一世パイオニア

Issei Pioneer

Shunsuke Uchiyama

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Chapter 1

Early Life, Childhood

Shunsuke Uchiyama was born on January 13, 1883 (Meiji 16) in the village of Kuno, Narasaki town, Toyoura County (gun), Yamaguchi Precture (Ken), as the first son of father Zentaro and mother Yatsu. The Uchiyamas were an old farming family in the village, and although they were not especially wealthy, they did not suffer from want. His two older sisters and he grew up wrapped in the warm love of their parents, but tragedy soon struck. Shortly after his younger sister was born in 1885 (Meiji 18), his mother suddenly dies from a short illness on January 25th. It must have been a very sad and lonesome experience for two-year old infant Shunsuke.

Soon thereafter, his father remarried, and the family increased to seven children, with two younger sisters, and a younger brother added. As he grew older and began to understand life, Shunsuke missed his mother Yatsu greatly and shed many a tear many a day. He threw himself into his schoolwork as if he was trying to divert his feeling of loneliness.

The feudal government of Tokugawa (Tokugawa Bakufu), which began with Iyeyasu Tokugawa, has lasted for two hundred sixty five years, to the time of Shogun Yoshinobu ended with the return of the reign of the Emperor. The new government started with the changing of the name of an era from Keio to Meiji, moving the capital from Kyoto to Edo and renaming Edo to Tokyo. In the fourth year of Meiji (1871), the government executed the abolition of feudal clans and set up the new prefectural system throughout Japan. The provinces of Suo and Nagato were combined and Yamaguchi Prefecture (Yamaguchi Ken) was formed. The Nagato where Shunsuke was born, was

also know as Choshu and is famous for producing Shoin Yoshida, the founder of Shoka Sonjuku Academy in Hagi City and the loyalist to the Emperor prior to the Meiji Restoration It was probably due to the influence of this Academy that outstanding figures as Takayoshi Kido (Nagato), Shinsaku Takasugi (Nagato), Takachika Mori (Nagato), Kaoru Inouye (Suwo), and Masujiro Omura (Suwo), came to being, all of whom contributed to the successful Meiji Restoration. Hirobumi Ito was born in Suwo Province, but he moved to Hagi in Chosu and studied under Takayoshi Kido, one of the three great principals of the Restoration. In 1883 (Meiji 16), the year Shunsuke was born, Ito returned from an inspection tour of the political systems of European countries (the first inspection tour was in 1871 (Meiji 4) when the tour covered both America and Europe) and became the central figure in Meiji Regime. In 1885, he assumed the office of prime Minister (Sori Daijin) for the first time in Japanese history (until then, the position was known as Dajo Daijin (Chief of Council State)) and in 1889, he drafted the Constitution for the Meiji government.

In August, 1894 (Meiji 27), the Sino-Japanese War (Nisshin Senso) broke out in a clash of interests over Chosen (present day Korea). The Japanese Navy destroyed the Chinese Navy in the Yellow Sea; the invincible Japanese Army advanced into northern Chosen, southern Manchuria, and to the Liaotung Peninsula, and China asked to negotiate peace. The First Army Commander in Chief Aritomo Yamagata and General Taro Katsura were both from Chosu. When peace negotiations were begun in March, 1895, Shunsuke had just finished the sixth grade and was advancing into the upper division (seventh grade). Kosho Li represented China, and Prime Minister Hirobumi Ito and Minister of Foreign Affairs Munemitsu Mutsu were present for Japan at this peace conference held at Shimonoseki, just 15 miles (24 kilometers) from Shunsuke's home in

Narasaki. In April of 1895, the so called Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed whereby Taiwan (Formosa), Liaotung Peninsula, and Pescadores (islands between Formosa and Hong Kong) were ceded to Japan, and in addition to that, a huge reparations were paid by China. The fact that so many great heroes were from his native Yamaguchi Prefecture, since the Meiji Restoration, left a deep impression upon young boy Shunsuke.

Soon after graduating from Narasaki Jinjo-Koto Sho Gakko (six years of primary and two years of upper division) another big change entered Shunsuke's life. At age 16, he was sent to be taken care of by his mother's relatives to be raised by his maternal grandmother and his uncle and aunt. His uncle and aunt had no son, and it apparently was hoped that Shunsuke could be adopted as their son.

Shunsuke helped with the farm work diligently, but his enterprising spirit left him dissatisfied with the traditional way of making a living. He was eager to try something new. Hitting upon the idea of raising vermifuge chrysanthemums and cryptomeria saplings, he importuned his uncle to order them from Kyushu. No sooner had they arrived, Shunsuke asked to borrow his uncle's land. It seems that the ambitious and courageous nature so characteristic of this man throughout his life was already in the formative stage. The family thought him a bit too daring and did not like the idea too well, but the saplings were already here and they yielded to the eager Shunsuke's importunities and permitted him to use the mountain land belonging to his grandfather.

One night, in the next room, he overheard the conversation, "that young stripling of Shunsuke is just too bold and daring. We can't tell what he will pull next. It's dangerous to let him succeed to our fortune and property."

Rural Yamaguchi was not the suitable place to foster the dream of this youth Shunsuke. Staying with his uncle and aunt for two years, in 1901 (Meiji 34), on the day

of the village festival, 18 years old Shunsuke decided to run away from home and left for Tokyo.

A new life began for him in Tokyo. Aspiring to continue his education, he started to attend night school to study his favorite subject of law. However, being a runaway, there was no financial aid from home, and thus he had to work during the day to support himself, as well as to pay the tuition. He did not care what kind of work he found. Since the Meiji Restoration, the country's strength improved greatly and the Sino-Japanese War was easily won. The reparation received from that war was used to expand the military strength. Because of this, the manufacture of munitions supplies flourished and other kinds of industries were also prosperous. The times were good and there was plenty of work.

In February, 1904 (Meiji 37), Japan entered into war (Nichiro Senso) against the largest country in the world, Russia. Shunsuke careful and cautious in character and intelligently aware of the situation applied for and obtained a job to draft designs for war weapon parts at the military department of the government.

"The cryptomeria saplings are doing very well. Shall we send you the money? Was written in the letter from home. However, Shunsuke declined with thanks, desiring to maintain his independence.

While the fierce battles were raging in the Russo-Japanese War, the new year came. Under the command of Commanding General Iwao Oyama and Chief of Staff General Gentaro Kodama, the Third Army, led by General Maresuke Nogi, attacked and took 'impregnable' Port Arthur after a hard fought campaign (January). The Combined Forces of the First, Second, Third and Fourth Army took Mukden in Manchuria (March).

Admiral Heihachiro Togo annihilated the Russian Pacific Fleet and the Baltic Fleet in the Battle of the Japan Sea (May). Both Kodama and Nogi were from Choshu, Japan.

Report such as these, and the occupation of Karafuto under the command of General Haraguchi (July) excited the spirit of the Japanese people. The victory by Japan over Russia marked the first defeat of Europeans by non-white nations in 400 years.

Peace negotiations were mediated by the U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Foreign Minister Jutaro Komura attended as Envoy Plenipotentiary, along with the Japanese Ambassador to the United States, Kogoro Takahira. Japan was ceded the territories of southern half of Sakhlin, or Karafuto (south of Latitude 50) and Kwantung Province in Liaotung Peninsula as well as the railroad and coal mining rights in southern Manchuria (signed in September, 1905).

With the end of the Russo-Japanese War, also came the end of the work of drafting war weapons parts. Shunsuke next took up selling medicines as he continued with his studies. Besides studying law, he began to study English at night at the home of his teacher, Mr. Saito. As he studied English, he heard of foreign places and soon his young heart was full of dreams of going abroad. He began to think that he would like to go to a big and new country----AMERICA----. The maxim "Boys, be ambitious." By William S. Clark, an American who came to Hokkaido during the early years of Meiji to teach at the Sapporo Agricultural School (the present day Hokkaido University) and to help direct the opening of the northern frontier stirred even more Shunsuke's dream of going to America.

To maintain frugality in expenditures, he rountinely spent two sen (one sen is 1/100 of one yen) for two bowls of rice and one sen for a dish of 'okazu', but sometimes he bought only a bowl noodles, or just sniffed the specialty being sold in the 'unagi-ya'

(eel dish restaurant) downstairs in the house where he roomed. By 1907, he had saved three hundred yen, an adequate sum for passage on a ship to America.

The decisive factor of Shunsuke's going abroad was the death of his father Zentaro, on April 8, 1907 (Meiji 40). Having lost both of his parents, young man Uchiyama firmly decided to leave Japan. He returned to Tokyo after attending his father's funeral, and immediately began preparations to go to America.

There had been some discussions between the government of Japan and the United States (Gentlemen's Agreement) to curtail the number of Japanese immigrants to America and the passport was not easy to obtain. So, he asked the help of Chikara Ooka, the president of Chuo Shimbun Sha (Central Newspaper Company) and younger brother of Ikuzo Ooka who was a member of Seiyukai Party and later became the Speaker of the House of Representatives and a Cabinet member. They were from the town of Kogushi which was only six miles from Shunsuke's home in Narasaki. Shunsuke applied for a passport to America as a news reporter for the company.

Thus, on July 10, 1907, 24 years old youth Shunsuke Uchiyama sailed from Yokohama, carrying in his heart his sorrows and his great aspirations.

Chapter 2

To the American Continent

The Pacific Ocean, unlike its name, had extremely big waves. The ship was headed for Vancouver, Canada. Shunsuke did not know if, and when, he would once again step on his country's soil and felt real loneliness. Saying goodbye to the members of the Uchiyama family, to those who had helped him, and to his friends, was trying and sad. As he stood on the deck of the ship Aki-Maru (NYK Lines), he fell into deep thought. He had made such a clear decision to go to America, and yet, here he was, wishing with all his might that he was back in Japan. Anxious thought assailed his heart, for he was going to a strange land.

Looking back on Japanese history, the Meiji period following three hundred years of Tokugawa isolation from the outside world was one which awakened the Japanese and also allowed the dignity of the country to reverberate throughout the world. This Uchiyama youth, born in this Meiji period, did not let his ambitious decision to go abroad crumble.

Anxiety and ambition alternately struggled is his heart, and for seventeen days these mixed emotions troubled his mind until the ship docked at Vancouver on July 27, 1907. He had heard that Canada was huge, but compared with the small country of Japan, the enormity of this land could be understood only when one actually saw the country with his own eyes.

"This is a great big North American continent! This is the land of action! I will do my best!" vowed Shunsuke.

At this time there were already many Japanese residents in Vancouver, many of whom had come from such prefectures as Wakayama and Shiga, and some from western mainland Japan and northern region of the island of Kyushu. They were working on fishing boats, in factories, or on the railroad, etc. Shunsuke stayed for a few days, rooming at a boarding house being managed by Japanese. After obtaining a little bit of necessary information on immigrant's life on the continent, he boarded a train for his intended destination (the United States). He heard the rumor that some Japanese immigrants who had no passports to Canada, had to sneak into the USA via freight trains. However, Shunsuke had a passport to the USA and was able to cross the border boarding at Vancouver; Shunsuke reached the leading city of northwestern USA, Seattle, Washington.

Even though he had come to his country as a news reporter, that title was only a means to obtain the passport and Shunsuke, carrying the dreams of great enterprises within his heart and mind, had no intention of holding this job. After paying for his boat ticket, there was little money left in his pocket. In order to build up funds for capital, Shunsuke sought work the next day through a Japanese agent. There were many Japanese immigrants here in Seattle, but in addition to the declining trend of the economic conditions, and because they were foreigners, their work was actually limited to manual labor. Even if he knew English and law, Shunsuke was not able to find work along those lines.

The days of distressing hardships continued. Shunsuke obtained work on the Great Northern Pacific Railroad as a construction laborer. He would be covered with dirt everyday; his bones ached and ached from the hard labor of repair and laying down the rails, which was quite new to him. Although the pay was much better than in Japan, it

seemed as if his big dreams would never be realized. But he gritted his teeth and kept working hard to make his original intentions come true.

This work was not to last long. About two months later, Shunsuke shouldered his blanket and began searching for his next work. Washington was known as the Evergreen State because of the heavy rainfall and the large forests of evergreen. Forestry was the leading industry. Shunsuke entered these mountains and worked on the tree farms where they were raising future Christmas trees. Under his Caucasian boss, there were Japanese young men with the same youthful vigor and hopes. First, they had to chop down the giant trees to make a tree farm. With the simple food of rice, meat soup, and pickling cabbage with salt, they worked on.

"We don't need to come to America to succeed. We would succeed in Japan if we worked this hard there," they told each other consolingly.

If they looked south toward Tacoma they could see the majestic Mt. Rainier, which resembled Mt. Fuji, although somewhat higher in elevation. Homesick for Japan, these first immigrants living in Seattle called this beautiful sight the Tacoma Fuji. For Shunsuke, who had spent some six years in Tokyo having had excellent views of Mt. Fuji, the sight of Mt. Rainier made him think of Japan even more.

From fall to winter, the winds from the Cascade Range were cold. They slept inside tents, but in the morning when they awoke, they found their heads were covered with frost. The Company gradually became unable to pay the workers, and one by one they left the camp. The day to close down the company had come. The boss apologized to Shunsuke who had stayed until the very end and gave him a piece of paper saying, "This young man works very diligently." Even though Shunsuke was not paid, carrying

this letter of reference with him, he boarded a train and headed for Vacaville, California, to seek the job passing through Washington and Oregon. It now was the spring of 1908.

The natural features and the climate in Washington was much like that of Japan, but California which is bigger than Japan (mainland Honshu, Shikohu, Kyushu and Hokkaido combined), was completely different. Located about thirty miles west of Sacramento, Vacaville now has a population of 25,000 but at the turn of the century, it was still a small country town. However, since around 1890, large groups of Japanese immigrants came to work for the Caucasians farm owners in Vacaville, and there were enough Japanese there to think of it as a Japanese village. When Shunsuke arrived there in 1908, there were over 1,500 young Japanese, which was then greater than the Caucasian population. There was a Japanese town with more than ten Japanese stores. Many of the young men had leased farmland, but the great majority was working as laborers in the Caucasian's orchards for a dollar a day wages.

Shunsuke was hired to work on the farm, in the pear and peach orchard and the alfalfa pasturelands. However, in addition to the fact that it was a new kind of work, it was as hot as blazes (over 100 degrees Fahrenheit, or 38 degrees Celsius) and he vomited blood more than once because of the severe work and heat.

There were many immigrants from his native Yamaguchi Prefecture and neighboring Hiroshima Prefecture, and the dialectic speech everyone used in their conversation brought moments of sweet nostalgia and made the hard work bearable to a degree. There were but a few Japanese women in Seattle, but here in Vacaville, there were some men who had sent for brides from Japan. Being 26 years old, Shunsuke himself thought of marriage, but felt that his finances were still inadequate. Money did not grow on trees here either. His ambitious objectives were still in the distance.

Na mo shiranu tooki shima yori
Nagare yoru yashi no mi hitotsu,
Furusato no kishi wo hanarete
Nare wa somo nami ni ikutsuki.

- "Yashi no mi" by Toson Shimazaki

From an unknown far-away island
Floats a coconut, one,
Leaving its native shore,
Tossed on the Waves for many months.

- "The Coconut" by Toson Shimazaki

Shunsuke spent but one summer in Vacaville. When the alfalfa work was done, the seasonal workers migrated to the next place, seeking further work. Central California was fertile farming land, and water for irrigation purposes was quite abundant there. Many Japanese had already migrated there, and in Fresno, the largest town in Central California, there were over ten Japanese restaurants. Such were the rumors about Central California, and everyone was very sensitive to news of Japanese communities in the United States. Thus, in the fall of 1908, Shunsuke's feet turned toward Central California.

There were already many Japanese working on the Caucasian farms in Parlier, some 20 miles southwest of Fresno. There were several towns in Central California, and it is not known why Shunsuke chose Parlier. At any rate, Shunsuke decided to stop his wandering and took the job of doing domestic chores in the household of a large farm owner in Parlier.

"Shunsuke" was difficult to his Caucasian boss to pronounce, so he acquired a new name at this time: George. He was to prepare meals for the laborers working in the field. This was the easiest job he had had since he came to America.

Nonetheless, each night as he pulled out the English book he had studied when in Tokyo, *Pushing to the Front*, he wondered to himself, "Is this all right?" This book is mentioned in the Natsume Soseki classic, Bocchan, and was written by the American essayist, Marden. For Shunsuke, it was his right-hand book; the discipline and character-building training it taught were to help him to overcome the many overwhelming obstacles in life and lead him to success which made it all worthwhile.

"Business enterprise is man's life" was Shunsuke's creed. Realizing that remaining in his household would never help him to go forward toward his dreams and aspirations, he soon left this job. Moving into the Domoto Labor Camp, he received work at a fruit tree nursery.

Shunsuke worked harder than ever before. Soon he had accumulated quite a sum of cash. At last, the long-awaited day had come…small as it was; he leased some land and began to raise pigs. Up to now, he had been working for other people, but now, although the scale was indeed small, he was his own boss and had his own business. He was beside himself with happiness.

Of course, it took time however for the piglets to grow up. And he had only a few of them. Even after he sold them, his income would not be that great. Thus, even while raising his own pigs, he hired himself out to the Caucasian farmers to work in vineyards and peach orchards.

When evening came, every Japanese immigrant sought to release the day's hard labor and the waves of homesickness for Japan that kept surging in their hearts; like the insects attracted to light, these young men would jump into the one-horse buggy and ride into town where the amusement center was.

Usagi oishi ka no yama, kobuna tsurishi ka no kawa;
Yume wa ima no megurite, wasuregataki furusato.

Ikan imasu chichi-haha, tsutuganashi ya tomogaki;
Ame ni kaze ni tsuketemo omoi izuru furusato.

Kokorozashi wo hatashite itsu no hi ka kaeran;
Yama wa aoki furusato, mizu wa kiyoki furusato.
-Shogakko shoka, "Furusato"

The mountains where I chased rabbits;
The rivers where I angled fishes;
I still think in my dream;
My unforgettable native land.

How are you, father, mother?;
Are you well, dear friend?;
Whether it's raining or windy;

I still think of my native land.
Accomplishing my ambitions,
Someday, I shall return;
My native land where mountains are green,
And water so clear.
-Elementary School Song, "My Native Land"

These were all young men full of hopes that they could return home in glory, but there were many among them who spent their money for wine, women, and gambling, and their dreams drifted farther and farther away. Like these men, Shunsuke tried to participate in the going amusements of the times, and tried such Chinese gambling games as Shiiko, Chi-Ha, and Bakappe…just once. But he won nothing, and in fact, lost easily and fast. It wasn't much money, but it was hard-earned money wet with his sweat of labor, and he couldn't let that happen again, and he decided not to gamble any more.

Because they could amass a sum of money from work very slowly, many of the men eager to build up a fortune in a hurry frequented these gambling joints. It actually was not for pleasure at all. All they did was lose, and many ended their lives just repeating this over and over, with no further progress. The Chinese proprietors of these

places considered Japanese men choice guests, and at the end of the day when the Japanese men had been there to play, these owners would take rice-sacks full of money to the bank for deposit.

Many things happened during the two-plus years George was in Parlier, and George grew from youth to manhood.

Chapter 3

Reclamation of Wasteland, Early Period

When Shunsuke moved from Parlier to the neighboring town of Sanger to the north, it was spring of 1911 (Meiji 44), and he was 28 years old. The four years here in America were tough, difficult years, but he kept faith in the proverb "perseverance brings success," and endured the hardships with patience. He was beginning to understand things about America. Columbus discovered America in 1942, approximately 400 years before. In 1607, the first immigrants to America came on board the Mayflower from England; that was a mere 300 years before. Compared to Japan, there was much more opportunity in this young country. There were already some successful Japanese immigrants. These are the reasons why Shunsuke decided to move to the "danburo" region in Sanger to do something big. This land was lower than the Kings River flowing nearby, and whenever the river overflowed or the embankment broke there was danger of flood. The Caucasians in this area called this belt of riverbed "down below," and the Issei of the area who did not understand English well called it "danburo."

It was economically impossible for Shunsuke to undertake the new venture by himself. He, together with his three pals (Kataoka, Ogawa, and Sakomoto) leased 140 acres of land for truck gardening purposes. In one corner of the acreage, they put up a pen and began to raise pigs as well. These healthy and sturdy four men lived together without grumbling in a primitive shack, and quietly worked and worked and worked.

The following year, all three of his friends found other work and left him to handle the 140 acres. But for one person, it was an impossibility, so Shunsuke converted the entire land to alfalfa, hoping to go into the pasturage business. Emperor Meiji died in

1912 and the imperial reign passed on to Emperor Taisho; it was this same year that Shunsuke joined with two new friends to lease a thousand acres of vast pastureland and begin to raise cattle. The seemingly foolhardy venture was not considered mere adventure by these three vigorous, strong, healthy men. Within the boundary there were hills and creeks, too. Their lives as cowboys had begun. Horseback and lariat and all else that can be seen in the western movies. But all did not go well. One by one, the cattle began to die. The two friends ran away. The fellow whose words he had believed had not really known anything about the care of cattle. At that time, cattle cost $300 a head. It was a tremendous loss for Shunsuke.

In spite of the great loss, Shunsuke did not regret it. "I did it thinking it was a good thing," he said. He did not blame his two friends who had run away. Instead he was contemplating on whether or not to make a fresh start once again. Payments on the one thousand acres were impossible, and he began anew and planted alfalfa, which brought not much, but a steady income.

In 1853 and 1854, Admiral Perry led his "Black Ship" into Uraga Bay (south of Tokyo), demanding that Japan use an open-door policy, and Japan was awaken from isolation which existed under the Tokugawa shogunate. In 1858 (Ansei 5), the Tokugawa elder, Naosuke Ii, met with American Consul General Townsend Harris to negotiate a goodwill treaty. Thus, in 1860, the treaty was ratified and reciprocation was agreed upon, but there was no apparent interest in travel abroad, and it wasn't until six years later in 1866 (Keio 2) that the first passport to the United States was issued.

According to the United States census, there were six Japanese residing in the United States in 1868 (Meiji 1). In 1870 (Meiji 3), there were fifty-five; in 1880 (Meiji 13), 148 names were recorded. In 1890 (Meiji 23), there were a little over 2000 Japanese

in the United States. Since then, however, the number of Japanese emigrants to the United States increased greatly, and by the time of the 1900 census (Meiji 33), there were about 34,000 Japanese in the mainland US. Subsequently, until 1924, emigration to the USA occurred steadily, and although there were many who returned to Japan, the balance showed that there was a steady increase of about 2,000 persons per year (by 1905, there were about 76,000 Japanese in Hawaii, but there were many in that number who went on to the United States mainland until that was banned in 1907).

There were all kinds of persons in this immigrant group. Some came with their wives; others left wives and children in Japan. Even the old men came too. Kafu Nagai, Japanese novelist, in his America Monogatari (Tales of America), tells of his trip to the United States in 1903 (Meiji 36); he describes a white-haired elderly immigrant he saw on the ship, saying he could not forget him, wondering how such a person could ever handle hard manual labor. Also wives and their children who had been left in Japan were sent money from America and came to this country as "yobiyose" immigrants.

However, these people were relatively few and the most of Japanese immigrants who crossed the Pacific were young single men. Life for an immigrant in a foreign land was full of suffering and hardships. Even thought these men were of marriageable age, most of them did not have the finances to go to Japan to pick their brides. Thus, since the beginning of the 1900's, the process of picture-bride marriage (Shashin Kekkon) began. However, many young men could not afford to have even the picture marriage and around 1905 when news of a new bride's arrival was heard, they would ride by in their buggies or on their bicycles to get a glimpse of the newcomer, and to look not a little enviously at the lucky fellow.

The young men would write to their parents or their friends in Japan, to ask them to find suitable mates. Marriage is the start of a new life, and a very important one, but both the man and the woman relied upon photographs, and once the decision was made to marry and the name of the bride-to-be was registered into the family of the husband-to-be as a wife, the bride traveled all alone across the Pacific to a strange land and a strange husband. Since the boat fare was to be paid for by the groom, and there were many who were barely able to afford that, there was really no other means of marrying and welcoming the Japanese women as their brides.

Seeing a fine house behind the young man in the photograph, she would be thinking all the while she was enroute to America that she would be living in it, only to learn on arrival that the house was actually the home of the Caucasian boss for whom the young man worked. To the Caucasians, this picture-bride method of arranging marriages no doubt seemed extraordinary, but at that time in Japan, love marriages were rare and the majority of marriages were arranged by go-betweens or else determined during childhood by their parents, and there was less opposition to the method than one would think now.

The Japanese maidens kept coming in numbers to America and the marriages by pictures flourished from 1910 to until this was forbidden in 1920 (Taisho 9). According to the immigration office records in Seattle and San Francisco, there were 6988 picture brides coming to America during the nine-year period between 1912 and 1920.

Toshi Uchiyama was born as the first daughter of Kichizaemon and Shina Sasao on April 13, 1896 (Meiji 29), in the village of Tabe, Toyo-higashi-mura (town), Toyoura-gun (county) in Yamaguchi-ken (Prefecture). When she saw Shunsuke's picture, she was 19 years old.

"There are no relatives in America so that you don't need to worry about the problems associated with them; the weather is said to be nice there; if you wish to go, you may do so," said her parents. However, her parents and family members did not think this girl who had been weak since childhood would consider going, and they were astonished and could not believe their ears when Toshi said, "I will go to America." They could not imagine where this delicate little girl had such pluck. She was a tiny girl, but it wasn't strange after all that she would show such pluck if one took into consideration of her strong innate personality.

Kuno-mura, where Shunsuke grew up, and Tabe-mura were only three miles apart, but their age differences were such that they had not met before. Although Toshi saw a picture of Shunsuke the decision of going to a land completely unknown to her as a bride of a person she had not met before, became shaky at times. But her indomitable spirit helped her overcome these anxious moments. Through the go-between in the next village, a Mr. Fukumura, she sent a picture of herself, a lovely miss in a charming momoware hairdo.

The letter from Shunsuke saying he was waiting arrived. Arrangements to sail abroad to America were made; Toshi's name was entered in the Uchiyama family register at the town hall; etc. Sent off by her family (parents, a younger sister and two younger brothers), relatives and friends, she left her home in the spring of 1916 (Taisho5).

Toshi's father came to Kobe to see her off on the Tacoma Maru (O.S.K. Line-Osaka Shosen Kaisha). Parting from her father was painful indeed. When she was finally alone on the boat, a deep loneliness welled up inside her chest….and yet, the ship, stopping only once in Yokohama, kept plowing the white waves and sailing on and on toward America. How brave and strong, this little girl!

There were 630 picture-brides that year of 1916; there were some fourteen of fifteen on board this Tacoma Maru. They soon found each other and cheered and encouraged each other.

The ship tossed upon the waves and many became seasick, but fortunately Toshi was not affected at all. However, this deep lonely feeling and anxiety was intolerably painful. It was assuaged only by the thought that she would soon be meeting her husband, and she eagerly looked forward to the time when the ship docked at Seattle.

The ship arrived in Seattle as scheduled on April 29, having gone some 5000 miles from Kobe to Seattle. Shunsuke was somewhere in the crowd waiting on the dock, but she couldn't see him. She stepped down on terra firma once again. More than the joy of being freed from the rough voyage, Toshi felt a real joy in realizing that she had finally come to the land where her bridegroom was. As she was going through customs inspection, the two finally met!

Seeing Shunsuke in person, Toshi thought he looked even manlier. "I am glad I decided to come. If it is to be with this person," she thought to herself. Shunsuke also, having been in America for nine years, was now very happy to have found such a good mate.

They had a quiet wedding ceremony at the Seattle Buddhist Church (the present day Seattle Betsuin), and spent their honeymoon night at the Fujii Hotel. Shunsuke was 33 years old; Toshi was 20.

The sight of Mt. Rainier and Mt. Shasta viewed from the train window was spectacularly beautiful. The train passed through Tacoma, Portland, Oakland, Sacramento, Fresno….and two days since departure from Seattle, arrived at night at the Sanger Station. Shunsuke called a taxi, and they rode to the house on the outskirts of

town along a winding road, along the winding river. Toshi began to feel uneasy and forlorn, for the winding road seemed to represent a picture of what their future outlook was like.

"I'm behind in my work," said Shunsuke as he went out into the field the next day. A neighbor recalls, "It seemed as though he was trying to create more work rather than being satisfied in getting it done. He worked twice and thrice as hard as any man." There was no time for a soft and sweet newlywed life.

In Japan, Toshi had never help a shovel in her hands, but she became just like her husband, for she could not just stand by and watch him work so hard. She woke up before sunrise (5:00 AM) and prepared breakfast on the wood stove. There was no such thing as tractors in those days; instead they had horses and it was Toshi's job every morning to feed them hay.

Sanger had the typical big continent weather and climate, and although it didn't snow in Sanger, the winters were very cold, and from May to October there were several days in a row when the thermometer rose to 100 F. (38C.), and not infrequently it rose as high as 110F (43C.). In spite of these extremes in weather, the two continued to work hard every day. When it came toward evening, Toshi would head home first, to hand-pump water for their ten horses and for the open-air bath. It was an awfully hard task for Toshi since the pump was not in good operational condition and she had to hand pump about 70 times to get just a bucketful of water.

Shunsuke would come home after sunset, when supper would be ready and the bath was started. The hard and heavy work and lack of sleep kept his eyes red constantly. This home, located five miles from Sanger town, had no electricity, and supper was by lamplight. There were no electric fans, nor was there a washing machine. Life was very

primitive. After supper, they were busy again, and they never got to bed before 11 P.M. They were taking the weekly Japanese newspaper; Chuka Jiho (Central California Times), but there was no time to read it thoroughly.

Toshi had never dreamt that life here was like this, and she was desolate and miserable. After supper, she did the washing, and then bringing out a Japanese book, cried her misery and loneliness out. Shunsuke was preoccupied with his work plans and did not pay attention to her. There was no one else to talk to, and she assuaged her loneliness by reading Japanese books.

One day, this incident occurred. Toshi like the writings of Japanese woman essayist, Motoko Hani, and had been subscribing since her days in Japan the monthly magazine, "Fujin no Tomo" (Companion of Woman) which carried the serial by Hani called "The Numerous and Varied Worries of People." One day, saying that the magazine was too argumentative, Shunsuke went to the Fresno book store which was former Komoto Department store, and changed the order to "Shufu no Tomo" (Companion of Housewife). Toshi was terribly distressed. "How Cruel!" she thought. Then, realizing that Shunsuke was irritated and worried because of the work, she began to feel sympathetic understanding toward her husband who was in the habit of saying his favorite phrase, "Business enterprise…" So, she had never mentioned of returning to her parents even though the life here was a severe struggle. Toshi, who had said that she did not want to marry a wage earner when she was a young girl, vowed that she would accept the present fate and work alongside Shunsuke no matter how difficult the times were or would become.

The World War I, which broke out in 1914, prompted the export of farm products from the United States and farming flourished during the neutrality period maintained by

the United States. In 1917, the USA joined the Allies and in 1918, Germany surrendered. Still, the times were good for America. In addition to the general economic conditions, for Shunsuke the prices for alfalfa exceeded expectations because of the shortage of rainfall for three years. In 1919 (Taisho 8), Shunsuke was able to deposit $2000 into his account. This was still not enough, but he managed to arrange to buy the neighboring three hundred acres for $60,000 ($200 per acre). Their Italian neighbors, the Rusconis, were friendly neighbors and they bought 55 acres of the three hundred acres for cash. Shunsuke used this money as down payment for the rest of the acreage (245 acres). The rest of the money he owed would be paid in annual installments.

Even though he wished to buy land, a non-citizen could not do so. Shunsuke therefore purchased the land under the name of the Parlier Land Company. But before long, this company went bankrupt, and Shunsuke had to try to solve his problem another way. Through his friend, he met a Hawaii-born Japanese (therefore a citizen), Yasuto Hata, and with his consent, Shunsuke was able to register his land again.

According to the 1873 (Meiji 6) U.S. Naturalization laws, free whites and slave Africans and their offspring were able to become naturalized citizens of the United States. In 1881 (Meiji 15), a paragraph forbidding Chinese to become naturalized citizens was added. Since it specified Chinese, and not Japanese, by 1906 (Meiji 39) there were 420 Japanese who had become naturalized U.S. citizens.

The Tokugawa Shogunate ship, the Kanrin Maru, was the first Japanese ship to cross the Pacific, taking thirty-seven days to reach San Francisco. The year was 1860 (Ansei 7, which became Mannen 1, when the Elder Naosuke Ii was assassinated in March at the Sakurade Mon (gate of Edo Castle)). In the ship's log, the Captain Kaishu Katsu, has recorded that already in San Francisco there was a Chinatown. The discovery of gold

in Coloma (forty miles east of Sacramento) in 1848 caused people not only from east, but also from all over the world to rush to California seeking their fortune and 1849 marked the beginning of the gold rush age. The Chinese were used in railroad construction since that time; thus the Chinese history in the US is older that the Japanese by forty years. The 1882 law discriminating against the Chinese being successful, attention was next focused on discrimination against the Japanese from about 1905 (Meiji 38). In 1900, there were 34,328 Japanese in the United States; in 1910 (Meiji 48), 72,000; in 1920 (Taisho 9), 111,000. As the numbers increased, the discrimination became stronger.

In America, if the native Indians were excluded, the nation was actually comprised of immigrants from the many and various countries of the world. However, numerically, the European immigrants were an overwhelming majority, and the Asian people who came little later, had to bear the brunt of a discriminatory attack. Finally in 1906, the American government denied the citizenship application by Japanese citizens, and from then on the door of attaining the citizenship was completely closed for the Japanese.

In 1913 (Taisho 2), the California Alien Land Law was enacted and enforced. In the large cities like Los Angeles and San Francisco, some Japanese worked in the Caucasians' stores, or had businesses with Caucasian as clients (e.g. laundries, etc.), and in the rural communities where Japanese towns were found, they engaged in the business with fellow Japanese as clients. However, the majority of Japanese in this country were engaged in farming, and this law was a shocking blow. It read, "These foreigners who could not become naturalized citizens could not acquire land, possess land, bequeath land, or inherit land. However, they could lease land for agricultural purposed for the periods of three years of less." (1913 California Land Act).

This California Alien Land Law, as generally called the Japanese Discrimination Land Act, was in essence aimed specifically at the Japanese even though it used the word "alien". Ostensibly directed at all foreigners, it was obvious at a glance that it was enacted against the Japanese. It was because the Japanese did not have naturalization rights and could not become citizens of this country. It had the intentions of forcing the Japanese to give up the land that had been acquired up to then (some 20,000 acres) and to prohibit the new acquisitions.

On the surface, Japanese farmers were limited to hiring themselves out or to lease farmland. As if this was not enough, in 1920 (Taisho 9), as a result of a general election, a second Land Act was enacted, whereby Japanese farmers were forbidden percentage farming or leased farming as well. This meant that the Japanese were only to work as hired hands under the Caucasians. The laws similar to the California Alien Land Law were spreading insidiously along the Pacific to the other states.

However, despite this disadvantageous situation since 1913, those Issei who already had farmland or wanted to engage in the farming operations sought the assistance of lawyers and continued the farming as an owner, tenant or new owner under the name of individual Nisei or the land companies in which the Nisei were stockholders. It was a terrible irony that in this land where freedom was it objective and slogan, these Japanese had to struggle under such restrictions and inconveniences.

In cases where a citizen's name was used to buy land, they depended upon the young Nisei citizen who had reached the age of 21 years (since a Caucasian could not be trusted after all, they did pass these discriminatory law.)

Shunsuke did the same; he borrowed Hawaii-born Yasuto Hata's name.

Chapter 4

Reclamation of Wasteland, Middle Period

The reclamation of the land he bought, the wasteland, began. Eighty acres had already been reclaimed and cultivated, but the remaining 165 acres was pastureland (and had been for twenty years). Besides the alfalfa there were profuse and deep growths of Johnson grass and Bermuda grass. Tractors were too expensive, but even if he had one, it probably could not be used on this rough and irregular terrain.

Trying to reclaim and cultivate this huge tract of wasteland, as large as the combined area of all of the farmlands in his native village, was backbreaking work. There were willows growing along the ditch, and he had to use dynamite to dig them out. The undulations over the entire acreage were not easy to level off. Ordinarily, one used four horses to pull a plow, but in this instance, Shunsuke used ten horses to cut grass and to plow the land. The blades broke and chipped easily, and Shunsuke went into Sanger to get new ones so frequently that the storekeeper was amazed.

Shunsuke always kept ten horses on the farm, but spirited Toshi, not one to sit back idly, borrowed their friend's four horses and began to plow alongside her husband. It was strange that although the ten Uchiyama horses stood the strain of work very well, borrowed horses gave out easily. "At the Uchiyama's, even the horses are strong," was the good-natured rumor that spread.

Toshi had had a weak heart from childhood, and when she came to America she weighed only 89 pounds. Since then, she would lose weight from time to time, but she never gained above 89 pounds. Nonetheless, because of continuous hard work, she had become strong and healthy, and was able to do more work than the average man. Seeing

how rough 23 year old Toshi's hand had become, Shunsuke would sympathize and treat her kindly. "You poor dear!" Shunsuke had the Choshu upbringing of courage and daring on one hand, and a gentle and thoughtful way with his wife on the other. When Toshi went to the book store in Fresno and asked that the magazine be changed back to "Fujin no Tomo", Shunsuke did not say anything.

His plans progressed well. Because the land had been in pasture for so long that the soil was very fertile. Almost eighty acres of spinach he had planted did exceptionally well. He shipped it to cannery, but compared to the spinach from other farms, his were huge.

After spinach, he planted potatoes. Because the acreage was so big, he always had five or six laborers, and during the busy season, as many as ten. Truck gardening required a great deal of time and hand work and when he was not with the vegetables he was busy reclaiming more land; there was no rest.

Although they were always busy, Shunsuke would make every effort to catch all the Japanese programs being presented in Fresno: amateur shows, motion pictures, plays (shibai) and Naniwabushi presentations from Japan, etc. He still could not afford to purchase an automobile, and so he would hitch a buggy to a horse and go to the Sanger station with his wife, where he would leave it at the stable. They would then take the train to Fresno. After the program they would stay overnight in Fresno (there was no night train to Sanger) and go back to Sanger the next day….it was very stylish, elegant life. (In this day and age we can make a round trip between Fresno and Sanger in less than an hour, but in those days it took an entire day to ride the buggy).

The motion pictures were just that: motion pictures. There was no sound. However, accompanying these silent movies were very eloquent, dramatic speakers (viz.

Suimin Matsui, Taiyo Kawai, Takeo Arihara, Muneo Kimura, Namiemon Tochuken), and the spectators were carried away emotionally as they saw scene after scene flashed on the screen. For the Issei, it was a wonderful release from the cares and weariness and loneliness of their everyday life in this foreign land. As they were hungry for amusements, the shows were presented almost always before packed audiences. To Shunsuke, the theatergoing served as the catalyst to take on the morrow's challenges.

In 1893, the Prohibition movement was started in the east and the Anti-Saloon League was organized in 1893. With their active campaign, this movement spread from the eastern seaboard through the entire nation and in 1919 the Eighteenth Amendment (Prohibition Law) to the Constitution was ratified. (It was to continue until 1933 when the law was repealed). In California, from January 1920, sale of alcoholic beverage was forbidden.

To say Central California was like saying grapes, for this area was covered with vineyards. With the Prohibition Law, however, it seemed that there was no future in growing wine grapes, and they began to remove the vineyards and replace them with fruit trees.

Shunsuke decided to go against the current thinking and planted not only table grapes but also wine grapes on the newly reclaimed land. This was in February of 1921, when prohibition was at its peak. Shunsuke could speak English, and thus had many Caucasian friends. One of these Caucasian friends had suggested such a move, and Shunsuke believed in the advice.

Shunsuke and Toshi had been married for five years, and yet had no children. The other ladies from Japan were having babies one after another; those girls who had

come to this country about the time Toshi came also had been blessed with two or three children already. But somehow Toshi still did not have any.

A short while after Toshi came to America, she developed typhoid fever (drinking ditch water) and had been hospitalized for forty days. Other than that, she was quite healthy. Shunsuke was bothered by neuralgia in his knee, but had never taken to bed because of illness. Nonetheless, it seemed that there would be no children for this couple. Perhaps it was because Toshi overworked herself. At any rate, now that they were managing rather well, they both wished that they had some children, and looked with envy at the others who had been so blessed.

Then the happy news came. It was about the time when the transplanting of grape saplings was completed in April of 1921.

"It seems that I am expecting," said Toshi.

Shunsuke danced with joy. Although he was busy and hard at work with the spinach for the cannery as before, the work was well worth the trouble as he thought of good news and he threw himself into his work with even greater vigor and effort. Toshi and the child she was carrying grew along with the vines out in the field. Shunsuke told her that she needn't work out in the field, but Toshi carefully watched herself and still went out to help as much as she could.

Good fortune follows good fortune. After the March harvesting of the spinach, Shunuke planted Irish potatoes, obtaining one freight car load (thirteen tons) of see potatoes from a seed company. Not only was the growth abundant but also the price was unbelievably good. No doubt there had been crop damages elsewhere. Potatoes used to sell at a dollar and half two dollars per large sack, but this year it was five dollars per sack, and Shunsuke made about $30,000. It was only three years since he bought this

land and this unexpected huge income was a great help for the improvement of the farm such as putting in irrigation pipes and the annual payments for the years to come.

Up until now, the Uchiyamas were not in the mood of celebrating Obon or Oshogatsu (Buddhist Memorial) and New Year's, respectively), but the New Year of 1922 (Taisho 11), was an especially happy one. Toshi still did not feel any quickening, but Shunsuke took her into Fresno to the Miura Maternity Home (in the 1920 Ford he had purchased in the fall of 1920, his first automobile). For those who could not afford it, it was easier to have the midwife come to the home. However, Shunsuke had spare cash. Besides, he had another reason for bringing her to the maternity home. This way he could continue his work without worrying.

Almost two weeks after hospitalization, on January 15, a gem of a boy was born to Toshi and Shunsuke. Toshi could hardly wait to show the baby to her husband, but it was a week later that Shunsuke came to see the baby. "The MIKI (trunk of tree) must be strong first of all," he said, and the child was named Mikio. From the bottom of their hearts, the couple rejoiced the birth of their newborn son, and the first Uchiyama Nisei (second generation).

It was learned that cooked spinach was harmful to the body, and the cannery where Shunsuke took his spinach lowered prices. Thus he changes over to raising potatoes, carrots, and cabbage. Shunsuke liked fruits, and although it wasn't much, he bought the leftover plum and peach saplings at the nursery and planted them in the newly reclaimed land he had just prepared.

It was about the time that Mikio reached age one and was beginning to say "papa". Shunsuke became ill with acute appendicitis. Worse, it was ruptured. He was taken to the Sanger hospital, but with so many debts on lands, and with a wife and child

to look after, Shunsuke delayed surgery until his will had been written. Surgery was successful, but since it was a ruptured appendix, it took two weeks of intensive hospital care (there were no antibiotics yet). He narrowly escaped death. After this incident, the fierce temper of Shunsuke somewhat softened and it surprised Toshi, not unpleasantly. It was the summer of this year that Shunsuke took her and Mikio on a three-day trip to Yosemite National Park. It was not too far away, but it was their first visit there.

When people were switching from vineyards to orchards because of the Prohibition, Shunsuke had planted grapes. Now, 1923, was when he would pick the first grape off those vines.

No matter that the Prohibition Law was passed, people could not live without wine. Although stores were forbidden to sell it, they were selling wine-making equipment. Many were making their own wine at home, secretly. And wine exports continued as before. Thus, demand exceeded supply, and the price went up. He harvested his wine grapes (Alicante) in October, and obtained a very good price.

However, with the decline in economic conditions after World War I, table grapes fell in price and it was unprofitable to keep on with it. He sold the eighty acres that were planted in table grapes.

The couple had been childless for a long time, but Toshi became pregnant again and when Mikio was two years old, another son was born on January 12, 1924 (Taisho 13). Their neighbor from Kyushu, Mr. Nishikawa said, “After MIKI must come a profusion of leaves….SHIGERU,” thus entered Shigeru Uchiyama. He was a very energetic boy since the birth.

Among the immigrants from Japan, there were many who unwittingly believed the exaggerated tales told by the returnees to Japan from Hawaii and America, that if one

worked for three years in America, he would earn enough to relax for the remainder of his life; that money grew on trees in America

However, they came to find no money trees. Instead, they found hard work and lonely homesickness. Three years, five years, and even ten years, and they were still struggling. In some instances they were worse off than when they arrived, and their dreams were fading away from them mercilessly. In addition, there was a persistent air of discrimination against the Japanese people which kept spreading and getting more distressing.

When the Russo-Japanese War broke out, the United States was amicable with Japan, and President Theodore Roosevelt acted as mediator at the peace conference held at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in 1905. Since then, however, with the worsening of relations between the two nations, the anti-Japanese feeling became stronger day by day and unfavorable laws to the Japanese in America were issued successively. In 1913, the California Alien Land Act; in 1920, the second such Act; also in 1920, the forbidding of picture-brides' entrance into the U.S. And in 1924, the year the Shigeru was born, Alien Immigration Act (commonly called the Exclusion Act) was introduced and it restricted entry of Japanese into the U.S. to government officials, tourists, ministers, and priests, college professors, exchange students, men involved in international business, and returnees. Thus from July 1, as far as the immigration of common people were concerned, the door was closed completely and the only Japanese who could enter the U.S. to stay as immigrants were those who had been here before and were returning a second time.

According to the statistics in the U.S. Immigrations Office, there was the following number of Japanese immigrants:

1921……..7878
1922……..6716
1923……..5809
1924……..7217

The 1924 Immigrant Act cut the number of immigrants severely. Figures for 1925 and 1926 were as follows:

1925……...682
1926……...598

The six hundred or so immigrants of 1925 and 1926 were returnees who were visiting in Japan after having immigrated to the U.S. There were some educators and ministers among that number, but they were few.

Since the prohibition of picture-bride immigration, there have been many men returning to Japan to bring wives back with them. However, with this new law of 1924, a returnee could not bring a bride back with him if the girl was not a returnee herself. There were not many Nisei girls of marriageable age in Japan for the purpose of marriage disappeared almost completely. Nisei girls here were children yet. The young single men who had emigrated here and were still bachelors were placed in a wretched situation indeed.

Bitterly disillusioned, there were many who pulled up stakes and returned to Japan. If one included those who were returning to Japan for a visit, in 1924 there were 2120 persons who arranged to leave the United States. In 1925, the number was 1170; in 1926, 1201.

In this atmosphere of strong discrimination against the Japanese in America, subtly reflecting to strained relationship between the two countries, the Uchiyamas, too because of the reason that they were Japanese, went through many bad experiences. To

make matters worse, some of the fellow Japanese, envious of Shunsuke's ability and success treated him coldly like a proverb, "A nail that sticks out is bound to be pounded."

It was fall of 1925. Shunsuke came home from the field and said to his wife, "I just spoke to a lawyer on the bridge. I asked him to sell everything. Let's go back to Japan."

The current price of table grapes was not good, and the farm was not running as smoothly as desired. As he had paid annual installments on the farm for seven of the ten years he had contracted for, if he sold the 245 acres for $60,000, he would still have forty to fifty thousand dollars left. These were the reasons Shunsuke had begun to seriously think about returning to Japan.

After speaking thus to his wife, Shunsuke fell into silent and deep thought. Suddenly jumping to his feet, he exclaimed, "No, I won't sell!" and dashed out of the house to go tell the lawyer that he had changed his mind.

When one speaks of immigrants, one thinks that such persons come into the new country planning to become permanent residents there. The European and African immigrants to the U.S. had such objective. But most of the Japanese obtained passports to the U.S. were with the idea of seeking his fortune and returning to Japan in glory or of making a great deal of money in short period of time and returning to Japan. Perhaps they should be called "migrant" workers (crossing the ocean, and crossing national boundaries, rather than immigrants).

Shunsuke, too, had similar thoughts at first. But with a family and with his work progressing so well, his dreams of returning to Japan gradually faded and he decided to stick to dreams and hopes for a good life for his family and a bigger business operation in America.

There 85 acres planted in table grapes which he sold two years previously were returned to him because the buyer was unable to pay. He decided to convert this vineyard eventually into orchard. In 1922, he had planted peaches, and they had grown very well. This was the first year of harvest from this small orchard.

In 1926, after the grape harvest season had passed, Shunsuke suddenly said, "Let's go to Japan." He no doubt wanted to show his family……his two dear little boys…..to his brothers and sisters and to Toshi's parents. In ten days, all necessary arrangements were completed, and the four boarded the ship, Shinyo Maru, in San Francisco; on October 12, 1926 (Taisho 15). At that time, Toshi was carrying her third child, but what with her little boys running around excitedly on their first voyage and the sight of her husband having his first real release from work worries, Toshi was extremely happy and had no time to get seasick.

Shunsuke was returning to his native country after nineteen years; for Toshi, it was ten. It was a tearful, though sweet reunion, and the spoken words came out jerkily as they embraced and greeted each other. Both Shunsuke and Toshi felt that the hardships they had patiently endured were all worthwhile. They had dreamed so much about this reunion; they could hardly believe that this was actually happening. Everyone had aged, but the tender affection and love had not changed at all.

Furusato no yama ni mukaite yuu koto nashi,
Furusato no yama wa arigataki kana.
-Ishikawa, Takuboku

I behold the mountains of my native land in silence,
The mountains of native land are gratitude untold.
-Takuboku Ishikawa

After visiting the Uchiyama home in Kuno-mura and Shunsuke's parents' graves, the four went to Tabe-mura and settled for a while at Toshi's parents' home. It had been

a long time Toshi had done her hair in the Japanese style and had worn a kimono, and she reveled in the pleasure.

Mikio and Shigeru mischievously broke the fragile shojis (paper screens) and ruined the tatamis (straw mats)…these were strange, interesting, and different and the boys were curious….but the grandparents were indulgent and did not utter any admonishment. They enjoyed their dear little grandchildren. Even when a neighbor came to return some hardware that Mikio had apparently taken from their hardware store and given it to the neighbor's son, not a scolding word did Mikio get.

Shortly after they had returned to Japan, Toshi's younger sister told her how eagerly her mother had waited this reunion, and how sad she no doubt would be when time for parting came again. Toshi did not realize until then how much her mother had been thinking of her all these years, and tears streamed down her face in pained gratitude.

This year (the year that the Emperor Taisho died, on December 25) was an especially cold winter, and Shunsuke's arthritic knee hurt even more because of the greater humidity in this island country. He tried the Beppu hot springs in Kyushu, but the pain persisted. In addition to this, his body was used to hard work, and these days of relaxation made him more tired. "I can't sleep on a tatami," he began to complain.

But even more than the arthritis and the lack of bed, Shunsuke was concerned about the work on his farmland in America.

The family kept traveling between Kuno and Tabe, and before long, two months had passed and the new year 1927 (Showa 2) came along. It was about the time Mikio and Shigeru celebrated their birthdays (five, and three, respectively). The grandmother, sensing Shunsuke's worries about this business in America, said, "Perhaps you should start thinking about going back; your farmland may be needing you." These words of

parting which were so difficult for Shunsuke and Toshi to say came from Toshi's mother. After waiting the next boat, on February 27, they sailed for home in America on the Tenyo Maru.

They had been absent from home for five months. Shunksuke had been worried about the farm, but the young man, Shoichi Doi, had taken good care of it in his absence, and when they reached home in the middle of March, the peach orchard was in full bloom.

Things began to get busy for Shunsuke again, and he thrived on it, just like a thrashing fish that had been returned to water. Toshi was due to deliver her third child soon and did not exert herself excessively to protect both her child and herself.

Takako was born on April 20, 1927. It was their first daughter. How they wished they could show her off to their folks in Japan. It was a month after Takako's birth that Charles Lindberg made his historic solo flight across the Atlantic from New York to Paris.

If Shunsuke were to plant fruit trees on the entire acreage of grapevine at one time, the orchard he desired would be complete in four years, but this was impossible because the four year period he needed to attain the goal would have expenses as well. He continued to plant the leftover transplants he purchased at the nursery every year. So, the farm was a maze of vegetables, grapes, and fruit trees. Besides the truck gardening, there was work in the vineyard, thinning, pruning, tying vines, and picking. The orchard required planting, grafting, thinning, pruning, etc. There was a lot of work, hard, hard, work.

"Have hard workers for friends," Shunsuke would tell his children. He was a stern man who believed in diligence. Those who had come and stayed with him were all

industrious. He was really fortunate in this regard. If there was danger of frost, they would get up at two in the morning and burn old rubber tires around the vineyard, without a grumble. Workers included many nationalities, Japanese, Caucasians, Mexicans, and Indians.

Mikio reached school age, and Shunsuke would take him in the automobile to the elementary school located three miles away since no school bus was available in those days. He also attended Sanger Japanese Language School on Sundays. In the fall of this year, 1927, when Shunsuke went to New York to visit the market where he was shipping his vegetables and fruits (a two week trip), Toshi not only took charge of the farming operation, but also obtained a driver's license and took Mikio to and from school during the period. She drove the car about five or six years, up until Takako begged her mother to quit because her driving was so dangerous.

It was at the end of this year that the following incident occurred. A fellow native of Yamaguchi Prefecture was in Hawaii, planning to publish a book. Shunsuke received a letter concerning this, and shortly thereafter, the man came to Sanger to see him. He said, "If you donate your publications, I'll put your name in the book, which will be a great honor for you." Shunsuke did not like his words at all and did not give even a penny changing his original intentions completely. Even though he was busy at the time, this episode well reflected his personality.

Chapter 5

Reclamation of Wasteland, Late Period

It was 1929. Mrs. Miura, the midwife who had delivered Toshi's three children, had returned to Japan, and Hisako was born on January 6, at the Eda Maternity Home in Fresno. It was a happy occasion, but the start of a happy new year was soon to change due to a sudden outbreak of terrible incidents.

It was in the month of May. Shigeru had been sent to the neighbor's home to buy milk, as usual. On the way home, he stumbled and cut his face with the broken milk bottle. He was taken to Sanger Hospital and treated, but Shunsuke was not satisfied with the result. He had heard that there was a fine doctor in San Francisco, so even though it was the midst of busy farming season, he took Shigeru to the German Hospital there immediately. Shunsuke, who had burned his ear when he was still a child, had suffered some sad experiences as result of it. He didn't want his son to go through that kind of experience. He was dead serious about his son's accident, and he did not care, no matter what he had to do to help him or how much it would cost.

Shunsuke came after Shigeru after two weeks. To catch the train at Oakland, they took the ferry from San Francisco, and father and son happily crossed the Bay and arrived at the Oakland Station. However, Shunsuke suddenly realized that in the excitement and happiness over Shigeru, he forgot the suitcase and left it in San Francisco. Leaving the message with a man at the ticket counter and Shigeru at the waiting room of the Oakland station, Shunsuke traced his steps back to San Francisco. It was dark by the time he returned to the station. He got his suitcase, but this time Shigeru was gone. He could not see his son anywhere. After inquiring around, he was told that a man who appeared to be

Chinese too the boy to San Francisco. Shunsuke contacted the police, the Japanese Association, etc., and searched high and low all over the stations and train cars; he ran all over Chinatown looking for Shigeru desperately all night. Thinking that Shigeru might have been kidnapped for the slave trade, Shunsuke became frantic with fear. The next morning Shigeru was safe and sound back at Shunsuke's side. Apparently the Chinese man, who did not understand either English or Japanese, had thought that this little boy at the Oakland station was lost. Although Shigeru resisted, he took Shigeru with him to Chinatown in San Francisco. When he realized that Shigeru was a Japanese boy, the Chinese man took the child to a Japanese home to spend the night. In the morning the Japanese family contacted the Japanese Association. Returning home, Shunsuke happily told his wife about the whole incident in detail as this happening might have been a tragedy turned out to be the one with a happy ending.

August 8 was a Sunday, and there was a program from Japan being presented at the Japanese Theatre (Nihon Gekijo) in Fresno. The Uchiyama family left early in the evening to attend the show. They were at the theatre when their friend, a Mr. Mikami, came to Shunsuke excitedly and exclaimed, "It's terrible! It's terrible! Mr. Hata slipped on a rock and fell into the river at Polaski Hot Springs, and they can't find him anywhere!" Yasuto Hata was the lad from Hawaii whose name he had borrowed since 1919 to buy land. Shunsuke immediately went to the river and spent the entire night looking for him, using a hand lantern, but to no avail. It was a sad, sad funeral.

Mikio was seven years old at the time. Since he was not of age, Shunsuke borrowed another Nisei's name; Shoichi Haranaga was over twenty-one. The problem of the land was solved, but Shunsuke, remembering how Yasuto Hata had accepted his request willingly when he was in need, did not forget his debt of gratitude to this man.

Yasuto's sudden death made his wife, Yoshiko, a widow with two little children (Tadashi, age 5, and Terue, age 2 ½). This grief-stricken Yoshiko was at a loss as to what to do or where to turn. Shunsuke immediately removed the things in the house next door and offered it to the Hata family. Shunsuke and Toshi decided that they would treat Tadashi and Terue the same as they treated Mikio, Shigeru, Takako, and Hisako. The Uchiyama children also felt that they suddenly had acquired a brother and sister, and they began to feel closer to each other, day by day.

"You're still too young. If you wish to remarry, please feel free to do so. Toshi and I will take over Tadashi and Terue if it would work out better that way. Please do not worry; we will take very good care of them," said Shunsuke to Yoshiko. But Yoshiko did not remarry; she stayed on at the Uchiyama farm.

During World War I, all the countries enjoyed prosperity despite the sadness of war, but as the war ended in 1918, the tide turned and an economic slump started. In Europe, the heavy war loans that the European nations had shouldered began to push the depression in by 1925. In Japan, too, with the monetary crisis in 1927, the depression mood was prevailing. Despite these economic situations throughout the world, only the United States had maintained the prosperity. However, even the United States could not withstand the worldwide pressure of depression any longer and in October of 1929 (Showa 4) there came an unprecedented stock market crash of New York Stock Exchange marking the beginning of the Great Depression in this country.

Many banks and security firms declared bankruptcy one after another. The closing down of factories increased the unemployment and the lowered wages increased the number of poverty-stricken families throughout the U.S. The initial cause of this Great Depression in this country was the overproduction of farm products and one can

understand the scope and its effect upon the farmers. Shunsuke wondered what was going to happen to the prices next year.

As if the depression was not enough, there was more to darken the days. Toshi's mother, Shina, died on December 30. Toshi received the telegram from Japan when she was preparing for New Year's Day, saying that Shina had had a sudden heart attack. For Toshi, what is ordinarily a happy new year's day (1930), became instead a very tearful and sad one.

Because of the depression, the harvested crops were sold at very low prices as excepted. Fruits and grapes were not necessaries of life, and the cold wind of depression blew ill. However, Shunsuke was saved by the fact that the Santa Rosa plums sold at a fairly good price and that the wine grapes sold at a good price. The wages paid to the workers were low now, too (10 to 15 cents per hour). And the farm had been paid off completely the year before. Compared to the others, because of these reasons, Shunsuke did quite well in spite of the depression.

Nonetheless, not knowing when times would get worse, Shunsuke austerely practiced frugality and would not permit to extravagance. Toshi would spend her evenings mending socks and shirts and other clothing, and gazing at the children, would sigh, "We couldn't buy anything new for them this year again, ne". Shigeru had entered the first grade in September; without complaining at all, he and his brother went to school in the patched pants and shirts that their mother laid out for them.

Besides the family of six, there were ten workers and their families to support. The prices for the peaches and grapes were low, and yet, during the harvest season, Shunsuke had to hire as many as seventy workers to get the work done properly and in time. Shunsuke had to work out some countermeasures against the depression.

Even in March, 1931, the depression did not get lighter but instead got heavier and heavier. Since the season for planting fruit saplings was in January and February, those who plant those have finished by then. Shunsuke came up with an idea. He went to the Sanger Kanagawa Nursery and bought up all of the leftover fruit saplings that were there, cheaply because they were leftovers. These he planted in between the grapevines because he had intentions of grafting them with the specific kind of fruit he wished to cultivate when they grew a little, he did not care what kind of trees he got at the store.

No, none had ever thought of planting fruit trees in between the grapevines before. Shunsuke was thinking of pulling out the vines in three years when the fruit trees matured. This was a brilliant idea; one can perceive what kind of mind Shunsuke had.

Even though there were banks that loaned money, none of them would loan to Japanese. Thus Shunsuke had to economize carefully, to have adequate funds for farming equipment, animal food, wages for the workers, fertilizers, and etc. He had to develop new plans and work hard to overcome the adversities and difficult situations created by the depression. He couldn't succeed by doing as the others did. Steadily, surely, Shunsuke increased the scale and the scope of his farming enterprise.

Toshi, seeing her husband throwing himself heart and soul into his work, would go out into the field and work, too. Takako and Hisako were not of school age yet, and so, as she did to her sons, she would lock them in the house everyday while she went out into the field. It was not infrequent that a neighbor came to tell her that the children were crying. Mikio and Shigeru would go out into the field after school and help. The hot summers, with temperatures rising to 100 degrees F and more, did not daunt them. Shunsuke would say that the summers had to be hot so that the fruits could become sweet. The saying, "Nothing is impossible" seemed to be the motto; abstaining from vain

glory, wearing old clothes that were almost rags; being content with a frugal diet; buying nothing new other than the necessary farm equipment….the Uchiyamas worked hard and endured patiently.

In 1932, about the time that the harvest was over, a neighbor decided to sell his seventy acres of vineyards because of the depression. Shunsuke had paid off the amount he owed on the 245 acres three years ago, and with his careful avoidance of extravagance plus the good returns on the wine grapes, he was better off than most. He decided to buy the seventy acres for cash. Mikio was still not of age, so once again, Shunsuke borrowed Mr. Haranaga's name.

Life for the Issei was such that both husband and wife had to work. Having children underfoot made it difficult for a wife to help her husband at work. Not only that, since many Issei were contemplating on returning to Japan, and they wanted their children to acquire a Japanese education, many of the Issei sent their children to their parents and relatives in Japan when they reached school age. Shunsuke and Toshi did think of this, too, but it was very difficult for them to send their children off like that thinking of the lonesome days Shunsuke had to go through without his parents at his side when he was a child. (When the Nisei children who were sent to Japan for their education returned to America, they were known as Kibei Nisei or simply Kibeis).

Following President Hoover's one term in office, Franklin Roosevelt became the President of the United States, with an overwhelming vote in 1932 and was inaugurated on March 4, 1933. Even though the depression was beginning to show the sign of recovery since the end of the previous year, there still were one out of four labor force unemployed-----14,000,000. The American people had been suffering from the

depression for over three years and their expectation toward the new President for his new policy of economic recovery, the New Deal, was beyond description.

Contrary to the favorable turn of the nation's economy, the Uchiyama's this year (1933) became one of the affected by the economic disaster. Shunsuke has shipped his grapes to New York, but because of the prolonged rains, they were unable to unload them, and the grapes rotted in the freight cars. The packing house billed him for packing and shipping. Not only did he not get paid for the grapes (it had been arranged as "on consignment") but also, he had a huge packing and shipping bill, for he had sent sixty cars of grapes. Shipping cost of $600 per car, so he owed $36,000 to the shipping company for grapes shipped but not sold.

Shunsuke could not sleep for many nights. Unable to pay such a huge amount, his farm was attached. But worst of all, friends to whom he looked for help not only did not sympathize, but instead were cold and unkind, saying that Shunsuke was through this time.

Rather than going down in defeat, however, Shunsuke reacted to the business loss and the "friends" comments with a firing up of the Chosu fighting spirit. Whenever Shunsuke failed, his habit of saying was, "It's no use to mope or worry, or spend time regretting my past actions. I did it thinking it was the best thing to do. I have no regrets." Instead of sitting and wringing his hands, he set about trying to resolve the problem.

The success or failure of a farming enterprise is influenced by the weather and the market. Then there is one more factor, the man himself. Instead of quitting the orchard farms, Shunsuke approached the packing house and arranged to borrow necessary operational capital for the following year, and began to develop fresh plans.

He had this terrific loss because he had arranged to sell the grapes on consignment. He changed his methods. He negotiated with the packing house to sell the grapes from next year at a set price per ton, for cash.

Whenever grape harvest season rolled around, Shunsuke would become irritable and easily angered. The children would see their mother being scolded, and frequently said, "We don't like harvest time." Shunsuke was especially easily provoked to anger this year of 1934. He usually did not fling his annoyance at the children or at the workers'. He turned his irritations on his wife. When he scolded her in front of other people, Toshi could not say anything and she frequently went home and cried her heart out where no one would see her. However, she kept telling herself, "He is all alone in this world. He had had nothing but painful struggle after painful struggle since childhood. And he is irritated right now because of the work situation," and tried to bear the anguish and pain in her heart.

It was about this time that a Caucasian painted the Uchiyama name on the mailbox placed by the roadside, and came to collect for the service. Shunsuke refused to pay, for he had not asked to have it done, nor did the fellow get permission first. Toshi said that the fellow is to be pitied if he doesn't get paid for his work, and urged her husband to pay him, but Shunsuke was adamant. With the air of discrimination so prevalent at the time, many Japanese felt ashamed of being Japanese. However, Shunsuke could hardly contain himself against the superior attitude taken by some of the Caucasians.

Harvest season ended. Since Shunsuke was involved in unusually large enterprise, when he failed the failure was severe, but when he succeeded, it was a tremendous success. Most of the Japanese farmers at the time had at the most about fifty

acres and very few had a hundred acres of farmland. Shunsuke, who had finished paying off the money due on the farm, had 315 acres. With the income for this year (from the plums, peaches and grapes), he was able to pay most of the debts of the previous year.

Time passed, and the children grew rapidly. Hisako was five years old in 1934, and enrolled in school in September. Mikio was in the seventh grade, Shigeru in the fifth, and Takako was a second grader, all attending the Alameda School. Hisako was born in January, and actually should have waited one more year before starting school, but Toshi was busy helping on the farm, and therefore arranged with the school to get her enrolled in September of '34. In the morning, Shunsuke would take the children to school in their car, but after school, the children, including the two Hata youngsters and children of Portuguese immigrant, good neighbors of the Uchiyamas, would walk home the three miles of country road. It was a grand sight to watch them walking home, and both Shunsuke and Toshi would smile in delight as someone in the field shouted, "The children are coming home." Shunsuke thought that it was important to give the girls a talent, and thus Takako took piano lessons, and Hisako learned to play the violin. (These lessons were continued until they were sent into the relocation camps in 1942).

If Shunsuke thought that a certain idea was correct, he asserted himself and remained adamant, to the point of being stubborn. In regard to Japanese language, he insisted that the children must learn Japanese and had been sending three of the older children to Japanese Language School in Sanger on Sundays. "A Japanese must know Japanese," he maintained. However, in September of this year (1934) he enrolled his four children in the Parlier Buddhist Sunday School and Parlier Japanese Language School admiring the teaching method used by the instructor, Rev. Chijo Suyemori of the

Parlier Higashi Honganji Buddhist Church. (It became a part of the Nishi Honganji system in 1948).

The children studied well, and both Mikio and Shigeru were already able to get up at the school programs and give difficult orations in Japanese.

A story about the Uchiyamas is not complete until a description is given about the family supper hour. Supper never began until the father was home to sit at the table with everyone. Even if he was delayed until quite late and the food got cold, the growing children were famished, it was the tradition upheld by the family. During the day, everyone was scattered into the four winds, and the one time during the day when they would all be together was this supper hour. To Shunsuke and Toshi, it was a precious moment, and all the cares and worries were made worthwhile when they gazed upon the faces of their healthy, energetic children enjoying the meal. As they ate, they would tell of the events of the day and report whatever was necessary. When supper was over, it was Shunsuke's turn to speak. And invariably, it would be a bit of a sermon dealing with morality, society, character and personality, or something similar.

> Kongoseki mo migakazuba tama no hikari wa sowazaran,
> Hito mo manabita nochi ni koso makoto no toku wa arawarure;
> Tokei no hari no taema naku meguru ga gotoku toki no ma no
> Hikage oshimite hageminaba, inkanaru waza ka narazaran.
>
> Shogaku Shoka "Kongoseki"
> Shoke Kotaigo

> Even as the diamond will not sparkle unless it is polished,
> A person must be trained to grow rich in virtue;
> And just as the hands of the clock never cease to move,
> We must endeavor day and night to achieve success.
>
> Elementary School Song "Diamond"
> By Empress Meiji

Shunsuke's discourse sometimes was about a great man in history, or sometimes he would use the textbook on ethics which he had studied in his youth. The children

were astonished at the wealth of knowledge their father had. Be proud that you are a Japanese, study hard; nothing is impossible if you will really strive; effort and concentration are important to success; etc., etc. These ideas were expressed constantly to urge the children to become strong and able to face the vicissitudes that were a part of life. These discussions usually lasted an hour or so and more. The children listened quietly and absorbed their father's spirit into their lives; the lives they lead today are a testimonial to Shunsuke.

The work on the farm was never-ending, especially since there was such diversity, and in such huge quantities. Where the fruit trees had grown enough, he had to pull the grapevines out. Shunsuke was as busy as a bee and his head was constantly spinning with plans of actions.

It was his principle of life not to stand in the forefront and lead a group, and although he served on the boards of the Sanger Japanese Association, the Japanese Language School, the Buddhist Church at Parlier, etc., he rarely showed his face at meetings. He helped generously with financial aid, and did his part as a trustee of his area in communicating with the members. Because he was so busy, he attended only the very important church services at the temple, but Toshi was astonished to realize that he knew the Shoshinge and the Gobunsho so well. He had learned and memorized these important writings of Jodo Shin Sect of Buddhism from his father and grandparents long ago, as a child. The farm was doing well, everyone was healthy, and the Uchiyama family was a continuing serial of happy scenes.

When Shunsuke was still a child, his grandmother used to say to him, "Please grow up to be a hard-working man. Do not associate with lazy persons." Having lost his

mother at such a young age, these words from his gentle grandmother became unforgettable. He began to repeat the very same words to his four children.

Although he prospered and the children did not really have to help on the farm, he kept assigning farm tasks to them in rapid succession as part of their training. He did not use his physical force to make them work; his stern disciplinary methods were of higher caliber. And whenever one of them expressed a want, he did not spoil the child by rushing out to get it; he got it if it was warranted and determined to be a beneficial thing.

The children, in turn, understood their father well and never once sassed back. Whereas in the late afternoon of summer vacation, it would be understandable to hear a child say he was tired and wanted to go home, these four children would quietly plod on and on with the work at hand, just like their parents, until the job was completed. When school was in session, even when the boys were supposed to play on the school basketball and baseball teams, and there was a game scheduled, there was a time they would let the playing go and come home to work during the busy season. Shunsuke would learn about it later, much to his embarrassment.

"Tsuki ni murakumo, hana ni kaze." (Literally, the moon has its gathering clouds, the flowers has its storm. Figuratively, nothing remains perfect.) On February 6, 1938, Toshi's father, Kichizaemon Sasao, died. Toshi, like Shunsuke, had now lost both parents. Eleven years previously when the family visited in Japan, her mother was ever so gentle with the two mischievous sons who would lick their fingers and poke holes in the shoji paper (she was patching the holes every night), and her father had led the boys by the hand or carried them piggyback to go see the cow out in the field. When Toshi realized that that was to be the last time she was to see her parents, her tears would not stop flowing. It was a painfully sad thing to part from one's parents but it was even more

pitiful to be in another country when the final parting came. This was the destiny of all Issei.

After 1935, with the farm paid off, and all the necessary equipment purchased and the reclamation and conversion completed, Shunsuke started to put his money in investments. Rather than leaving his earning idle in the bank, he began to invest in gold mines, silver mines, oil, tungsten, etc. He had great losses as well as successful investments. He was even bamboozled once. But he did not complain. His response always was that he did it thinking it was a good thing. He never conferred with Toshi on anything about these ventures, believing that business affairs were really a man's world. And Toshi never said a word.

Becoming more and more prosperous, in 1938, he leased the two hundred acres across the river and planted it in alfalfa and beans. This meant that he would be busy again, but the children were grown now, and they were a big help in the field.

In June, 1940, Mikio graduated from Reedley High School and matriculated at the University of California in Berkeley. Shunsuke felt that one must not stint on money for work purposes or for health or for education. Especially on the education of his children, recalling many hardships in his school days, Shunsuke used to say to his children "Don't worry about money, just study hard." He was a believer of the proverb, "Education is the most far-sighted and far reaching policy." His great desire was that all four of his children would acquire a college education, and he was extremely glad that his oldest son was now attending college.

Chapter 6

World War II Begins

Depression and economic panic which struck Japan in 1927, two years before that of United States, increased its intensity as the years passed by, and the Japanese military authorities began to assert that in order to resolve the problem they must take the Chinese market. In September, 1931, the Manchurian Incident broke out, and Japan captured and occupied three provinces in northeastern China, renaming the area Manchuria and arranged for it independence. However, these Japanese advances caused strained relations between Japan and England, and between Japan and the United States, for both of these countries were also interested in establishing a market in China.

The newly rising power, Japan, began to lose what friends she had among the member nations of the world conference, and in 1933 she withdrew from the League of Nations. In 1934, she withdrew from the Armaments Conference held in London. With the completion of the five year plan for the development of Manchuria, Japan, aiming at the Chinese continent, entered the state of undeclared war against Chiang Kai Shek's Chinese government, and bloody battle (Shina Jihen or Nikka Jihen) began in July 1937 (Showa 12). The Japanese army was well equipped and well-trained, and before a year had passed, had conquered the entire Chinese coast from northern China to the southern end.

The English, who had close relationship with the United States, gave aid unstintingly to Chiang Kai Shek who moved the capital inland to Chungking. Also, over in America, there existed the growing opinion and the fear as to the safety of the Philippines a colony of the United States since 1898.

Relations between the United States and Japan this became worse as time passed, and if July, 1939 (Showa 14) the United States abrogated her commercial treaty with Japan. In the summer of 1940, she declared an embargo on scrap iron and crude oil to Japan, materials Japan needed to continue the war in China.

World War II had begun in September 1939 when Germany invaded Poland. Japan entered into a tri-partite treaty with Germany and Italy in September, 1940, and declared hostile relations against the Allied powers. Under the slogan, "A Greater East Asia Mutual Prosperity Sphere," the Japanese army advanced into French Indochina (the present day Vietnam) in July, 1940 (Showa 16). The United States took retaliatory measures against this be freezing the property and assets held by the Japanese in the United States. War between the United States and Japan seemed to be inevitable; it was just a matter of time.

The day finally came. On December 7 (it was December 8 in Japan), 1941, 105 Japanese fighter planes and bombers from aircraft carriers headed for Hawaii made a surprise attack on the naval base at Pearl Harbor. The Pacific Fleet suffered a deadly blow, and a fateful war between the United States and Japan (Pacific War as a part of World War II) began with a violent explosion.

The start of this war increased the trials and tribulations already so unbearable for the Issei and Nisei in America. December 7 was a Sunday, and the radio repeated this special news from about eleven that morning. Shunsuke listened to the news with his mind in confusion and turmoil. He was 57 years old, and had been in the United States longer than he had lived in Japan (thirty-four years); he dreaded and lamented that the worst things had happened; his native country and his second native country were at war against each other.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation had been busy for over a year, investigating persons of Japanese ancestry, but form the evening of that fateful December 7, they began to arrest suspicious persons on the blacklist. (It was supposedly a list of spy suspects. However, actual spies were non-existent, as later reports showed, and it was more or less a list of the leaders of the Japanese communities.) And within the period of the first three days, they had picked up 1291 persons. These people, along with many more Issei leaders who were arrested later, were shipped off to the detention centers in Missoula, Montana; Fort Sill, Okalahoma; Livingston, Louisiana; and Roseburg and Santa Fe, New Mexico. They were taken to these internment camps in guarded convoy trains and placed under strict surveillance.

Rumors, true and false, became rampant with the onset of this adversity for the Japanese in America. They were labeled enemy aliens overnight and the Japanese communities were thrown into a state of disorder and confusion. The Japanese males didn't know if and when the FBI would be arresting them. Shunsuke, too, kept a suitcase packed with the essentials, just in case they suddenly came by for him. Filled with fear and anxiety, they burned books and pictures and anything else that the FBI might think suspicious. They even destroyed the certificates of appreciation so many of them had received from the Japanese Red Cross for their donations. Shunsuke noted that strange cars which seemed to belong to the police department parked by his home frequently. Fortunately, they didn't come to pick him up.

Shortly thereafter, in Sanger, it was decreed that no Japanese (Issei, Nisei, and Sansei alike) would be allowed to travel far from his home. They were ordered to turn in rifles, shotguns, pistols, Japanese swords, flashlights (thinking that some might use them as signals between comrades and also for Japanese airplanes), cameras, and movie

cameras they had in their possession. The oppressions against the Japanese getting severe and on February 24, it was decreed that no Japanese would be allowed to travel outside the radius of five miles from him home. Curfew was declared. No Japanese was to be found outside of their home between 9:00 PM and 6:00 AM.

They were treated with contempt by the Caucasians, and often were refused service at the stores. Their businesses were boycotted. Their homes were damaged. The curfew and other restrictions made it impossible for Japanese organizations (religious and social) to have meetings. Because of these adverse conditions, the Japanese community was almost a state of paralysis. Whether it was from feeling of fear or of shame in being Japanese, it is difficult to determine, but there were some Japanese who tried to separate themselves from anything Japanese (religion, language, etc.).

Japan, which annihilated the main force of the U.S. Navy at Pearl Harbor, rapidly went on the warpath with an irresistible force, and within the span of three months after December 7, had subdued Thailand, occupied Guam, Wake, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Manila in the Philippines. She kept advancing into Malay, Burma, and Java.

The more Japan was victorious in the Pacific and Southeast Asia, the more severe became the discriminatory acts against the "Japanese" in America. Life was bitter and miserable. There were some among the Caucasians who expressed the fear and spread a rumor that the enemy Japanese would land on the West Coast and invade with their military forces. Facing this emergency situation, the America that had been in existence without the strong unity, being comprised of immigrants from all over the world, began to stir the air of anti-Japanese even more, headed by the anti-Japanese radicals and was in the process of forming a strong national unity. "Remember Pearl Harbor" became the cry word.

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin Roosevelt signed the Executive Order No. 9066, authorizing the Department of the Army to remove the "Japanese" from the West Coast. On March 2, General John L. DeWitt of the Western Defense Command announced that the western part of California, Oregon, and Washington; and the southern part of Arizona would be classified as Zone I; and the remaining portions of these four states as Zone II. And for defense reasons, anyone with any Japanese blood in their veins would be forced to evacuate Zone I, at some future date to be announced by the General, was the communication received. The communiqué also informed that if one wished, he would be allowed to evacuate Zone I on a voluntary basis before the announced date. The Wartime Civil Control Administration was established to begin making arrangements to handle this mass evacuation project.

At this time, there were approximately 140,000 "Japanese'' (Issei, Nisei, and Sansei) in America, excluding those living in Hawaii, and the majority of them lived in Zones I and II, mainly in California. Out of the ten western states, only Utah and Colorado, needing laborers for their sugar beet farms, were willing to have evacuees move in. Thus, March 27 (the date set by the government as the final date for voluntary evacuation), a little over 5,400 "Japanese" had gone to either Utah or Colorado, and 4,800 of those living in Zone I moved further inland into Zone II. In Central California, the dividing line between Zone I and Zone II was established as U.S. 99 (present Golden State Highway) which runs north and south through the Central Valley through Fresno. The Japanese population in Central California increased suddenly and greatly as those living in Zone I joined relatives and friends living in the east of the highway (Zone II).

The "Japanese" were free to go anywhere else in the United States, but knowing that there was a strong anti-Japanese feeling throughout the U.S., and realizing that the

hardships would be the same no matter where one went, most of them did not choose to make such a drastic move. Besides, they really did not have to money to cover the expense of such a questionable move.

On March 19, the President established the War Relocation Authority and appointed Milton Eisenhower to head the administration of the relocation of the Japanese. (In four years, from June of the same year until the WRA program ended in June of 1946, Dillon S. Myer was Director). On March 24, DeWitt announced the removal of all Japanese (alien and citizen alike) from Zone I. And on March 27, three days later, he halted the voluntary evacuation. Thus, those "Japanese" in Zone I, were just waiting for the forced evacuation. The mass evacuation began. The stable in the Santa Anita Race Track in Los Angeles were quickly converted and became the Santa Anita Assembly Center. Since this Center was opened March 27, the first group of evacuees had only three days before they moved in. With what baggage they could carry, wearing number tags around their necks, and under the watchful eyes of the military police, "Japanese" were herded into this temporary quarters. Some of them had to sell whatever property and assets they had that which they could not take with them, all within the short length of time. Needless to say, they lost a great deal.

In Central California, on April 20, the Tulare Fairgrounds (located fifty miles south of Fresno) became the assembly center for evacuees from the coastal regions of Santa Barbara, Oxnard, Guadelupe, and Santa Maria….over 4,000 persons.

On May 6, the Fresno Fairgrounds became the assembly center for residents in Fresno, Hanford, Delano, Fowler, Selma, Bowles, Madera, as well as those living in the coastal cities of San Luis Obispo, Monterey, and those living in northern California in Florin, Elk Grove….some 5,120 persons. In a period of less than two months, working

day and night without rest, some 500 construction workers and carpenters had completed the conversion of the existing buildings, barns, stable, etc., and the construction of over 250 new barracks.

In Pinedale, too (a town five miles north of Fresno), they established an assembly center, using a cotton gin site and the adjoining 80 acres of government land. There were 4,792 Japanese interened in this center from May 7 until its closure on July 23. They had been brought in from coastal California and from Tacoma, Washington, and White River Valley and Auburn, Washington. They utilized the twenty-five huge cotton gin buildings, and in addition, as in the case of the Fresno Assembly Center, put up some 250 barracks. The legs of the beds and tales in their barracks sank into asphalt floor being softened by the hot temperature. Especially to those evacuees form the State of Washington that had cool weather, this hot Fresno weather was severe and cruel like the action of the evacuation by the American government.

Thus, there were three assembly centers in Central California, but east of Highway 99, which was designated Zone II, there were 6,000 “free Japanese”, including those who had moved there out of Zone I. There were altogether 82,386 persons interned in fifteen assembly centers (California had twelve; Washington, one; Oregon, one; Arizona, one) and the Manzanar Reception Center located in the eastern border of California.

The assembly centers were just that: temporary gathering places only. The evacuees were to be moved inland eventually, or as soon as possible, but plans did not materialize rapidly because of the time factor involving the construction of necessary facilities for a large number of people. So, some of the evacuees had to live for over six months in these centers.

Mikio was a sophomore at the University of California at Berkley, but shortly after the start of the February semester, he returned to his home in Sanger. Everyone had been uneasy about having his so far away alone. Sanger was in Zone II, and they thought at first that they would not be confronted with the evacuation problem, but on June 2, DeWitt ordered the relocation of the Zone II "Japanese" inland directly into the WRA Centers without going through the assembly centers.

The removal of the Japanese into the hastily- constructed barracks in the War Relocation Centers located inland began, and on May 8, Poston Relocation Center was opened in Arizona. Tule Lake Relocation Center, located in northern California near the Oregon border, where there used to be a lake in ancient times, was opened on May 27 and evacuees were escorted into this relocation camp by military police: they were transferred in form the assembly centers at Santa Anita, Salinas, Marysville, Sacramento, and Pinedale. (Tule Lake is famous in history as the old battlefield of many Indian battles).

Although the Uchiyama family was somewhat prepared, they dreaded the day when they, too, would have to evacuate into a relocation center.

The day had come. On August 7, 1942, the six members of the Uchiyama family boarded the Santa Fe train waiting for the evacuees at the Sanger station. The farm was 20% in grapes, the remaining 80% being orchard, and they had just finished harvesting the fruit the day before evacuation. The grapes would be ready for harvest in another two months, and there seemed to be an abundant crop, but Shunsuke had to arrange for the care of the farm with the packing house. He had been very good to the workers, Indians and Mexicans alike, and they were very sad to see their boss and his family being removed from the farm. According to the official records, the completion of the

evacuation of the “Japanese” from their homes to assembly centers and /or relocation centers was June 5 in Zone I and August 7 in Zone II, so the Uchiyamas were part of the last “Japanese” to be evacuated from their homes in the west coast, USA.

For Shunsuke it was like being torn into pieces to taken away from his business enterprise which was the main objective for his living and his raison d’etre. In addition to that, he trembled with fear and worry over what would happen to his wife and children in this new environment. But the train mercilessly began its departure from the Sanger station with its special passengers shortly after noon. There were many Caucasian people at the station, many of them just curious onlookers but others who were friends of the Japanese leaving on this train. Military police, carrying rifles, were stationed at the doors of these cars; the windows were closed tight (it was not in Sanger in August). Besides these passengers from Sanger, there were those from Parlier, Selma, and eastern Fowler, and the train was a long one. All told, there were 2,982 Japanese evacuated from Sanger, and on this last day, approximately 500 boarded this train. (The Fresno Bee reported news of these Issei, Nisei, and Sansei as Japanese, not even recognizing the differences in generation and citizenship within the group). It seemed as if the train with its window shades down symbolized the destiny which they were in.

Prior to the departure of the train, Shunsuke had a feeling of relentless anxiety, but as the train started to move, that feeling changed to that of resignation and he began to sense the unexplainable feeling of serenity.

The train stopped in Los Angeles that night for about five or six hours (although they were not allowed to leave the station platform), and then they were traveling through Arizona, through desert scenery which was new and strange to them. After passing

Yuma, they were allowed to raise the shades of the windows, and they looked out upon the Yuma Desert, with its cactus and sagebrush covering the land as far as the eye could see, and beyond. 650 miles after leaving Sanger, in the afternoon of August 8, the train stopped in Casa Grande, where they stepped down, hot and tired and miserable, to get into buses which would travel another twenty miles of hot desert road to the north to their final destination, the Gila River Relocation Center.

General DeWitt of the Western Defense Command proclaimed that this evacuation move was primarly to protect the "Japanese" but one wonders if that were really so. It is true that after Pearl Harbor attack, some civic organizations, the newspapers and radio, and those individuals who hated "Japanese" increased anti-Japanese statements and spurred public opinion into mass hysteria so that there was danger of harm, and the "Japanese" were afraid and anxious. Nonetheless, such a reason seems inadequate for imposing such a forced evacuation of the "Japanese" alien and citizen alike, into the inland.

The transfer of the "Japanese" from the West Coast was steadily progressing. And in early November, 1942, the last contingent of evacuees from the Fresno Assembly Center was taken 2,000 miles inland to the relocation center farthest east, to Jerome, Arkansas after five nights and six days of journey. Here, the evacuation of the "Japanese" into the Relocation Center was completed.

Approximately 112,000 (about 30,000 families) had been evacuated from the four western states into ten relocation centers (Poston, Arizona; Gila River, Arizona; Tule Lake, California; Manzanar, California; Mindoka, Idaho; Heart Mountain, Wyoming; Amache, Colorado; Topaz, Utah; Rohwer, Arkansas; and Jerome, Arkansas). Out of the

total number, one-third (approximately 38,000) were Issei. The rest were Nisei and Sansei, born here in America.

Among the Issei, experiencing discrimination throughout their long life in America, some felt a loyalty to their mother country, but did not do anything to harm the American nation, by sabotage, espionage, etc. Nonetheless, because of the war, and the abnormal psychology of the Americans in regard to the "Japanese", they became victims of circumstances. It was not only the Issei who were born in Japan, but also the Nisei and Sansei, who were actually the citizens of the United States, were treated as an "enemy alien" and had to endure discrimination because of their skin color, despite the voices raised in protest by those Caucasian of good sense. The United States was at war with Italy and Germany as well, but with the exception of espionage cases, none of the people of Italian or German ancestries had to go into America's concentration camps. "No matter if he is a US Citizen or not, a Jap is a Jap!" was the words uttered by General DeWitt himself; this portrays vividly the anti-Japanese feelings of American society and the severity of discrimination against the "Japanese".

According to *A Short History of American Democracy*, by John Hicks, professor and UC Berkeley, and George Mary, professor at UCLA, there was actually a discussion of the evacuation of the "Japanese" from Hawaii to mainland USA as well. In Hawaii, at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack, there were 158,000 "Japanese" in Hawaii (nearly one-fourth of the population here), but their absence would have crippled the economy of the islands very badly, and it was decided to suspend the mass evacuation plan and only to pick up and intern the very suspicious ones. The rest of them, and they were by far in the majority, were left as always to carry on the businesses of the islands. On the other hand, on the West Coast of the continental USA, where large number of "Japanese" were living

but they were far less in proportion to the others and thereby less of a threat to the economy there. Thus, according to this book, the forced evacuation was carried out and they were all forced to leave their homes and go inland into evacuation camps.

Freedom and equality are words that go hand in hand with the word, democracy; this part of American history is a page telling of the shame and disgrace they had cast upon themselves. (In December, 1944 (Showa 19), the Supreme Court of the United States handed down the decision that the evacuation was an unconstitutional act. It was a unanimous decision: 9 to 0).

Chapter 7

Life in the Gila River Relocation Center

Gila River Relocation Center (also known as the Gila River Evacuation Center) was located in the Arizona desert forty-five miles south of the State's largest city, Phoenix. Most of Arizona was ceded to the United States after the Mexican War when the peace treaty was signed in 1848 and the remaining portion, south of the Gila River was purchased from Mexico in 1853. Being admitted to the union in 1912 as the forty-eighth state, it is a relatively young state, but the influence of the American Indians who lived there and of the sixteenth century Spanish explorers is very evident.

Geologically, about 25,000 B.C., the North American continent was joined to Asia across Alaska, and when the Asians migrated to Alaska, they eventually wandered southward to become the nomadic Indians of the North American continent. Even with the Westward Movement and the growth of the United States, and the great increase in population, today, one out of every twenty people in Arizona are Indian. About 10,000 Indians live in Arizona. When the United States made a compromise treaty with the Indians, they created nineteen areas, equivalent to approximately one fourth of the state of Arizona, into Indian reservations for the fourteen tribes (Apache, Navajo, Hope, Papago, etc.); one cannot talk about Arizona without talking about Indians. The word itself, Arizona, is derived from the Indian vocabulary and means "a small spring." The word, Gila, means "spider", or "salty water."

This Gila River Relocation Center was also located in one of the Indian Reservations. Utilizing 17,000 acres, a city suddenly came into being in the middle of the desert. This time, the American society which had pushed away the Indians (the first

Americans and Native Americans) was sending the Japanese (the most recent immigrants) and their offspring into the relocation center in the Indian Reservation. One cannot but feel the strange combination of the history. The relocation camp was opened July 20, and consisted of 13,000 persons. All of a sudden it became the fourth largest city in Arizona. The evacuees were from the Turlock and Tulare Assembly Centers as well as from various places in California.

The largest city in Arizona was Phoenix, and second was Tucson. Third was the relocation camp created down the river of the famous Grand Canyon, the Colorado River, and it was comprised of evacuees from southern and central California and coastal California. There were 18,000 people in Poston Relocation Center.

The Uchiyamas got on the bus waiting for them in front of the station at Casa Grande, and upon arrival at the Gila River Relocation Center, were surprised to see how extensive it was. The camp consisted of sixty blocks, and each block had twenty barracks, plus a mess hall, a recreation hall, a shower house, restrooms, and utility buildings for washing and ironing. Besides this, there was a fire safety department, hospital building, food warehouses, offices and living quarters for the Caucasian government workers, etc., so that there were altogether approximately 1,400 buildings in the Center. Surrounding these buildings, part was the desert land, part of which was converted into farmland as the evacuees began to cultivate it. There were little hills of dark red soil in this desert land as well. The front and side sections of the camp were surrounded by the eight-foot barbed wire fence with guards posts at strategic positions. However, there was no need of it toward the back of the center since there was nothing but endless desert land. The Gila River cut across Arizona from east to west, not too far from camp. A canal was dug immediately north along the edge of the camp on the Camp

Canal section of the relocation center. The center was divided into two camps, Camp Canal and Camp Butte. The Camp Canal was called Camp One and Butte Camp, Camp Two. Butte Camp was separated by four miles of desert land from Camp Canal, and was twice as large as Camp One. The Uchiyamas occupied one room in one of the barracks in Camp One. (Block 22-11-A).

The U.S. Army had hastily built these barracks, which were similar to those used as temporary building in the front lines by G.I.'s. They were very flimsy in construction, designed primarily for single young men and built not to last more than four or five years.

The room was 24 feet by 20 feet, with wooden floors. The mattresses on the cots were made of straw. There was nothing else in the room. Shunsuke was speechless with dismay, wondering how long they would have to stay in a place like this. "How about the children's schooling? How about the management of the farm in Sanger?" His worries were endless and his heart seemed to break into pieces.

Stretching a wire across the middle of the room, they made it into two smaller ones by hanging a sheet over it. By the time they put in the articles they had brought with them from home (ice box, two beds, two sofas, etc.) the appearance had changed. (In the early stage of evacuation, the evacuees were allowed to bring only articles they could carry with them. Since this was in the later stage, Uchiyamas rented a freight car with their five neighbors.)

There were approximately 250 people living in Shunsuke's Block 22. Outside of their barracks, there was the mess hall, the restrooms, utilities room, the shower house, and the recreation hall that they shared. Therefore, there was no need of these facilities in the barracks and the rooms were big enough for their primary purpose of sleeping. However, there was only a single wall separating the rooms so that one had to speak

softly not to disturb the family in the next "apartment." It was also an annoyance to have the sand blowing in so often through the wide cracks in the wooden floors.

America had removed the "Japanese" from their homes and sent them into the camp in this far away place; that was truly cruel treatment. However, she did not lose her conscience completely and there was some vestige of humanity left. The barrack buildings were turned into classrooms and school started in September. Both Takako and Hisako began to attend this school consisting of almost all Nisei teachers and all Japanese students. Perhaps the quality and the quantity of education had much to be desired for it was a quickly set-up institution in the middle of the desert, but at least there was no break in the continuance of the education of the youngsters.

There were elementary and high schools established in this Relocation Center, but no higher education was available. One could apply to leave camp to go on to college, however, and Shigeru, who had graduated with honors from Reedley High School, sent inquiries to several universities throughout the middle and eastern United States, through the WRA office. There were many negative replies; probably due to the influence of the newspapers and some organizations, there was a feeling in the eastern USA that the Japanese who were unwanted on the west coast, were just as unwelcome on the east. Shigeru was discouraged, until he heard from the University of Texas, one of the schools on his list of choice schools. Four months after entering the Gila River Relocation Center, after celebrating the New Year of 1943, Shigeru left to enroll in the University of Texas in Austin, not without some anxiety. Tadashi Hata went with him. (Ordinarily, college classes are offered as semester sessions, but during the war, the terms were changed to three trimesters a year, without a summer vacation. This arrangement made it possible to graduate in three years. Shigeru started his first trimester in January of 1943.)

Everyone became a bit abnormal being isolated from the outside world and living with the feelings of being oppressed at all times. Moreover, the heat of 120 degrees (49 degrees C.) daytime temperatures were even hotter than that of Central California summers and resembled the description of the hell of heat, and the sandstorms on windy days which suddenly obstructed the field of vision completely, made already existing worries of these evacuees more severe. It seemed that the male evacuees suffered more than the females from being sent into the camp because they were not able to adapt as well.

To give vent to one's resentment over this kind of treatment, those who felt a loyalty to Japan and who had brought some Japanese records secretly into camp with them played these songs (e.g., the Japanese Navy March) over the loudspeaker, blasting loudly. Others would listen to Japanese military radio broadcast on the progress being made by the invincible Japanese military forces (which was not true) from the hidden shortwave radio and post what they had heard on the bulletin boards and on the walls of buildings. Even if this was discovered by the Caucasians who lived solely in the administration district, they could neither read nor understand Japanese; nor did they know Japanese military songs, so the daring activities continued. And perhaps some of the Caucasians were aware of this kind of activity, but chose to tolerate it at the beginning in sympathy for the way the evacuees had to live.

Shunsuke lost his zest for life when he came into the evacuation center for he was used to working with all his might every day; to be suddenly denied the daily challenges and activities and to have to worry about the farm and no being able to do anything about it, was severe treatment. He did sign a contract with the packing house with which he had done business over the years, but shortly after coming to Gila he received a letter

from the packing house and it only deepened his worries. The packing house wanted to buy his farm, and implied that Shunsuke should sell it to them before the government confiscated because he had illegally used another person's name to buy land which he could not do under his name. Recalling the Land Act of 1913, Shunsuke began to wonder if he was in the wrong after all. Nonetheless, he found it difficult to consider selling; he had worked so hard for it! The children also felt that it should not be sold, but decided that in the final analysis, since Shunsuke was ill, that he should do what he thought was best, and told Toshi of their feelings in this regard.

Shunsuke continued to worry about this for six months; at length, the spring of 1943 came. The Sanger packing house boss, not through the letter, but this time came to see Shunsuke at Gila, and told him that the contract could not be renewed, but he would buy the land. He reiterated the possibility of confiscation by the government because of illegal acts on Shunsuke's part, to put pressure on Shunsuke to sell. Too weak to fight any longer, and thinking that as long as the children were able to have adequate funds for their education, Shunsuke sold the farm.

Twenty four years previously, in 1919, he and his wife had bought this 245 acres of wasteland, and with blood, sweat, and determination had converted it (along with an additional 70 acres acquired later, to make a total of 315 acres) into splendid fruit orchard and grape vineyard….it was the time of the year that the plum and peach trees were in full blossoms approaching the harvest time and grapevine shoots were in full flush as Shunsuke signed over the farm. He had expended great sums of money to put in the irrigation pipes as well. In selling the farm, Shunsuke gave up the beautiful farm, the house, warehouses, horses, all of the equipment, and the crop harvest, all of the original prices he had paid for the wasteland! The income from one year's harvest of the fruits

and grapes would have been equivalent to this price, so it was like giving it to the packing house. Even though he did sign the paper, for Shunsuke, the departure of the Sanger farm felt like losing his own children and links. Actually, it was not illegal to buy land the way Shunsuke had, and there was no confiscation of the land by the government. And there were only a very few people who were forced to sell their land under the scare tactics as in the case of Shunsuke.

In a strong wind, the hard and sturdy oak will break off branches, but the weak-looking bamboo and willow will not break even in a storm. Facing the crisis of Uchiyama family, Toshi, like the bamboo, took this storm well and became a strong support to the family.

Aside from the administration and education buildings, one rarely saw the Caucasians anywhere in the camp. Each block was managed by its own residents; daily necessities were sold at the co-op operated by the evacuees; the three meals served at the mess halls were handled by the Japanese cooks, dishwashers, etc. It was practically a pure Japanese community world.

The land was gradually cleared of the waste lumber strewn on the grounds; lawns, flowers, and trees were planted in front of the entrances to the barrack rooms. At first the sandstorms were so severe that there were many instances of lost children getting caught in the sudden storms, by gradually the situation improved. Even standing in the long line at the mess hall, in the hot sun, became tolerable as time passed.

Among the Issei and the Kibei (Kibei were those who were born in America but were sent as children to be educated in Japan, and had returned to America) there were some who worked in the blocks as cooks and helpers at the mess halls, gardeners, co-op store salesmen, newspaper helpers, and office helpers at the block manager's office. (The

block manager was usually a Nisei who could speak English.) In addition, there were those who went outside of their blocks to work on the farms, raising vegetables, fruits, chickens, pigs, or to work in the warehouses. They were paid a salary of sixteen or nineteen dollars a month.

However, the majority of evacuees had abundant leisure time, and to them, this forced evacuation was almost like vacation was well. They were given food, clothing (at a set cost per period), and the shelter "free", and medical care was available as well, so that the days were relatively carefree. They spent their leisure time pursuing amusements and hobbies, or education in the various arts. Presenting plays, or playing "go" (Japanese checkers), or playing "shogi" (Japanese Chess), or playing "hana-awase" were some of the amusements they indulged in. In the same way, they had opportunities to learn many of the fine arts, the creative arts, from the specialists who were evacuated there (ikebana-flower arrangements, chado-tea ceremony, shigin-poetry recitation, utai-a noh drama recitation, shodo-calligraphy, tanka-thrity one syllable poem, haiku-seventeen syllable poem, senryu-a kind of haiku, and all aspects of Japanese culture.) Some people attended English and sewing classes. There were spectator sports to enjoy as well: baseball, Japanese wrestling, watching their own children and friends participating in these sports. For hobbies, many took up handcrafts, wood sculpture, woodwork, rock-polishing, etc.

Gradually adjusting to camp life and getting his strength back, Shunsuke took up calligraphy as disciplinary training. He also began to take an interest in woodcarving, and gathered pieces of cottonwood form along the branch stream of the Gila River, and pieces of the ten feet tall cactus and the dried pieces (perhaps lying in the desert sands for hundreds of years) of the hardwood known as ironwood…all to work with and create something: a desk, a shelf, an ornament for the alcove, little birds, canes, etc. (He

especially enjoyed making the little birds, even painting them and polishing them. He made so many of then that he gave many away to friends and grandchildren, but even now there are over fifty of them left at home. Perhaps he enjoyed making these birds because they symbolized freedom to him and he was envious of the free flying birds.) Shunsuke took daily walks over the desert land; seemingly a bleak and desolate landscape, to Shunsuke, it gave a touch of freedom.

There was a variety of occupations among the "Japanese" in the camp. But it was a time when "Japanese" could not get a good job even though he had a college education. So, there were few doctors, dentists, and teachers, and these people were busier than before evacuation. Many ministries had been picked up and taken to the internment camps, but there were still many ministers (mostly Jodo Shinshu Buddhist ministers since the majority of Issei were from the prefectures such as Hiroshima, Kumamoto, and Wakayama where Nishi Honganji had great influence, and few ministers of Christianity and other Japanese religious organizations) who were evacuated into this camp with other "Japanese." These ministers, along with other professional people, were actively busy meeting the needs of the people in the camps. They received only nineteen dollars a month (however, it was the highest salary paid to workers in the camp), but the benefits they were able to bestow on the evacuees with their services was immeasurable.

Romance bloomed in spite of the fact that they were walled in with a barbed wire fence, and there were many weddings in the camp. The young people, however, did not consider camp life as good as the Issei did. Compared to American standards, salaries or sixteen or nineteen dollars a month was meager indeed, and many of them began to apply to leave camp for work in New York, Chicago, etc. They also left in large numbers for the agricultural farms where labor was short, in Idaho, Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado.

The Caucasians, who had not any contact before with the Japanese and yet felt discriminatory because of the mass hysteria and propaganda so prevalent in the air at the time, began to change their opinions about the Japanese when they observed how skillful and diligently industrious these Nisei were. Eventually, they even began to ask or come to the camps to canvass for Japanese worker, in preference to other people. Thinking that leading a nonproductive, non-progressive life in the camp had a detrimental effect on the youth, Shunsuke was very happy about this new trend.

There were also many Nisei who made every effort to enroll in some university outside, after graduating from the camp high school.

The U.S. Army which had organized the Hawaii Nisei into the 100th Infantry Battalion decided late in January of 1943 to organize the Nisei on the mainland into the 442nd Combat Team, and on February 6, began recruiting the volunteers in the ten relocation centers. On February 10, a questionnaire regarding the loyalty of the Issei and Nisei evacuees who were of age was issued to each one. The Nisei were torn between ancestral country and native country, but many Nisei answered based on their reason and hope, "It is our duty as citizens to be loyal to the United States," and "if out families and relatives can be saved from this humiliation and disgraceful discrimination, we will go." And although there were some who disagreed with what they were doing and pointed at their backs, these Nisei volunteered for the 442nd and left the camps. At this time, no one spoke in the public about Japan possibly losing the war. Disbelieving the reports by the United States, some chose to believe to Japanese military radio that invincible Japan would be victorious again, and they called these volunteers, "dogs" and "traitors" behind their backs.

Shunsuke knew very well the land from Vancouver in the north to Los Angeles in the south. He had been to New York in the east. He could not believe the Japanese military news release that Japan was continuing to win battles against this extremely large country. Shunsuke, with mixed emotions accepted the news transmitted over the radio or carried in the newspapers since no matter which nation won or which nation lost, he would not be happy.

As the Japanese Navy confidently predicted before the Pearl Harbor attack, Japan did not experience any defeat in the Southeast Asia and the Pacific for six months since the start of the war. However, from June 3 to 6, 1942 (Shunsuke and his family were still in Sanger at the time), the re-strengthened Pacific Fleet defeated the Japanese Navy (nine ships, including four aircraft carriers were sunk) in a resounding victory at Midway. The tide of the war turned a full 180 degrees, and Japan was now on the defensive. Their progress southward was checked at Guadalcanal, and from the landing of U.S. Marines on Guadalcanal on August 7, Japan was on a one-way road toward defeat, despite fierce fighting.

The 100th Battalion comprised of Hawaii Nisei, organized in June, 1942, underwent training at Camp McCoy in Wisconsin, and in the summer of 1943, they were sent to the front lines in Italy. The mainland Nisei were recruited for the 442nd since February, 1943, numbered about 3,600 (there were 487 volunteers from Gila Relocation Center); they began their basic training "American" instructor's at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, along with those who had been drafted into the military services prior to the war, and the 2,700 Hawaii Nisei who moved in April of 1943.

As a result of the loyalty registrations, it was determined to establish a separate center for the "disloyal" and the relocation from the relocation centers was to start. There

was discussion of using one of the three largest centers, Poston, Gila River, or Tule Lake as a segregation center. Tule Lake, which had been the most riotous of the ten centers, was finally selected (there were 14,000 evacuees there, but only 59 had volunteered for the 442nd). From mid-September until the middle of October, over 8,800 "disloyal Japanese" ('Japanese' determined disloyal because of the questionnaire to the U.S.) were transferred from the other nine centers. (This figure was not definitive, for in a Japanese family, the father's opinion would prevail; the wives and children would accede to his wishes despite what their personal feelings might be. On the other hand, a more complete and a deeper investigation might have revealed less 'disloyal' persons.) About 6,200 'loyal Japanese' were transferred out from Tule Lake at this time. And in February of the following year, 1944, about 1,800 evacuees were brought in from the Manzanar Reception Center, to make the total count in Tule Lake nearly 19,000, the largest numbers….and the most riotous.

By June, 1944, Takako had attended the relocation camp high school for two years, and was due to enter college the following year. She wanted to pursue a medical career, and he father was also in favor of that. However, the subjects she needed to meet entrance requirements into college were not offered at Canal High School. She wrote her older brother, Shigeru, in Texas, and told him of her problem. He suggested that she come out to Texas to work as a school girl in his Caucasian acquaintances' home. Thus, as soon as school ended in June, she and Terue Hata left the relocation center to spend their last year of high school in Austin.

They were all together at the time when the came to the Gila Relocation Center, but now all were gone except Hisako. It was getting lonelier and lonelier in the Uchiyama household.

It was about this time, on June 12, 1944, President Roosevelt sent a memorandum to the acting Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius, Jr. (appointed active secretary due to the illness of the Secretary of State Cordell Hull, although he was later appointed Secretary of State) suggesting that the Japanese evacuees in the relocation centers should be returned to their homes. It was decided that it was not good to send them all back at one time, but to send a few at occasional intervals. "Why not proceed along the about line—for a while at least?" was the instruction.

The Pacific war was progressing with victory after victory for the United States. Expecting the end of the war to been soon, the anti-Japanese movement being led by more than ten powerful organizations relapsed, and there was a strong opposition to the return of the "Japanese."

"Americanism is a matter of mind and heart; Americanism is not, and never was, a matter of race or ancestry," were the famous words that President Roosevelt made when the formation of the Nisei Combat Team was announced in 1943. However, 1944, was election year. Perhaps it was because of his worry about the election ballots of those who were strongly opposed to the returning of the "Japanese" to the west coast, he did not forcefully urge this issue on the radio broadcasts as he usually did all issues. Instead, he resorted to a short memorandum, using the conversational expression, "Why not proceed along the above line—for a while at least?" of gradually sending the "Japanese" back to California, Oregon, Washington, etc., a few, at a time, at occasional intervals. Even though this order was not made public, some "Japanese" were able to leave and live outside the centers following the President's instructions.

The 442nd underwent hard training at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, for over a year. On May 1, 1944, they were shipped overseas, and after twenty-eight days on the Atlantic

they landed in Naples, Italy. And as early as June 7, they were inn the front lines exchanging gunfire with the enemy. The 100th Battalion, which had been in Italy for almost a year, were put in the 442nd on June 10 at the seaport of Civitavecchia, and the Nisei Combat Team became much larger. It consisted mainly of the infantry, but it also had a field artillery battalion, an engineering corps, a field artillery company, a sanitation corps, a headquarters company, and they won glorious victory after victory as they advanced up the "boot" of Italy, beginning with the battle of Belvedere, where they destroyed the German armored corps. Advancing north past Rome, they liberated Florence (culture city, the Kyoto of Italy). The resisting Germans put up a stiff resistance at the Arno River, but finally on September 1, the Nisei Combat Team successfully crossed the Arno. The Italian Army had already collapsed, and the defending Germans were weakened considerably; they were just fighting for time. However, as the 442nd advanced north and got closer and closer to the German border, the German Army showed stiffer resistance and gave strong counterattack.

And while the 442nd Nisei Combat Team was shedding blood in battles in Italy, demonstrating loyalty to their native USA, their parents and sisters and brothers were behind the barbed wire fences in the United States.

The Nisei were Americans, but Japanese blood flowed through their veins and the Japanese fighting spirit was instilled into them. The Combat Team was comparable to equipping the strong-willed fighting Japanese soldier with the world's best war weapons (both in quality & quantity). Their fame spread. Around the end of September, the Combat Team received order to withdraw from Italy, and they moved from Naples across the Mediterranean to French seaport of Marseilles, where they debarked on September

29. There they transferred to trains and trucks, and headed north until they reached the outskirts of the ancient city, Strasburg, where they set up camp. It was mid-October.

When the 442nd landed in Italy in June, the combined forces of the British, Canadian, and the United States Armies, led by General Eisenhower and General Montgomery, had successful landed on the Normandy coast of northern France and had chased the retreating Germans across the greater part of France. They were near the French and German border.

The 442nd was attached to the 34th Division of the Seventh Army, and also involved with the advance into the German homeland. They had come near the Rhine River, which separates France and Germany, and were in the Vosges Mountains. The fighting became far desperate and fiercer than it has been in Italy, for the Germans had retreated almost into their own homeland, and they did not want the enemy to put one foot onto the German soil. Each time the command to charge was given, the Nisei soldiers shouted "Banzai!" (They had never uttered this word before, thinking it was not proper, but the situation at this time was so furiously desperate that the word naturally came out as they put their utmost effort into the battle.) When one fought a battle where one could actually see the enemy's face, victory or defeat was a matter of guts. The Nisei soldiers, remembering the hardships being endured by their dear ones at home, and re-asserting their vows to do their duty, fought fiercely, and they knew only to advance and never retreat.

"Go For Broke" was the password, or the slogan, for the 442nd. The rescue of the Texas Battalion, the First Battalion of the 141st Regiment, which had been surrounded by the enemy for over a week in the Vosges Mountain, and was given up for lost (it was called The Lost Battalion), was successfully carried out by the 442nd on October 30, after

four days and nights of fierce fighting without rest or sleep. This heroic accomplishment was instantly transmitted on the radio and newspaper throughout the United States, as the people rejoiced over the rescue. However, many Nisei soldiers died in the action during this rescue mission. Many quiet and sorrowful funeral services were conducted on these relocation centers.

Shunsuke felt a certain destiny or fate in that the rescued battalion of American soldiers were from Texas, where his children had gone to further their education. In truth, his children had been admitted to schools in Texas, not because Texas was necessarily sympathetic to the "Japanese," but because the Texans, who lived in this state which was twice as large as Japan, did not know the "Japanese." Nonetheless, compared to the other states, which had refused to have Japanese admitted into their schools, Shunsuke felt grateful to Texas for her open heart and arms. As they came to know the Japanese character, and with incidents, such as the rescue of the Lost Battalion, there developed a mutual reciprocation of understanding and trust.

Following these distinguished services in battle in France, and the 442nd was once again returned to northern Italy, where they were stationed until the end of the war in May of 1945. For their valorous deeds, the 442nd had received the presidential citation from the President seven times, the most that any single combat unit had received in the history of the U.S. Army. They received the most honors, but they also had a record 4881 wounded and 650 killed in action.

President Roosevelt had successfully won election to the office of President for the fourth consecutive term in November, 1944. This was unprecedented event. Among the evacuees, there were some who took the matter of the Evacuation from the west coast and the exclusion of the Japanese from the Pacific coast to the Court. An Irish American

lawyer, James Purcell, handled the lawsuit for Mitsue Endo, a former California state employee who had been dismissed from civil service. The case of this woman went through the lower courts all the way up to the Supreme Court of the United States. And the decision of the Court was expected to be handed down very shortly. But as if he had a premonition about the ruling to come from the Supreme Court, Major General H. C. Pratt, head of the Western Defense Command, probably under orders from the President, announced on December 17 that effective January 2, 1945, the west coast exclusion orders against the "Japanese" would be revoked. The following day, December 18, the Supreme Court ruled by a unanimous decision that the internment of "loyal" citizens in relocation centers was unconstitutional. For the person of Japanese ancestry, it was a historic decision. Following this Supreme Court ruling, on the same day, WRA Director Dillion Myer announced the closing of all relocation centers in six months to a year after January 2, 1945 (except Tule Lake).

Up to this time, there were as many as 35,000 evacuees who had left the relocation centers (most of them were in the age bracket of 18 to 30 years), but there were still come 80,000 "Japanese" in the internment and relocation camps. Now that the WRA centers would be closed, they began to think and talk about their future plans, for they would soon become free agents.

Shunsuke was probably the happiest of them all over the Supreme Court decision allowing the "Japanese" to return to their homes. His creed had always been "Business enterprise is man's life," and this kind of life in Arizona had been more demoralizing than the time he had to be away from his work visiting in Japan with his family twenty years before.

As January 2, 1945 (Showa 20), rolled around, the people began to move out of the centers (a few went east, but the overwhelming number returned west to their former locations.) Shunsuke had sold both home and farm two years previously, and could not leave immediately. He was happy for, but also envious of, those who had a home to return to.

When he had first come to America, he had worked on the railroad and on reforestation project, but after he moved to California, he had concentrated on farming. To Shunsuke, there was no other road but to choose farming for the restart. Both Mikio and Shigeru were over 21 years old, and he no longer had the additional worry of having to borrow a Nisei's name to purchase land. He wanted to return as soon as possible, and in addition to writing to his Caucasian friends in Sanger, he asked those who were returning to Central California, especially those who were going back to Sanger area, to keep an eye out for farmland with home being offered for sale. Shunsuke waited in vain for a reply.

When they first entered these relocation camps, there were many false rumors, among them, one which said that the Japanese were being gathered together so that they could be annihilated with bombs dropped over the camp. However, as time passed and the evacuees realized that they would not be harmed, tensions relaxed and many of them began to enjoy their "care-free" though incarcerated life in the centers. Those with growing children who would have been a problem to feed, those who had difficulties in their family finances, and those who felt relieved from having to work for a living….these people were reluctant to have the relocation centers closed. Their lives were safe in these centers; food, clothing, and shelter were provided free; hospital care was available; schools were available for the youth; recreation and amusements were

abundant; sugar and meat, which were rationed in the outside world, were served in adequate proportions without cost…no. There were many, especially those who did not have homes, who wanted to continue this way of living. In addition, there were reports from the twenty-five resettlement offices (established in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, etc. to help the returnees) saying that discrimination was still as severe as before, and the housing situation was not favorable, which strengthened their inclination to remain in the camp as long as possible. And as a matter of fact, some families stayed until the last day of the closing centers. However, the west was the place where they had lived before for many years and they could not forget it.

The headwaters for the Snake River are in Wyoming; the river, like its name, meanders east to west through Idaho and border of Idaho and Oregon. This border region is called Snake River Valley or Treasure Valley and the farmers raise potatoes, onions, and sugar beets. From the relocation centers, many Nisei laborers had come to work in the fields in Nampa and Caldwell areas, but with the announcement of the closure of the WRA centers, there were still many who decided to come to this region as a place of the new permanent residence.

Ontario, located in the eastern edge of Oregon and on the border between Idaho and Oregon, is a strategic point for communication and agricultural commerce between the mountain states and the Pacific Northwest. The "Japanese" living in this region were not required to evacuate into relocation camps. It was in Zone II in Oregon. (Unlike in California, Zone II residents were not forced to evacuate.) Besides that, Ontario was one the few cities which welcomed the "Japanese" during the war. As a result, many "Japanese" gathered there, and contributed to its growth. Three miles southeast of

Ontario, there is a city called Fruitland (in the state of Idaho), and apropos to its name, this area is noted for it apples, peaches, and other fruits.

Shunsuke felt that although he had spent over twenty years in California, if the atmosphere there was not friendly, he would do better to move to this "Ai-O" (Idaho-Oregon) region. When spring came, permit in hand, he left the relocation center. He found a suitable apple farm, and making a down payment, he hurried back with the happy news. He was smiling again for the first time in a long, long time. He made plans to move there with the entire family when Mikio graduated from the University of Texas, and until that day came, he asked his friends, Messrs. Shiine and Ikuta, to go to Idaho to take care of his apple farm. Not long afterwards, however, Mr. Shiine unexpectedly came back to Gila River. He said that the owner of the farm decided not to sell after all.

The pleasure of going to the apple farm in Idaho faded, and Shunsuke decided, in mid-April, that he would return to California after all. Needless to say, he headed for the place filled with so many nostalgic memories for him: Sanger. He had had no reply form anyone regarding possible lands for sale, but he wanted to see for himself for he became so impatient in waiting for a reply. Acutely aware of the possible danger of harm because of the anti-Japanese atmosphere, he cautiously boarded the train for the long ride to Sanger, California, and he arrived in Sanger, he stayed at the home of Tadao Nakamoto, just in the outskirts of the town. Tadao Nakamoto was also from Yamaguchi Prefecture.

It was a great moment for Shunsuke to be gazing once again upon these familiar lands; he had been gone for two years and eight months. It had been land that belonged to him until last year and he and his wife had struggled so hard and so long for it; the house in the corner of the farm had been the scene of many, many, years of a happy

family life. As he stood there and gazed out at the area, it seemed as though it still belonged to him and it was saying "Welcome back!" to him. Both heart and eyes were filled with warm tears as he recalled those cherished remembrances of the past.

Coming back to the cold reality of the present, he began to search for a suitable farm to buy, and asked his friends to be on the lookout for farm on sale, and contacted the Caucasians he knew to see if they could help him….for many days.

At long last he found a Caucasian who wanted to sell his farm. Although there existed an atmosphere with no eagerness to sell lands to the "Japanese," Shunsuke was willing to pay the price asked by the owner using the current price as the base. However, there was a good change of completing the transactions. The packing house which had purchased Shunsuke's farm from him coming to Gila River Relocation Center began to obstruct the proceeding of the sale. In a small town like Sanger, the news traveled fast. A farmer relied upon the packing house to help him with his produce sales, and could hardly say anything against the company. The packing house somehow did not want Shunsuke to return to Sanger; perhaps the packing house boss was remembered the unfair deal he had hoisted on Shunsuke during the war. The deal was not completed. Two other possibilities also went down the drain in the same manner. Shunsuke realized why he had never any replies from Sanger while he waited and waited in Gila River.

On April 30, after the Allied forces had attacked the German capital, Berlin, Adolf Hitler killed himself in the air raid shelter at his headquarters, and Germany surrendered on May 8. Time passed swiftly.

Shunsuke had been in Sanger for almost a month, and was about to give up when he learned about a farm being offered for sale in Fowler, located seven miles southwest of Sanger and nine miles south of Fresno. It was a vineyard of forty-five acres, with a

house, adjoining the farm owned by Tamejiro and Harry Hiraoka (father and son). Shunsuke was introduced to the owner of the farm through Mr. Hiraoka. Jess Reese was farming the land himself, but on the side he was also engaged in the real estate business and had bought this farm as an investment two or three years before. It was mid-May, and the grapevine branches and leaves were growing profusely, and tiny clusters of grapes were beginning to show. Shunsuke arranged to buy the land, including the crop that would be harvested in the fall. He purchased the land under his son's, Mikio's, name.

Chapter 8

Returning Home and Beginning All Over Again

Returning to the Gila River Relocation Center, Shunsuke began his preparations to leave the camp. When he realized that he had not many days left in this center, he forgot how dreadful it had been, and even felt that he would miss it.

Takako had graduated form Austin High School in June and had returned to the camp. All of her loneliness in Texas became only a part of the past. Gila River Relocation Center was scheduled to be closed in November. The four Uchiyamas, each carrying his own memories and thoughts, bade farewell to the camp five months ahead of its closing date. Mrs. Yoshiko Hata and her daughter, Terue, accompanied the Uchiyamas back to California. The two years and ten months spent in the WRA center seemed long, and yet, so short.

The group detrained at the Fowler station and head east on Adams Avenue for three miles until they reached Leonard Avenue. Turning north on Leonard for just a short distance, they arrived at the farm that Shunsuke had purchased. It was on the west side of the road.

Shunsuke was 62 years old when he and his family moved out of the camp in Gila, Arizona, and settled in Fowler in mid-June of 1945. He had been worrying about the Sanger farm for two years previous, and was not in any mood at that time to observe the traditional “kanreki” celebration (honoring a person’s sixtieth birthday.) Already two years had passed since then, and he was at the age that most people might think of their retirement. Until evacuation, he had owned and operated a flourishing 315 acre orchard, just seven miles east of his new home. And he had been prosperous and had no intention

of selling the farm. However, in less than three years, the situation had changed drastically and he now had just 45 acres of vineyard that he had purchased recently.

> "Ware ware no saidai no koei was ichido mo
> shippai shinai to yuu koto dewa naku, taoreru
> goto ni okiagaru tokoro ni aru."
> -Oliver Goldsmith

> "Our greatest glory is not that you haven't failed before,
> but you get up every time you fall down."
> -Oliver Goldsmith

> "Kako no in wo shiran to hosseba, ima yo
> ni ukuru tokoro wo miyo. Mirai no ka wo
> shiran to hosseba, ima naseru tokoro wo miyo."
> -Kako Genzai Inga Kyo

> "If you want to know the cause in the past, look
> what you are receiving. If you want to know the
> result in the future, look what you are doing."
> (The present is the result of what you have done
> and the future is the product of the present.)
> -Past and Present Cause
> and Effect Sutra

One would ordinarily feel quite wretched if he recalled the past miseries, and complaints would pour forth in a rush. But Shunsuke had neither the inclination nor the time to wallow in self-pity over the past. With a strong conviction that his retirement was when he would die, Shunsuke never considered retiring. "I'll get right in there again and give it all I've got!" His enthusiasm was the same as when he was still young.

Mikio came home. He had graduated from the University of Texas School of Law in June, but had remained in Austin to take the bar examination scheduled in July. When Shunsuke was young and had gone to Tokyo, he struggled to put himself through school while working to support him. He had studied his favorite subject, law, at night school, but was not able to complete his studies. Now, his son, Mikio had realized the

dream he was unable to, and his heart was full of joy and pride. He was as anxious as Mikio to know the results of the examination.

Mikio used to return to the relocation camp during the spring or year-end break at school. "My buddies are working as dishwashers while going to school. I think I will do the same," said Mikio during one of those visits. Shunsuke scolded him. Mikio was to concentrate on his studies, and not concern himself with money. Mikio understood his father's feelings well and responded to his wishes by graduating with an excellent record at the University Of Texas School Of Law. Shunsuke had heard that the bar examination was very difficult, but his love for his son, and his confidence in his son, made him feel that Mikio would pass the examination at the first try.

Wishing to continue with his studies in law, Mikio applied to Harvard University. He was notified to enter in September. In the meantime, he helped on the farm, driving the tractor to scrape and level ground. In some places, he scraped so deep that the roots of the grapevines were exposed.

Losing Attu and Kiska in the North Pacific, Japan also lost armies of her soldiers in the Central Pacific as the United States took the Saipan in Marianas, Guam and Tinian. It was obvious that the United States was winning the war one-sidely. Toward the end of 1944, the B-29 bombers flew from their bases in China and Saipan and dropped their bombs almost daily, day and night on the Japanese homeland, hitting not only the strategic military establishments, but also the large cities everywhere in Japan. They were unable to send any supplies to the front line; they had no supplies left anyway. In March, 1945 (Showa 20), Iwo Jima fell. General MacArthur had returned to the Philippines and was advancing toward Manila. Despite the courageous kamikaze pilots, the U.S. Marines landed on Okinawa on April 1 under fleet escort and by mid-June they

had taken over the initiative of the war there. Warships and veterans from Europe were sent over, too (the 442nd did not participate in the Pacific Theatre), and the mainland Japan was defenseless against the escalated air raids by the Grumman planes (1,200 airplanes) taking off from the aircraft carriers off the coast of Japan and B-29 bombers (500 planes) based on the island of Okinawa and Saipan.

The elementary and middle school (junior high school) students in the big cities were evacuated into the country; college students, women, and office workers, were drafted and worked at military installations and factories; strict blackout orders were given; college students (male) and older men, too, were drafted and sent into military service; the number of air raid victims increased; letters notifying families of their dear ones killed in action….Japan was showing all the signs of her last hour.

Still, the people of Japan, knowing that Japan had never lost a war in the history of Japan and believing the propaganda put out by the Japanese military authorities, refused to think that they might lose. "We don't want anything until we win," was the slogan they uttered as they endured the lack of food and other goods. Even when they learned that President Roosevelt had died suddenly of cerebral hemorrhage on April 12, many of them thought that this meant that the United States was going to pieces. There was no freedom of speech, and anyone who even suggested that Japan might lose, or be losing, was considered to be a traitor and taken prisoner. President Truman of the United States, Prime Minister Churchill of England, Chiang Kai Shek of China, and Stalin of Russia met in the Potsdam Palace in the outskirts of Berlin, and on July 26, they issued a proclamation in which they demanded Japan's unconditional surrender.

The war was nearing its end. On August 6, a fortress bomber B-29 took off from Saipan carrying the world's first atomic bomb, and dropped it over Hiroshima. Three

days later, on August 9, another atomic bomb was dropped over Nagasaki. On August 9, Russia declared war against Japan and marched into Manchuria.

The Japanese leaders, who had insisted that the war must be fought even on the homeland, had no choice but to end the war under these circumstances. On August 10, Japan, through the Domei News Agency proposed her surrender to the Allies and the acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration with one condition—sovereignty of the Emperor. (The people of Japan were not informed of this surrender offer.)

On August 11, President Truman, representing the Allies, sent a reply: The system of the Emperor may be retained, but the Emperor would have no power of sovereignty (it would belong to the people) and he would be under the orders of the Supreme Commander of the Allied Occupation Forces. And on August 14 (in Japan it was August 15), at noon, the Emperor announced on the radio that the war was over and that the Potsdam Declaration would go into effect. Thus the Pacific War, which had lasted three years and eight months, came to an end with the unconditional surrender of Japan.

Shunsuke was in the Fresno Community Hospital with his neuralgia problem when he heard of the news. He was not surprised as the news media since August 10 had repeatedly announced that the surrender of Japan was a matter of time. He was surprised at the Pearl Harbor attack in 1941, but the news of the end of the war was taken calmly thinking that which was bound to happen did happen.

A letter from the Texas State Supreme Court, dated August 22, came to Mikio telling him that he passed the bar. Mikio was out in the field at the time, and Shunsuke took the letter out to him, for he was eager to know the contents of the letter. Shunsuke knew that Mikio had passed and was grinning happily as he handed the letter to Mikio for

him to open. Confidence and pride in his son showed in that happy grin. "We must celebrate with a feast!" he exclaimed when Mikio gave him the good news.

Harvard University is one of the leading universities in the United States. Telling his son not to worry about finances, Shunsuke just urged his son to study hard. And thus, toward the end of August, Mikio left for Cambridge, Massachusetts, to enroll at Harvard University.

In September, Takako began to commute to Reedley College located ten miles from home. Hisako enrolled as a senior in Fowler High School. The first grape harvest from his new farm was made into raisins. Harvest season for grapevine owners is a busy time; picking, turning trays, rolling trays, and boxing the raisins. Fortunately, it did not rain at the wrong time, and the first harvest ended very well.

Before he had even completed one term at Harvard, Mikio received a draft notice for the Army. World War II was finished, both in Europe and in the Pacific; it must have been for some good reason that a young, budding, Nisei lawyer was drafted at this time. In August, General Douglas MacArthur became the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces and immediately began the task of occupying Japan. Starting with the disarmament, they planned the reform of old system of Japan by American democracy (government of the people, by the people, and for the people.) The declaration of the status of the Emperor as a human being and not a god any longer, the enactment of the new Constitution based on the principle that the sovereignty of the land was vested in the people, the land reforms, the trial of war criminals, school system reforms (to 6-3-3 system)—the enactment and enforcement of the many varied reforms were such that, in the history of Japan it was as revolutionary as the Meiji Restoration changes of the 1860's.

At such a time as this, specialist in these fields of reform were needed to organize and implement the suggested changes for a new Japan. Mikio, whose parents were Japanese and who understood and spoke Japanese, was a lawyer and was ideally suited to handle an assignment like this. Entering the Army in early December (1945), he had a brief course in intelligence and was sent to Japan at the latter part of December. There were burnt sites by the air raids all over the city of Tokyo, and he was surprised to see so many dilapidated makeshift houses, juvenile vagrancy, war orphans, black market, etc. He was stationed at the GHQ (General Headquarters) and was to remain for six years assisting with the problems of the aftermath of the war. (Mikio had met Toki Henmi in Tokyo and they were married on October 10, 1948). A son, Bobby, was born to them on July 12, 1949. Mikio returned to the United States with his wife and child in the latter part of 1951 when the scar of the war was healed considerably and the reconstruction of Japan was on the right track.)

In January, 1946, shortly after Mikio had gone to Japan, Shigeru came home from Austin with a diploma in mechanical engineering after three years of intensive study without a summer vacation. Shunsuke was very happy to see him, for if Mikio had made Shunsuke's boyhood dream of law profession come true, Shigeru was the one who would succeed him in managing the farm. As parents enjoy seeing the growth of their children, to those who engage in farming, there is no greater joy then watching their crop grow. Compared to the relationship with people, in the agriculture, the stimulus-response is straightforward and uncomplicated bringing the fair and honest result. Here lies a great challenge to test one's devotion and technical skills. Shunsuke was indeed happy about Shigeru's return as he was hoping to regain his pre-war success once more in the near future.

Shunsuke and Shigeru were now working together. The forty-five acres were in Thompsons and Muscat grapes, but feeling that the future market in Muscats was doubtful, they decided to convert those twenty acres of Muscats to Santa Rosa plums. In February, they pulled the grapes out and planted the plum saplings.

After the war, Japan was cut down in size to the four islands of Honshu, Shikoku, Kyushu, and Hokkaido. Not only that, imports had ceased. Repatriates, both ordinary citizens and soldiers, were returning from China, Southeast Asia, Taiwan, Manchuria, Korea, and Sakhalin, and an already-crowded Japan was in terrible straits for provisions. Mikio wrote that not only in the big cities but also rural Yamaguchi was suffering from want, and Shunsuke and Toshi began sending supplies to their homes and relatives; sugar, soap, candy, gum, canned goods, chocolates, coffee, Lipton's soups, powered milk, old clothing. The evacuees who had returned from the relocation centers not long ago, realizing that their relatives in defeated Japan, were in extremely impoverished condition, all sent goods to them, even though they themselves were beginning all over again and their life itself was not an easy one. There were many who sent the expensive streptomycin that had been discovered in America, to save the lives of those who were suffering from tuberculosis.

Many returnees to California had no homes to return to, and stayed with friends and relatives until they could get situated. Others stayed at the Buddhist churches, the Japanese Christian churches, and Japanese Community halls (this lasted until the summer of 1946). Even these people sent packages of "imon" to Japan frequently.

Whether it was because they were loyal to Japan or were disgusted with the treatment they received by the American government, the problems existed all the time at Tule Lake Relocation Center (segregation center). There, as many as 800 persons had

been sent to Santa Fe Internment Camp in New Mexico and over 5,000 Nisei had chosen to renounce their American citizenship. Even this center was closed down March 21, 1946, and now all the ten relocation centers which housed more than 110,000 "Japanese" (persons of Japanese ancestry: Issei, Nisei, and Sansei) are now closed. According to the statistics complied by the WRA, it had cost a total of $350,000,000 for the entire project. The rest of the report on relocation centers are as follows:

Number of births in camps	5,981
Number of deaths in camps	1,862
Repatriates of Japan	4,724
Returnees from camps, to west coast	54, 127
Returnees to other parts of US	52, 798
Number of Weddings	2,120
Number of enlisted men	3,600
Transferred to Detention	3,121
Transferred to outside hospitals or old persons home	1,322

The cost of construction of the WRA centers came to $70,000,000 and the costs of maintenance ran to $150,000,000.

The plums were planted, but they were mere saplings as yet, and thus required little care. In addition, the farm was much smaller than the one they had in Sanger, and Toshi went out to do day labor as well; she did not like to be idle either. Toshi who had to hire many people during the coming grape harvest season felt that is was a lesson in employer-employee relationships as well.

Hisako graduated from Fowler High School in June, 1946, and enrolled in Reedley Junior College (to be graduated in June, 1948). The farm in Fowler was not small when compared to the average size of farms in the area, but it was much smaller than that in Sanger. However, Shunsuke had paid cash for it, and therefore had not much difficulty with finances for his children's education. If he had, he would have gone into

debt to provide for their education, and he did not care how much he had to spend for the education at all!

Returning home to the west coast was not always safe. Even in Central California there was evidence of discrimination, and shooting incidents occurred not infrequently. The land that was sold to Shunsuke in this atmosphere was not in the best of conditions, but Shunsuke, who loved the best in everything, determined that his farm would be inferior to none, and worked hard to improve it by scraping and leveling, putting in irrigation pipes, using ample fertilizers, carefully tending the planted fruit trees. Because this was a new start, he had to purchase fruit trees and farm equipment all over again. The income from his Fowler farm would hardly have taken care of all these expenses, but pre-war successes on the Sanger farm provided him with a surplus that others did not have. His investments became a big part of his enterprises, and farming was only one part of his total business ventures. Instead of leaving his money idle in the bank, he began to invest the spare money (he made sure that there was enough capital to cover the farm expenses) in gold, silver, and tungsten mines and in oil. His friends were often amazed at his grit of investing the large amounts of money. When he as still living in Sanger (i.e., pre-war times), he put $10,000 cash in his pocket (for drilling right on eighty acres) and went out to the Coalinga oil fields located about eighty miles southwest of Sanger. The investment brought no oil. He failed in other investments as well, but he also unexpectedly struck gold in one of the mines he had invested.

They were quite wealthy, but the couple put no airs, and as was their routine, they got up at 5 A.M. every morning to work steadily out in the field. In this mechanical society, it is no exception in the field of agriculture as well. However, the machines do

not do all the work and the man must be willing to labor himself in order to succeed. They truly enjoyed working on the farm and watching everything grow. Shigeru was helping on the farm after coming back from Texas, but a draft notice came in 1948, and he went into the army. He was discharged after a year and was back on the farm with his parents in January, 1949.

It was about this time that Shunsuke set up grand plans to develop an agricultural community in Paradise Valley, 200 miles northeast of Reno, Nevada. He joined two American investors to purchase 40,000 acres of the Nevada desert land. They were planning to have "Japanese" farmers convert the land into farmland. The land was so vast that it was hard to grasp the size of it.

Shunsuke set about to raise the funds. In 1946, shortly after returning from the relocation center, a friend had advised him to invest in oil in the Bakersfield area. Believing in his friend's advice, Shunsuke invested in some 5,000 acres of oil prospecting in Cuyama Valley, sixty miles southwest of Bakersfield. They struck oil 1947. The value of his shares rose stupendously. The Richfield Company contracted for the oil.

A good portion of the money he received from the sale of his Sanger farm during the war had been spent for the education of his four children and the purchase of the farm in Fowler, but even after these expenses, he still had considerable amounts of funds for investment. With the funds he had, plus the sale of a part of his stock in the Cuyama oilfield, he became a chief stockholder in the Paradise Valley enterprise. It was desert land, but water for irrigation purposes would be available when the wells were dug.

Shigeru, who had graduated from the University of Texas in mechanical engineering, enrolled as a junior at the University of California in Berkeley to study

business administration, in September, 1949. Takako had graduated from the Reedley College in June, 1947, and after attending Fresno State College (present California State University, Fresno) for one term, went to San Francisco with Hisako to enroll in the University of California School of Nursing in September, 1948. Thus, when Shigeru left for Berkeley, Shunsuke and Toshi were alone again, after 33 years. Compared to the time when they first met in 1916 as Toshi came to the U.S. as a picture bride, both of them sure grew old. Now Shunsuke was 66 years old; Toshi, 53. The lines on their faces vividly told the thorny path they went through during those years. Together they shared an understanding and cooperation that nurtured a deep sense of gratitude, and their pleasure in their four children knew no bounds.

A rule in economics is that any products which have unique and good quality have either excellent or stable price on the market. Because of this, there is a constant striving to improve a product and to reorganize the structure in all lines of industry. This holds true with agriculture. Experimenting with hybridization between peaches and plums resulted in the fruit, nectarine, around 1947. As large as a peach, the skin was smooth like that of a plum; it was a pretty color, and the flavor was a moderately sweet, slightly acid taste. The pulp was firm and the fruit did not spoil easily or fast. The orchardists were attracted to this new fruit that had so many good points in its favor. Shunsuke's interest, too, was aroused. He was close to seventy years of age, but he was young at heart and did not hesitate to try this fruit. However, it took five years before the nectarine was mature and bore considerable crop, and besides the original cost of the sapling there was a royalty of $3.50 to be paid per tree. So, as an initial step, Shunsuke decided to plant them on ten acres, pulling out the grapevines; this he did in early 1950.

The couple was alone for two years, but in 1951, the children all came home. Both Takako and Hisako graduated from the University Of California School Of Nursing and began to work as public health nurses at the Fresno County Public Health Department. Shigeru graduated in the business administration at the University Of California in June, and returning home, began to expand the farming ventures.

Since the end of World War II, the world became divided into the free nations and the Communist countries, and a cold war ensued. With economic aid from the United States, Japan recovered from the effects of war and became a member of the free nation group which was led by the United States and occupied a very important role in the Pacific region. From September 4 to 8, fifty-two nations (free nations and neutral countries were present) met in San Francisco and signed a peace treaty; Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida represented Japan as Ambassador Plenipotentiary. Three months later on December 10, Mikio, with his wife Toki, and their son Bobby, returned to the United States. Since the start of the Korean War, Shunsuke had told Mikio to come home each time he wrote a letter wishing to see his first grandchild, but Bobby was already 2 ½ years old. The active child, speaking Edokko Japanese (Japanese with Tokyo slang) instantly became the delight of the entire household. The six member Uchiyama family was all together again for the first time in nine years. After Shigeru left for the University of Texas from the relocation center, one by one, the children left home to pursue their roads of life and the family never completely together. But now that the family was whole again and had the addition of Mikio's wife and child, Shunsuke resumed his lengthy after-dinner discourse at the family evening table.

As 1952 opened, Mikio enrolled at Stanford University in Palo Alto to qualify for the bar in California. There was no reciprocation between when it came to bar

examinations, and Mikio wanted to practice law in California. He took the examination in California in July, 1952, and opened his practice of law in the office of a prominent lawyer, Iener Nielsen, in Fresno. In 1955, Mikio opened a second office in Fowler.

Following the law establishing reparation for the claims against evacuation (passed in 1948 and amended in 1951), the California Alien Land Act was declared to be unconstitutional in April, 1952. In June, the Walter McCarran Immigrant Naturalization Law was enacted and passed over President Truman's veto, and the 1924 discriminatory law was abolished. It then became possible for Japanese immigrants to come to this country once again and for the Issei to become naturalized citizens. These changes were complete turnabout-face from the situation that existed before and during the World War II. Credits for these accomplishments must go to the National Japanese American Citizen League led by Mike Masaoka and many conscientious Issei and Nisei who contributed toward the fund achieving this goal.

Immediately after the war, everyone was suffering from the customary depressions, but Shunsuke had stuck oil and did not need to worry about any financial pressures and instead had joined two Caucasians friends to invest in the Nevada enterprise at Paradise Valley. However, the project did not progress as planned. Ordinarily, an area of about 20 acres is sufficient to keep a farmer busy with vegetable and strawberries, but the Paradise Valley project of 40,000 acres were 900 times larger than Shunsuke's 45 acres farm; the size is actually difficult to grasp, it is so huge. Taking a few samples of water to the Agricultural Experimental Station in Fresno, he learned that it was satisfactory for agricultural purposes. Shunsuke wanted to lease the land for agricultural purposes. To cultivate this vast land, however, it needed large amounts of capital to cover the expenses, and it was difficult; to find such a person. Since 1949,

three men (one was a Nisei) had tried, but they could not continue because of a deficit in capital funds. When Mikio returned to the States in 1951, this Nevada enterprise was ended, but in the meantime the debts that had accumulated and asserted breach of contract had led to a lawsuit for $160,000. The case was tried in the Superior Court in Fresno.

Contrary to his expectation, Shunsuke lost the case. A meeting of the stockholders was held (of the three original investors, one had withdrawn and sold his shares, and there were now numerous stockholders), where many of the opinion was that the damages should be paid from the sale of the land. At first Shunsuke stood alone in saying that the case should be appealed, but soon one of the stockholders who, like Shunsuke, held one-third of the stocks in the company, came over to Shunsuke's side and the case was scheduled to be tried in the appellate court. A young lawyer, Mikio (30 years old), who just obtained his license to practice law in California, was to handle the appeal. After investigating thoroughly the records of the similar previous cases, he filed the appeal briefs. This time the verdict was in the Uchiyama's favor reversing the previous ruling by the Superior Court of Fresno. Shunsuke was beside himself with happiness, for not only did he not have to give up the Nevada land as he did the Sanger land, but also his son had represented his side and won the case. The problem was solved for a moment, but it took some ten years, until 1971, before the Paradise Valley became true to its name. In that period of time, Shunsuke had his hands full keeping the tax arrears of the other stockholders paid up and pacifying those others who wished to sell their stocks.

In 1950, they had decided to convert the orchard and vineyard (plums, peaches, and grapes) completely to nectarines and kept planting the nectarines saplings each

succeeding year, and now, although the harvest was still small, the 1950 trees were all beginning to bear fruit. The leveling of the land was completed and the irrigation pipes were all in. Shigeru had been wanting to expand the farming enterprise, and thus in 1953, Shunsuke accepting the request of his son, made a down payment on 80 acres of vineyard in wine grapes located in southern Reedley, ten miles east from home. They both thought the land was a very fine one. In 1952, the Alien Land Act was abolished, so when this purchase was made, the land was put in Shunsuke's name as well as his sons'. The plan was to convert this vineyard into a nectarine orchard, too, and early 1954, they used an Uchiyama specialty since Sanger days: planting the nectarine sapling in between the rows of grapevines. The price of nectarines was good, compared with other kinds of fruits, but the period of time required for the trees to mature and bear considerable amounts of fruits was comparatively long. It took four years for grapes, plums, and peaches to mature, but for nectarines, it took at least five. In addition, there was royalty of over three dollars per tree. This five year period would require sizeable expenses, with no income from the trees, so one could not begin such a project without considerable capital. The care of these trees was also more complex and difficult.

With farming operation doing so well in 1956, Shunsuke again accepting Shigeru's request, purchased the neighboring 60 acres of open land and planted more nectarines. One acre will take a hundred trees, so they would have almost 200 acres of nectarines. It was a matter of only a few more years of patience before Shunsuke's dream of completing the nectarine orchards would be realized.

Chapter 9

Happiness

Shunsuke and Toshi were frequently invited to weddings of children of their friends, but it seemed as though their own children were not considering marriage in the near future at all. Mikio had married Toki Henmi when he was in Japan, but although the other three children were of eligible age, none of them seemed concerned, and the parents kept their inner worries hidden. Toshi had married Shunsuke when he was twenty years old, and she felt that a girl should not wed too late in life, but both Takako and Hisako had finished college and had fine positions at the hospital, and although marriage proposals were not few, nothing seemed to be just right. Shigeru, too, was 30 years old when he bought the land in Reedley, and was quite eligible. In the household, whatever Shunsuke said was the last word, and the children were obedient; knowing this, there were many go-betweens who approached Shunsuke as well as many who were interested themselves in one of the children, but on this matter, he stated that the decision was up to the individual involved, and would not try to use his influence in any way.

When the wedding bells began to ring, they started to ring for all three in three successive years in the month of March, starting with Hisako, then Takako, and then Shigeru. Hisako was wed to George Kimura of Fresno in March, 1956. At present they are a family of four: Alex was born in January, 1957, and Grace was born in February, 1963. Takako married Jack Sumida of Visalia in March, 1957. They have three children: Steven, born in November, 1959; Patricia, born in November, 1962; and Kenneth, born in

January, 1967. Shigeru took as wife Teruko Kuwamoto of Fresno in March, 1958. Their family now consists of the twins Vance and Marsha, born in December, 1958; Gordon, born in August, 1962; and Allison, born in April, 1965.

Up to now, Shunsuke and Toshi had one grandchild, Bobby, but with the weddings, from 1957 to 1967, they were blessed with a grandchild almost every year. Including Russell who was born in May, 1957, as the second son of Mikio and Toki, they had altogether eleven grandchildren. Shunsuke and Toshi reached the pinnacle of their joy in life as they realized that all four of their children had done so well and had also taken fine spouses to help them build their homes and families into splendid ones.

In September, 1958, Shunsuke and Toshi made another trip to Japan; it was thirty-two years since their first one. This time, instead of a two to three week voyage on a ship, they flew, fast and in excellent comfort. Because Shunsuke had Toshi had become naturalized citizens of the United States, they carried a passport issued by the U.S. Government for this trip.

They became citizens of the United States four years previously, on August 18, 1954. The reasons why they (who had been born in Japan, had spent their childhood there with their families, and had suffered long discrimination after coming to America) wanted to become naturalized citizens of this country removing their names from the register in Japan were decided to be buried here in America where their children were, that they were impressed by the good sense and conscience of America that admitted her serious error in the treatment of the “Japanese” and tried to make some sort of reparations, and that they themselves realized that the Uchiyamas also owed much to America.

In spite of the fact that they had become American on official papers, they could not yet cast off the thought of being Japanese completely, and when they landed at Haneda Airport in Tokyo joining the tour group arranged by the Shibuya Travel Agency in Los Angeles, they felt not that they had come to Japan, but that they had returned to Japan. It had been thirty-two years since they had been back, and the reunion with both Shunsuke's and Toshi's sisters and brothers was a joyful one, indeed. There was a great deal to catch up on, for both sides, and the time sped by.

Nishi Medicine (the Nishi System of Health) was originated by Professor Katsuzo Nishi and advocates of the health of body and spirit and harmony between the two. There are followers of this Nishi System in many countries of the world today. Based on the principle that there are four primary factors that must be maintained in good condition (skin, nutrition, legs, and spirit), there are six fundamental rules to be observed (a flat sleeping surface, a wooden pillow, goldfish exercises, capillary calisthenics, palms and soles together isometrics, back and abdomen exercises). In addition, there are leg and boy calisthenics, bare body physiotherapy, hot and cold bath treatment, a diet that is mainly of raw vegetables, and the practice of spiritual discipline (the ten virtues listed are generosity, compassion, gratitude, patience, endurance, effort, serenity, friendliness, gentleness, calmness, and the knowledge of transience).

Whenever one thinks of the Nishi System, one recalls the Uchiyama name, for their relationship was very close. Shunsuke was first introduced to the Nishi System in 1937, before World War II, when he was living in Sanger. He attended a lecture given by Professor Nishi who was touring Central California. He thought that ideas presented were good and tried to follow the method by eating more raw vegetables, exercising regularly, etc., but he gradually began to forget and neglect it. The soil in Sanger was

soft compared to that on the Fowler farm, and Shunsuke's neuralgia in the knee was quite painful. Since his hospitalization two months after his arrival in Fowler, he did not need to be hospitalized again, but the pain in the knee was still there. There were pain medications, but no specific medicine for the cure of neuralgia itself.

Professor Nishi had come to America in 1950 on the invitation of Keizaburo Koda, the rice king of Dos Palos, 50 miles northwest of Fresno, and gave a week's series of lectures at the Fresno Buddhist Church. Shunsuke and Toshi attended and were completely impressed. They decided to seriously follow Professor Nishi's method of health. Shunsuke used to smoke two packs of cigarettes a day, for well nigh forty years, but he immediately stopped smoking. Their new life style began. He ordered books from Japan and continued to follow the instructions assiduously. The results were good. They no longer caught colds easily; the entire body felt young and vigorous. The hot and cold bath treatment helped greatly to reduce the pain in Shunsuke's knee. The flab that he had acquired in the Gila camp disappeared.

The trip they were making to Japan at this time was to visit their families in Japan and also to see this man whom they respected so much, Professor Nishi. They planned to get further directions and lectures at the Nishi Institute at Ichigaya, Tokyo. Shunsuke and Toshi spent a total of eight weeks in Japan at this time, but half of it was spend attending lectures at this Institute. They mastered the principles and the practice of the course and received the teaching certificates at the completion of the training. Subsequently, they visited Japan in 1963, 1965, 1967, 1971, and 1972, and received further training. At home, they faithfully put into practice what they had learned of the Nishi System, and n Central California, they became the leaders of the Nishi School of Health, both in name and reality.

The variety of nectarines that were planted on the Reedley eighty acres was inferior and therefore did not sell well. Shunsuke and Shigeru felt that it was necessary to change the variety by grafting. It upset their original schedule, but by 1962, the entire acreage of 185 acres in nectarines was producing fruit for harvest. Demand was greater than the supply, and the price was good every year.

Shunsuke had celebrated his seventieth ("koki") and seventy-seventh ("kiju") birthdays in excellent health. He and Toshi still rose at 5:00 AM, and after the exercises, went out into the field to work very diligently. He was very thoughtful of Toshi, and whenever possible, included her in whatever activity he was involved in. This practice had not changed one bit even this age, and they attended shows, church, etc. together, and even made all those trips to Japan together. However, when it came to business matters, he did not consult or even discuss it with Toshi as before. With all the children now married and leading their own lives, he subscribed to the Wall Street Journal and resumed investing in stocks he thought were promising. He also invested in new residential area and business zone lands in Palmdale, and around Los Angeles. Shunsuke did not like to be idle, and he didn't want his surplus cash to lie idle either.

A 185 acre farm is a very large one, and the fact that the land was completely in these choice nectarines made Shunsuke's and Shigeru's position an enviable one. But, Shigeru was young, energetic, and ambitious; he kept urging his father to increase their farmland holdings. However, Shunsuke felt that 185 acres was enough for one person to handle (eventually by Shigeru alone), and would not agree to purchasing more farmland.

The grandchildren grew and the years passed. Soon the first grandchild, Bobby, was to graduate from high school, and another happy milestone for the Uchiyama clan came. To celebrate this event, grandfather Shunsuke wanted to do something significant,

and after consulting with Bobby's father and his son Mikio, he established the George Uchiyama Scholarship. This scholarship was to be given to any Fowler High School graduate who was going to pursue in the field of some profession, medicine, dentistry, law, accountant, etc., in college. The presentation of the scholarship award was to be made at the graduation exercises. (Today, even though Shunsuke George Uchiyama is no longer here, the scholarship continues to help a student graduating from Fowler High School.)

It was also about this time that Shunsuke began to show some interest in Japanese poetry recitation ("Shigin"). He joined the San Joaquin branch of the national organization, the Kinyukai of the Kansui School of Shigin, and began to attend the sessions that were held at night once a week. He was 85 years old, but his performance was good for his age. Shunsuke himself was happy to have other means of learning about the dramatic events and outstanding character in Japanese history.

The "Japanese" (persons who have Japanese blood) are the remarkable people. The unusually trying hardships visited upon the "Japanese" before, during, and after the war were unique experiences requiring great adaptability to adverse situations. They demonstrated this ability splendidly. In Japan, natural disasters such as earthquakes, typhoons, floods, etc., were common, and the Japanese character was formal to accept these calamities stoically and to adapt themselves as smoothly as possible to emergent situations. Thus, it seemed that not only the Issei, but also the Nisei and Sansei, who were born in America, had an inherent ability to adjust to the unusual problems that confronted them. They got up again no matter how they might have been stomped on or crushed.

The prospect of starting all over again after the war was a grim one, but the Issei, Nisei, and Sansei, were untiring in their efforts to adjust, and in due time, their diligence and skill were recognized and given credit. Gradually, more and more Nisei and Sansei began to participate in society and to take on the responsibilities that came with the privileges of becoming active in American society.

The American disposition of openness and willingness to be friendly, the natural tendency that Americans had to shake hands after a fight, is one the finest characteristics a human being can have. This helped immensely in the "Japanese's" efforts to be absorbed into American life, and they began to actively participate and occupy the important positions in all phases of American life and society: public office, schools, business corporations, agriculture, hospitals, medical professions, legal professions, architectural sciences, etc.

In the summer of 1968, Mikio was appointed Judge of the Justice Court in Fowler. Thus, in addition to the two offices he had in Fowler and in Fresno, he was busy presiding in court several times a week. He was the first judge of Japanese ancestry to be appointed in Central California, and other than John Aiso of Los Angeles, no other Japanese American had been appointed to this high office, even in California where there were many "Japanese." Shunsuke's happiness was overflowing.

The leased land in Paradise Valley, Nevada, was still in Shunsuke's and his associate's name, thanks to Mikio's help and Shunsuke's determination. In 1971, there was an interested buyer, and it was decided to sell 9,000 acres of the 40,000. It was sold for a good price, and the other stockholders (1/3 of land was owned by them) were pleased indeed.

Paradise Valley is in northern Nevada, approximately fifty miles from the Idaho border. 9,000 acres is a tremendous acreage, and Mr. Kracaw, who had purchased the land, was planning to put it all into growing Idaho potatoes. He was a giant industrialist from Idaho. Equipped with capital, equipment, experience, and daring….and success, today he has several huge storage warehouses and is contemplating on expanding his business and buying some more land.

Chapter 10

Elegy

Shunsuke and Toshi made their sixth trip to Japan in October, 1971 (Showa 46). Shunsuke was 88 years old ("beiju"), but the years of hard work and the twenty years of following the Nishi System for health had made him appear at least twenty years younger. However, unlike previous trips, somehow Shunsuke in Yamaguchi was different. Perhaps he sensed that this would be his last visit to his native land. Shunsuke arranged to have beautiful new headstones made for his parents' graves before he returned to America. The parting from the native land was always sad but this time, it was more painful than ever before.

> Koko ni tachite saraba to wakare wo tsugen,
> Yama no kage no furusato, shizukani nemure;
> Yuhi wa ochite tasogaretari, saraba furusato,
> Saraba furusato, saraba furusato, furusato, saraba.
> Kokyo wo Hanaruru Uta, Yoshimaru Kazumasa
>
> I stand here and bid farewell,
> My native land in the shade of the hill, sleep quietly;
> The sun has set and evening is nigh,
> Farewell, dear precious native land, farewell,
> farewell.
> Parting From Native Land, Kazumasa Yoshimaru

In April, 1972, Shunsuke invited the authority on the Nishi System for Health, Dr. Sho Watanabe of Tokyo, to come to America to lecture for ten days on this subject which had been so helpful for him and Toshi. These lectures and demonstrations were presented at the Fresno Buddhist Church and the Buddhist Church of Fowler as well as in the Uchiyama home. All expenses for this program including the plane fares were

covered by Shunsuke. As usual, he did not show any sign of arrogance of what he was doing.

Toward the end of the month, that National Federation of Buddhist Women's Association held a two-day conference in Seattle. The program was to include a four-day and three-night sightseeing tour through Canada after the conference, and the spouses were welcome to attend with the ladies. Shunsuke and Toshi signed up to go; Shunsuke wanted to see the place where he had landed from Japan sixty-five years previously (Vancouver), and also wanted to visit Seattle where he spent his first few months of life in America. The ferry ride from Victoria, the state capitol of British Columbia, to Vancouver was a memorable one. A large ferry boat moved northward threading its way through numerous small islands in the beautiful Strait of Georgia which resembled the Inland Sea of Japan. It was a very impressive scene to see Shunsuke standing solemnly on the deck of the boat and gazing at the Port of Vancouver, reminiscing some 65 years ago.

Shunsuke had made a great deal of contributions, both morally and financially, towards the movements for citizenships, naturalization laws, and for land ownership laws, for the Issei and toward various organizations and community activities. In recognition, the Japanese government in 1960 awarded him a certificate of merit for contributing toward the prosperity of the "Japanese" and helping toward developing good relationships between the two nations (it was the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of good will between Japan and the United States), a singular honor. In 1962, the Japanese Agricultural Association, which had for its honorary chairman, the Prince Takamutsu (the Emperor's younger brother), officially recognized Shunsuke's contributions and presented him with a certificate of merit for his past efforts promoting

the industry, friendship between the two countries and civil rights movement. In 1964, he received another medal of merit, and in 1969, upon the 100th anniversary of Japanese immigration to the United States, he was officially honored by the Japanese Consul General in San Francisco, Shizuichi Shima.

There were some who misunderstood Shunsuke, but he considered work first and foremost and the money second. The money he received was a result of his hard work as a by-product. If he felt that a project was worthwhile, cost or money was not considered an issue or a deterring factor in proceeding with the project. The invitation sent to Dr. Watanabe is an example of this belief held by Shunsuke. It was also this same year that Shunsuke, through the assistance of the Rev. Gibun Kimura, was the Fresno Buddhist Church (the Reverend Kimura was also from Yamaguchi Prefecture), arranged to donate a sizeable sum of money to the Buddhist Churches of America. Consulting the Bishop Kenryu T. Tsuji and the Reverend Ejitsu Hojo, who was chairman of the committee for the 75th anniversary of BCA (the anniversary was two years ahead), Shunsuke donated $15,000 to establish a fund to provide financial aid for medical care for the ministers of the BCA.

Even when Shunsuke reached the noble age of 89 years, he wore no eyeglasses and his hearing was excellent. Legs and arms were not handicapped in any way, and he was easily able to pass his driving test and obtain his license. His driving became a bit gentler, perhaps, but his habits or mannerisms while driving, such as the way he stepped on the brakes to stop, was as rough as it had always been. It sometimes scared Toshi, but it was true that he was never involved in an automobile accident or received a traffic ticket.

It was on November 1, that Shunsuke and Toshi attended the monthly Issei Day program held at the Fowler Buddhist Church. That day they had a party with the "matsutake" mushrooms sent from Belleview, Washington, especially for Issei Day, Shunsuke enjoyed the special treat. Even though he seemed to be somewhat listless, no one thought that he had to be hospitalized two weeks later. The farm was in the capable hands of his son, Shigeru, so that if he felt indisposed, he didn't need to go out into the field, but Shunsuke was not the type that would sit still at home. He rode a tractor and finished scraping the weeds beneath the nectarine trees. Perhaps he seemed a need to complete everything he wanted to accomplish Takako came to visit her parents once a week, from Visalia, and when she came as usual on November 16, she was startled to see the severe changed in color on her father's face. She immediately called Hisako in Fresno and arranged to have her father see a doctor and be hospitalized at the Fresno Community Hospital. A thorough examination revealed that his liver was the source of his illness, and the subject of surgery was broached. Shunsuke called Tokyo from his hospital bed and arranged to be hospitalized at the Watanabe Hospital in Tokyo. Arrangements to go to Japan were made, and on November 19, Shunsuke and Toshi flew to Haneda and the Watanabe Hospital. Shunsuke told his wife and children not to tell the relatives in Yamaguchi Prefecture; he did not want to worry them. Dr. Watanabe, recalling how Shunsuke had done so much for him when he came to America the past spring, did all in his power to help Shunsuke. Shunsuke improved. Shunsuke wanted to come back to the U.S. so badly. He was eager to be back in Fowler to do the many things he still had left unfinished. After receiving further instructions from Dr. Watanabe, saying that he would return to the Nishi Clinic in the spring after it got a little warmer, and thanking Dr. Watanabe profusely, Shunsuke and Toshi left Haneda Airport on

December 20. Perhaps he sensed that his final days were near, and he wanted to be with his children.

After returning to Fowler, his daughters, Takako and Hisako, and Toshi, took turns caring for him, day and night. Under Toshi's directions, (both Takako and Hisako were nurses), they began the Nishi exercises. However, shortly after returning from Japan, Shunsuke developed a cold and lost his appetite. His health declined markedly. New Year's Day came and went, without the usual festive family get-together.

Typically of that stoic Meiji upbringing, Shunsuke had withstood his abdominal pain until his appendix had burst before he sought medical aid before the war in Sanger. Now, believing that there was nothing finer than the Nishi System for Health, he did not wish to change. Realizing that he was going to die soon, he gathered his family around him and spoke to each one about what he wanted done after he was gone. He talked to them and discussed with them until there was nothing further to add. He celebrated his 90th birthday in bed.

His condition suddenly became worse. Requiring transfusion and intravenous feedings, he was admitted to the Fresno Community Hospital on January 15. Neither modern medical treatment nor the dearest wishes of the family could help, and he became more and more critically ill. His children continued to nurse him as he passed from the comatose state into his final sleep. Shunsuke died at 1:15 P.M. January 20.

Funeral services were held at the Fowler Buddhist Church on January 24 at 1:00 P.M. with all of the ministers of Central California participating in the rites. Everyone paid their last respects and offered incense at the altar; and the line was a long one. Shunsuke received the posthumous name Kenshun-In (One who revealed his excellence) from the mother temple in Kyoto, Japan, Nishi Honganji and Shaku Shutetsu (one who

was outstanding and thorough-going) from his minister. He was buried at the Fowler Cemetery, the serene little cemetery surrounded by vineyards.

Preface

Greetings from Toshi Uchiyama.

My husband lost his mother at the age of three, and ever since, has been experiencing painful struggle after painful struggle, and spent some sixty years of his life in America fighting the good fight to establish himself. I wanted very much to write his life story for our children and grandchildren, but he died before that could be accomplished.

No matter what else I would do, even if it was only what I knew, I wanted to write down his biography while I was still healthy. Thus, I approached Reverend Yoshiaki G. Takemura, and I was most gratified when he kindly accepted my request for his help.

Despite his being so busy with his ministerial duties, and withstanding the extreme heat of summer, Reverend Takemura wrote my precious book for me. Whatever I did not know, he would research by calling my husband's friends, while learning many things that even I, never knew. He investigated things very thoroughly, except our private lives, and recorded, in detail, a great deal about the struggle of the Isseis in the early years resulting from the discrimination. Discrimination such as the laws forbidding land ownership by Japanese, and about the various hardships endured by the Issei and Nisei in the relocation camps. Realizing that this is a fine history of our fellow Issei and Nisei, I am very happy. Not only us, but all Issei have trod paths very similar to ours.

I would like to express my deep gratitude toward Reverend and Mrs. Takemura, for being given this opportunity to repay even a little of my thankfulness and love to my husband. I hope eventually, to have it translated into English.

In conclusion, my heartfelt thanks go to all of you who extended your esteemed friendship to my late husband. Thank you very, very much.

Please except those brief words of greetings upon the publication of this book.

Gassho,

Toshi Uchiyama

January 20, 1975

On the third memorial of my husand.

Epilogue

Postscript

When Mrs. Toshi Uchiyama asked me, "Would you please write my husband's biography so that I can leave it for my children and grandchildren?" It was soon after his one year memorial anniversary. I answered with an unhesitant "yes," but the numerous Buddhist Church activities kept me busy and I was unable to begin work on it until this late June.

The busy season for farmers began and church work diminished by half as summer came along, and I took advantage of the leisure moments to write. I felt acutely the difficulty of handling the contents and construction of a book and the writing style. Simultaneously, I was amazed at the greatness of Shunsuke Uchiyama. As I recounted episode after episode of Mr. Uchiyama's life to my wife, she repeatedly said, "Uchiyama-san no tsume no aka wo senjite nominasai." (Translation note: literally, drink the infusion made by boiling the dirt under his fingernails; figuratively: you would do well to take a lesson from the measures of this man.)

At first, I thought it would be a matter of thirty pages or so. But with Mrs. Uchiyama's consent, I had complete freedom of developing the content, style, and expression of the book. Moreover, I was allowed to include the historical and social background of the times only indirectly affecting his life, and the project had a snowballing effect. Mr. Uchiyama's ninety years covered the Meiji, Taisho, and Showa periods, sixty-six years of which were spent in America; thus you could say that his life history is the history of the Issei in America.

In writing this book, most of the information, needless to say, came from his wife, who had shared some 56 years with him. I was astonished at the powerful memory she had. I also gathered data from the members of the Uchiyama clan, from Issei, and friends of Shunsuke Uchiyama; I also rummaged through records and documents. In so doing, I realized how superficial my knowledge had been of the severe hardships and struggles endured by the Issei, and the Japanese Americans. I was also able to feel for myself, albeit vicariously, the triumphs they succeeded in obtaining by overcoming these hardships. For this, I am deeply grateful for having had the opportunity to write this book.

This is a biography of Shunsuke Uchiyama, but there is no detailed record of his childhood and youth, and thus that period of his life was covered briefly. On the other hand, and as would be expected, the record of his 35-year period (over half of his life in America) spent in Sanger, struggling to reclaim and cultivate wasteland, and the incredible, dramatic changes brought during 1941 to 1945 (during World War II), is quite long.

And although this is the story of Shunsuke, I was surprised to not that his wife, Toshi, takes up a great many pages. I frequently found myself steeped in the thought that if Toshi was not present, how different Shunsuke's life might have been. There were some among their friend who said that Shunsuke's success was due to the assistance of his wife. Indeed, Toshi is a big hearted person. Shunsuke was fortunate to have had such an understanding and cooperative wife. Toshi understood well that although Shunsuke was reticent and typically of Meiji upbringing, he was thinking of her. After her husband's death, she never forgot, and still does not forget, to visit his grave once a week, even during the bust harvest season. She carried out his wishes as expressed in his will,

that large sums of money be donated to the temple, the shrine, the village itself, and the grammar school of his native town. In the foreword, Toshi dedicates this book with love to her children and grandchildren, but I believe that she also dedicates it with veneration to her husband.

Shunsuke, during his lifetime, had said to Toshi that his life would become a book, but it is due to Toshi's will and effort that this book of memories of his vicissitude-filled life was materialized.

One afternoon of last summer when I was gathering data for this book, Toshi and I drove to the Sanger farmland. As I stepped down from the car and set my foot on that ground, I felt as if Shunsuke in his young days was present. I sensed his feeling and relived almost realistically the various happenings that had occurred there so long ago. In sympathetic response, I felt as if I was Shunsuke himself. Filled wit this kind of feeling, I worked on this biography of Shunsuke Uchiyama, very much a self-made man. However, if the story herein is inadequate in portraying his figure, it is because of the inadequacy of my ability with the pen.

"That which is born is destined to die….those who meet must part" is the sober, solemn rule of life. Two years have already passed since Shunsuke died. And yet, whenever the family gathers together, the conversation leads to remembrances of the father, Shunsuke Uchiyama.

> "Watashi no nikutai nomi wo miru hito wa watashi wo shin ni mite iru hito dewanai. Watashi no oshie wo ukeireru hito koso shin ni watshi wo mite iru hito de aru."
>
> Cho Agon Yugy Kyo
>
> "He who looks upon my physical being only is not truly seeing me. He who accepts my teachings is truly seeing me."

We can no longer see Shunsuke Uchiyama, but his spirit had been passed on to his four children, and the foundation he and his wife have built so painstakingly had flowered in a splendid way.

> "Miki(o) wa futori, eda-ha wa Shige(ru)ri, Meisei iyo iyo Taka(ko)ku, nochi nochi made mo Hisa(ko) shiku tsuzuku de aro."
>
> Takemura, Yoshiaki

> "The trunk of the tree will get stronger, the branches the leaves will grow abundantly, the good name will rise higher, and this no doubt will continue ever long."
>
> Yoshiaki G. Takemura

At present, the Uchiyama family tree is as follows:

First son----Mikio Uchiyama
Attorney at law
Judge, Fowler
President, Central California Judo Black Belt Association
Governor, Central California District Council
Japanese American Citizens League
Wife—Toki, nee Henmi
b. Tokyo, Japan
Naguata natori, Kineya, Yasuji; Sogetsu Ikebana instructor, Ichiyo
First son—Bobby Mitsuru, age 25
Attending California State University, Long Beach
Second son—Russell Takashi, age 17
Attending Fowler High School

Second son----Shigeru Uchiyama
Orchardist
President, Fowler Buddhist Church
Wife—Teruko, nee Kuwamoto
b. Fresno, California

Daughter of Mrs. Tomiko Kuwamoto, Owner of Aki Company Fresno
First son—Vance Kei, age 16
Attending Fowler High School
First daughter—Marsha Reiko, age 16
Attending Fowler High School
Second son—Gordon Shunji, age 12
Attending Fremont School
Second son—Allison Tami, age 9
Attending Marshall School

First Daughter----Takako Sumida (Jane)
Public Health Nurse at Tulare County Health Dept.
Husband—Jack
Son of Mrs. Yoshiko Sumida
Pharmacist, Visalia, Co-owner of Roy's Drug Store
First son—Steven Hiroshi, age 15
Attending Redwood High School
First daughter—Patricia Keiko, age 12
Attending Mineral King Junior High School
Second son—Kenneth Toshio, age 8
Attending Mineral King School

Second Daughter----Hisako Kimura (May)
Registered Nurse
Currently helping the family business ("Boys Market") as accountant.
Husband—George
Owner, with father, Boys' Supermarket, Fresno
First son—Alex Masaru, age 17
Attending Fresno High School
First daughter—Grace Toshiko, age 11
Attending Daley School

Since Shunsuke's death, the mainstay of the Uchiyama family, Toshi, despite her grand and noble age of 78 years, continues to rise early in the morning to go out to work in the orchard. It is dearly hoped that she will continue to do so, in excellent health, for a long, long time.

The rough draft was completed by the end of September, but subsequently there were revisions, additions, and rewrites, and before long, the new year came. In preparing to send this manuscript to Kyoto presently, I re-read the complete draft. There are many

incomplete spots in writing, but if you can just come into contact with this noble figure described herein, and the thorny path he trod so gallantly, I shall be gratified.

In closing, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the many persons who supplied me with information for the book, to my wife who gave me encouragement and criticism, and to the publisher, Mr. Satoshi Imada of the Dobo-sha.

Gassho,

Yoshiaki G. Takemura

January, 1975, nearing the third memorial and anniversary date.

Original book in Japanese was published in Kyoto, Japan

July 4, 1975

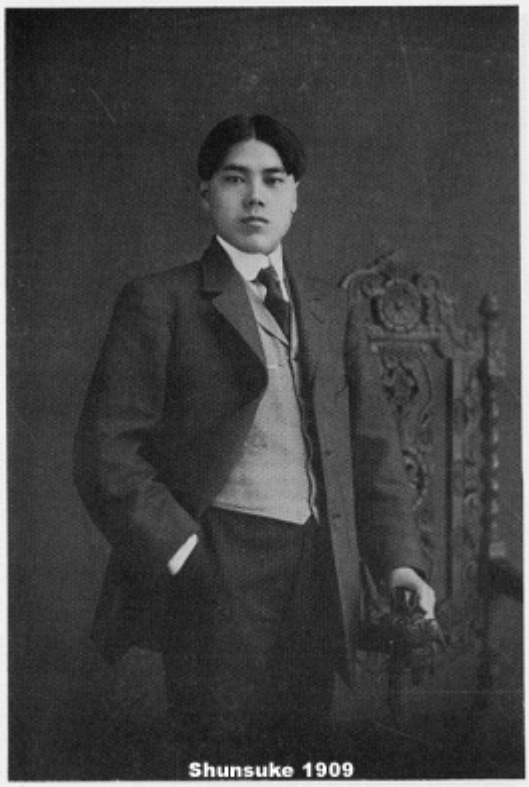
Publisher: Dobosha

東京に於ける勉学時代

Passport issued in 1907

日本政府発行旅券
このパスポートの裏面には横浜出港日(1907年７月10日)及びバンクーバー入港日(７月27日)の印がある。

トシ　19才
1915年９月(結婚のため俊介に送った写真)



1909年１月20日加州フレスノにて
(後に写真結婚のため使用)

一家四人　1925年

日本訪問　1926年11月
トシの妹と共に

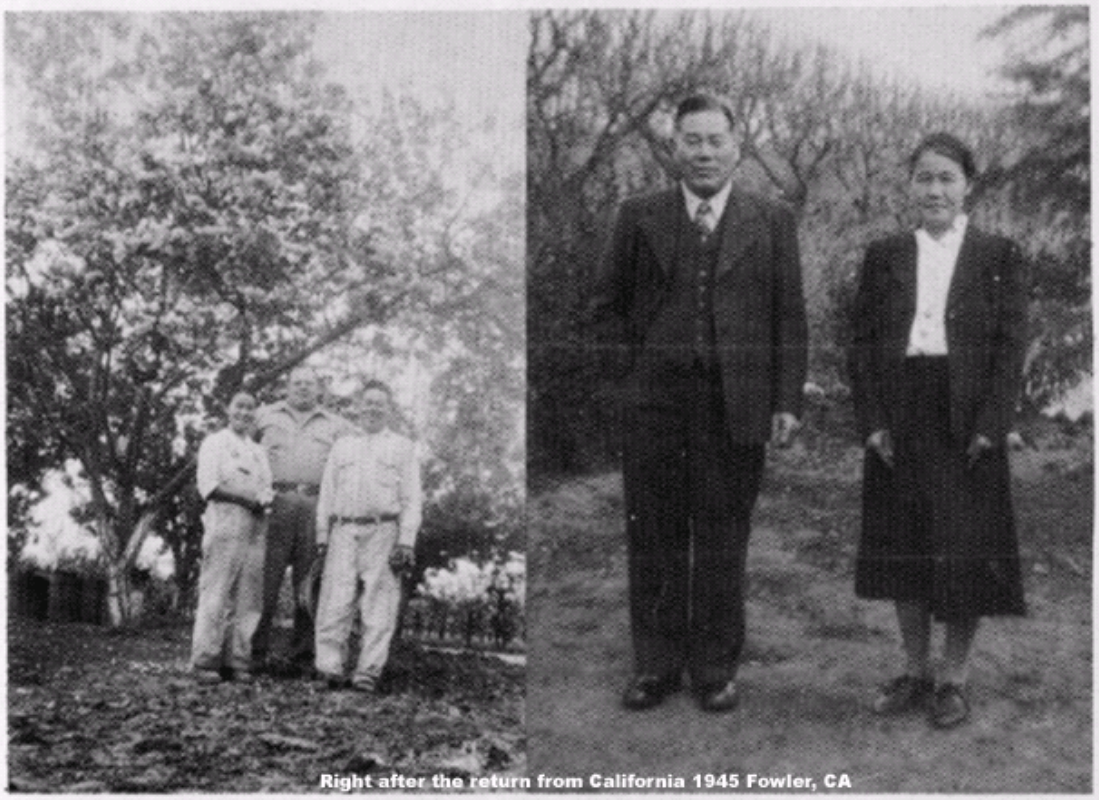
サンガーに於ける新婚時代
1916年

一家六人　1932年

内山一家　1938年

ヒラ転住所で俊介が作った小鳥
1943年

アリゾナ州ヒラ転住所の一部



Right after the return from California 1945 Fowler, CA

転住所より帰還当時加州ファーラーにて

Receiving the certificate in 1958　April, 1966

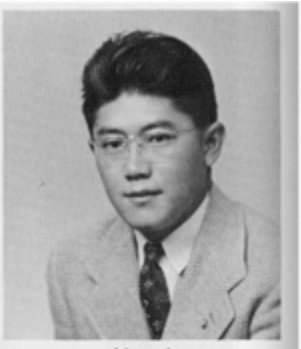
西医学一級司教免状授与記念

（前列中央は西勝造先生）

隆子一家

壽子一家

茂



幹雄

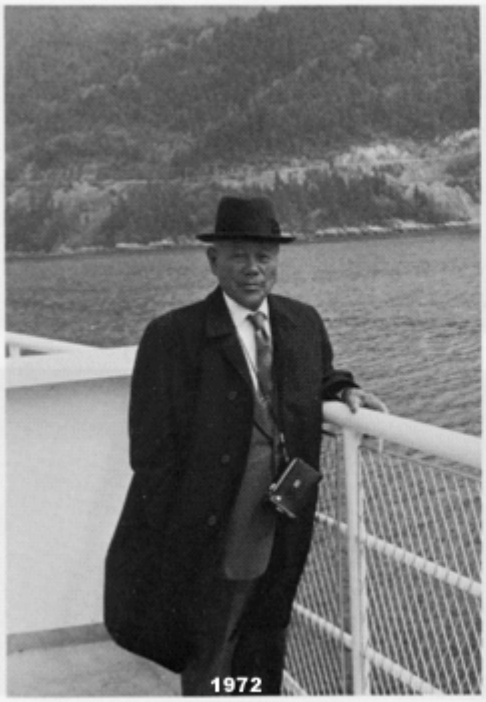
息子と娘
大学卒業写真

隆子と壽子

Graduation

幹雄　一家

茂　一家



カナダ・バンクーバーの船上にて
1972年 （筆者撮影）

金婚記念 1966年

内山一家　1975年１月

米国仏教団開教總長辻顯隆師、トシ夫人、筆者
1973年