

George Iwasaki

SR 958, Oral History, by Etsu Osaki

Japanese American Oral History Project

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IWASAKI: George Iwasaki

EO: Etsu Osaki

Transcribed by: Unknown

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Tape 1, Side 1

1992 August 19

EO: [This is an interview with] George Iwasaki, a Nisei, age 80 years old, at Oregon Buddhist Church at 3720 Southeast 39th¹ in Portland. Today is August 19, 1992. The interviewer is Etsu Osaki of the Nikkei Oral History Project under the direction of the Oregon Historical Society. This is Tape 1, Side 1.

Okay, George, why don't you just tell me about your early years; where you were born and so forth.

IWASAKI: I was born in Sumner, Washington, March 4th, 1912. I don't know when, but possibly at age two or three, my parents moved near Hillsboro, to a farming section of Hillsboro which is called Farmington. My parents were dairy farmers at that time. I don't believe that we lived at this particular farm, which is about, perhaps, six or seven miles from Hillsboro. And then we moved to our present location where I still reside, which my father bought in 1916.

EO: Would you give us the address of that present residence?

¹ Now Southeast Cesar Chavez Boulevard.

IWASAKI: At that time, it was a Rural Route 5, and, perhaps, Box 34, as I recall. The rural route started from Hillsboro, so at that time, we must have been about the 34th one on that route. Now that location is called Minter Bridge Road, the address would be 2555 Southeast Minter Bridge Road, Hillsboro.

EO: Do you want to say something about your parents? Where they came from and how they met and so forth?

IWASAKI: My father, calculated his birthday, would be 1876. He was brought up in rural Shiga-ken Prefecture. He came to Canada in 1899, which would make his age – oh, what would it be? Anyway, a real young man.

The reason most of the early immigrants came was because of the economic conditions in their country, and especially in the farming sector.

In 1901, he had crossed over to the United States and I don't know what – I think, from his tales, he'd done various odd jobs, which all the immigrants just picked up whatever work they could find. He did relate that one time he worked in a brewery because he liked to drink sake, [EO laughs] but he didn't have the money to buy sake, so he worked at a brewery. He also worked on the railroads and he went as far east as Missoula, Montana, that I recall.

I don't know when he started doing farming, but I do know that, like all the single Issei men, [as] they got along in years and wanted to settle and have a family. So he wrote to his relatives in Shiga-ken that he wanted somebody for a wife and, as the custom of the Issei at that time, sent for so-called picture bride. And so my mother, who I believe was about age 19, decided to venture out.

She was born in 1890. She arrived in Tacoma, Washington, in 1910. I believe they must have been married after she arrived. I don't know, like I say, I don't know what year they moved from Washington State to Oregon, but my earliest recollections was only that I started to grade school in this Farmington area, so I must have been age five.

EO: So you're the oldest in the family, right?

IWASAKI: Yes, I'm the oldest.

EO: So how large a family did they have?

IWASAKI: Eventually, eight. Three boys, who came first, and then five girls.

EO: What do you remember about growing up on the farm, in that period?

IWASAKI: Well, I can't remember much, except for the fact that, because of economic circumstances, everybody worked, and including myself. In fact, after we moved closer to Hillsboro, which is still, perhaps, two and a half miles to school, and at that time there were no buses, so I had to walk to school. But when I came back from school, even in the elementary grades, when I come home, it was my job was to help on the farm, whatever I was capable of doing, as well as all my brothers and sisters. So, rather than socialize or take part in school activities, we were just told to come home just as soon as school was out and help on the farm. So that was kind of the experience during my younger years.

EO: So you said your parents had a dairy farm. Was that unusual among the Japanese, at that time?

IWASAKI: Apparently so, I believe. I'm surprised that they were Japanese dairy farmers. Well, I found out later that in the Puget Sound area there were, not a lot, but a scattering of dairy farmers also, besides the produce farmers.

EO: But to your knowledge, your parents were the only ones in Oregon or in the Portland area?

IWASAKI: Oh, wait did the – let me see. No, we found there was another family near us in Hillsboro, but I think their origin was Tokyo, I'm not sure. Yes, because the man was a city man and his dairy was something altogether out of his line, you might say. However, he was a very smart man so he was quite successful. He had a family, too. I believe in — we were acquainted with him after he moved in 1916 to a farm. I don't know when we first got acquainted with them, but I believe about the year 1924 he had accumulated enough of a fortune, so he pulled up stakes and the whole family went back to Japan. He had a larger dairy. I don't know how many animals he had. But in a profession that he wasn't acquainted with at all, he was quite successful. He was admired by the *hakujin*² neighbors, too.

EO: In those days did your parents lease the land, or were they able to buy the land?

IWASAKI: Well, my father leased the farm in the Farmington area, which, is, oh, approximately four miles from where we live presently. I believe that where ever he may have farmed in Washington before he came to Oregon, most Japanese farmers leased because they weren't eligible to own property. Plus the other fact is most of the Japanese still had come to the United States thinking that it was the land of opportunity paved with gold, you might say, so they would get their riches and return back to Japan. That was their thought when they came.

But, like I say, I don't know how many moves in farming my father did in Washington, but this was first one in Oregon. This was a leased property and when the lease was up, which may have been, maybe, two years or three years, I don't recall, he had to find another place to lease, which is our present location. This also was a lease. His family was growing and the lease would be up, so he would have to look for another place. He was getting tired of the thought of having to move with everything.

² Japanese for white people.

Of course, I think, he mentioned this to the landlady, who happened to be the landlord at this farm. She was an elderly widow lady, I believe. She says, “Well, why don’t you buy this place?”

He says, “I have no money.” And she said she would give him good terms. As I recall, the price at that time for a 50 acre farm was \$12,000, which is, besides that being an enormous amount for my father to take care of, still, it was also, I don’t believe it was inflated, but it was a real good – I mean it was...

EO: It’s expensive.

IWASAKI: Yeah, it was expensive; expensive farm. So, she made arrangements with my father. So my father was able to buy this farm on a long time arrangement.

However, at that time, as I recall conversations with other immigrant Japanese, they ridiculed my father and said, “Ah, Iwasaki-sama, *America de wa shino tsumoridena*”³ [Laughs] In other words, he was — they thought he shouldn’t set his roots down in this country because they had aspirations of returning to Japan with their fortunes. But I think he realized that there wasn’t going to be no fortune to pick up and go back to Japan.

EO: Would you know about what year that would have been? When he purchased the land?

IWASAKI: It would have to be, perhaps, 1917, because...

EO: Did he buy it in your name?

IWASAKI: No

EO: At that time, he was still able to purchase it.

³ Japanese for “Mr. Iwasaki is going to die in America.”

IWASAKI: Yes

EO: Okay, that was before they put in that law.

IWASAKI: Yes. At that time, also, we were still in a small dairy, but the First World War came along. With the dairy situation, you're just tied to the business, because it's an everyday business from early morning 'til late at night and you have no — you can't leave for a day, in other words, if you're in this industry.

So, I believe, my mother was getting rather disgusted and bored. In fact, we had heard that other Japanese, because of the First World War, the boom, they were in the produce business, vegetable farming. They made a killing, so to speak. So my mother persuaded my father to sell off the cows and get into raising vegetables. And this happened in the year, I believe, 1924.

EO: What kind of vegetables did he raise mainly, in those days?

IWASAKI: Let's see, well, lots of Japanese daikon, potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, beans, and eggplants. I don't know how we prospered, but at least the land was really fertile because the base had been dairying.

EO: Right. [Laughs] It's been fertilized. So where did he sell his produce?

IWASAKI: We also raised gooseberries and blueberries and peas. I think we had a cannery in Hillsboro, so a lot of things went to Hillsboro, and I think he must have peddled it in Hillsboro town, which, at that time, maybe it had a population of not much more than 2,000, maybe 2,500. But in the later years, well, I'm not sure, maybe mid-1920s. By that time he raised strawberries which went to the cannery also. I think he raised more than enough so he made arrangements with the produce company in

Portland, who came by daily and picked up the produce he had ready, because he couldn't be on the farm and also ship it, because it would take too much away from the farm, and he had to stay there.

EO: Realizing how busy your dad must have been, farming, do you recall, was it your mom or dad that disciplined you, the children, and set values? What kind of values did either of your parents talk about or emphasize in your lives? Or did they? [Laughs]

IWASAKI: I kind of think it was osmosis. Just. [Laughs]

EO: Just by example of the hard work.

IWASAKI: My mother was sterner, but my father was easygoing. I don't recall that they ever tried to keep us in line or anything. So I really don't know too much about how I grew up to be what I became. [Laughs]

EO: Do you recall going to community activities, some organizations such as, maybe, church, language school, *kenjinka*?⁴

IWASAKI: Not 'til, I would say, I was out of high school, in other words up to, say – well, I'll take it back. I think in the mid-1920s, there may have been four or five Japanese farming families who came to our area in Washington County. So those were about the only people that – and, being farmers, we rarely, if ever, I mean, not frequently, interacted with them.

As with all Japanese immigrant families, the man was the head of the farming business, you might say, so naturally, he had to have contact with the outside world, his business and laws and so forth. So they picked up the rudimentary English speaking

⁴ Prefectural association.

ability and so forth. But the mothers on all the farms stayed home, and they, in fact, generally, you might say, ran the operation. Not altogether, but, I mean...

EO: The day to day?

IWASAKI: Yes, the day to day.

EO: Do you recall your dad being in any group, like a group of farmers or business?

IWASAKI: There was only, like I say, half a dozen scattered in mid-1920s, but by the 1930s there was a big influx of Japanese that came to the Banks area, because, well, I guess they probably knew that this was an ideal spot for raising dryland strawberries, because Banks has a lot of south slope land with hills, which produces early strawberries. So a large group of Japanese came in then. So they made a Japanese, *Nikkei jin kai*,⁵ which is called the Banks *doushikai*.⁶

EO: Did you have any religious associations or connections?

IWASAKI: No, until, maybe, simultaneously with the arrival of the large group of Japanese, I would say, must have been originally 12 to 15 families. So then they started a *howakai*.⁷

EO: Who was the minister at that time? That would have been, what, in the mid-1930s?

IWASAKI: Mid-1930s, yeah.

⁵ 日系人会: Japanese association.

⁶ 道志会; Association of kindred spirits, or Brotherhood.

⁷ Buddhist church.

EO: Well, I can find out who the minister was. But he would go out to someone's home and you would meet there?

IWASAKI: Yes. Well, we had a small building in the town of Banks, which was not a very big town anyway, kind of a small building that they started a language school. So they used that as a meeting for the *howakai*.

EO: Do you remember attending the *howakai*?

IWASAKI: This wasn't on a regular schedule. I mean, being farmers, most of the year, they never met, but mostly, I believe, after harvest in the fall and winter. No, I don't know what the schedule was, but I...

EO: It was usually when...

IWASAKI: Once in two months.

EO: Usually when they weren't busy?

IWASAKI: Yes.

EO: Well, how about, like, you know, if there was a funeral or a wedding? Would they come into town for that?

IWASAKI: Yes, I think so. Or else, I remember one in particular in 1934, I believe it was held at the American church. I don't recall who officiated.

EO: Well, that would have been a Christian funeral, not a Buddhist funeral.

IWASAKI: Yes...

EO: But for the Buddhist funeral, they would have to come to the *otera*⁸ in Portland? Right?

IWASAKI: Yes, that's right.

EO: Did you go to the language school?

IWASAKI: Yes. I was out of high school. Of course, my younger brothers and sisters were, I guess, you might say, more, or should be more receptive to the Japanese language school. But I think in my case, and perhaps some of the older ones about my age — well, for one thing we couldn't understand why it was that here we're born here, we're Americans, why do we have to get Japanese language education? [EO laughs] So, with that sort of mentality we didn't go to study with any earnestness. So, sure we went and picked up the kana; katakana and hiragana. Some of the students were more conscientious and they progressed into, what do you call? The next stages of the...

EO: High school?

IWASAKI: No, you know what I mean. The...

EO: The kanji.

IWASAKI: Yes. So, I didn't...

EO: Did they go just once a week or did they go every day?

⁸お寺: Buddhist temple.

IWASAKI: No. I believe it was discontinued in the summertime.

EO: But during the rest of the year, how often did you go?

IWASAKI: I can't recall. I think it must have been maybe two Saturdays a month. Maybe on both Saturday and Sunday. I don't recall.

EO: So you would probably go all day on a Saturday.

IWASAKI: I don't know if it was all day or not. At least half a day.

EO: Do you recall the names of any of the teachers?

IWASAKI: Yes. There was a Miss Sato, I believe from Japan. I mean she was, you know, maybe, a temporary visitor or whatever. There was Mrs. Tsujii. She was a member of this church,⁹ wasn't she?

EO: I've heard her name before, teaching Japanese.

IWASAKI: And also her husband taught, too. We had – was there a Fukuda?

EO: Oh, yes. Yes, she was there. I think she also taught in Gresham...

IWASAKI: Yes, I think so. She taught maybe in the city and elsewhere. And I believe, last before the school, or maybe because of the war, I don't recall, but also Reverend, was it Sugimoto from here? He was also briefly a teacher, but I think they were too rowdy and he didn't want to teach anymore, or something. [Laughs]

⁹ Oregon Buddhist Church.

EO: How many students were there? I'm sure it was just one room, right?

IWASAKI: Yes, one room.

EO: How many, do you recall?

IWASAKI: Oh, I would say maybe 15 or so, maybe 18, I don't know. That'd be a lot. Not a big number.

EO: What about the English school. What stands out in your mind of the American schools?

IWASAKI: Like I say, the first school I attended was in this Farmington area.

EO: Do you recall the name of the school?

IWASAKI: Yes, it was called Farmington. One room school.

EO: That was grade school, one to eight?

IWASAKI: Yes, one to eight. I think there was only one teacher. I believe it still stands. Although the man next door bought it and I think he tore it down, or was going to tear it down. But up to a few years ago it was still standing. I went there just one year; introduction to school. Then we moved and then went to grade school in Hillsboro, and of course, I had to walk and walk back. I can still recall the names of the teachers [EO laughs] up to the 8th grade, that were my teachers.

EO: That wasn't a one room school?

IWASAKI: No.

EO: That was a bigger school.

IWASAKI: That was a...

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]

Tape 1, Side 2
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EO: We were talking about the American school, and you went to Hillsboro Grade School and it was a bigger school, right?

IWASAKI: Right, yes.

EO: So did you go up to the 8th grade there?

IWASAKI: Yes, graduated the 8th grade at Hillsboro.

EO: Were there any Japanese students?

IWASAKI: No, I believe I was the only one.

EO: You were the only family?

IWASAKI: Yes, only family. Yes.

EO: Did they treat you any differently because you were Japanese? Or do you recall any incidents?

IWASAKI: No, I don't recall, except I know my schoolmates really butchered my name, and as I think about it now, later, when I first — introducing to new people and they pronounced your name so incorrectly, I think they were maybe just making fun of me. Of course, kids were younger so maybe they couldn't pronounce my name. [Laughs] But they really butchered my last name.

EO: But George was your given name.

IWASAKI: Yes, it's my given name, yes. It's the only name I have.

EO: Then you went to Hillsboro High School?

IWASAKI: Yes, at the time – well, I don't know for what reason other than, I assume that when you went through grade school, to the high school you just automatically went. I think my parents must have assumed that was the thing to do, so I went to Hillsboro High School. I think by that time they had a school bussing system. I'm sure, maybe, from 7th grade on, we had school buses.

EO: But up 'til then you walked?

IWASAKI: Yes, up to then I walked.

EO: About how many miles were you walking?

IWASAKI: About two and a half miles. Both ways. One way is two and a half miles, I mean.

EO: You ate lunch at school? You brought your lunch?

IWASAKI: Yes, brought the lunch.

EO: What kind of lunch did you bring?

IWASAKI: I know, originally, I took rice balls. I think whether the schoolmates remarked or whatever, but I felt kind of out of place. [Both laugh] I saw some other kids having sandwiches, so my mother started packing sandwiches for me.

EO: Is that the same high school now, or was there a different school?

IWASAKI: No, it's still the same high school.

EO: Same building?

IWASAKI: No, the building, the high school I went to — incidentally I entered in midterm 1926, which would be, perhaps, February 1926. The building, then, was constructed in, maybe, 1915. At the time there must have been around 300 students in the whole student body.

At that time, I had one other Japanese student who was also my classmate in the same class. His name is Mamoru Wakasugi. I don't believe that in the four years I attended there, any more Japanese entered at all, because I think the next group of Japanese who may have attended were younger.

EO: So when did they move to the present location, the building? Was it after you left or was it during your time?

IWASAKI: No. The class of 1929 had their graduation ceremonies at the new school. My class was the first class that had a full school year at this new school, which is now a middle school.

EO: Right. You didn't really have time to participate in high school afterschool activities...

IWASAKI: No.

EO: Because you had to go home to the farm.

IWASAKI: In fact, there was chances of two bus routes coming my way. I was told to take the first one, [Both laugh] which I did. I was very — and besides my stature, of course, I was — all the athletic boys were my heroes. [Both laugh] And I really envied them and looked up to them and like to see them participate, but I rarely got the chance to even see games. But I do recall, a lot of the boys who were athletes, and still do to this day.

EO: Do you still see some of them?

IWASAKI: Yes I do, because we have a alumni picnic, second Sunday in August, and it's always held, and I have been out of — I was graduated in 1930, so it would 62 years, I guess, since high school. I enjoy going to see the old time students. They don't all come, and of course they pass away and all that. But I do see some of the athletes of that era, I meet with them and enjoy meeting them, talking to them, reminiscing.

EO: When you were growing up, being a Japanese, did you feel comfortable when you were in school or when you were with other kids? Did you feel like you were one of them?

IWASAKI: Yes, I don't believe I was discriminated against, but there may have been behind my back, which, being younger, I may not have been aware of. But there wasn't any incidents that stick out in my mind. Although I do, maybe not directed to my face, but I have heard comments, saying Japs.

EO: So who were your close friends during your school years?

IWASAKI: I had, graduating in the 8th grade, I had — well, I suppose it's only just in the school, but I ran around with three or four boys who also went through with me to high

school, but they're all deceased now. The few that I see at this alumni picnic, but very few.

EO: Is there anything else that you want to share about your childhood?

IWASAKI: No, I think I was just nondescript.

EO: [Laughs] You were just busy on the farm!

Let's go to the years leading up to the war, or perhaps talk about what happened, you know, when the evacuation happened. Now you had graduated in 1930, so there's about 10 years. Okay, now, what did you do during that time, up to the war?

IWASAKI: Okay. I'm graduating, so I'll be out of school. My next brother, Ike, who's four years younger, so he would be, by the time of the 1940s — or anyway, and also the other brothers and sisters are growing up. So my father expanded farming operations, and I guess I just stayed on in the farm, while — I guess it was kind of the thing to do, plus with economic conditions as it was, and we did into the Great Depression from 1931 through 1937, I guess you might say. Anyway, and so, graduating from high school, I didn't have any thoughts of going to college, and of course I knew it was impossible without any money, but I didn't have any aspirations to go either. [Laughs]

Anyway, farming operations gets enlarged as time goes on. So, like I say, we had a base farm in Hillsboro, and the Japanese farmers, a big influx, came to Banks, dry farming strawberries, and some of my father's friends said, "Well, why don't you also expand into Banks?" So, my father did. He had a farm in Hillsboro and we were commuter farmers to Banks, raising strawberries. That was because we had a larger family and you can also be able to do that. So we were also large strawberry farmers, as well as produce and cannery farmers on the old place. Plus, well, we marketed produce in the early market here in Portland, which was my job, to...

EO: To bring the produce in?

IWASAKI: Yes. That was early morning; the market opened at four. At that time it wasn't too well regulated. You didn't have a regular stall, so to get the best spots, you had to leave early and line up at the entrance of the building to get in. So most of the time I arrived at 12 o'clock, abouts. I slept in the truck 'til it opened.

EO: What market was that called?

IWASAKI: This is called the – well, the Japanese called it the Italian Market.

EO: Where was that located?

IWASAKI: The location is 10th and Belmont, east side. But prior to that it was along Union Avenue by the railroad and at that time, I can recall. Although my dad didn't go there, I mean we didn't go there often, at that time there were farmers bringing produce on the wagons. But by the time it moved to 10th and Belmont, of course, they were all brought in on trucks.

EO: So, that's pretty much what you did up until World War II started?

IWASAKI: Yes, plus my next brother, Ike, was growing up, so he rented another separate strawberry farm, but we worked together on both farms, yes.

And then the war broke out. And we also, from December 7th 'til January and February, of course, we were under pressure and all the rumors and so forth. And, of course, when Executive Order 9066 came to be, we knew that we were going to be moved and, of course, we had lot of problems connected with that. We didn't know where they would send us or what the outcome would be, whether the families [of] Japanese would be separated, or whatever.

As far as our family in Hillsboro was concerned, we were well-respected. I don't know if we were admired, but at least we had good relations. When this order came through, I, being the oldest, since we didn't know what the future was going to be, so I decided, and maybe I was advised, that the best thing to do was to go and obtain letters of introduction to wherever we might be sent, you know.

Since we had good relations, why, I went to the sheriff, got a letter from him, and the banker, and the doctors, and the lawyers that we had dealings with. And they all wrote real nice letters. But, unfortunately, they've been lost. [Laughs] I should have kept them. They would have been real nice artifacts. But, like I say, when I went and told them they said, "Well, certainly, they don't mean you. You've been here." And, "This doesn't apply to you." Of course, we knew better. So, that's what I did.

EO: Now somewhere in between, did you get married before camp? Or after?

IWASAKI: I believe I'm possibly among the last of the Japanese custom marriages of *baishakunin*.¹⁰

EO: But your wedding was in Portland, right?

IWASAKI: Right.

EO: So that must – it was 1940...

IWASAKI: Well, I guess, maybe November was the arrangement type, you know, the Japanese custom of *baishakunin* and so forth. I think we were — I'm not sure at that time, November — or maybe we did have the date set, but anyway, the fact that the war came, hurried it up.

¹⁰媒酌: Go-between, or a match maker.

EO: So you were married in 1942?

IWASAKI: Yes, February 22nd.

EO: Oh, right before evacuation, wasn't it?

IWASAKI: That's before evacuation, but after the war broke out and after Executive Order 9066. At that time, my wife, Tomiko, was a native of Auburn. We were going to have the marriage ceremony here in Portland, but we had travel restrictions. I don't know whether she and her family had to get travel permits or not. But at least her parents were not permitted to travel, so they were not able to come.

EO: So, you must have had special permits, because you had to come from Hillsboro to Portland, which...

IWASAKI: [Laughs] I guess that's right, too.

EO: So that means, was it mainly your family that attended the wedding?

IWASAKI: Yes. Let me see. No, I guess my parents weren't there either. Just my brothers and sisters, and her brothers and sisters.

EO: So it was a small wedding.

IWASAKI: It was small. Yes, it was small.

EO: Which minister married you?

IWASAKI: The license was issued in Auburn, signed by Reverend Shibata, but the ceremony was performed here by Reverend Terakawa.

EO: Terakawa, oh, I see. So, who was your *baishakunin*?

IWASAKI: My cousin, his name is Zentaro Maekawa, who resides in Kent. Right now he must be — he's got to be 90 years old.

EO: So you had never met Tomiko, up until...

IWASAKI: I guess I was acquainted through the family, because my father and her father were good buddies from way back, presumably.

EO: When your father lived up there?

IWASAKI: Yes, in fact they're from the same...

EO: Same *ken*?¹¹

IWASAKI: Yes. So maybe periodically we visited, I guess, but not that frequent, no.

EO: Did you go to camp? What did your folks do?

IWASAKI: We had to settle our farm and we also had leased strawberry fields. The farm was a vegetable farm, produce farm, and we didn't know what to, how to do. I know, with pressure you can't sell, and we don't know if we want to sell. We didn't know what we should do.

¹¹県: Prefecture.

As it turned out, we talked to our longtime neighbors who were German, of German ancestry, I mean, German Americans, and they ran a very large dairy farm. So we talked to them, had him take over our farm while we were gone. Of course, he raises forage for his dairy animals and we had some permanent crops like asparagus already there, plus we had — in other words our agriculture's different from his. But for real, real low rent, we told him, if he would take care of the place and whatever crops he wanted to raise there. If it happened to be inappropriate at the time we came back, that we would buy it from him, so he wouldn't be out. So that was the arrangement with the home place.

The strawberry farms, and incidentally right up to, even with the Executive Order, and the fact that we are imminently going to be removed, we were encouraged to keep up the crops. So, you know, in other words, I suppose for the war effort or whatever, we're supposed to take care of it right to the last minute. I don't believe we did that extensively, 'cause we really couldn't do that.

The government set up Wartime — what'd they call it? W.C.C.A., [Wartime Civil Control Association]. Well, anyway, a hastily put-together agency to help transfer properties for the Japanese. Here was a crop just about to mature and ready for harvest, because that time, come springtime, and the government couldn't find anybody right then that would buy the crop or take over the lease, which in fact it would be, because they were leases, you know.

So, I think one farm we had to abandon because there wasn't anybody to take over that crop and lease. And one farm made arrangements through an intermediary, but, of course, the buyer was just somebody off the street, you might say, so we never got paid for that. So you might say those two strawberry fields were just a total loss.

And the house, where we live in now, was built. We started building in the summer of [1941]. Barely finished that winter and we resided in it for just two weeks in 1942. Of course, we didn't know what to do with the house. It was a nice house at that time. Advice from Japanese friends and neighbors said, "Well, you're not going to ever see that again, better sell it." And some people said, "Well, why don't you lease it?" We didn't

know what would be the best course. And, of course, under pressure how are you going to find anybody to make arrangements?

But it so turned out that there was a new county doctor coming into town and we arranged to lease it to him. I got one man in the bank to be the man to take care of it, so he collected the rent. So from 1942, we returned the fall of – let's see. When was...

EO: 1945?

IWASAKI: Fall of 1945 we came back. In the interim, why, the doctor had moved out. Of course he paid the rent. There's somebody else in there. Of course, we knew it wouldn't be kept up, like if you were in there, but it wasn't too bad in a shape when we came back, so were able to get the house back. So, I guess were among...

EO: The lucky ones. [Laughs]

IWASAKI: The luckier people, yes.

EO: Did you go to a camp? Or did you decide not to?

IWASAKI: For our order to – and incidentally, in the early spring of 1942, like I say, most of the Japanese in the county leased their strawberry fields. Of course, they had to make arrangements to water for their crops, but they were relatively freer to move out of this exclusion area because they didn't own the property. Several of the county moved to Ontario, Eastern Oregon, as well as elsewhere. But we had holdings that we couldn't just leave and go, so we stayed and did the best we could 'til the order came to enter the assembly center in Portland. Our county was moved on May 20th, 1942.

And they gathered all the Japanese in the county in a certain place in, I believe it was Forest Grove, and travelled by bus to the assembly center here in North Portland

Stockyards. Of course, we were bewildered and didn't like the conditions and whatever. I believe they gave us a room with the whole family – no, wait a minute.

In February my brother, Ike, was inducted into the Army, I don't remember the date, if it was after the Executive Order or not. In March my next brother, Arthur, was drafted. And so I'm the oldest and the rest of my sisters and parents, and when we got to the assembly center, they gave us a room with all of us in that one room. So I and my wife made a small partition in part of that large room, and that's where we had to stay.

About the end of May recruiters came from Eastern Oregon. Mostly, of course, that was a free zone, Eastern Oregon. Like a lot of places where agriculture is controlled by processors or bankers, or whatever, that help out the farmers to get them started and carry them through, sort of thing. In other words, people without money, resources. In Eastern Oregon the situation was with the Amalgamated Sugar Company was the big...

[End of Tape 1, Side 2]

Tape 2, Side 1
1992 August 19

EO: [Tape 2], Side 1, and we're continuing the interview with George Iwasaki.

IWASAKI: As I was saying, the sugar companies have invested heavily in the farmers in the Eastern Oregon, Ontario, Nyssa area, which at that time were mostly native Caucasian farmers. But with the outbreak of the war, their farm labor all rushed to Portland to the shipyards, because of the better pay and everything, so the sugar companies would be left holding the sack, so to speak. And so they could see that there was a pool of idle Japanese in the assembly center, [EO laughs] so they came recruiting Japanese people out of the centers to go to Eastern Oregon and work in the farms. Of course, our family being in the assembly center, which, while the younger sisters probably thought was a nice thing for them, because they could have nothing to do and socialize and have a good time, I could see that was no place to be incarcerated.

So I think the first sugar company recruitment to the assembly center must have been towards the last weeks in May. And as I recall, I believe about seven of the unattached young men, that is meaning maybe adventurous or not tied down to family obligations and so forth, they went to Ontario. The sugar company, I don't know how they went but the sugar company took responsibility for them and took them over. They surveyed the situation in Eastern Oregon and came back with a favorable outlook, whatever.

Although in the center, itself, here, there was all kinds of rumors. I don't believe most of the people had ventured out of this locality so they don't know what Eastern Oregon is. Rumors of Indians and so on. [Laughs] And since we're stuck here, why should we go because they tell us to go over there, volunteer over there? All kinds of rumors and everything occurred here.

Since this was while we were going out as laborers, at least it was in the line of which we grew up in and knew. Plus the fact that there was already a few farmers from our Banks location who voluntarily had gone over there, so we knew we wouldn't be

among new people, new surroundings, and whatever. That was the first recruitment, and then there was another recruitment and a few whole families left in this one. Among them was Ouchida, Henry Kato, the Morishita family, Naganuma family.

[Tape stops]

EO: Sorry. Okay.

IWASAKI: And on the third recruitment...

EO: Who were some of the families that you mentioned?

IWASAKI: Jack Ouchida's family, Henry Kato's family. Well, family meaning their parents. Haruo Morishita, and Naganuma, and there may have been some others as well as a lot of single or unattached people were there, too.

The third recruitment came through in this assembly center and this time a large contingent went, because when these first people came back and told us very favorable conditions, we're not restricted over there. Although we knew it was going to be hot weather-wise. They were treated well by the Caucasian farmers. Of course, the farmers were desperate, they had to have help to manage their crops and all.

I ventured out on this third recruitment, just myself, to see what it was all about. I stayed there the first week, looked around, talked to the people. There was also some Japanese farmers who were already residents there, prior to the war, maybe longtime farmers. Anyway, they were farmers who were settled there. This was a government Farm Security Administration [F.S.A.] camp, which was a agricultural camp with floor tents, laundry and shower in a big trailer, and a mess hall. I don't think the mess hall was continued, but it was at that time because it was a temporary thing. They also had a government employment agency there. I stayed there a week and looked around and also looked up the people who had voluntarily evacuated from our county. I decided this

was much better than staying here in this assembly center. So I wrote back to my family and told them of the conditions and said that we should come up here.

I also had in my mind, although I didn't know whether it would work or not, see, when we left the home, see, we had the old house and the new house. In the old house, in one room — incidentally, the old house was under the care of the farmer who took care of the farm. In one room we had several items that we thought we could use if we ever got into different circumstances. So my thought at that time was, whether it would work or not, I'm going to tell the government that I'm going to help them out by getting out of their center, you know, it's helping the government, if they permit me to get my truck, which I had a large truck at home, get my things from there and have them brought up to Nyssa, this Nyssa F.S.A. camp where I'd come.

While I was thinking of it, the following week, the rest of my family came into Nyssa and I was surprised. Of course, I wrote a favorable letter and told them they should come, but I didn't know they would be coming that soon. The following week they all showed up. [Laughs]

In fact, at that time I had nothing to do and it was a Sunday and to help out the people who came there, in town they had run buses. It was about three miles to town from camp. They had a free picture show. I don't remember what I was looking at, but all of a sudden they flashed on the screen, "George Iwasaki, come immediately." I was, "Oh, what the heck is this all about?" I found out that they said my family was here.

We're all farm oriented, all my sisters and brothers, of course, we all worked on the farm. We could work on whatever employment there was, and we'd be outside, in fresh air and everything. And so I figured that'd be much better for everybody concerned.

Anyway, they came and we lived in a floor tent. This would be in June, July, August and September. We had work practically every day. By that time the camp had grown, too, so I don't how many eventually were there. Of course, mostly they were unattached, young men.

EO: You don't recall how big that camp got? Was it as big as, say – well, you weren't in Minidoka.

IWASAKI: Maybe couple hundred.

EO: Were they all from the Portland Assembly Center, or were they from other camps?

IWASAKI: No, not from other camps but from the same assembly center.

EO: The Portland Assembly Center.

IWASAKI: Before I left, maybe the first week in June, the people from Yakima came to this assembly center. The people who also went to Nyssa were a lot of Yakima people. And also, of course, Yakima, being agricultural. We had work and good relations with farmers and they paid us a prevailing wage. Came fall time, towards winter, and over, of course, there the weather is extreme hot and extreme cold, except there's no humidity so even hot temperatures, you don't feel it.

Towards winter we can't live in those floor tents, so they moved us to an abandoned C.C.C. [Civilian Conservation Corps] camp. That also was tents, but it was larger and I guess it was, maybe, thicker canvas, whatever. There was also a few cabins in there, but as I recall – let's see. Yeah, my parents and my sisters, they had one of the cabins and we had one of the tent structures.

EO: Was this also in Nyssa?

IWASAKI: This was about 10 or 12 miles from Nyssa, further into the country towards Owyhee Dam. It was called Cow Hollow, the district. I think the nearest town to that would have been Adrian.

EO: So, what type of farm work did most of the people do at that time?

IWASAKI: When we went in the spring – well, over there it's row crop farming, which means vegetables and the principal crops were lettuce, onions, and sugar beets, which, of course, it was a sugar beet factory there. Most of it is what we call stoop labor, meaning that it's work done stooping over, working with a short-handled hoe. What was involved was the plants are planted in rows, thick and you take the short-handled hoe and space it out, so that you leave just one plant with the hoe, or whatever, which would be 10 or 12 inches apart. A lot of the work was by contract by acre so — I don't know if we done much negotiating although some did, but also had a lot of good deals, too, because if it was sparse, they still paid you the same so much by the acre. It wasn't too bad. Of course, we were younger. [Laughs] It really takes the younger people to do that kind of work.

EO: In these camps, did you eat in a common mess hall?

IWASAKI: No, like I say, the first week I went to this F.S.A. camp, this being new, they came without facilities or whatever, they had a mess hall put up. Oh yes, I recall that the lady in charge of this mess hall, Japanese, Mrs. Matsubu. She isn't here now,

EO: From Portland?

IWASAKI: Yes, from Portland. And her daughter — what was her daughter's name? She had two daughters. Her younger daughter — can't recall her name. So as I recall, we had just cornflakes and milk for breakfast. I don't know what we had for lunch. Anyway, it was just kind of a temporary thing.

The established families that came — and incidentally, I know Jack Ouchida had his truck and so he must have had things, whatever, brought over. Henry Kato had his truck and must have brought more things, so they set up in family style. So, of course,

when my family came, why, we also set up family style. Of course, we had to go out and buy everything, because there's nothing there.

EO: So, did you have children at that time? Not yet?

IWASAKI: No. The following year my oldest son was born in April 30, 1943.

EO: You were still in that camp?

IWASAKI: Yes, still in the Adrian camp, C.C.C. camp, yeah. My second son, Ron, was born in July...

EO: Two of them were born in that camp?

IWASAKI: Not Government Camp, but...

EO: In the C.C.C. camp?

IWASAKI: Yes. They were both born in Ontario, which must have been 15 or 20 miles away from it.

EO: So, the government provided the housing, or did you have to pay for housing?

IWASAKI: They provided the housing.

EO: How long were you there, in the C.C.C. camp?

IWASAKI: 1943, all of 1943. And I think, perhaps in 1944 the Selective Service came in for all Japanese, so I didn't realize it at that time until much later, or maybe they would

have ignored it anyway, but they don't take all the sons in the family. In other words they leave one, but of course I didn't know that. So, since the government changed our draft status to be eligible to be drafted, unless you had a deferment.

There was farm deferment. Already we were more or less working for this family, which is Hashitani family, so we had to get farm deferment saying that you're going to, that you're deferred, that you're a bona fide employee of the farmer. While the rest of the family went out on different jobs and whatever, I lived in this camp, but I went to work for this farmer throughout 1944, and maybe 1945 until – no, wait a minute, no. Maybe part of 1943, I don't recall. In 1945, the year we came back, I ventured out on a sharecrop arrangement, because I wanted to try it. I don't know what my draft status was then.

EO: Certainly, with two brothers in the service you would have been deferred, even if you were not a farmer. Don't you think?

IWASAKI: Yes, I guess so, but I didn't understand that, at that time.

EO: So did the rest of the family stay in the camp while you worked?

IWASAKI: Yes, there was an employment agency in this camp also, so everyday there'd be, or you may know ahead of time, where you're going the next day.

EO: Then you didn't live near the Hashitani's or anything. You were still living in camp?

IWASAKI: Yes, although Hashitani's was right next door to our first camp, the F.S.A. camp. They just lived across the way.

EO: What were your parents doing? Were they also working on the farm?

IWASAKI: Yes, yes, yes. My father was 65 years of age at the time of evacuation, and my mother would be 14 years younger.

EO: Certainly, they were still capable of working.

IWASAKI: Although the work was strenuous, but they pitched in and worked. That was really a healthy environment compared to the assembly center or the relocation center.

EO: So, then after the war ended, then did you come back to Hillsboro right away?

IWASAKI: Throughout 1945, I think, I even wrote to Dillon Myer and I should have saved that letter too. [Both laugh] I questioned what they meant by “military necessity,” because it was an arbitrary term that didn’t really mean anything, you know. I think he wrote a letter back to me. I can’t recall what the contents were, but it wasn’t very satisfactory.

Anyway, there were rumors that this exclusion would be lifted, So towards the fall of 1945, I contacted the Army and they sent me an application form to enter the excluded area. There was, as I recall, it had a lot of data on there and they needed fingerprints. We all did that, and no sooner had we sent it out, there was a general order that you could go home.

I knew that as soon as the order was lifted, we wanted to come back. We had our place here. We didn’t want to stay in – although, it seemed like a real — the outlook for farming in that area, while it was a new type of farming to most of us, because it was all irrigated fanning and you had to be an expert in knowing how to irrigate. Our farming here on the West Coast area is not that type of farming. And some of them made their fortunes over there in a brief time. But we wanted to come back.

When the rumors of being lifted, we wanted to get back as soon as we could. We did come back, got our farm back, got our house back. We didn’t meet any prejudice or

hostility or whatever, although there were, of course, new people that may have come in since, in our absence that we don't know, of course. Later, of course, we heard some rumors of some of the merchants that we patronized before, that some of them were really anti. Maybe they had their reasons, maybe some of their sons were killed, or whatever, you know. But generally, we just picked up where we left off.

[End of Tape 2, Side 1]

Tape 2, Side 2
1992 September 16

EO: [This is] September 16th, 1992 and I'm interviewing George Iwasaki and we will continue with our interview.

We were talking about you coming back to the Portland area from Eastern Oregon and I believe I asked you if you felt discrimination upon your return. And you said you didn't really feel any discrimination from the community.

IWASAKI: That's correct, yes.

EO: In what condition was your farm when you came back?

IWASAKI: It was in good condition. Of course, the crops that we raised are not there, but the dairy farmer raised forage crops there, but it was kept up. The new house that we had left, it had some wear and tear but, generally, I would say it was in very good condition. That is, we didn't know what shape it would be in, but I think it was satisfactory.

EO: When you returned to Portland, did you come by train or did you drive back?

IWASAKI: When we returned from Nyssa? No, we drove back. Let's see now. I had a truck there, so I brought back what belongings we accumulated in Nyssa. I guess I don't recall how the rest of the family did get back. Oh, they took a train. Yes, they took a train. Yes, that's right, because my second son was just born a couple of months prior and Tomiko rode the train, so I think the rest of the family, they all rode the train back.

EO: Do you recall the date?

IWASAKI: Let me see.

EO: You worked for the Hashitani's in 1944 and 1945.

IWASAKI: Yes, let's see. Was 1945 the year that they overturned...

EO: The war ended in 1945.

IWASAKI: But was the Exclusion Order lifted in 1945?

EO: I believe so, right after the war, probably.

IWASAKI: Okay. Let's see. [Laughs] What was your question?

EO: When did you return to Portland? Do you recall what season it was? That might help.

IWASAKI: Oh, yes. It was late fall.

EO: Then, probably it was in 1945 then, that you returned.

IWASAKI: Yes.

EO: So then, will you tell us what you did with your farm after you got back?

IWASAKI: Okay, I believe we got our farm back right away. The first thing I did was make contacts with businesses that we would have to have for, mostly for supplies. I started preparing the farm for the following spring's crops, which we hadn't decided too much on, too much in depth, but, primarily, what we had in mind was to continue with the

same kind of farm programs that we had prior to leaving; in other words, raising the same kind of crops, which are mostly vegetables and strawberries.

EO: So, did you have any problem getting credit from these businesses?

IWASAKI: No? No, no.

EO: In the meantime, let's see, your children were of school age, or perhaps younger?

IWASAKI: No, they weren't of school age.

EO: They weren't of school age yet. So, do you want to talk about their schooling and your participation in the community, perhaps?

IWASAKI: Well, I don't recall too much of that, in those respects, at all.

EO: How did your children's lives differ from yours, as they grew up on the farm? Were they responsible for chores like you were? Or did they come home directly from school, or did they stay at school?

IWASAKI: No, for them it was quite a bit easier and different. We did try to instill the work ethics into the children but not intensely. Circumstances were different for them than it was for me. We encouraged them to participate in extracurricular activities at the school, so they did. It was better for them than it was for me, the time periods.

EO: So you were in the farming business from 1945 to what year? When did you retire?

IWASAKI: Oh, I still have not retired.

EO: Oh, you haven't really retired! [Laughs]

IWASAKI: I'm semi-retired.

EO: How did your business change over the years? Or did it change?

IWASAKI: Oh, yes. Postwar, we picked up the same — not exactly the same, but prior to the war it was strawberries, dry farming, but since the war — and farming practices had changed somewhat during the war. And after the war, in that we raised strawberries, but it was irrigated farming, so the acreage was much smaller and farming was more intensive and I believe the profits were much better that way, too. Plus, prior to the war produce farming was dry farming, but irrigation was a big thing after or during that time, so we raised cannery crops and strawberries. That was the main crops, plus a small portion of it in greenhouse bedding plants, which we shifted to entirely in about the year 1968.

EO: So you no longer do the other type of farming?

IWASAKI: No, because we have a business advisor-accountant who told us that there we're struggling with strawberries year after year but we're not making any money, so he said that we should shift our emphasis. So from then on — well, it was quite a struggle in the 1970s, because, primarily in the local area, the major players were, perhaps, a half a dozen Japanese small greenhouse growers, but competition was quite stiff and the marketplace, I believe, kind of took advantage of us and our products were generally loss leaders to the merchants, so it wasn't a very good situation.

However, after struggling through, maybe, well, decades, [Laughs] the business and everything changed so that the merchants realized that if they depress the prices, they don't have a margin for themselves, either. So they changed the business methods,

I suppose you could say. Now it's become a business more so than prior, I guess. Also, in the meantime we're enlarging and growing in the business.

EO: Who were some of the other Japanese families that were doing nursery business?

IWASAKI: George Furukawa's family, Charley Yamada, Koida's family. I guess those were the major ones, but there were several other smaller ones, too. We were the largest one in Washington County.

EO: Aren't you one of the largest in Oregon now?

IWASAKI: Oh no. [Laughs]

EO: You're not?

IWASAKI: No, no. There's huge competitors who moved over from California and are located in the Salem area.

EO: But as far as the private family business, you're one of the biggest, aren't you?

IWASAKI: I presume so. Although, we're incorporated, however, you might say, family controlled.

EO: Tell us about the nursery business. What types of plants do you have?

IWASAKI: What we raise are what's called bedding plants, so they're relatively short time from seeding to marketplace. And also those plants are called annuals, which live only one year, I mean, they're seeded and planted in home gardens and landscapes. Then there's also perennials which are plants that recover yearly, which has become a

big part of the business now. Plus, related to that, of course, is changing marketplace, so we make many planters and baskets that supply the urban needs, such as condominiums and so forth. Plus, I don't know if you would call it landscaping, but for commercial enterprises that use our products for their decorations.

EO: So do you deal directly with the retailers, the large retailers, or do you work through a wholesale?

IWASAKI: We're wholesale and almost exclusively we service the large chains.

EO: Who is involved in the business right now?

IWASAKI: About — well...

EO: You say you're semi-retired?

IWASAKI: Yes.

EO: So, is it your brother, mainly?

IWASAKI: No, it was — we're upgrading, mainly. We had three brothers, but in the 1970s my brother, Art, separated. So now my brother, Ike, and I were principally involved. But as we grew older and the business became larger and complicated, we went to get a general manager. The general manager has from — no, we had three general managers in succession after us.

The fourth one, who was the present general manager, is a Scotsman, originally from Scotland, who came to the United States, got his education at U.C. [University of California] Davis, a botany major. He also taught at U.S.C. [University of Southern California], and 10 years he was at University of West Virginia, head of the horticultural

there. Then he went to General Electric in New York and Buffalo, and then ended up at St. Paul with C.D.C. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention].

EO: Your children are not involved in the business?

IWASAKI: Yes. He's a general manager and he's been there, like I say, about eight years. First year, he had his own team of supervisors under him, then he chose my son, my oldest son, James. They work together very well. James is a sales manager, but in constant communication all the time. They are the ones who are running the business.

EO: Ron does not.

IWASAKI: No, Ron was a general manager of – well, he was the general manager after we went to general manager, but he stayed about three years, but he wanted to move on, so...

EO: So James is the only one involved in the business right now, family wise?

IWASAKI: Currently, yes.

EO: Then how about the girls? Are they involved?

IWASAKI: No, none of the girls are involved.

EO: How about grandchildren? Do you think they will be?

IWASAKI: Well, it's too...

EO: They're still young?

IWASAKI: Oh, yes. [Laughs] It's too far down the line.

EO: Other than the business that you're involved in, how do you spend your time?
Where do you give your time?

IWASAKI: Presently?

EO: [Yes], or over the years. You know, during the years that you had the business.
Are you involved in community organizations?

IWASAKI: Not too much. No.

EO: Are you a member of any of the other Japanese organizations?

IWASAKI: Just *Hyakudoukai*.¹²

EO: *Nikkei jin ka?*

IWASAKI: Yes.

EO: And O.B.C.? [Oregon Buddhist Church]

IWASAKI: Yes.

EO: You've been on the O.B.C. Board off and on for how many years, now?

IWASAKI: I don't know. Five or six.

¹² 百道会: Organization that encourages staying active until 100 years of age.

EO: Five or six. Not before that?

IWASAKI: No, I don't believe so.

EO: When we were at the old church, your father was still active?

IWASAKI: Yes.

EO: Was he on the Board?

IWASAKI: Yes.

EO: You said your father was — was he a charter member? Would he have been a charter member of the Church? When the Church organized?

IWASAKI: Oh, I don't think so. That would be back, what year?

EO: Oh, gosh. We're going to be celebrating the 90th pretty soon, in a few years. We did celebrate the 85th anniversary.

IWASAKI: No, I don't think so.

EO: But he was involved on the Board level?

IWASAKI: Yes. I know he was at the time this building was being built.

EO: Did you mention when your parents passed away? I can't remember if I'd asked you.

IWASAKI: Yes, my father passed away in 1968, and my mother, 1980.

EO: Both your mother and father were active in the Church?

IWASAKI: Yes, yes.

EO: Is there anything else you would like to share, as far as these years? Do you want to talk about your family? Do you ever discuss the war years with your children?

IWASAKI: I don't know if I discuss it in depth, but if there's articles or concerns that are in print, I point it out to them.

EO: Are your children involved in any of the Nikkei organizations?

IWASAKI: No, I don't think so. Well, in the culture, but not in organizations, otherwise. That is don't take part in organizations, I don't think so.

EO: How are they involved culturally?

IWASAKI: My daughter who lives in Seattle works now for the Seattle Arts Commission. Prior to this — well, I'll begin at the beginning.

She went to school at the U of O [University of Oregon] in education. In her Senior year she decided wasn't going into education, but into art. She switched majors and went into art. Also, she was exchanged – not exchanged. When you go to another school, is that called exchange? Somebody has to switch to be called an exchange, don't you? Anyway, she had an opportunity to go to University of Massachusetts at Amherst. That was her junior year, I guess, because she came back and finished here.

Then spending a year on the East Coast, she liked it very much, so as soon as she graduated here she wanted to go back again. She went back and she was involved in Children's Museum in Boston, which was a noted at that time, I guess, it was a pioneering effort in children's museum. That's in line with her studies for art. Also in this, there's a Japanese part in this museum, which is – one of the major ones was a transplanted Japanese house in the museum.

She had interest in Japanese culture, plus she had friends who were in Japanese culture in Boston, so from that she progressed. Essentially, she was one of the three organizers of the Dragon Boat Festival in Boston. She helped coordinate that for three years.

In her resume, when she applied at Seattle, she was chosen out a hundred, although she said she has a family so she could work only two and a half days, instead of a week like they wanted her to. So that's what she's doing, now. So, she's very interested in Japanese culture. She has her two boys taking private Japanese language lessons.

EO: How old are they?

IWASAKI: Five and eight. So I think it's very nice and important that posterity, generations are interested in the background, ethnic culture. What thoughts I have is, with the increase that we see in intermarriages with other races, that I hope that the generations, if they're, say, only part Japanese, which they will become that way, then I hope that they recognize that and feel proud of their heritage. That's my hope, because intermarriages are going to go on.

EO: Definitely. [Laughs] So you have one, two, three, four, five children. Right?

IWASAKI: Yes.

EO: Are they all married?

IWASAKI: Yes.

EO: How many of them are married to fellow Nikkeis?

IWASAKI: Just the first two.

EO: First two are?

IWASAKI: Yes. The third one, daughter, third child is married to an Afghan from Afghanistan. Marcia is married to a local person that she helped out when she was in Boston. He came to Boston, too. He's an architect. John's married to, also, a schoolmate, who went to Eugene. John is a feature editor, a reporter, for the *Seattle P.I.* [*Post Intelligencer*].

EO: Oh, so he's also in Seattle.

IWASAKI: Yes. So, I have two in Seattle.

EO: What would you consider the most important events in your recent years? I know you celebrated your 50th wedding anniversary and that was a very important event.

IWASAKI: I think the most important event was the project we had in Waterfront Park.

EO: Oh, were you involved in that?

IWASAKI: No, I wasn't involved, I mean.

EO: Okay, but you thought that was an important event.

IWASAKI: Yes, very significant.

EO: Any feelings about Redress?

IWASAKI: Well, I think it's a recognition of the government's wrongdoing.

EO: You did get your Redress money?

IWASAKI: Yes

EO: And, of course, you — how about your children, they're eligible, too, aren't they?

IWASAKI: Yes, we didn't know at the time, but...

EO: Are all the children eligible?

IWASAKI: No, just...

EO: The ones born in Nyssa?

IWASAKI: Yes, that's right. Just the two.

EO: Oh, two of them. Do you have any, well, I think you already kind of covered this, advice to the young people. You mentioned that you wanted them to be aware, and appreciate their ethnic heritage.

IWASAKI: Yes

EO: Any final comments you would want to make?

IWASAKI: No, I don't think so. I can't think of anything...

EO: Well, I really appreciate your doing this, George, and thank you very much. I thought it was a very, very interesting interview that you gave me. So, thank you.

[End of Tape 2, Side 2]

[End of Interview]