeah.

HS: They had to give everything up.

LU: So, your dad lost all of his businesses?

HS: Oh, they lost everything. He had a- Where we lived, where our house was, there was 10 acres, we always lived on that 10 acres.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: He had bought a 100 acres of forest and he had started to clear that land and he had built a little shack there, he hadn't built a house yet. We used to live in that shack and we had berries there and everything. So, we had started on that 100 acres of land. That's all gone. The government just took everything. My husband, my husband's uncle, the family is- There's all doctors in that family, my son is also a doctor but- It's all doctors in that family. Well, my husband had the drug store on the main floor. His uncle, Dr. Shimotakara owned that property. We had the drug store

on the main floor and the doctor had his offices on the top. That's [on the corner of Main and Powell?]

LU: Oh wow.

HS: And when the war started, we just had to give all that up. There's no two [recording stopped from 1:37:21 to 1:37:23] ways about it. You didn't question them or anything. We just- We just went, we just left Vancouver.

LU: Yeah.

HS: On our own.

LU: So where did you go?

HS: We went to a place called Kaslo, for a year. And then we went to Montreal. Dr. Shimotakara was also in Kaslo. He practiced there. The government had him practice there. And then he came to Montreal too, yeah.

LU: What was Kaslo like?

HS: Pardon me?

LU: What was Kaslo like?

HS: Kaslo was a very pretty little town. It's a country town, you know, there's nothing there. I was just there for a year, so I don't remember too well- We rented a house. Most people, they went where the government told them to go. They put them into concentration camps or whatever. We had money so we traveled on our own. They left us alone, they didn't take our money away from us. All they wanted was us to get away from the BC coast. That's what we did.

[Conversation redacted from 1:38:28 to 1:41:46]

HS: Yeah. There was no job that I could do [in Montreal], I wasn't trained for anything. I only had the high school education. I wasn't trained for stenography or anything. So then I thought, the only thing I can do is go and clean somebody's house, which I didn't want to do.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: I got enough of that as a child. I didn't know what I was gonna do. Meanwhile, there was a job in the paper that wanted someone to come to work from 11 at night until 12 in the morning to look after an invalid. So, I went every night. I left the house, I put the children, two children to bed, I don't know how I did it. I put the two children to bed and I left the house at 10:30. I went to work for 11 and I'd come home in the morning at 7:30, yeah 7:30. At that time, Austin must have been, my son would only have been four years old or three years old. The two of them, he'd be playing with his little sister, making sure she wasn't crying or anything, when I got home from work.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: Yeah, this went on- I did that for two years. She didn't give me one holiday. I didn't get Christmas, I didn't get New Year's. Nothing. I did it for two years. My pay was 75 dollars a month.

LU: Wow.

HS: But that paid, helped pay my rent, you see. And then during the day, I did sewing at home. And that was able to buy my food.

LU: How did you have time to sleep?

HS: Pardon me?

LU: How did you have time to sleep?

HS: I didn't.

LU: No?

HS: For two years, I didn't sleep. I had a nap here and there. But you see, how body can go. It keeps going. Yeah, I did that. Yeah, I remember that. Those were the terrible years.

LU: Yeah.

HS: Anyway, somehow- I managed, somehow. My son, somehow, kept going to school. I know when we were in Montreal, he was taking an engineering course. One day, he decided he wanted- And then I moved to Toronto, I was offered a job here, so I moved here. And he came with me. My daughter stayed in Montreal because she was in her last year of high school, she wanted to finish her high school so she stayed with her relatives. So I came here, my son came with me. He went to work. He quit school. It really hurt me because I wanted him to have an education, I didn't get one. And he went to work. I was amazed at how well he did his work, he was in an office somewhere. One day, he came home from work and he said, "Mom, I'd like to go back to school." You know, that was the happiest day of my life. I, I, oh, I was really, so happy. He said, "I wanna go back and I wanna be into medicine." That, that really, because that's what I had hoped all my life. That's what I wanted to do, you see.

LU: Yeah.

HS: And so, this is exactly what I wanted. From then on, my life was- I didn't care what my husband was doing or anything. My son went back to school. And somehow, he managed to become a psychiatrist. He, he did well. He did well in school.

LU: Oh wow.

[1:45]

HS: So, life turns out okay. I mean, it's hard at times.

LU: Yeah. I don't think, now that we think about, I don't think we told the story about your son being born in the hospital with the cameras.

HS: Oh.

LU: Yeah. Do you mind re-telling it?

HS: You mean, born in the hospital- At the time, he was- Well, in those days, you went to the hospital to have a baby, you didn't have it at home. I guess some people did, I don't know. But I know we went to hospital to have a baby, and we didn't stay for two days or one day, we stayed for two weeks. So then, the war broke out, while I was there, having my son. The doctor said, "I will let you stay here because you are in a private room." My husband had put me in a private room. You see, he had the store at that time, he was able to- Because I was in a private room, I was able to stay there [at the time?]. So, I was very fortunate in that way. He said, "As long as the other patients don't know that there's a Japanese here, you'd be alright." And doctors and nurses weren't [?] gonna go around telling, saying, there's a Japanese in- [chuckles] So that's how that happened.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: Because it was a private room. I think, what do you call the other rooms where everybody is all together? They would have had to move out right away. Even the ones that were dying were moved out.

LU: Oh.

HS: They weren't allowed to stay in the hospitals.

LU: Where would they go? Do you know where they went?

HS: I have no idea what they did, the Japanese, where they put them. We were all evacuated to ghost towns. Or wherever. People with money, they went on their own. Because that's one thing that did not take from you. Your money, the government did not take your money from you.

LU: They didn't take your money?

HS: No, no, no. They took your homes, everything off the land, everything you owned they took but not your money. I don't think they can do that, can they?

LU: I don't think they can.

HS: No, they cannot. So that was- Anybody with little bit of money was able to get started somehow. But you know, the Japanese, I don't know the right word but, they are- You know, with all they went through, it's amazing what they, what they have accomplished, what they have done.

LU: Oh, yeah.

HS: I don't know, we weren't- We didn't cry, we didn't yell, we didn't fight the government. We just did what we were told.

LU: Yeah.

HS: It's amazing, isn't it?

LU: You mentioned your husband had a store.

HS: My husband had a store on Main and Powell. It was a drug store.

LU: Oh, that's right.

HS: See, the whole building, the whole building on that corner belonged to Dr. Shimotakahara, and the main floor was my husband's drug store and the upstairs was his offices. This was before the war.

LU: Yeah, yeah.

HS: That building, this year I went to see it. It's something, I don't know what it is, they built it somehow. It's not the same.

LU: Where was your daughter born?

HS: My daughter was born in Montreal.

LU: In Montreal.

HS: [nods] My son was born in Vancouver, my daughter was born in Montreal. In fact, when I left Kaslo, I was pregnant. I had my son in '42 and my daughter in '43. That was hard.

LU: That would be hard. What else was Kaslo like? Where did you stay?

HS: When we went to Montreal, my brother-in-law, my husband's brother had Clevermade [?] Manufacturing. They made blouses. In Vancouver, he had a factory, I guess you call it a factory?

LU: Yeah.

HS: He just moved it to Montreal.

LU: Oh.

HS: And my uncle, my husband's uncle had a store, ladies' wear store on Granville Street? He called it Modeste [?]. Yeah, Modeste [?] on Granville Street in Vancouver. He was a very clever man. What he did, he had a very trusted employee, a lady employee. He sold the store to her for a dollar, and she kept it running for him, all through the war.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: When the war ended, he just went back there. He was the only Japanese, I don't think the government knew that.

LU: That he went back?

HS: He went back. His son and his son-in-law ran the store. They expanded to Victoria, I remember, and they had a store in Montreal. The Clevermade [?] Manufacturing, the blouse manufacturing that my brother-in-law had, one of the sons took that over, uncle's son.

[Conversation redacted from 1:49:47 to 1:51:48]

LU: So, living in Montreal, did you learn French?

HS: Oh yeah. I could speak French.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: I went to school in Montreal with the priest.

LU: Oh, did you?

HS: To learn French.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: I got a big diploma somewhere. Where is it? He gave me a medal, he gave me- I don't know what I did with that. [chuckles]

LU: And your children speak French, too? They grew up in school-

HS: Oh yeah. My children, they can speak French.

LU: Yeah. Oh wow, isn't that incredible.

HS: Especially my daughter, she married a French man. [laughs]

LU: Oh, really?

HS: She married a very nice guy.

LU: Oh my.

HS: That's where my great-grandchildren come from. Yeah. He's French.

LU: What do you remember about being in the camps, though?

HS: In the camps?

LU: Yeah, we haven't really talked about it.

HS: Well, you see, as I said, we weren't really sent to a camp. Because our husband had money, we went on our own.

LU: Was Kaslo a self supporting location?

HS: Kaslo?

LU: Yeah.

HS: Not really. They were all in, put there by the government and they were put into big- See, in Kaslo, it's an old mining town. And it has great big buildings downtown. Huge buildings. So, there were, say, ten rooms in that huge building. They would put a family in each room. Say you have a family of ten children, I think they had a miserable time.

LU: Oh, yeah.

HS: And I was told there would be just one kitchen. So then, one housewife would be down there, put her, say she put her rice on, and the next housewife would come down, push that aside and put hers on. Apparently, there were a lot of- [chuckles]

LU: Oh, yeah.

HS: And the laundry, they would hang it up in another- If they were mean, you know, she would tear all that down, put hers up. I don't think there were that many mean women around but I was told there were terrible stories like that.

LU: Oh, yeah.

HS: Yeah. In Kaslo, that's what happened. They were put into great big buildings. Whereas in a place like, where my parents went, Tashme. Have you heard of Tashme?

LU: Oh, they went to Tashme?

HS: Tashme, they built homes for everybody.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: It was an all-open field and they built these little, I shouldn't call them shacks. They were homes, you know, little homes.

LU: Huts.

HS: Huts or whatever you wanna call it. I visited them. When kids, children were two and three years old, I took the two and visited them.

LU: Oh, really?

HS: We stayed there for half a year, yeah.

LU: But you were in Montreal?

HS: I was in Montreal.

LU: So, you went back to Tashme to visit?

HS: I went back to it, yeah. See, what happened, my brothers, three of the older brothers came to Toronto, finally. And when they got settled, they came to visit me in Montreal.

LU: Mm-hm.

[Conversation redacted from 1:54:40 to 1:55]

[1:55]

HS: Yeah, that's how I got there.

LU: They were all together in one house?

HS: Yeah.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: All in one house.

LU: What was it like-?

HS: They were lucky. If you were a small family, say if you had four children, they would put two families in one house, apparently. Because our family was big, they were allowed one house.

LU: What was Tashme like?

HS: Tashme, well, it's a- It's like seeing- Like if you go to a country home now, say in the summer time, you go to a country home, it's like that.

LU: So, it had gardens and-

HS: [nods] They had their gardens in the back and they had- But you didn't have indoor toilets in that. You know, the toilets were all- How do you call? Outhouses?

LU: Outhouses?

HS: And they had- You know, the Japanese have to have a bath.

LU: Yeah.

HS: They have to have a bath. So, bathhouse- Every time there's a Japanese community, that's the first thing they build, a bathhouse. I can remember going, we went back- Girls and boys, there's men and women.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: So then, my son couldn't go with me, he had to go with one of the boys, I think. He wouldn't go, he wouldn't go. He said, "I am not going in there." He said, "It's all steamy and there's just one lantern hanging," he says, "I am not going in there." I remember when we got off the train at a place called Hope, which is near Tashme. This is 5 o'clock in the morning when we reached there. It was raining. And my sister, older sister had come down and rented a hotel room because a taxi wasn't going up until 9 o'clock in the morning, that's four hours we had to wait in the rain.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: She had rented a hotel, well, a country hotel room. We went up to the porch of this hotel and it's, it's got a great [big veranda?] like this, you see, and the door was open and inside, there was just one lamp, in those days, you know, the country had one lamp. You could hardly see. My son says, "I am not going in there, there's a ghost in there, mommy." [chuckles] Absolutely refused to go up the stairs.

LU: Really?

HS: So, we had to walk on the beach there for hours in the rain. Oh, my son was difficult.

LU: [laughs]

HS: Anyway, we finally got up to Tashme. I stayed there for quite a while, about 6 months, I think.

LU: What about sinks or stoves in the kitchen?

HS: Everybody, every house, we cooked with a stove, a wood stove.

LU: Oh, okay.

HS: You see, the wood was so raw. It was fresh wood that they had cut. If you tried to burn it, water would squeeze out. [laughs]

LU: Yeah.

HS: They were having a hard time.

LU: It wouldn't burn.

HS: It wouldn't burn, yeah. It was terrible. Yeah, they had a hard time. But the Japanese had to have a bath. Isn't that funny how Japanese-

LU: How did they heat the water? Wasn't it cold?

HS: No, you burn a wood stove underneath the thing.

LU: Oh.

HS: It would heat up the water.

LU: I didn't know that.

HS: You are too young for that, I guess.

LU: Yeah.

HS: You wouldn't know about those Japanese baths.

LU: No, no. I've never seen one.

HS: You've never seen one?

LU: No, maybe photographs.

HS: Even in Vancouver, you know, there were a lot of people who didn't have bath in those days. So then, there would be Japanese baths.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: You would go every night. You pay a nickel or whatever it was. Japanese had to have a bath every night.

LU: Yeah.

HS: It's a crazy custom.

LU: So, when you were in Tashme, did your children go to school at all?

HS: No, no. They were two and three years old.

LU: Oh, so they didn't need to.

HS: Yeah, they were tiny infants.

LU: Yeah.

HS: Yeah, they didn't go to school.

LU: And your younger brothers and sisters, did they go to school in the camps?

HS: Oh, yeah, they had schools there. I think they had wonderful education.

Christian, Christian people, they came and offered the help, I think. I don't know, we were teaching them. And then my sister, oldest sister, because she had a high school education, she was teaching Grade 1.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: One of the boys, Roy, he had a high school education so he was teaching, too, until they moved out.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: So everybody- I don't know how, if they had to write exams or what, how they became teachers, but they were teaching.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: I think there were a lot of good Christian people who were teaching the older, you know, high school students and that. A lot of children missed- like my- Ross, he was in first year high, I think, when evacuation started so they missed a lot of schooling, you know.

LU: Yeah.

HS: A lot of them couldn't even finish their education. They couldn't finish their education, yeah. I was lucky, I had finished my high school, but my younger brothers hadn't made it yet.

[2:00]

LU: What about your parents? Were they working when they were in Tashme? Was your father working?

HS: No, I think my dad went to cut wood and things like that. I think they were given work and paid there. I think they were paid a nickel or whatever, a little bit of money for what they did. I think life for them was, it wasn't too bad, I don't think. See, we were on our own, living on our own money. I can't quite- I know, they were all given work to do. What they were given to do, I don't know. I think, talking to the- A lot of girls are here now, among our club, they are much younger than I am. At that time, they weren't married yet. So, they had a lot of fun, sounds like.

LU: Some of them, depending on the age group, yeah.

HS: You know, whereas in Vancouver, we were restricted. You weren't, you weren't allowed to stand on a streetcar and talk to a boy, oh my God, you were a bad girl.

LU: Really?

HS: In those days, yeah.

LU: So how did you meet boys?

HS: I don't know. [laughs]

LU: How did you meet your husband at the time?

HS: Well, we were family friends.

LU: Oh, okay.

HS: Yeah, in that way, I knew him from when I was younger.

LU: Yeah.

HS: In those days, boy, if you were to sit on a streetcar and talk to a boy, you were a bad girl. [laughs] And you didn't dance- There was no dancing.

LU: No dances?

HS: Oh, no. Japanese, Japanese girls, they didn't dance. That was, that was, oh, that was bad.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: The war changed all that.

LU: Yeah. I know in Slocan, they would have Christmas dances.

HS: Yeah. The war changed all that, they had dances and they had all sorts of fun. I remember when I was in Montreal, my brother, one of them, Ross, I don't know how old he would have been at that time. He sent a picture, they had some kind of a- I don't know, he was dressed in a bathing suit like a woman. So, they had fun, they had concerts, you know. They did all sorts of things. But life changed for them. It wasn't as restricted- How would I put it anyway? We were very restricted before the war. We really were, we really were.

LU: Yeah.

HS: You didn't talk to a boy, you were a bad girl.

LU: Very traditional, I guess.

HS: Oh, you didn't go out on a date, you were a bad girl.

LU: Yeah.

HS: Really bad.

LU: Oh my.

HS: So different now, isn't it?

LU: Mm-hm. Certainly is.

HS: Yeah, it was so different. I wish I could have talked to you when I was younger. I would have more in my memory but-

LU: Oh no, this is great.

HS: I am 92 now, I am forgetting so much.

LU: No, your memory is more vivid than some 70-year olds that I talk to.

HS: Really?

LU: Yeah, oh yeah.

HS: As niseis, we were very restricted. We really were. I remember there was one fella that wanted me to go to, I don't- I guess it was a movie or what. Mom said, "No, ask dad. If he says you can go, you can go." But dad said, "No, if you go with six girls and six boys or something like all together, it's okay but I don't want one and one." He wouldn't let me go. I remember that, yeah. We were very restricted. No, we weren't allowed to do anything.

LU: So, did you ever go to movies before you were-?

HS: Yeah. We went to movies but just with my brothers or you know- I couldn't go with a boyfriend, for instance.

LU: Yeah, yeah.

HS: But if you were smart, you would go with your brother and take a boyfriend with you. [laughs]

LU: [laughs] As long as they chaperoned.

HS: Hmm?

LU: Chaperoned.

HS: Chaperoned, yeah. No, we didn't do things like that. I don't know, we were brought up very strict, very strict, yeah. It's not like now. I watch my great-grandchildren of Roy [laughs] and my grandkids.

LU: [nods]

HS: My granddaughter's been married twice. She had a lot of fun.

LU: Oh, yeah?

HS: [laughs]

LU: What about when you went to movie theatres, where were the movies?

HS: Well, the movies, there were no movie theatres in our little hometown. We used to get movies, I can't remember how often and the year, now. A Japanese fellow would bring a movie camera and show us Japanese films. We used to look forward to that.

LU: But it was all in Japanese?

HS: All in Japanese, yeah. [nodding] But then we had, in a place called Haney, which is a town about 20 miles away, there was a movie theatre. And Mission, there was a movie theatre. Canadian movies, you know.

LU: Just going to switch this quickly.

[2:05]

HS: We never did go to movie theatres, not that much.

LU: So different, isn't it?

HS: Oh, yeah.

HS: The life was different in the country. You have Christmas concerts and things like that at the school. We always had a picnic once a year.

LU: You had a picnic once a year?

HS: [nods] We had a picnic once a year.

LU: For school or with friends?

HS: For the school, for the whole school.

LU: You mentioned before that, after you left your husband and you are living on your own-

HS: That's when I came to Toronto, in 1962, that's when I first moved here. And my daughter stayed back in Montreal with her friends because she had her Grade 12- I guess it was Grade 12 she was in.

LU: Oh, so she wanted to-

HS: Just for a half a year, she didn't want to change school here, and so she wanted to get her, graduate there, so she did that. My son came with me. Meanwhile, he had quit school, you see. I was quite disappointed, but- He went to work right away. I think he, as I told you, two or three years, I think, he worked, saved his money and then one day, came home and said, "Mom, I wanna go back to school and be into medicine." After that, it was just straight sailing. He went right through until- To get into psychiatry, that's a lot of schooling.

LU: Oh, it is.

HS: A lot of schooling, but he did, he did it, so I am very proud of him.

LU: When did your daughter come from Montreal?

HS: As soon as she finished her Grade 8.

LU: What did she do afterwards?

HS: Grade 8, or is it high school?

LU: High school.

HS: High school, yeah. She came here and she was working as - Where was she working at? Oh, she was working with engineers, I remember, because I was at a party not long ago. He remembered my daughter. He said, "I worked with your daughter."

LU: Oh wow.

HS: Years ago. Yeah, so she worked at an engineering office but, she loved [this guy?] in Montreal. So, before I knew it, she had gone back to Montreal.

LU: And got married.

HS: She was a bit rebellious, that kid. [laughs]

LU: [laughs]

HS: And then, they wanted to get married so, that was the end of her. Girls are okay, if they find a nice guy, you know. He's a very nice guy.

LU: Oh good.

HS: And he's from a very nice family, a French family. They are all- Usually, French are very tiny people. When I first moved to Montreal, I used to think, my god, they look like a bunch of Japanese going down [unclear]. They are so tiny, the French?

LU: Yeah.

HS: But this family that my daughter married into, the boys are all over 6 feet tall.

LU: Oh my.

HS: Yeah, big tall family and they are all- The father was always in business so they were very, it's a good family so I didn't, it didn't worry me at all. So, she's been very happy. She's been married to him now for how long- She's got great-grand kids, she's got grandkids now, yeah.

LU: Oh wow, quite a while then.

HS: She's been very happy, she's married whom she wanted so that was okay.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS; But my son never got married. I can see-

LU: He's in Arizona now, you said?

[sentence redacted from 2:08:32 to 2:08:41]

HS: So, he lived with a lady, he's lived with her now for- Oh my God, Donna and Austin have been together now for, I don't know how many years. So they might as well be married but he won't marry her. So, they have no children. All he's got is his dogs. [laughs] They live in Arizona.

LU: When you came back to Toronto, you mentioned you were working the two jobs and-

HS: Oh, I had a couple of jobs and I had- When I was 65, when I retired from work- Yeah, I was 65, I was working. One job I was working at, she came to me and said, "I noticed you are 65 this year," and I said, "Yes." She says, "Our company policy, anybody who's 65, we cannot keep." So, I said, "What-?"

HS: You had to retire?

HS: Yeah, that was a- I didn't know that, she never told me. So, then I said, "That's fine." 'Cause I thought, oh, then I will go back to school. So, when I- Can I say I got fired? [laughs]

LU: Where were you working at the time?

HS: Gee, after the war, it was at the airport, near the- They were, they were here- I am getting all confused. This is Toronto, this is Toronto. Where was I, anyway?

[2:10]

HS: Anyway, they moved their fact- their office up to the airport and I had to go with them to work. And the boy, he was working as a messenger boy for that company at that time, he had a car and he said- Somehow, I mean, they hired him so that he could take me back and forth to work. To the airport. Yeah, I remember. They did that for me, the company did that for me. Yeah, so I was able to go to the airport to work.

LU: That's amazing.

HS: I can't remember what happened anymore, but I did work there. I was working, I was also- See, I had gone to university to study Japanese. So, I got a job as an interpreter.

LU: Oh.

HS: Interpreting Japanese? At the airport.

LU: But this is after you retired?

HS: No, before I retired.

LU: Before you retired, you went back to university?

HS: I was working at the airport as an interpreter. Every time a Japanese plane came, I had to be there to interpret for all the-

LU: Really?

HS: For all the- Would you call them customers? People that get off the plane.

LU: Yeah.

HS: They didn't understand any English, you see. So, I did that for years. And even when I came here, they used to phone me and I said, "Please take my name off the list." I remember when I was 85, I said, "I am 85 now, I don't wanna work anymore." The guy says, "You 58?" I said, "No, 85." [laughs] Anyway, I had to ask them so many times to take my name off the list, but I guess it's very hard to get interpreters.

LU: Yeah.

HS: So, I kept getting phone calls here and they said, "We will do it over the phone."

LU: Do it over the phone?

HS: A three-way phone, you see.

LU: Really?

HS: Yeah. Me here and the other- I am forgetting the word, who is the guy that looks after the people that come off the airplane?

LU: Travellers-?

HS: I had fun though. It was a lot of fun working like that, but it got to be too much at one point, so I quit.

LU: When did you start taking Japanese classes?

HS: When I was 65. When I-

LU: So when you retired, yeah.

HS: [nods] When I got into university. I was 65, I got into U of T and I started learning Japanese right then and there. That was the only reason why I went. I wasn't gonna get a degree or anything. I thought, I wanna learn Japanese. I knew they had good professors. They have wonderful professors there, University of Toronto.

LU: Oh, yeah.

HS: So, all these essays, I've got it all written in Japanese, too, essays in Japanese.

LU: Oh wow, oh wow, like the story about your mom and the story about your dad?

HS: [nods] I did that about father, I did that in Japanese, too. See, my, my English isn't- I don't know, somehow, us Japanese, our English is poor, isn't it?

LU: Some are better than others.

HS: Now, there's no difference, I see in my children, that there's no difference. But we- I guess because we spoke Japanese at home or something, there's something lacking in our education, our English wasn't that good.

LU: Yeah. Someone's mentioned-

HS: Even now, you find, some of the seniors my age, their Japanese is very poor. Their pronunciation, their grammar, yeah. But now, there's no difference. You find these children, they are doing just as well as any white person, yeah, in their English. But in our day, I guess because we spoke both languages, would that be a reason?

LU: That could confuse it.

HS: I don't know. I was never good at writing essays and things like that. I was more in math and, yeah.

LU: Numbers.

HS: Yeah, yeah. Then I started to write things just to- Well, that's what I went to university for, so I thought, might as well try and write.

LU: Yeah, yeah. I've been told before that people who come from different prefectures in Japan have a different accent.

HS: That's right. Every prefecture has an accent, so they never understand each other.

LU: Isn't that crazy?

HS: Yeah. Isn't that like in England?

LU: Yeah, I guess so.

HS: I think it's the same thing, yeah.

LU: Yeah, I guess so.

HS: Yeah, I think it's the same thing. England, Ireland.

LU: With all the different accents.

HS: They have different accents, yeah. Isn't that funny how in Japan, why they are like that.

LU: You are all speaking Japanese.

HS: Yeah, they are all speaking Japanese but they have their own- Yeah, they have their own accents. What do you call it?

LU: Slang words, I guess?

HS: Kagoshima, where my parents come from, I think their language- See, they had- I don't want to go into Japanese history, I am forgetting it now. But there was a very famous Saigo Takamori in Kagoshima.

[2:15]

LU: What is that?

HS: He was a- My God, who is the head of the government? Anyway, he was the head and he was very famous. Apparently, they make a language in Kagoshima so that no one else could understand them, for what reason was I told? Anyway, sure is a difficult language, our Kagoshima language. No one else could understand us. I can't even speak it.

LU: Well, I don't speak any Japanese either.

HS: You don't speak Japanese at all?

LU: No, no. My grandparents only know a little bit about it.

HS: Is that right? Your grandparents would be about my age?

LU: They are a bit younger, I think. They were- I think they are early 80s.

HS: Oh, okay.

LU: Just a little bit younger.

HS: A lot of them, yeah.

LU: Yeah, 'cause they were just kids, in the camps.

HS: I went to University of Toronto to study Japanese so I was able to speak it, write it and everything, but now it's-

LU: Trying to think of any other questions.

HS: No, you, you ask me questions, that's easier to answer than trying to think of something else.

LU: After the war, when you went to Montreal, how did everybody treat you there?

HS: Oh, Montreal, Montreal was very good. The French, they were very good to us.

LU: Oh, good.

HS: It wasn't like, like here, the English, you know. You hear a lot of stories of things that happened here. But in Montreal, we were very- If you wanted to rent a place, they would rent you a place, they had no problem. I know my brothers walked the streets for days here, looking for a place, when they first came.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: Suitcase in hand, yeah. He said they finally got a car, started going because there was too much to walk.

LU: Oh, yeah.

HS: They finally found. There's always the odd [?] person that would rent to you, you know, but when they first came, they had a terrible time, renting- But in Montreal, we had no trouble at all.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: In fact, in Montreal, my brother-in-law, my husband's brother, older brother, had moved to Montreal before us, because we went to Kaslo, you see, they went straight to Montreal. And he had bought a big home in a place called Ahuntsic in Montreal, which is northern Montreal. A huge house, he had bought, because he had this ladies' wear manufacturing company. He opened it up Downtown Montreal.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: When we went there, that's where we stayed until we found a place to rent. I was sitting on the veranda with my- I didn't have my daughter yet, with my little son, baby son. I was sitting there, and there's two men across the street. There's two cars there, I don't know what they were arguing about. One was French and one was English.

LU: Oh, yeah?

HS: They are fighting. They are fighting away and their voice got louder and louder. Finally, the Frenchman told Englishman, oh, what did he say? "Go back to where you came from." And I just sat there and laughed because we have been told that all our lives, you know. [laughs] Slant eyes, yellow bellies, go back to where you came. Here's this, French one, telling the Englishman to go back to where he came from, I thought, I thought that was- [laughing] That was my first day in Montreal.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: But the French were very good to us. Very good to us.

LU: What about when you went to Toronto?

HS: Toronto, by the time I came, it was 1960s so you know, it wasn't like-

LU: So, it was a bit better.

HS: -1940s. Yeah, that changed. I never had any trouble.

LU: Did you ever hear stories about your, other than your siblings, having to walk around?

HS: I don't know much. I know my brothers, when they finally found a place to stay in Toronto, they bought a house downtown Toronto on Gerrard Street, a big 13-room house, a huge house.

LU: Wow.

HS: Bought it for mom and dad.

LU: So, they went to the house?

HS: So, dad and mom came. They were sent to a cattle farm. Cattle farm? Yeah, I guess you would call it cattle farming.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: In Guelph, from, from the government. Dad, you know, he's scared of cows. And he hates dogs. [chuckles] You know, my dad never really worked as a farmer. It was hard for him.

LU: He was a businessman.

HS: So, then my brothers, they all got together and they bought this house, and put mom and dad in it. And they rented rooms. They've got so much room for- Mother had to work hard, she had to wash sheets. Every time I came to visit, she would be busy washing sheets. Once a week, you are changing sheets and- In those days, you had a dresser- Lace on top of the dresser, lace on top of the chesterfield, all that stuff.

LU: Oh my.

HS: She would be washing it, ironing it. But they did okay.

LU: Mm-hm.

[2:20]

HS: I don't think they had any- I don't think they had any problems, I don't know.

LU: Did you ever encounter any racial prejudice after the war?

HS: No, no. I can't recall any. I am getting old now so I am forgetting, maybe there were, but I can't recall any. I can't recall any. And my old friends like, high school friends and that, I got in touch with one by one. They are all wonderful.

LU: How did you get in touch with them after all these years?

HS: I don't know. Somehow, we did. I don't know how.

LU: It was years after the war, wasn't it?

HS: I know, I know.

LU: What did they say? Did they ever ask you, you know, what happened?

HS: I can't remember all that now. See, I hadn't seen them since high school days

LU: Yeah.

HS: And then we got together, we had a lot of fun. We really did. They are wonderful.

I don't know, my daughter lives in White Rock- How did I get to see Edith and Elsie? Anyway, we get together now. Every time I go out there, we get together and have

tea. Now though, they've all gone. They've all gone, one by one. I am the only one left now, I think.

LU: Elsie is still here, isn't she?

HS: Except Elsie. Elsie is still in New Westminster. Last time I phoned her when I was in- Yeah, she's still alive. She's getting old. Her husband is almost 100 now.

LU: Oh wow. Did you ever hear about what they went through the war? Did they have any problems?

HS: White people didn't have any problems, did they? I don't think so. I guess there was problem, I mean, it was war, wasn't it?

LU: Yeah, yeah.

HS: Yeah, I don't know. But they didn't have kind of trouble that we had to go through. We had everything taken away from us. We had to start all over again.

LU: Did you find that very difficult? To have to start all over again?

HS: To start all over again? I don't know, somehow [unclear] we did it somehow.

LU: Just 'cause you had to?

HS: Yeah, you had to. You had to live. You had to buy bread, you had to eat. I can remember, I had 18 cents left in my purse and I thought, "What I am gonna feed the children tomorrow?" Yeah, there were times like that.

LU: Yeah.

HS: At that time, I was able to buy two cans of Campbell soup for that price. That's what I gave them. But then, the next morning, a letter comes from my parents with a big cheque in it. So, always, when I got to my last penny, we had help like that, so I thought, you know, I wasn't a good Christian, but I thought, there is a God. Yeah. And then, one Christmas, we had nothing to eat, nothing, and doorbell rings, my uncle, the rich uncle, his wife and their sons were at the door with a really big box of goodies for Christmas. Things like this, every time, happened. So, I thought, "Gee, there is a God looking after us." Yeah, we never starved, really

[Conversation redacted from 2:23:18 to 2:25:51]

LU: So, his last name is Shinkoda?

HS: [nods] I've kept his name, yeah.

LU: It's very similar to your maiden's name.

HS: Isn't it? Shin and Shinkoda. [laughs]

LU: I thought maybe it was merged somehow. Maybe you put the two together 'cause last name is Koda, I don't know.

HS: Yeah, sounds like it, doesn't it? Shin and Shinkoda. It's funny, isn't it? Yeah, that was my maiden's name, Shin.

LU: Yeah.

HS: That's an odd name too, Shin.

LU: Yeah, I haven't heard-

HS: It is a very odd name. I don't think there are many of that name, I don't think there are any-

LU: Just your brothers. All seven of them.

HS: Just my brothers, yeah. [laughs]

LU: [laughs] So after the war, did you ever return to Japan to go visit?

HS: Oh yeah. I went to Japan many times.

LU: Oh, that's right, you said you went back and forth during your studies?

HS: Yeah. I went- Gee, how many times did I go to Japan? I've been ten times to Japan.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: Back and forth, yeah. That's where I spent all the money. I would have some money now if I hadn't made those trips. [laughs] But I enjoyed Japan. I went all over Japan. See, my brother, Roy, ran the- You know what karaoke is?

LU: Like karaoke?

HS: Karaoke, yeah, karaoke, yeah. He ran it at the Centre. He's the one that started it, he ran it. And every three or four years, we would make a trip to Japan. So, I went with him. So, I was able to see all of Japan, yeah.

LU: Did you have family there that you would go visit?

HS: I have family and I got to- I have a lot of friends there now. I made a lot of friends.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: Yeah so, come Christmas or anything, I get all kinds of parcels from Japan.

LU: Oh, nice.

HS: Yeah. Christmas parcels. New Year's parcels. They are wonderful. And then, all of a sudden, I would get a phone call, they are here, they wanna visit me. It's wonderful.

LU: Yeah, isn't it?

HS: I made a lot of friends. People wonder, how, how did you-? I don't know, I just made them, that's all. I just made them and had a great time.

LU: Yeah.

HS: I have one- She was a dentist, here. I don't know what she was doing. She was a dentist already from Japan. She must have taken another course [in dentistry?] or something. The university professor, the dentist's wife, I think, took her in or something. Anyway, she, she just didn't like it here at all. Somebody asked me if I wouldn't mind letting her stay with me. I was living alone at that time, and I had a little house, so I said, "That is fine." She and I have become very good friends.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: After she finished her university or whatever she was doing here, she met an Irishman. And she married him. I got invited to their wedding. See, her parents

wouldn't think of her marrying an Irishman so they didn't want to give her a wedding. So, she went to Ireland to get married.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: The husband's family gave her a wedding. So I was invited to that, but I couldn't go, I had another wedding at that time. But she and I are good friends. You should see her, I have pictures of her somewhere. She has- Claire, yeah, Claire would be coming to university in- Where this year? Los Angeles or somewhere. And the boy, he just finished his college at- Where was he? He kept sending me emails but I- See, I am forgetting now.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: In this way, I made a lot of friends. Yeah. Mark, his name is Mark. [clock chimes] Oh, there it is, 5 o'clock.

LU: Oh wow. 5 already.

[2:30]

HS: Yeah, that's right. I made a lot of friends in Japan.

LU: Are those flowers real? The one by the window?

HS: The flowers? The white one? Yeah, that's a- What do you call that thing? Orch-

LU: Orchid.

HS: Orchid.

LU: Is that what it is?

HS: My daughter sent it to me on Mother's, yeah, Mother's Day in May.

LU: I was told that they last forever.

HS: Yeah, they last, last forever. I just water it, that's all I do. The other, it's poinsettias?

LU: Yeah, yeah.

HS: It was Christmas time, but all the red is gone. Somehow, you can't throw it out somehow, because the green is still- Maybe it will get-

LU: It should come back.

HS: -red again for Christmas.

LU: It should come back

HS: It should, eh?

LU: Yeah.

HS: 'Cause that's not a flower, is it? It's leaf that turns red or something.

LU: Yeah, yeah. It's like fall. It turns red, I think?

HS: I just leave it there.

LU: Yeah, somebody told me before that you have to talk to the orchids.

HS: Oh, really?

LU: It helps them bloom. Or play the radio or the TV, as long as there is sound.

HS: There's always TV going on here.

LU: Oh good. Maybe that's why they are doing so well.

HS: It says May. It's always the same amount of flowers, doesn't decrease or increase. That thing there, the green. When I first came- See that, the thing that is in the pot? [points at a pot hanging from the ceiling]

LU: Yeah.

HS: The clay pot or whatever.

LU: Oh yeah.

HS: My grandson, that boy there [points at a picture], he had given it to me when he was a little kid.

LU: Oh, really?

HS: For Christmas or something.

LU: The plant?

HS: Huh?

LU: The plant or the pot?

HS: The pot, he had given it to me. It's got a leather strap on. So, I always treasured it because my grandson gave it to me. When I came here, I thought, "Gee, I can't just have it hanging here with nothing in it." My neighbour, she's on this floor, she said, "I've got a little plant, we will put it in there." It's been here for ten years now, look at that.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: [laughs] It's the same thing there.

LU: So were you ever a big part of the Redress?

HS: Was I ever a-?

LU: A part of the Redress.

HS: Oh, I don't know that I did much. I don't think I did now. I was in Montreal and then I came here. I did when I was asked to help but I didn't- I was working too hard.

LU: What kind of activities did you help out with?

HS: At the Centre?

LU: Yeah.

HS: My brother, Roy, was right in there like a dirty shirt, but I didn't- Any time they wanted help. They used to have a caravan.

LU: Caravan.

HS: Did they tell you that? They had Caravan every- How many, for how many weeks we would have it? Every day for so many weeks.

LU: Oh, yeah.

HS: You don't know what Caravan was?

LU: No, I am trying to think.

HS: The Japanese one was at the Centre. Every country would have their own somewhere. And it would go on all summer.

LU: Oh.

HS: [nods] You would visit each Caravan. People would visit. And I used to go up- I worked all my life, so I'd go up after work, after 5 o'clock. I would go up to the Centre and help them with whatever they were doing. Usually, they had me helping in the, not this Centre, the old Centre, where they had a-

LU: Yeah, the old one.

HS: When you came in, there was a reception area, and there was a little store there. I would be, I would be there, I would be there all the time.

LU: Like the gift shop.

HS: [nods] I was always there working. Every night until 11 o'clock. And then I'd go home, I didn't have a car or anything. I remember going home by bus. My leg is bad, you know, this thing.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: I can't, I can't sit down, I always have to sit. So, there would be a bus stop there, still there. And I'd have to stand there and wait for that stupid bus to come.

Sometimes I'd wait for an hour.

LU: Oh my.

HS: And I couldn't sit or anything. But I did it, every summer. Caravan was for, I forget how many weeks. I helped every summer like that. Any time they needed help, I was up there helping. My brother had karaoke so we used to have karaoke every Saturday night. I don't know what else I helped with.

LU: Did you ever do odori classes or anything like that?

HS: Oh, I did that, too. That was before the war though, I used to-

LU: Oh, really?

HS: I used to- My mother loved odori so we had Japanese kimono, we would do odori. Even here, geez, they were about four, five- Five, six year olds, I guess, both, little girls. I would teach them odori and I would take them- No, that was back home, in BC. I'd take them to various, you know, different, the next town, for instance, and put them on stage. Both girls have grown up now, they are grandmothers now.

[2:35]

LU: Where did you learn odori?

HS: I don't know, we were always musical. I, somehow- When we were little, my sister and I, when we were very tiny, when we were about seven, eight years old, we did odori. And in those days, that was very unusual.

LU: Yeah. Just at home or-?

HS: No, mom would put us in Japanese kimono and get us on the stage there. We used to do odori all the time, my sister and I. Somehow, I learned it and then, when I was teaching the little ones odori, I remember we used to do it, [I've done a lot?]. But

not lately, I haven't done anything like that. Since sister and I were working, you know, I had no time.

LU: Yeah, yeah.

HS: My sister-in-law is- See, my brother there with- [points at a picture] That, that picture.

LU: That one?

HS: At the bottom, yeah.

LU: Yeah, yeah.

HS: She is *ocha no sensei* [?]. Tea.

LU: Tea. Oh.

HS: [nods] Mrs. Shin, if you have heard of her.

LU: She's at the Centre, sometimes?

HS: She's there all the time, I think, yeah. She goes to various schools and she is pretty busy.

LU: Did you learn tea ceremony?

HS: No, I went to a few but I didn't, I didn't learn anything. You try it, you know?

LU: Oh wow.

HS: She's a Japanese *ocha no sensei*, a tea instructor? How would you say it in English?

LU: Yeah, yeah.

HS: Yeah. Tea ceremony instructor. She's been to Japan and she's done-

LU: So, do you have any favourite stories that you would like to tell about your childhood? When you were growing up or, do you have any other stories?

HS: I can't think right now you can [unclear] something out of me, I can't think right now. Favourite stories, what did we do anyway? We had a lot of fun when we were children.

LU: [nods] Did you ever have-?

HS: Our fun was different to fun now, you know? You didn't have cars. My dad always had a car but he was the only one that had a car. You didn't go anywhere, you walked. Gee, we walked for miles. I don't know how we did it. Stupid, with heels on.

LU: With heels on?

HS: It's funny when you are young, you wanna wear heels. [laughs]

LU: Yeah, yeah.

HS: Yeah, I was thinking, that ruined my- That's why my legs are ruined.

LU: You walked for miles in heels?

HS: Yeah, because you are in a country. Anytime we had- We'd put on a movie or anything, we'd have to go sell tickets, you know? We walked for miles, selling tickets.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: Living in a country. Japanese movie.

LU: Oh, that's amazing. Is it important to you that your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren know a little bit about their Japanese history?

HS: I think, I think they should, yeah, I think they should. I've always tried to talk to them, tell them about Japan. I don't think it should be a strange country to them, where they came, where their ancestors came from.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: I mean, should be proud of where you came from, I think. I am.

LU: Yeah. Our ancestors did a lot of work to get us here.

HS: Oh, I think every country, the ancestors had, they really had to work hard.

LU: Yeah, yeah. Hopefully, with this project, we'd be successful.

HS: So, what are you going to do with this project? You are getting it all in there like that and then-

LU: Yeah, yeah. What we will have is, the videos will be edited into short little segments.

HS: Mm-hm.

LU: So you know, five minutes, it will be talking about odori dancing. If anybody wants to learn about odori dancing, they can go on the internet and type it in and then, the videos will pop up.

HS: [nods] Oh, I see, I see.

LU: And they can just click on it and listen.

HS: Well, we did- In the country, we did a lot of, my sister and I, we did a lot of odori teaching to the, the whole school. We used to go to Japanese school. We used to have picnics. Japanese school would have a picnic once a year. We'd have the whole school out there doing odori. My sister and I, we would be doing, we would be the instructors. [chuckles] Yeah.

LU: Would you put the kimonos on and everything?

[2:40]

HS: No, not when we did the picnic, no, no. On New Year's, we always had a concert on New Year's. Shibaye [?], they called it.

LU: Shibaye [?].

HS: There would be a play, a short play by somebody. And there would be music. Well, then, we would put the kimonos on and we would do odori. Yeah.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: I've grown up with that. Mother started us very young.

LU: Mm-hm.

HS: At that time, there weren't that many, I guess there weren't that many, I don't know, my sister and I were the only ones that did odori in our area. We did a lot of it,

yeah. You know, you put the little Japanese kimonos on. Yeah, we've kept up the Japanese tradition. New Year's, like New Year's?

LU: Oh yeah. We do a big New Year's dinner, too.

HS: Yeah, you still do it?

LU: Yeah, big dinner, everybody gets together.

HS: That's right.

LU: We don't sing or anything, we're not a musical family, but-

HS: Oh, I see.

LU: We all get together and eat.

HS: Ogozo [?]. Yeah. Japanese food, eh?

LU: Oh yeah.

HS: Yeah, right, so you still carry that tradition?

LU: Yeah, yeah.

HS: [nods] We've always done it.

LU: New Year's Day is a big day for-

HS: For Japanese Canadians. More so than Christmas, somehow. It's different.

LU: It's a different feeling.

HS: Christmas to us is more for the children, we used to think.

LU: Yeah.

HS: But New Year's is for everybody, for the whole family. We would get together. We always got together.

LU: So, when you would have kimonos, would your mother make them? Did she buy them?

HS: No, they came from Japan.

LU: Oh, you ordered them from Japan?

HS: She never made them.

LU: Wow.

HS: When you put on yukata, we always went to bed with yukata, you know what that is, eh?

LU: No.

HS: Oh, it's like- It's made like a Japanese kimono.

LU: Oh, just the cotton-?

HS: We never wore night gown, we wore that. Yeah, cotton.

LU: Oh, yeah.

HS: We always wore with an obi.

LU: It's called yukata?

HS: Yukata.

LU: Yukata.

HS: Obi is a belt.

LU: Yeah, yeah.

HS: We never went to bed with- I didn't know what a night gown was. We all wore yukatas

LU: Really?

HS: Yeah, to go to bed.

LU: And were they long, they came right down to your ankles?

HS: [nods] But they got shorter and shorter as you got taller though. [laughs] So we got new a one. I was quite tall, so hard to keep me dressed.

LU: [laughs]

HS: I grew up fast, I don't know why I am so tall. For a Japanese, anyway.

LU: [nods]

HS: Not for- You are tall, too?

LU: [nods] Well, your father looks very tall.

HS: For a Japanese, he was, yeah.

LU: Your mother, was she tall?

HS: For a Japanese, yeah. She was taller than my girlfriends' mothers, for instance, yeah.

LU: Yeah.

HS: She is not as tall- Her brothers were tall. And she had nephews that were, oh my God, they were all tall. They all grew very tall in her family. Dad had big sisters, too, tall sisters. I guess we were, we were a tall family.

LU: Yeah.

HS: Because Japanese family as a whole, don't you find them tiny?

LU: Oh yeah.

HS: Yeah, even now-

LU: Oh yeah.

HS: When I saw you, my God [chuckles] How tall are you? 5'7", eh?

LU: 5'7"

HS: Yeah, my daughter's not that tall. My daughter's only about 5'4".

LU: Oh, really?

HS: Mm-hm.

LU: That's still pretty average.

HS: That's, for Japanese, yeah. Yeah, she didn't get that tall. Her dad, he wasn't, he was just a bit taller than me. I was tall, I am so tall. When I put my heels on, I would be taller. They didn't like that.

LU: And you brothers are all very tall.

HS: They are all, they are all- Except two brothers, I guess three, two or three. Well, Roy is gone now. He was the tiniest, He was always- Have you ever seen a Japanese bath? We used to have a Japanese bath.

LU: Just the big round-?

HS: No, it's made out of wood.

LU: Yeah.

HS: It has a thing on the bottom to build a fire under-

LU: Okay.

HS: Yeah, we used to have- Every night, you take a bath, Japanese bath. Dad used to take the two boys, Roy and Ross, to bath with him. The older ones would go on their own, of course. In our bath, you see, because the bottom is tatami, what's that? Tin? Is it tin? Whatever.

LU: Is it? Okay.

HS: You can't stand on that, you'd burn yourself, so you have a wooden- Dad would make a wooden platform that you put on the bottom.

LU: Oh.

HS: And ours used to float, if you didn't stand on it, it would float. So then, when you get in the bath, you push it down with your feet, you see it now.

[2:45]

HS: Well, dad took one child, the younger one, Ross, and he was washing him outside, and he left Roy inside. Then, when he went to get Roy, Roy is floating already. So, dad rushed him home. I think he died for a second there. They had a doctor and everything.

LU: Really?

HS: So, he's never been strong. He didn't grow as tall as the rest. That bath, that did that to him. See, those things float. Those wooden things, yeah. I think most baths, they had made so it was permanent, that thing at the bottom. But ours used to float, I remember that. And you had to push it down with feet as you got in.

LU: I was always wondering, you know, if the fire's underneath-

HS: Yeah.

LU: -how did the tub not catch on fire?

HS: No, no, because there's a tin there. There's a tin there. We called it tatami, not tatami. I am forgetting my words, too. There must be an English name for that.

LU: I don't know.

HS: If I said it, you would know.

LU: Maybe.

HS: I don't know, I am forgetting all my words now. See, that's going way back. We always- Japanese always had a floor bath. We always had it. I remember when we were in school, Tom Handerson, he used to make fun of us all the time. He used to say, in front of the whole class, he would say, "Old man Shin, every night, he'd take his lantern and get all his children, they'd all go one by one, they take their bath," he says. You know, we were so ashamed of that, you know. He used to make me cry.

LU: Oh no.

HS: He used to say things like that, yeah. I remember that.

LU: How did he bathe?

HS: Huh?

LU: How did his family have a bath?

HS: I guess they had a bath once a month. I don't know. If they had a chance in the tub.

LU: Yeah, I don't know.

HS: I guess, to him, that was- You know, they didn't do that. Old man Shin took his kids, all his kids, with a lantern, went to bath every night. Every night, we had to have a bath. That's one thing, one thing, every day, that bath was washed and cleaned and new water put it in. Every day. That was my job. I remember. But white people, white people, that's a funny way to put it, [laughs] at this time of age, but in those days, you know, relatively. They didn't take a bath. They just washed themselves. Even now, I don't think they take as many baths as us stupid Japanese. [laughing] I had to take a bath every day. When I was working, I used to take a shower in the morning and a bath at night.

LU: Yeah, yeah.

HS: Isn't that what you do?

LU: Yeah.

HS: Isn't it something? We are funny, aren't we?

LU: But I like that. It's relaxing.

HS: Yeah. At night, isn't it nice?

LU: Yeah.

HS: But when you are working, you gotta just take a shower in the morning. You've been in bed all night. No, we have a funny habit, we gotta have a bath. I remember when my sister- Our first trip to Japan, we were at my aunt's place, we got to my aunt's place. She said, [speaks Japanese], there's a nice bath- How would you translate in English? The bath is ready-

LU: A hot bath?

HS: -Hot bath is ready, I guess that's how you would say in English. So, my sister and I looked at each other. I said, "Do you think we smell or something? She's telling us to take a bath." [laughs] But that's a Japanese custom, you see. Before you have supper, you take a bath, change into a nice yukata or kimono. And you sit and have your supper. That's a Japanese custom.

LU: I know sometimes, they say, I drew you a bath. Or, bath is drawn.

HS: Bath is drawn, yeah.

LU: Something like that.

HS: In Japan, it's not that way, you see. They put the fire underneath and they heat it up. So, you can't draw a bath.

LU: No, no.

HS: In this country, you draw a bath, that's right. That's the proper way to say it, I guess.

LU: Yeah, I guess.

HS: I remember that. We looked at each other and said, "Do you think we smell? The auntie is telling us to take a bath." [laughs] But it's Japanese habit, you see.

LU: Also wearing the slippers? Or flip flops?

HS: Yeah, you wear- In Japan, you wear flip flops. Inside the house, you don't wear anything.

LU: Oh.

HS: Yeah. One of my cousins' place, she had a shoe store. You walk through the store to get to the living quarters. So, you walk through the store in, I guess slippers or whatever you had on. No, we had to change to slippers to walk into the store, too, yeah. We changed to slippers. And then, to get up into the proper living quarters, we had to change again. It got so confusing. And then, when we went up to the bathroom, we had to change again. There's special slippers for the bathroom.

[2:50]

LU: Oh, really?

HS: You never go into the bathroom with your regular- Never.

LU: Oh.

HS: That morning- It's so confusing because you have to keep changing slippers. So that morning, my sister came down in her bathroom slippers, down to the main floor. Well, that was horrible, you are not supposed to- [laughs] They keep changing, I am telling you. They are funny, the Japanese.

LU: Oh, your paper is underneath.

HS: Oh, that's what it is.

LU: Were there any other Japanese customs that you remember-?

HS: Japanese customs.

LU: -growing up with?

HS: I can't think of any. You know, custom is so different, isn't it? Now, it has changed. When I visit Japan now, it's altogether different Japan. It really is. When we went back in the 1930s, it was- I said, kids used to follow us, a long line of kids would come. When you are inside the room, you have *shoji*. You know what that is? The panels that close?

LU: Oh, the sliding doors?

HS: *Shoji*. It's called *shoji*. They would stick their tongue out in the paper so they could peek at us.

LU: Oh, really? [laughs]

HS: Yeah. [laughs]

LU: So you see little eye-?

HS: [laughing] I remember those kids, yeah. We were, we were- I don't know, we were strange, I guess. We had the shoes on, we had, you know, in those days, in Japan- They are different now. They are dressed the same as we are now. But in those days, they were not dressed like that. So we were, I don't know, [an oddity?] for them, I guess. They used to come, chasing me, walking behind us. That was back in 1930, 1930- I started high school in 1932, so it would be 1931. 1931. That's many years ago. Japan was so different then. It really was. Their school system, everything is different, really different. It was a wonderful education, though.

LU: Were they more disciplined in Japan?

HS: Oh, definitely. [nodding] Very disciplined. Very disciplined, yeah.

LU: Well, I can't remember if I have any more questions or not. We've had quite the conversation. Is there anything else that you can- ?

HS: I can't think of anything.

LU: No? Well, I will get this all set up. Thank you very much.

HS: You're welcome. I hope I was some help.

LU: Oh, more than you know it. Oh, yes.

HS: See, my brother wrote something, too. What day is it today? Monday.

LU: Monday.

HS: I have to be down for supper- Well, it won't take me long to read this, yeah.

LU: Oh, okay. Sorry.

HS: He starts, "Sydney Zentaro, Zentaro Sydney Shin." — That's what dad's name was, Shin Sydney, Japanese is Zentaro. — "He was a quiet man, a gentleman. Yet beneath this quiet [unclear] spiritual adventure, enterprise and resourcefulness that shaped his destiny as an immigrant in a frontier Canada, in frontier Canada, that a isn't there. Zentaro was born in Kagoshima, the oldest son of a successful rice miller who bought untimely investments in the share market, incurred debts. It was these debts that brought the 18-year-old to Canada in 1908. Within a few years, living frugally and by working day and night, Zentaro was successful in erasing the burden of the family debt. Before returning to Japan, he studied English and learned Western cooking while working as a house boy." — This isn't true, you know. When we went back to Japan in 1930s, he was still paying back that debt. He's got that wrong. — "After a short visit to Japan in 1914, he married, then returned to operate a boarding house for occidental miners at Britannia Beach copper mines, employing three Chinese men as helpers. His new bride soon joined him to work by his side, working long hours, serving boarders who language that she did not understand. By the end of the war, in 1918, Zentaro had accumulated savings of \$16,000, a tidy sum for an immigrant, and decided to open a business in Vancouver."

[2:55]

HS: "But first, after working every day for over three grueling years, he decided to rest for a short period in the country. He acquired a small farm and moved with his family of wife and three children, that's not correct, it was two children, to Whonnock, Fraser Vally in 1919. His enterprising spirit would not let him rest. He started to grow small fruits, strawberries or raspberries. The early years following the First World War were not extremely prosperous. Soon, he started to buy more and more acres, hiring dozens of workers, until a disastrous wet season caused shipment after shipment of berries to arrive on the prairie markets moldy and unsellable. With large priorities [?] to meet, he turned to logging. The Tokyo Earthquake of 1921 provided Zentaro with an opportunity of sending shiploads of pilings to be pounded into the earth to rebuild Tokyo. This prosperous adventure enabled to spread his logging operation to lumbering, starting Whonnock Lumber Mills which, to this day, is operating as a huge conglomerate listed in the Canadian stock markets. With a successful lumber mill, he opened additional logging camps on the Gulf Islands of Salt Spring and [unclear]. In 1930, the successful business man, now with seven children, returned to Japan for well-deserved vacation." — Weren't there five of us? Were there seven?

LU: Oh, I don't know.

HS: "Six months later, he received a frantic telegram from Canada stating that things were not going well. While he hastened to return, unlike today with air travel, it took weeks to return. By then, Depression had taken its toll. The whole operation was lost. The [unclear], it took his entire savings of 86,000, a fortune in those years, to pay off all the debts incurred by the bankruptcy, leaving himself with nothing. With a large family to feed, Zentaro again turned to farming, scraping up funds to purchase 87 acres of tax sale land. Battling the hard years following the Depression, he worked from dawn into the darker night with his growing children, now able to help. Gradually, the farming operation grew, working at the farm during the growing season while clearing more land and selling logs and [cored wood?] during the winter. By the late 1930s, he again ran a large operation with produce the year around: small fruits, vegetables and flowers in summer; hothouse rhubarb, the famous takuan during the winter. The lean years were almost over. During the late 30s, the issei farmers were becoming concerned that the young nisei men were forced to leave the farms to earn needed wages in logging sawmills, pulp mills, and shingle camps. In 1938 and 39, Zentaro led a delegation of farmers to seek a crop more profitable and stable than berries by researching farms in the northwestern United States. Hops used in brewing beer was selected as an experimental crop. [This move?] proved successful as the yield value for an acre turned out be three times that of strawberries and with less work. As a manager of this new cooperative adventure, he led the Fraser Valley farmers to increase their hops acreage. A

[unclear] kiln [?] was built in 1940. A new era was begun for the Japanese Canadian farmers, as acres of hops in the lower Fraser Valley was tripled in the spring of 1941. War with Japan came in December.” — Yeah, he was doing alright, with the hops.

LU: Oh wow.

HS: “His entrepreneurial spirit drove Zentaro, but he worked equally hard for his community, taking leading roles in farms associations, nisei education, and other community work. He continued to take on active role in the community on his relocation to Toronto after the war. The JCCA, kotobukai [?], the Buddhist Church were among many organizations in which he became involved. As President and head of the building community, he took a prominent role in the building of Toronto Buddhist Church. He represented the community in the occasional visit of Toronto by the Royal Highness, by His Royal Highness, Crown Prince Akihito.”

[3:00]

HS: “I recall proudly remarks made by his fellow isseis that, [unclear] I don’t know what that means. His wife and our mother would say of him that he drove himself in his work but also [speaking Japanese]-”

LU: What does that mean?

HS: “ -for others he worked well. I have been asked to describe the man who has influenced me the most. He did it by his days, the way in which he faced adversities, the way in which he shared his successes, mostly he showed us the way. Rarely did he lecture, but imprinted in my mind are some of the things he had advised.

Whatever your endeavor, become the best. Even if you choose to be a gambler, let no one beat you. The most valuable thing in your relationship with your fellow men is, [speaking Japanese].” Don’t make trouble for other people, I don’t know how you would say that in English.” And then he says here, the quiet man passed away in 1969. That’s all he’s written about that.

LU: Oh wow. Well, that’s amazing. Thank you.

HS: So, our parents really did work, you know.

LU: Yeah, they worked very hard.

[End interview]