

WAKABAYASHI, MR. T
(TRANSCRIPT)

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Mr. T. Wakabayashi.
February 13, 1978.

Accession No. 3175; Tape No. 1; Track No. 1.

Ms. Now, let's start at the beginning again, if you don't mind, and if you could tell us again about your father coming over and the kinds of work that he did.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Okay. My name is Tadeo Wakabayashi. My dad came to Canada in 1892. He worked as a fisherman, sawmill worker and a owner of a boarding house in Barnett, B.C.

Ms. Did he tell you much about his trip over?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No, he didn't talk too much about ^{the trip over} those things, because he figured well, maybe we shouldn't know too much about it. The hardship part, anyway. But... he always mentioned ^{that it was a} ~~that he was~~ trying time... trying to row from Barnett to Vancouver every week to get the groceries and row back, because there ^{was} no other ^{mode} transportation, that time. No cars or anything like that. And when the cars start coming the road ended at Sperling Avenue in Burnaby, which was a one-way road, and beyond that was no road at all, you know, so... it's quite a hardship on them. Then my mother came and she was a picture bride, and I can't recall the year she came over, but my older sister was born in Vancouver. That was sixty-five years ago. Sixty-seven as a matter of fact. And I was born in 1916, myself, and the ^{house} ~~hall~~ is still there, where I was born, but it's just a shack now, 400 block Powell Street.

Ms. It's still standing, now? Huh!

Mr. Wakabayashi: It's... and when I came back from the Interior, in 1960, I took my family down there to see where I was born and one look, and they said, "Dad. That house?" (laughter) Then I took them to another house we... my dad bought in 1940, which was on McGill Street, up in Hastings Park, and they were more proud of me when they saw the house, and that house is still standing. The address is 2456 McGill Street. And most of my brothers and sisters, born in the same place, as far as I know, and...

Ms. Was this down on Powell Street?

Mr. Wakabayashi: On Powell Street.

Ms. ^{Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes. Ms. Marlatt:}
Uh-huh. Which block?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Oh, it was... we were living in the lane, and it was four hundred block, and Dr. Uchida was a very good friend of ours and we... that's where we stayed. Rented house. And my dad was in the business ^{sp?} ~~that time~~, making Japanese bean cake, ^(to) and he did very well in that business, and during the Depression, we didn't feel it fortunately.

Ms. Where was his little shop where he made the bean cake?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well we had a shop and a place to sleep. The shop was in the four hundred block, where I was born, and my mother and dad lived in behind, well, in the shop, anyways. And my brothers and I slept in another house. Right next to it. And...

Ms. So the shop would be facing onto Powell Street, or would it be facing onto the alley?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No, it's in the lane.

Ms. In the lane.

Mr. Wakabayashi: In the lane. Yes. And there was another family by the name of Tanaka ^{sp?} that was next door to us, who was in the same business. Our competitor. But we got along fine. ^{In} ~~And~~ those days, there was no... nothing for us to work for, because of discrimination. A lot of us wanted... some of... well, quite a few went to university, but they come out, no future. Because they couldn't be a lawyer, they couldn't be a do---... you know...

Ms. Or a pharmacist?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes. So a number of them went back to Japan and they have been doing very well, but... in those days, our parents main object was for us to get the education, because -- this is my own personal opinion, but -- "If we can beat them, we'll beat them by education." That's why.../there /no maybe about it./ if ^{oh, was I mean,} we sluff on our schoolwork, ^{slack?} ~~see~~ ^{look out.}... (laughs)

Ms. You really heard about it, eh? (laughs)

Mr. Wakabayashi: Oh yes. And...

Ms. And you were going to a Japanese language school after...

Mr. Wakabayashi: After...

Ms. ... regular school?

Mr. Wakabayashi: ... we finish the regular school at Strathcona, we

went down to the Japanese school, and took in a lesson for about an hour and a half. And so, really, we had no time to play, because my dad was in business, and any spare moment, we have to work. And after we finish work, then we sit down and try to do our homework, you know. So... and there was two homeworks, the Japanese and ~~the~~⁷ English.

Ms. Gee.

Mr. Wakabayashi: So... well, we managed to get through. (laughs)

Ms. When was it that your father worked at the Hastings Mill?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Those days, I can't remember. No. Because then, like I said, he didn't talk too much about it, but whenever he thought of it, he mentioned that he was down at this Hastings Sawmill, and one day, he said he got so mad at the white man, he picked up a two-by-four and chased him around the sawmill till the foreman came along and stopped him and told him, you know, "What happened?" And not knowing English, he just ~~gave~~^{used} the sign language, so to speak, and convey to him that... the foreman did something wrong, and he was mad. (laughs) So...

Ms. Was the mill there when you were a young boy? Did you remember it?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes, the mill was still there and the booming ground was still there, and we used to go fishing and swimming, and swim or dive off the boom. And I nearly got drowned, when caught in between a boom, you know. If it wasn't for my play-mates, I don't think I'll be here today.

Ms. Gee. You dived down and came up underneath the logs?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No. That's the foolishness of young people. You're standing on one boom, I mean log, and... your hand on one and your feet on the other one, and... not knowing that the log is just drifting apart, and here you're stretched right out, and no way of getting back, unless you fall in the water. So my two chums, they came and pushed the log towards each other, and that's how I got off. (laughs)

Ms. Oh dear. (laughs)

Mr. Wakabayashi: But the Hastings Sawmill was our swimming ground, yes. And, oh, on every weekend or even during the af---... well, on weekend mostly, you'd find a number of boys and girls down there, and we -- some of us -- used to swim across the Inlet to North Van. and swim back.

Ms. Really!

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes.

Ms. That's quite a long swim.

Mr. Wakabayashi: It is, but we were... had to be careful because the tides run, you know. So we had to be careful we'd take the certain time and swim. And, oh a few of the boys and girls... I know one boy that got drowned and they dragged him up, and he wasn't a very good sight. But...

Ms. Was the water cleaner then?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Oh, the water was clean, yes. The water was clean. Not like now. Because, weekends we used to go fishing for shiners down on Gore Avenue dock, or any place, and the favorite place was the Gore Avenue dock, and we used to ^{pull out?} fish from morning till oh, we'd get a pail full anyways. Then we'd go down the to/Powell Street, and go to the fish market and sell that fish and we'd go to the movies. (laughter) Those days, you might get two cents a pound for the fish, but the movie was five cents, and that's all you'd need.

Ms. Yes. What kind of fish were you pulling up?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Mostly shiners. Yes.* And that was part of our daily diet, too, you know? And then, some days I would go on the shrimp boat. We had a friend -- oh, I've forgotten his name -- Mr. Kondo. And I would say, "Hey, Mr. Kondo, can I come?" And he says, "Sure," so no lunch or anything, I just hop on the... his boat, and we'd just troll in the Inlet... Burrard Inlet. Back and forth. You know, that just shows you how clean the water was.

Ms. The water must have been very clean then, yeah, if he was catching shrimp from it. Huh!

Mr. Wakabayashi: Um-hmm. Because it's banned now, I think. Yeah. ^{There?}

Ms. And jellyfish? Do you remember jellyfish?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Jellyfish, you see quite a bit of it, but we never... oh, we just pull them out and just play with it. But usually, we -- when we were fishing for shiners, we usually catch dogfish. Yes. When line was too far down, dogfish took hold of it. So... then... the schooldays was... I think I remember the population of Japanese at school was fifteen hundred eighty.* At Strathcona School. And about fifty-five, sixty percent was Japanese, I think. Yeah. And then next came the Chinese. Then the Italians and the rest of them. And personally, I got along very fine with Italian boys. But there's a little bit of animosity between the Chinese and the Japanese even then, and I never had any occasion of fighting them, but my brother used to come back and say, "Gee whiz, we got ganged up, and oh, we had a fight." And this church just up here, on Jackson... Princess and Pender Street. There's a Greek church, is it?

Ms. It was, yes.

Mr. Wakabayashi: It was a Greek church was it?

Ms. St. Xavier now? Princess and Pender? Yeah, the one with the spire?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yeah.

Ms. Uh-huh.

Mr. Wakabayashi: That's where they had their last fight with the Chinese boys. (laughs)

Ms. Do you know why there was that animosity?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well personally, I felt they were not on the same par with us. We were a little better, you know.

Ms. And do you think that was a general feeling?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well with the younger people, it seems that way. Yes. But the Italian boys that we used to know, there used to be a gang -- group -- called "Billy Gang" and they were always in trouble with the police and they had a police record, but they never touched us. They used to come down on Hallowe'en night to Powell Street, and raid the stores. You know, the corner stores? But, and attack any group. Oh, anybody that's walking around. But if they see us, oh, they just let us go. Oh, we were afraid of

* NB. According to Strathcona School, 1873-1961. The total school population in 1937 was 1458 pupils, "half of them Japanese."

Very.

them, mind you. You know./Because age-wise, we might be equal, but (laughter) by height, they're way far bigger than us.

Ms. Uh-huh. Yeah.

Ms. About what decade would this be that you're talking about?

Mr. Wakabayashi: That would be in the thirties. In the early thirties, yes. Because that would be in the grade five, six, seven and eight.

Ms. Was there any gang amongst your kids? The kids you associated with?

Mr. Wakabayashi: We had our own groups, yes, but that's formed through sports and age, too.

Ms. Uh-huh. So it wasn't really a street gang as the "Billy Gang" sounds like?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No. No, no, no. Our group would go to dances together and well, we'd go to movies together, and there's nothing belligerent about us. You know, we're just a good bunch of pals, that's all, and if you go to a girl's house, well, we all go together. You know, so this...even with the girls, we didn't say, "She's my girl" or "That's your girl". We are all just one happy group. And when it comes to dancing, when we first had our dance at Fuji Chop Suey. Oh, the first generation people really ran us down. Delinquents.

Ms. Really.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Oh we were nineteen years old, and those days, when they see us dancing with a girl, "Look at that! Holding a girl in their arm!" You know, I mean, despicable. Aw gee, we...

Ms. What kind of dancing did you do? What...?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Foxtrots. You know. And waltz. None of this... jiving came later on, but in those days it was just straight -- what do we call it? Ballroom dancing?

Ms. Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes.

Ms. Fuji Chop Suey?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes.

Ms. Is that where you dance? It must have been... it had an actual dance floor did it, or...?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No, no. Fuji Chop Suey is two stories and the top was the... where they usually had their banquets and so forth.

Ms. Uh-huh.

Mr. Wakabayashi: And when we go to dance, well we rent upstairs and all the tables around the sides, and the dance in the middle.

Ms. What would your source of music be? Would you have a live band? Could you afford to rent a live band or would you use a juke box or...?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No, there's no such thing as juke box in...

Ms. In the thirties?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No.

Ms. Huh.

Mr. Wakabayashi: No. We had... it was either a record or the live band, and usually it was a live band. Yes.

Ms. What kind of a band, and where would you get them from?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well I wasn't involved in those things too much, but I... I don't know where they'd get them. Sometimes it was a Japanese band, and sometimes, though, we would go to the Palomar. Do you know where that is?

Ms. No. What's the Palomar?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Palomar Ballroom. ^{was} That/ on Georgia and Burrard where the CP/ ^{Air} office is. That building there. There was a ballroom there, too, and then... and there was a nightclub. I forgot that name, on Fourth Avenue ... Fourth and... no, not Fourth... Ninth and Broadway was a nightclub where we used to go.

Ms. How far along Broadway?

Mr. Wakabayashi: On Fourth and... no, Ninth and Broadway. Now excuse me, Alma...

Ms. Alma.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Alma and Broadway. Yes.

Ms. Uh-huh. The Alma... Oh, there was a ballroom called the Alma Ballroom, wasn't there?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No, it was on the northwest corner. Yes, it was a small place. Yes.

Ms. Where was the Fuji Chop Suey?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Fuji Chop Suey's still standing. Three hundred block Powell Street. It's about... it is a two story building about a hundred and twenty feet from... east of Gore Avenue on Powell Street. It's still there. And all those stores on Powell Street, three hundred and four hundred blocks, two hundred blocks, was all run..... run by Japanese, and you could get anything from soup to masseurs, so to speak. See, Maikawa, T. Maikawa Department Store was selling the clothings and so forth and there was about one, two, three, four, five fish stores in that three blocks, you know? And well, our association with the occidental group was... there wasn't much. Not many, you know. Because we feel as though we were sort of left out. At school, mind you, they're nice to talk to and we'd play sports together and so forth, but outside of that there was no socialism... I mean socializing. But we had our fun. But the main sport was baseball. Yes. And there was a Asahi Baseball Club which was well-known and well-liked by the Caucasians and everybody, and first they were playing on Powell Street, then they went to Con Jones' Park, which isn't there anymore, now but there is a park there...

Ms. Where?

Mr. Wakabayashi: ... by P.N.E. Colosseum.

Ms. Oh. That's where the Con Jones Park was.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes. And I think... I've forgotten what the name of the league was, but whenever the Japanese Asahi, the number one team played there, oh that place was just jammed full then. That's where Caucasian ballplayers were very unpopular, because the Japanese were the underdogs. You know, they're small thing in every way. But they had...they was full of tricks, and even if they can't hit or pitch, somehow through the baseball, they manage to get the runs in and we were quite popular. Yes. And ...

Ms. Did you play with them?

Mr. Wakabayashi: I was in the number three team, that time. And

we had played in our own league, which was called Twilight League, I think it was. Then there was a number two team which played on Powell Street, and we played ^{down} on Powell Street, too, but we went to different places and played the different teams. And beside the school, as far as my group was concerned, second interest was baseball, and we used... the club used to take us to Stanley Park on a taxi and bring a cake with us and we'd spend all day out in the Stanley Park, down on Brockton Point, playing ball. You know, so... It was all nice, clean fun.

Ms. While we're talking about the Asahi team, I was wondering if you could remember the most well-known players, any of their names, for us?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well the most popular name was Roy Yamamura.

Ms. And what did... what was his position?

Mr. Wakabayashi: He was a shortstop. And he was given an opportunity to try out for the Pacific Coast League which was a professional team, that time. But... fielding was very good, but his hitting was bad -- not up to the par, so he didn't make it. But another well-liked ballplayer was Reg Yasui.

Ms. And what was he?

Mr. Wakabayashi: He was a catcher. And he was one of the best, and he taught me how to catch, too, because I was a catcher at that time, and he used to coach me and say, "Do this, do that." So those two are... and then there was George Tanaka. He was a pitcher. One-armed pitcher.

Ms. We've heard of him, yes.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes. And his brother, Herbie Tanaka, he was good, too, and I think he played outfield, Herbie did. Then there's George Ushido who was a shorts--... shorts--... no, second baseman. And there's quite a few. I can't recall their name, a lot of them, right now.

Ms. Oh, that's quite a handful. Yes, of names you have remembered.

Ms. Did the community or the businesses ^{support} help the Asahi teams or how was that organized? Do you recall?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Asahi Baseball Team was supported by the people through donations, yes. And we sacrificed a lot, too. You know, we used to go and spend our own money in travelling. Those days, streetcars were cheap, you know, but the main thing was it's not the money part, it's the sport. So we didn't care where we get the money, as long as they supply us with the ball and the bat, and that's all we cared, and we'll go ahead and play baseball, because that's our first interest. And even at ^{the} Strathcona School, if you go there now, you'll see a picture -- pictures hanging on the wall. The ballplayers are all mostly Japanese. And a soccer player was mostly Chinese, because the Chinese there in those days had their own team. Soccer team

Ms. Oh, did they?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes. All Chinese, and they were really good. And so baseb---... sportwise Strathcona School was very good, because baseball, the Japanese took it and soccer the Chinese took it, and the track and field there was the Italians and all those boys, and they take that, and... with a ? school population of fifteen (laughs) hundred, /you have quite a selection.

Ms. Uh-huh. Yeah.

Ms. There's a gymnasium on Jackson Street, ? the Japanese gymnasium. Do you recall it?

Mr. Wakabayashi: That place is called Japanese Buddhist Church now, and that was a United Church, and that ^{old?} building was there, and that's where we played basketball, in that gym.

Ms. Well where is the gym in relationship to what is now the Buddhist Church?

Mr. Wakabayashi: It's all under one. Buddhist Church bought it.

Ms. Oh I see. It's that brick building.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes.

Ms. Uh-huh. And it's joined now with a wing, from the church.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes.

Ms. Was there ever a gym further down on Jackson, towards the water?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No, there was no gym, except for the Japanese Hall, which was built in 1928.

Ms. That's the one that the school is in.

Mr. Wakabayashi: That's the present... the school is now.

Ms. Uh-huh.

Mr. Wakabayashi: But we had a judo club, and the judo club was behind the Hotel Marr.

Ms. Oh, was it?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes, right behind there, and we used part of the
(laughter)
beer parlour/as a judo gymnasium then. So after coming back from Japanese school, we'd have our supper and then we'd go to the judo club, and maybe practise for two, three hours.

Ms. Gee.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes. So we... actually our sport was nice, clean and there was no rough and stuff, and even to this day, I hardly get into an argument because... you know the background of a judo
and
and your reaction might be slow, right now/reflexes are slow and so forth, because you're out of practise, but once you get into an argument or fight, you know you can look after yourself. Yes.

Ms. How many years of judo would you have taken then?

Mr. Wakabayashi: I took judo about three years, I think. Um-hmm.

Ms. And most of the Japanese boys would take judo, would they?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Ninety-five percent was Japanese boys. There was an odd white boys that would come in, and I remember this one chap. His name was Victor, and I think he weighed about two hundred pound, that time. (laughs) We couldn't throw him. (laughter) He was too heavy for us. (laughs) And...

Ms. Who was the judo master?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Mr. Sasaki. He still lives on West 16th. And he
would
was a very strict disciplinarian, too. And whenever we get... we/
hurt ourself in judo, he always fixed our pains and aches. Even the broken legs, he'll just sort of put it back in place.

Ms. Wow, really.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Um-hmm.

Ms. He must have known the body very well.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well he was a... taught judo in Japan, and once you attain a black belt, they teach you those things, in Japan.

And a sprained ankle, he *knows how to?* fix it up for you. So... Except for broken bones and he'll just pull it back in its place, but he'll send you to a doctor to do the rest, anyway. But minor aches and pains, he usually fix it.

Ms. Excuse me just a minute. (Tape recorder is turned off.)

End of Track 1.

Mr. T. Wakabayashi.
February 13, 1978.

Accession No. 3175: Tape No. 1; Track No. 2.

Ms. ... as many detailed memories as I can, too, of your...
the time you spent in Japanese school. Who your teachers were and...
I don't know exactly when Mr. and Mrs. Sato came in. Were they
there when you went to school there?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes. I think Mr. Sato came in early nineteen
hundreds, and then Mrs. Sato came and... my first teacher was Mrs.
Sato. And then we had different teachers.

Well in Grade Five, I had Mrs. Miagowa. She's still here in Van-
couver, and Grade Six, Grade Seven... Grade Six we had Mr. Sato
and
and then Grade Seven we had Mr. -- gee, /I can't think of his name
now. It started with "S". But then the final year was Mr. Sato.
Yes. And then... that was up to Grade Eight, and after that, if
you want to further your Japanese then we had a higher group that
we used to go after school, too. And I spent three years of that,
and then we finished. So I graduate from Japanese school in 1931.

Ms. Same year that you graduated from Strathcona?

Mr. Wakabayashi: In April we graduate at Japanese School and in
[sic] means June.
September we graduate in the Strathcona School. Yes.

Ms. So were... you mean, you had the actual graduation
ceremony at Strathcona in September?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No. No, what I meant, actually meant, was graduated
in June, end of June.

Ms. End of June.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes.

Ms. Okay. Who taught the higher Japanese language group?
Do you remember?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Usually it was Mr. Sato. Yes. And we were taught
the grammar, the history of Japan and read and write and ~~writing~~ write in
the... there was a brush...

Ms. Calligraphy?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yeah. And that's about it. You know, read and write
and...

Ms. Did they give you any of the Japanese literature, the

poetry or any of the...?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Oh yes, yes. The poetry. That all comes in.

Yes. And whenever my children ask me, "How did you do at Japanese school?" I said, "My Dad and Mother payed my tuition for me to go and play for an hour and a half at school." (laughter)

Ms. Is that what it felt like? Was it very relaxed there?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well it isn't that, but... some applied themselves, but for others like me, studying is secondary. You know, as long as I-- I am no idealist -- as long as I pass, that's the main thing. And we used to play down on Railway Street. Played roller hockey and football with a small tennis ball, and things like that. You know? But Mr. and Mrs. Sato, I don't know how they took us, but the past fifty years, they really worked hard. Yeah, during the time they were teaching. Because, oh, ^{was} they graduate from that school is about twelve hundred. Yes.

Ms. Gee. How many children would have graduated from that school when you did?

Mr. Wakabayashi: The time I graduated, there wasn't very many. I can't recall the number of graduates, but I would say in the neighbourhood about three hundred? Yes.

Ms. Gee. That's quite a large number.

Ms. Did you see any sort of big difference between the way teaching was done at the Japanese school as compared to Strathcona?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes. Discipline. Yes. Strathcona School, they ... they have still have/their discipline, but it was more strict in the Japanese school. Yes. We had to look up to the teacher. Well, in that way, I think the Japanese respects the authorities more than anything else. Yes. ^{civic} ~~Because~~ Police Department, city official, school-teachers. They're the people in authority, and we had to behave. Not like present day. People run the Police Department down, simply because something happened to somebody and even the teachers ... I mean, the parents will take the teachers to court because their child was slapped on the backside or given the strap and so forth.

Ms. How did one get the strap then? What would be an offense?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well talking too much, or just in making too much noise, or something like that. Not paying attention to this and that. So... I prefer to see those straps come back in.

Ms. Was the strap also used at Japanese school?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No. We were put outside the classroom if we didn't behave or anything like that, but... one teacher, this Grade Seven teacher, he knew judo and oh, we were afraid of him, because one schoolmate, I can't remember what he did but he took him outside and the next moment we heard was a "BANG" and this chum of ours come back, and his face was white, and we knew what happened. He was thrown. You know? But parents didn't say anything. You know. We were taught if we'd done anything wrong, well we have to take it. And whatever the authority does, well they say, "Oh, what did you do?" "We did this." "Well was that right?" "No." "Well then, you deserved it." That's the attitude that our parents take. And that school was run on a tuition fee and some donations, too. So we had to apply ourself to get a pass, eh? "We / ^{are} paying your tuition."

Ms. Yes. (laughs)

Mr. Wakabayashi: You know? "Get some education in your head." (laughs)

And the same as in the Strathcona School. I could remember every or almost every class class/I went to, from Grade One and so forth. You know. And that old building that's still standing, it caught fire once, didn't it?

Ms. Yeah, I think it did.

Mr. Wakabayashi: In Grade Five with Miss Clark, I was right up on the top on the west side, and Miss Clark was really nice, too. But our discipline was very slack, (laughs) because there was one chap by the name of Tony and he was about six foot, and taller -- almost as tall as the teacher and maybe taller, and she was afraid of him, and there was another Chinese chap and his name was [?] *Guen*. Those two were... and then there was another Japanese fellow, [?] *Gene Shira*. we called him and those three, oh, they were the toughest and this

Japanese classmate, he works nighttime in the bowling alley, setting up pins, and he comes to school and goes to sleep. Well the teachers, ^{think} they ~~can~~ just leave him alone, you know. But he ~~is~~ still around. I don't know where Tony and the Chinese classmate went to, but... and then there was an Italian chap by the name of Alfred. He lives, I understand he lives in Cloverdale, doing quite well now. And then Miss Johnson was Grade Six. She and I didn't get along. (laughs) She called me names and I... I didn't call her names, but behind her back I did. (laughs) And there was Miss Morrison which I spoke ^{you} to/on the 'phone the other day. I don't know if she's still around or not, but she was teaching in General Gordon... I think it was General Gordon, when I came back to Vancouver. And there was Miss Robinson who was my Grade Four teacher. Three. Three or four.

Ms. Did you have Miss Doyle as a teacher?

Mr. Wakabayashi: (laughs) Oh yes, Miss Doyle. Oh, gee. (laughs)

Ms. She's still around.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Is she?

Ms. Yes.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Oh, for goodness sakes.

Ms. What was she like as a teacher?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Oh, she (laughs) shall I say she was tough? (laughter) But when you come to think of it, it's our own fault that they have to step on our toes like that, because we're bad. You know, when we could be... when we want to be, we could be good, but... any nationality, any age in that younger set, well we are always running around.

Ms. Do you think you learned more when you had a tough teacher or were you just more afraid or what would happen?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well, it isn't that. When you know the teacher's tough, it doesn't -- it didn't make any difference, because our teaching was to study. Get as much education as you can. ^{If it's} ~~it's~~ education, my dad would do anything. Yes. Because the general ^{'s} public/attitude towards the Oriental was oh, you've heard of it a number of times, we were a sort of a second-class citizen. That's why, like I said before, get your education. That way you will be

farther ahead, and I found out later on, what the parents taught us came true, because when the evacuation started and we were out in the Salmon Arm district and I got involved in the school and I found out here I was in high school education and I was tops. A lot of farmers out in the Interior didn't have the high school education. You know, it makes a lot of difference, that you feel proud.

Ms. Yeah, yeah. Where did you get your high school education? Which high school?

Mr. Wakabayashi: The first year was... we were called the Britannia Annex. Then the second year they changed it to Grandview High School of Commerce, which was on First and Commercial, where the Super Valu store is now.

Ms. Uh-huh. Were you in high school, then, during the evacuation, when that began?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No, I finished high school in 1936. Yes. I think it was 1936. '35.

Ms. Right in the middle of the Depression.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Four years of high school, yes. 1935.

Ms. Before we start talking about that period, I've got a few more questions to ask you about Strathcona. I don't want to leave it behind.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Okay. Go ahead.

Ms. You mentioned Miss Williams, when you saw her name. What do you remember of Miss Williams?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Oh Miss Williams, she was quite strict, yes, but very fair, and she was our History teacher. And I really liked her, because my subject I liked the history, and you are more attentive, you know. But she was really nice, although like I said before, she was strict. And then there was Miss Grant. She was in Grade Seven Arts, I think. She was the daughter of Judge Grant. Yeah. And we liked her. They were all strict, mind you. And they weren't afraid to express their opinion. little bit of discipline was required, they really did give it to us. But we deserved it. We know we had done wrong, you know? And when we

go home we didn't say anything to the folks, because then we'd get the second one. (laughs) So leave it at one. ?

Ms. Uh-huh. Do you remember Miss Schooley?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No, no.

Ms. She perhaps wasn't there at that time. Were there Christmas concerts when you were there?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes.

Ms. What were they like?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Oh, we all attended the Christmas concert, and the majority was Japanese taking part, you know, participating in it.

Ms. What would they do?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well it's the same thing, in the Christmas concert. You know, Jesus, I mean Mary and the baby in the manger and so forth. But in those days, Easter and Christmas... In Eastertime, I remember receiving candies, Easter candies, Easter^{eggs}...

Ms. At the school?

Mr. Wakabayashi: At school. The teacher used to give it to us. And at Christmas time, the teacher used to give us a Christmas candy and Japanese oranges. So I'm quite certain those things we received from the teacher came out of ^{their} / own pocket. And the school supplies... mind you, we received our Canadian Reader, you know in Grade One. Book One, Book Two, Book Three and so forth. But when the Depression hit us, you know, there was none of that.

Ms. Oh, they couldn't afford to give you textbooks any more?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No, no, no.

Ms. So what did you use?

Mr. Wakabayashi: They / dispensed with the notebooks and so forth but readers we were able to get it, you know. And that's... you know, when you get old, you start looking back and here the four or five -- the four of us that went to school, and each one of us get the book, Grade One book, Grade Two book and so forth, Canadian readers. And at home we had three or four, you know? That's the sorry part of it, 'cause it seems a wasting of money. You know, when you come to think of it now, when -- I'm in the stage where I'm counting money, (laughs) you notice / where the extravagance is.

Ms. Sure. And nowadays, they're just lent for the school year and then they're returned, I believe.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Oh yes, and any damage done, you had to pay.

Ms. Do you remember at Strathcona any programme or any effort on the teachers' part to get the children to appreciate the different cultures, the different ethnic backgrounds that were at the school?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No. I can't remember any of those things. No. Because... the teachers themselves were... I think they were quite busy. You know, most of them didn't have a car. They had to take the streetcars ^{so} so if they're living out in the West End, it takes a long time to, you know, go back and forth and so on... naturally, they wouldn't participate in any of those things, and I don't think there was a P.T.A., that time. Not that I remember. Even if there was one, well my parents won't attend anyways, because they couldn't understand the English word.

Ms. Do you remember what was around the school? You know where the vacant lots are now, in front of the school? What stood there when you went to school?

Mr. Wakabayashi: You know that Purves Ritchie's building there? That was our playground. And you know that... on the corner is a church, and then there's an apartment, and then there's a residence. ^(2 houses) The residence is sitting high. And from there to the corner of Jackson was a playground.

Ms. How do you mean, a playground? Was it an official playground, or... had it been levelled out, or was it just bush?

Mr. Wakabayashi: It was just dirt. There was a couple of old garage sitting there. Used to be there. And we used to use that... those... ^{that game?} two, three garages, and we used to play "eeni" over it. Do you know /

Ms. (laughs) I don't know. Say it again?

Mr. Wakabayashi: "Eeni, eeni, myni, mo..." I don't -- I've forgotten it.

Ms. Eeni, meeni, myni, mo?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes! That's it. You throw the ball on the other ^{they} side of the building and if they caught the ball, /come around

and hit one of you, and...

Ms. Oh yeah. Eeni eeni high over! Yeah.

Ms. What is it?

Ms. I think it's "Eeni eeni high over". Don't you say that as you throw the ball?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yeah, yeah.

Ms. And then what happened?

Mr. Wakabayashi: And, see, you're in two groups, aren't you? So you throw the ball to the other side, and you don't know whether they caught it or not, but if they caught it, they say, "Eeni, eeni, high over," and they come over to your way, and in the meantime you go to the other side and try not to get caught. (laughter) And you were playing this inside the garages or/outside?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Outside. On the outside. Utilizing those buildings...

Ms. Those walls...

Mr. Wakabayashi:... yes.

Ms. ... yeah.

Mr. Wakabayashi: And then between the apartment building and the old building and the new building, which was built in two sections... the front part was built first, and then the back part was built later. And in between, there was a playground, too. Then they built the auditorium, in, you know, so... And then between the primary building, which is here, and the old building, which was sitting here, there used to be a manual buil---... art... manual building in here, right on the corner, and there used to be a playground there, too. Two small ones and then across the street. And we used to make slingshots and oh, we used to have slingshot fights. You know, and usually it's the Japanese against the Chinese and we would go up on the top of the hill where the residence is and then Charge.... (laughs) and *even in the* school class... classroom, we used to...(laughs) That's how we got caught. (laughter)

Ms. Oh, that's great.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yeah. No, we had our moments and every time I

think of Strathcona School, you know, it was nice. Yes. Because that's the only school I know besides Britannia and Grandview High School of Commerce.

Ms. Yeah. Do you remember a soap factory in front of the school or near the school?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Silk factory?

Ms. Soap. Soap.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Soap factory. No. No. Used to be a Japanese church just down here. Used to.

Ms. Oh, where?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Second house / ^{around?} from the corner, this way.

Ms. On Keefer Street?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes, on Keefer. 600 block Keefer, first house in from east end.

Ms. That was a mission, wasn't it? -?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Is it a mission now? They call it Nichi Renshu.

Ms. Say it again?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Nichi... N-i-c-h-i, R-e-n-s-h-u. That's Buddhist, you know, religion. Used to be there.

Ms. Do you remember... recall a Japanese funeral parlour or a funeral some sort of a place like that in the area?

Mr. Wakabayashi: There was no Japanese funeral parlour. The only one they utilize most... was utilized mostly by the Japanese ones are on Gore Avenue, between Hastings and Cordova.

Ms. It's still there. Yes.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Is it Thomson's now?

Ms. Or Armstrong? Armstrong.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Armstrong? Yes, that was being utilized mostly by the Japanese.

Ms. And...

Mr. Wakabayashi: Then there was an Anglican church on Cordova Street.

Ms. St. James'?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No, this was Japanese Anglican church,* and that was on the four hundred block Cordova Street, and it's still -- the building is still there. It's almost in the middle of the block.

Ms. Has a store front that comes out? Is that the one?

* Known as the Holy Cross Mission, at 430 Cordova St. East, it operated through the 20's into the 30's. As early as 1911 there was a Japanese Methodist Mission School on the same site.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Two story one. Yes. It comes right out to the sidewalk.

Ms. Uh-huh. Do you remember what it called?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Umm. We used to call it *Sogakukai* which was a Japanese... in Japanese it is called *Sogakukai* but actually it's an Anglican church. My wife would know. She was an Anglican.

Ms. What were you raised as, then? - 7 -

Mr. Wakabayashi: At first, I was... my religion was Buddhist. Yes. And... but the funny part is I went to the kindergarten under the auspices of the United Church.

Ms. Oh yes, I think a lot of children went there.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes. And then that's the kind of pictures I lost, you know.

Ms. The pictures that they gave you there?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Um-hmm. The class where I graduate in the class and so forth. And then as I grew older, I was still a Buddhist, and Buddhist church used to be in East Hastings Street, which is still there. Franklin and...

Ms. Oh... it's just off Clark. It's one block off Clark?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes, something like that. Yeah. On Franklin.

Ms. Yeah. I know the building.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Right on the corner.

Ms. I know the building. Yes. Big wooden building.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes. And then the church separated, east and west. That's in Japan. Not here. In Japan.

Ms. I see.

Mr. Wakabayashi: And they built the new one on the corner of... *not* Jackson, Princess. Yeah, Princess and Cordova, where that... what is that? It's being used ... oh, you see that neon light, "Jesus saves." *Actually, "Christ Died For Our Sins."* Now the Union Gospel Mission.]

Ms. Oh, I know the building you mean. That would be the southeast corner.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes. That building was built by the Japanese Buddhist group. Yes. And they had their own school, too. But more for the older people.

* In 1911 there was a Japanese Buddhist Mission at 328 Alexander Street, and also a Buddhist Temple on Albert St. (it ran between Powell & Cordova - now Franklin?) and Woodland, which was just east of Park (now Commercial). This Buddhist Temple seems to have continued until the Buddhist church at 549 East Cordova was established in the early twenties.

Ms. And how about health? If you needed medical attention would you go to a Japanese doctor? Were there Japanese doctors? I know there was Dr. Uchida.

Mr. Wakabayashi: There was quite a few Japanese doctor. Dr. *Saita* and Dr. Uchida. And we usually went to Dr. Uchida, because he was just in front of us, and he's still living. Yes.

Ms. He is?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes.

Ms. Huh, really?

Mr. Wakabayashi: And his sister, *Chitosai (Sp?)* she was the first Japanese Canadian to receive a teacher's certificate. But she couldn't teach in B.C. She had to go to Alberta.

Ms. Um-hmm. We met, or we talked to the sister of a Chinese lady. Same thing. She was the first Chinese to receive her certificate, and she couldn't use it.

Mr. Wakabayashi: But Miss Uchida and Dr. Uchida are still here in Vancouver. As a matter of fact, you know, Miss Uchida is about a couple of blocks away from us. Yeah.

Ms. Gee. That's wonderful.

Ms. Yes. And which hospital would you go to if you needed to be hospitalized?

Mr. Wakabayashi: They had a St. Joseph Hospital on the corner of Powell and Campbell Avenue. And that was what we used to call a T.B. hospital.

Ms. Hmm. It dealt mainly with T.B. cases?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes. Um-hmm. But the other ailments, we used to go to Vancouver General, and that's why, you know, we were quite familiar with Heather and Fairview Buildings, because they were the two oldest, you know. But that's about... we didn't hear too much about St. Paul, because that was Catholic church.

Ms. Hospital, yeah.

Mr. Wakabayashi: It still is Catholic church.

Ms. Yeah, it is.

Mr. Wakabayashi: But I think doctors are.../when you are hospitalized, I think it was mostly the General.

Ma. Now when you got out of high school, it was the middle of the Depression, and you had to find a job. What happened?
Mr. Wakabayashi; Well, during the high school, like I said before, my dad was in the business, so it didn't affect us too much, but the thing that really hurt... hurt²ed us most, was that my dad used to give me seventy-five cents every two weeks, and the carfare was eight for a quarter.

End of Track 2.

Mr. T. Wakabayashi.
February 13, 1978.

Accession No. 3175; Tape No. 2; Track No. 1.

Ms. You were talking about the seventy-five cents that your father used to give you every two weeks?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well, my dad used to give me seventy-five cents every two weeks. And when you sit down and figure it out, ~~carefare~~ is four for a quarter, I mean eight for twenty-five cents. That gives you eight rides -- no, four rides. Four days, isn't it? So on the fifth day, you have to buy another twenty-five cents' worth. So in two weeks you spend the seventy-five cents. So, and being a kid, you like to have something to eat, you know? So we used to ride our bicycle to school or walk to school, to save that twenty-five cents for your afternoon snack, because on Commercial Drive there used to be a baker and every noon he brings out a hot meat pie, and soon as the class is finished, we would all head for that place and get that meat pie. Or we used to go down another block further down, and there used to be an ice cream parlour and they'd give you a nice, big ice cream for five cents, and across the street used to be a fish and chip shop, and nice big bag full for five cents or so. You know, being a kid, you like to have those things once in awhile, so you sacrifice a streetcar and walk or take a bicycle. Yeah. And Mr. Taylor was a principal at Grandview High and Mr. Abercrombie was a vice-principal. ^{[Tom] Alsbury} ^{[Tom] Hurd} ^[W.] And Mr. ^[W.] Clarke. And oh, there ^[Bill] was ^{a few} others. I can't think of their name now. But Mr. Abercrombie, to this day I believe he was the most fairest man there ever was. The reason I say that is when we were throwing snowballs around, during the lunch hour, he would join us, and oh, we used to go after him. You know. But he's ^{broad} ~~proud~~ enough to do it. Most... one of the... sort of one of the what we would call a tough teacher, was Mr. Clarke. ^{Here} He was a no-nonsense man. Then there's Mr. ^{Als-} Alsbury, ^{He} he was a shorthand teacher. And Mr. Hurd was ~~our~~ ^{you know,} general subject ^{teacher}. But it's so far away, you just can't think of it right now, but it might come back later on, who

it was, you know.

Ms. Yeah, yeah. Sure. When you were in high school, were you training for a particular direction? Were you being encouraged to?

Mr. Wakabayashi: See, in the Grandview High School ~~of~~ Commerce is what the name stands for. We took our shorthand, typing, book-keeping, and other general subjects beside that, ^{like} English. You know.

Ms. So when you would leave high school, you would be prepared enough then to take a position?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Oh yes. Um-hmm. The speed test, the typing was... we had to attain one not lower than fifty, I think it was, words per minute. And we used to do quite well. And the shorthand -- I wasn't very good in shorthand, but when ~~you~~ ^{it} come to theory, I could manage, but when ~~you~~ ^{it} came to dictation, I was poor. Yes. I always failed in the dictation, but I brought it back up with the theory. In bookkeeping, I had no trouble, you know, because ~~at~~ one time -- there was three of us, and ~~that~~ had the same answer on the exams, and it was a different answer from what the teacher's ^{uh} ~~are~~, was thinking of, and we argued and argued that we were right. Then we finally found out there was two ways of doing it, and we had... we did the other way. That's why... it's either a hundred percent or nothing, so we had to argue about it. So we got the hundred percent, 'cause he was fair enough. He didn't realize there was another way of doing that... such problems. So Mr. Clarke was very fair that way, but oh, he didn't care for the girls. No. He had no use for the girls.

Ms. Poor girls.

Mr. Wakabayashi: And... I know, because there was a girl by the name of Peggy Clarke and I thought that was too much for the teacher. Even as a kid, I realized that. He called her beautiful, but dumb, and I thought he overstepped that time. I still do, you know. I really felt sorry for that girl. And she was such a lovely girl. Mind you, and she was beautiful, but you can't call

her dumb.

Ms. Um-hmm, um-hmm.

Mr. Wakabayashi: No.

Ms. So you went through Grandview High School, and you were prepared for a job in commerce, and then you graduated, and then what happened?

Mr. Wakabayashi: After I graduated, ^{well,} / my dad had a business so I took over his bookkeeping. He had no system as far as bookkeeping was ^{concerned.} / You know? So I did my best. Then summertime, well... no, then ^{this} I was hired by / Maikawa Fish Store, to work during the busy season, ^{that's} towards the New Year's. And then I did that for ^{then} awhile, and then my dad's friend said that / he would like to start a fruit and vegetable wholesale, and my dad has, ^{well,} easy access to any amount of money. You know, his name was so well-^{the} known in Vancouver then and he had / trust of the people, you know, friends and if he say, "Lend me so much," no, no fuss. They'd give it to him, and he would do the same thing with the people he knew. ^{That's why...} Well I don't know how much money we gave away. / ^{whenever} there was an argument between my mother and dad, it was always the money, because my dad was just so easy with his money. You know? But we managed. And so, when this friend approached my dad to start the fruit and vegetable wholesale, Dad said, "Okay. How much do you want?" He wants so much... "So okay." You know? Just like that. Then, well he needed a helper, so I was it, because of my dad's ^{the} interest in the business and I knew / bookkeeping part, so they took me in, but the work itself was much more than I could handle, so I ^{strictly} went on living (?) ^{going} and / out to the country in nighttime, picking up fruits and vegetables from the farmers in the Fraser Valley district. And I worked from six o'clock and ^{after} when I end up / coming home from the outlying district, it would be about two o'clock in the morning, and I'd go down to Powell Street where the Chinese chop suey ^{house} ~~was~~ and sit down and have bowls of noodle or something and then come home, go to sleep and it was usually about three, three thirty. Then get up at... and be at work, six o'clock.

Ms. Ooh...

Mr. Wakabayashi: I put in long hours, and I did that for three weeks and I got sick. Oh I just couldn't get up. I couldn't drink, I... well, if you can't drink water, there's something wrong, you know. I was really sick, and then after that, they made it a little easier for me. But during the Depression, my first job was going to Banff Springs Hotel as a bellhop.

Ms. Really?

Mr. Wakabayashi: I worked one summer there, and brought home two hundred dollars.

Ms. Gee.

Mr. Wakabayashi: You know, for a hundred days' work, two dollars a day, room and board, you know, that's all tips, because the salary they paid you was ten dollars a month, less a union fee, I mean a uniform fee, and medical. So it didn't leave much, you know. So you have to make it on ^{your} tips, and two hundred dollar was a great deal of money that time, and I come back and I blew it. I bought a washing machine for my mother and took the family out to dinner and bought myself a, you know, the suit and shoes, and ... that was it. (laughs) But I enjoy it, you know. Then when I start working for this Japanese fish market, they paid me fifteen dollars a month, plus two meals. Start at six o'clock in the morning and by the time I finish my work, after making deliveries and cashing in, it was usually around eight-thirty, nine.

Ms. Gee, that's a long day, too.

Mr. Wakabayashi: And just before December I told them I had to quit and go home and help my dad, and they said, "Oh, we can't let you go, because we're getting busy." ^{I said,} "No, I'm going home." So ^{but} they finally talked my dad into me staying with them, because I know my dad's business, and before New Year it's very busy, and we have to work twenty-four hours a day, and my brother and I used to take the night shift. You know, work from twelve o'clock till Mother gets up at four o'clock, and then we'd go to sleep and then... for the whole week it was like that, see? That's why I wanted to go home and help him out, but the fish market won't let

me do that. They raise my salary to twenty dollars. (laughter)
 But in those days, twenty dollars is twenty dollars, because I
 could go to a movie on Saturday night, if I had a dollar and
 that was it. That's all you needed, because the movie was fifty
 cents. You know, and that's the Capitol and the Orpheum, ~~the~~
 Strand. The three big ones during those days. And then... that's
 all you needed. Then when my dad started this business with our
 well
 friend, my starting salary was fifty dollars a month, but like I
 said, when you work twenty hours a day, that isn't much.

Ms. Yeah.

Mr. Wakabayashi: You know. Now I wouldn't do it. (laughs) But if
 it wasn't for my dad, I don't think I would have worked for that
 company because of the hours and the responsibility we had, because...
 you work from six to twelve in town, and then from twelve o'clock,
 you head out towards Surrey and from Surrey, you go out to Alder-
 grove and Abbotsford and then cross the bridge, Mission -- old
 Mission bridge, and then you ~~work~~^{went} down the north side and come
 home, so... usually takes you over twelve hours, you know, and
 you're not stopping one place. You go from this farmer,
 picking up twenty crates of strawberry or fifteen crates of as-
 paragus or lettuce or beans or corn or something like that and
 you're doing all the collecting and bringing it back for the
 next day's business. You know, so... you just can't say, "Well
 I'm going to do it in eight hours. You got to... while you're
 out there, you ~~had~~^{have} to spend ten, twelve hours and that's why your
 night... days, ~~and~~^{see,} you get so long.

Ms. As a vegetable wholesaler in the thirties, would he
 be retailing to horse and wagon peddlers in Vancouver or to
 stores mostly, or...?

...
Mr. Wakabayashi: There was... the Chinese had a horse and wagon
 peddlers, but the Japanese peddlers were more mechanized. They have
 their own trucks, and... and usually ~~be~~ those people ~~who~~ were from
 the valleys. And they would come in and buy, not too much vegetable,
 but fish, rice, and things like that. Bean curd, which my dad was
 making. And... my dad, he shipped those bean curds out to Woodfibre,

Ocean Falls, Powell River, where the Japanese were. Yes. And we were one of the... there was about one, two, three in Vancouver that was in that business, but my dad was the biggest.

Ms. What did he call his business?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well, he called... well, we didn't... actually, we didn't have our name, business name. But we used our last name, like Wakabayashi Tofu.

Ms. Uh-huh.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well then our neighbours called themselves Tanaka Tofu.

Ms. I see.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes. So... anyways... I'm going too far, am I not? We didn't cover too much of a Strathcona part.

Ms. Oh, do you have more that you want to say about Strathcona?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Was there anything else you wanted to ask?

Ms. (laughter) You covered it well.

Ms. Do you remember any of the camps of the young men in the Depression who came in on the trains, looking for work in Vancouver?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Oh! See! I can't forget those things, because behind American Can Company used to be flats, and between the American Can Company and the Hastings Sawmill they used to... we used to call it "jungle". That's where all the unemployed men all congregated and built the shack, and... oh, we were afraid to go there. You know, they build the shack from anything, you know, from tin to the cardboard, and everything. And that big riot between the longshoremen and the police, well being a youngster, I was... we were right there. It was on the foot of Heatley... Overpass? And Alexander Street, there used to be a store. And as a youngster, that time, when the longshoremen was marching towards the Ballantyne Pier, we ran down and got up on top of the roof and watch, you know.

Ms. Hmm. So you had a really good vantage point and could see it all.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Oh yes. And on Alexander Street there was the mounted police lined up and the Heatley Avenue came down and they let the men all walk down towards the railroad track and that's where they stopped them. And next thing I saw was a little cylinder flying through the air, and landed below us, you know, and that was a tear gas, and that was the signal for the.... police to... oh, they just ran right into the... marchers...

Oh
Ms. /they charged them, did they?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Oh, they charged right into them. And...

Ms. On horseback or on foot?

Mr. Wakabayashi: On horseback. Oh, they just knocked them down, left and right, and that's the time I felt, "It's not fair." But mind you, I think one policeman got killed in that ... One... because the... I wasn't there, but on the corner of Hastings and Heatley they corralled a policeman and they beat him up so badly that I think he died. But anyway, when that started, oh, we took off, and on Powell Street there was quite a few bushes around there and so we were in there, and then the policemen, mounted police, moved up ^{to} ~~on~~ Powell Street, and then they lined up again, and then they charged down the street. You know? And being a youngster, and in sympathy with the longshoremen, because ~~the~~ the way they were treated, oh we picked up a stone and start throwing at the police. And then while we were doing that, one demonstrator ran into the bush, and there's a Drake Hotel and a few stores and there was a bush, and he ran into that bush and followed by two policemen and the mounted... mounted police, you know, followed him in. When he came out... you know, it made you sick, the way they were butchered. Because his face was just covered with blood, and he -- I didn't see what happened, but I ~~can~~ ^{could} tell what happened, when you look at his face. You know, they beat him with a riding crop, and as a matter of fact, I picked up a riding stirrup which belonged to the mounted police, and I took it home under my coat. And I treasured it, till the evacuation time. Yeah. So those things are... then they had that riot at the Post Office.

Ms. Yes. Did you see any of that?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well I was there, too.

Ms. Were you?(laughter)

Mr. Wakabayashi: We wouldn't miss it. When we hear things like that, we ~~never~~^{won't} miss it. We went and we got on the roof of the store, right on the Cordova and Granville Street. There used... it's a parking lot now, but there used to be some one-story stores ~~down~~^{around} there. So we were on the roof. And then Mayor McGeer read the Riot Act, that time, on Granville and Hastings, and then that created trouble and riots started and, oh, they start throwing rocks into this Post Office, and here we were throwing rocks, too, you know.(laughs) We thought it was ^a great fun.

Ms. This was before the occupation of the Post Office, was it? When a group of men sat in the Post Office for a number of days, I think it was...

Mr. Wakabayashi: That's right, yes.

Ms. ... almost three weeks. Something like that.

Mr. Wakabayashi: No. I think... I think it was before that. I think it was before that. And during those days, if you were hungry, all you have to do was go down and break the window in Woodward's or Hudson's Bay or any place like that and just wait for the police to come and pick you up.

Ms. Huh. And then they'd take you to jail and feed you?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yeah. That's why Woodward's storefront was all covered up with lumber.

Ms. Ah...

Mr. Wakabayashi: Um-hmm. Then that... the jungle I was speaking of, oh, you know, when you see that, you^{'d} wonder how people ever lived. And every freight train that comes in, men are coming in, and then they're going out. You know. And... oh, it's a very sorry sight, I... when you think back on it. And I never... I hope/it never comes to that again.

Ms. That's quite a few blocks of beachfront along there. About how many people would be in there? Or how many shacks per...

Mr. Wakabayashi: Oh... Do you know where the Centennial Pier is,

right now? Well take that whole thing. From the Campbell Avenue west. Must be thousands in there. Because not just one man in one shack. There's two, three, in one shack. And there's always fighting. You know, you can't help it, because the men are hungry, and they were only getting what, twenty cents a day? To go to ~~the~~ road camp. And their clothing supplied. They had a khaki... ^{those} cardigan, khaki pants, and army boots.

Ms. Would the men from the jungles come up into, around Powell Street for bread lines or soup lines, or handouts?

Mr. Wakabayashi: You know where the Lux Theatre is right now, on ^{It} Hastings Street? /used to be... I've forgotten now. Anyways, right across from that was a place called the *Hub Clothing* and he went bankrupt, so... if you wanted a cup of coffee, you could go there and pay one cents for a cup of coffee, one cents for ^{your} the sugar and one cents for the cream. You know. And if you had money, you would do that, but... this is what I always tell my family and I make a remark and say, "I don't know what is in the garbage can, that men will come, open it up, rummage through, put it in their mouth, then go on." And a little while later, another man come around. That's every day. Open up the garbage can, rummage around, put it in their mouth, then go on. And the thing that's in the garbage can is what you throw away, because it's un---... you can't eat it. Can't... And that's what they do. And I remember one minister coming to our door and the minister was talking to my mother at that time, and she couldn't understand him, so he... she called me over and... and he asked if we could spare half a loaf of bread. So I said to mother, "Can you spare a half a loaf of bread?" She said, "Oh, yeah. *Give him this* bread." So we give him a bread, a loaf of bread, then he ask for the butter. And, oh, we had plenty of butter because I used to -- every Saturday I used to go to Woodward's and buy a three pound block of butter. For 99¢, I think it was. So we had plenty of butter, so we gave him the butter and he thanked us and went away. And that's a minister of our gospel. Yeah. You know, those things you can't forget. How the people ever lived. Yeah. I don't think

You'll do it.

Ms. On Powell Street, among those who were Japanese and needy, were they being cared for within the community? What would happen?

Yeah.
Mr. Wakabayashi: Well, I think I am... I'm proud of the Japanese./
there's
I think, ~~this~~ pride in the Japanese people, that they won't, you know, go on the welfare or anything, so... and really help each other.

Ms. Was it sort of neighbour to neighbour, or was it organized in any way? Throughout the whole community?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Not organized. It was neighbour to neighbour.

Yes. And maybe it's because... in a way, the Japanese were thrifty, because our ^{mother and} dad's motive ^{you see} was ^{coming to} to come into Canada, make enough money, then go home. So their intention ^{is} was save money, ^{isn't it?} And they did save that's money. Even if it's a few hundred dollars, they.../ a lot more than a lot of people had. And rent was... *Working at the* sawmill...

my chum was working in the sawmill. I said, "What sort of pay here?" "You start ^{out} ~~at~~ 17¢ an hour." "What are you getting now?" "Oh, 25¢ an hour." That's a high pay. So two dollars a day, that's almost fifty dollars a month, isn't it? And your rent isn't too high. People that can't afford to live in a residence were living in what they call "cabins". There are some cabins still left on Powell Street, where Japanese used to live, ^a in a two bed--.../two-roomed house, ~~a~~ kitchen and a bedroom. You know.

Ms. And these would be a long row of them, all joined together, right?

Mr. Wakabayashi: A good example is on five hundred block Powell Street. There's one there. It's just a ordinary thirty-three foot lot ^[the building] and everything, and it goes right to the lane, and you just walk up and there's an upstairs and downstairs. Yes. That's a good example. And quite a few of them living in the rooming house. You know, housekeeping room, you know?

Ms. Did your mother and father go back to Japan in the end?

Mr. Wakabayashi: My dad went back a few times. The last time he went back, he went back and built the house, hoping to go home and retire. And he couldn't do that, because the war started. So I was the last one to go back to Japan and see the house. And that was in 1936 I went back. ~~But~~ When you go back to Japan, ^{ed} personal feeling is, "I never want to live in Japan. No. The life style is so *different*. Altogether different. And in those days the people in Japan knew there was a war... there will be a war between America and Japan. That's all they were talking about.

Ms. Uh-huh. This was in 1936?

Mr. Wakabayashi: That's in '36. They were already talking about it. And when I mention about the government, "ssh..." (whispers) "Not too loud. Somebody might listen!" And...

Ms. Excuse me just a *minute* ...

End of Track 1.

Mr. T. Wakabayashi.
February 13, 1978.

Accession No. 3175; Tape No. 2; Track No. 2.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yeah, the people in Canada don't realize how life is so easy here. Like the time I went to Japan. Sitting in the train, looking at the countryside, and somebody taps me on the shoulder. ^{I look.} He introduce himself as a police -- secret police. Want to know what my name is, where I've been, where I'm going, what's in my handbag. I had to show him. When I open my handbag, there was nothing but gifts in there. And he walked down the whole car, asking even a small child... ^{Wanted to know} ~~wonder~~ where mother is. You know? That's the freedom we have in Canada, to travel wherever we want. Nobody looking over your shoulder. That's why...

Ms. The only... there was one exception to that, however, and that was during the war here, for people who had to be evacuated. That was the exception.

Mr. Wakabayashi: That was the exception, then... but even then, it's my personal feeling that was the best thing that ever happened to Japanese people.

Ms. Why?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Let me ask you this question, then. If they had left us alone, on Powell Street, where will we be today? Still down there?

Ms. Huh. It gave you more opportunities. Is that what you're saying? It opened up...

Mr. Wakabayashi: Opened up the field for us, yes. Now look... you can go across Canada. You find successful people. Millionaires and so forth. We had our architecture, lawyer, doctor... take Dr. Suzuki, for example.

Ms. Um-hmm.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yeah?

Ms. Yeah.

Mr. Wakabayashi: The only thing I regret is peoples my age, during that time. When we were just about ready to "blossom", so to speak,

you know, we couldn't do that. We were sent to ^{the} road camp and... Interior, and so forth. So, people our age -- there are quite a few successful men around. But the majority of them are ... well, like me. I ~~had~~ ^{have} my own home. Family grew all up. You know, and life was easy for us. That's about it. And before the war, we couldn't join the union. Now anybody can join the union, and... you go to any business establishment, you find Orientals working in there. And quite a number of them have a key position, which we couldn't have before the war. That's why I asked you, "Where would we... if we were still down there?"

Ms. One of the problems, or one of the ironies though, is that the first generation before you, lost all their assets, by the evacuation.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Um-hmm.

Ms. Even though it may have broken up Powell Street, they lost so much by it.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well see, taking my dad for an example, he was in the business, and they told us, the B.C. Security Commission told us, "Write down all the money that people owe you, and send it in and we'll collect it for you." So I was doing the books for my dad, so I jotted down a), b), c), d), ^{and} it came over to twenty thousand dollars. That was in the Depression. And I -- to this day, I remember one cheque coming. Sixty-five dollars and something.

Ms. Gee. And what happened to... did you have... oh, you were renting, or did you own the property by then, that your business, that your dad's business was on?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No, the property my dad had the business on was rented, but we... 1940, my dad bought a house on McGill Street.

Ms. Oh, 1940.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes. That was three thousand dollars then. So when we went to see the house -- it was a lovely house -- my dad said, "Here's the fifteen hundred dollar cash. And next year, I give you the other half." And that was it. So two payments and you know. the house belonged to us, / My mother didn't live in there. My sister lived and I lived and my brother did. But Dad and Mother

didn't stay in that house. Did you know that?

Ms. No. They stayed with the shop.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yeah.

Ms. Was that their intention when they bought it, that it was for the children?

Mr. Wakabayashi: That's where we were all going to move.

Ms. Oh.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes. So...

Ms. And did he ever get any money back for that house?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Uh... That's why, when I bought this book, ~~The~~ That Enemy That Never Was, my name is in there, because my dad put that house in my name, and then when they wanted to take the case to the court, regarding the Japanese property, they wanted the Japanese Canadian, naturalized Canadian, and the Japanese national. The property in their name. They ask my brother if it's allright to put that house up, you know, in my name. So I said, "Sure." That's why my na---... my house... father's house was put through the court and we lost the case.* But they couldn't touch my... touch the house till the case was finished. But in the meantime, all the other property was being sold off, and here three houses, Canadian-born, naturalized Canadian, Japanese Cana---... nat---... citizen. Those three houses the government couldn't touch, because the court had an order on it.

Ms. So this was... this was actually during the time of the war, then?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes. So... when we lost the case, and here we were living in the Interior, and the house in Vancouver rented out, we didn't know whether we'll be coming to Vancouver or not. ^{So} We had a discussion on it, and decided to sell it. We sold it for five thousand dollars. And then, 1960, when we were coming back, we met a chap that used to live in our house, and he said, "Do you know how much that house is being sold for now?" "I have no idea." "Fourteen thousand, five hundred dollars," he said. That was in 1960 -- before 1960.

Ms. It would be even more, now.

* Adachi, p.323 The judge ruled that "The property owners had sued the wrong person... 'The Custodian is not a servant or agent of the Crown but an independent person in respect of whose acts a petition of right against the Crown does not lie'."

Mr. Wakabayashi: It was a double lot, see? So when I came back and went up to see the house... the property... on the empty lot/^{there} was another house being built.

Ms. During the evacuation, what was happening on Powell Street? What would you see from week to week in changes?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well, only thing is... notice is ^{that} people going away, going away. Business is on, being cont... They continued with the business as long as possible, because people want to buy groceries, so it was allright that way. But every day, people are being shipped out. And we had to go to the R.C.M.P. and ask for a permit to stay in Vancouver, and they might give you a permit for one month so we kept that permit, and you had to carry it with you all the time. And curfew was on, so we have to be home before sundown.

Ms. What was the feeling? How did people feel?

Mr. Wakabayashi: The feeling of the Japanese... the majority was very hostile. Even myself, well, I felt I was cheated out of a... being a Canadian. Because... we were called for military duty before everything ...

Ms. Oh, really?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yes, we were... one group was called, and my brother, he went and took a medical, and he came home you know, so happy, said, "I'm Class A." You know? That time, you were classified A, B, C, D, E, and F ^{or} something like that. And his friend was all classified fit, physically fit, so he was so happy that he's going to join the Army. Then by the time my turn came along, the atmosphere changed and ^{they said,} /"No, we don't want you." That's why... there was a chap by the name of ^{and he and} I used to play together, playing ball and things like that and he went to Japan and/joined the Japanese Army and he was captured in Manchuria, after the surrender, and he was executed. I forgot what they called him, but... I felt sorry for him, because he was such a nice fellow, but being -- living under this discrimination, you can't help it. If I was in his position that time, I ^{would} ~~will~~ do the same thing. I would go ^{off} ~~out~~ and join the Japanese Army and fight the

?
Kosawa

Allies. Well, ^{he} you can't help it.

Ms. You just felt so angry at the...

Mr. Wakabayashi: Um-hmm.

Ms. ... behaviour that you were being given.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yeah, and the way we had been treated up to then.

Ms. Yeah, yeah.

Mr. Wakabayashi: You know, we were ^a "bloody Jap," that ^{'s all.} ~~sort of thing.~~

My wife -- when I was courting my wife -- we came out of a movie, Orpheum Theatre, one night and a Army chap walked in front of us...was three of them. He looked at me, he said, "If it wasn't for you guys, we wouldn't have to join the army." You know? And it ^{'s} ~~was~~ not right, you know. Here I am... I'm proud as a Canadian. I'm more Canadian than a lot of these people that you hear on the radio programme. And, last minute they say, "You're not a Canadian citizen. You're just an enemy alien." That's not right.

Ms. You were Canadian born and really angry at this. Were your parents as angry?

Mr. Wakabayashi: My parents were angry too, yes. Like my dad, he came here in 1892 and he was here almost forty years. And he was more Canadian than Japanese. You know, even though he couldn't speak, you know, ^{very little} ~~a word of~~ English.

Ms. And even though he still thought of himself as going back to Japan to retire?

Mr. Wakabayashi: That's right, yeah. Because the family's here.

Ms. Yeah.

Mr. Wakabayashi: And we are taught as a Canadian. You come to Strathcona School and ^{we} ~~you~~ / ^{were} considered as a Canadian student, not as a Japanese student.

Ms. Oh, yeah.

Ms. I imagine you were taught all about the flag and...

Mr. Wakabayashi: That's right.

Ms. ... "Oh, Canada."

Mr. Wakabayashi: Singing "Oh, Canada" every morning. I mean, every occasion when it arises, and we say our Lord's Prayer, without knowing what it meant. You know? We ^{were} ~~are~~ being taught to be a Canadian

and here they come and told us that, "You're not/^aCanadian. You're an enemy alien." Only thing I'm glad is that nothing drastic happened. No bombing or anything like that. No sabotage or anything.

Ms. Did you feel after Pearl Harbour happened, and everyone knew that there was going to be a war in the Pacific, did you feel unsafe on the streets in Vancouver?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No, no. Not a bit. Only thing ~~that~~ we were afraid of was being picked up by a police and shipped out to the road camp.

Uh-huh.

Ms. /Well that's very interesting, you know, because one of the rationalizations given for the evacuation is that it was to prevent people from being beaten up in the street. (laughs)

Mr. Wakabayashi: (laughs) We could look after ourselves. (laughter) No, only thing is... most comical part is, we go down Granville Street or anyplace, the Caucasians couldn't tell the difference between the Chinese and Japanese. (laughs)

Ms. That's true. That's true.

Mr. Wakabayashi: So they had a button made, "I am Chinese."

Ms. Oh, really?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yeah.

Ms. Huh!

Mr. Wakabayashi: So somehow or other, we get hold of it. (laughs)

So -- it's quite comical and when we want to go out to ^{a certain} place, we had a Caucasian friend by the name of Sandy Stein... ^{sp?} ~~Ste~~^{en?}en, I should say. His wife is still living. She's a Japanese. And he is a Caucasian, and... "Hey, Sandy." He brings a car. We all ^{and} get in on.../lying on the floor and he's going down the dr--... Main Street. (laughs) So, we had our fun, but finally my excuses run out, to stay in Vancouver, so I ^{thought} to myself,

^{For goodness' sake.}
"Going to the sticks? I'll go to Hastings Park and stay and ^{were} ^{the} work there," because if you / working in/Hastings Park, they can't say too much. So I went to Hastings Park and worked there, putting straws in the mattress. Have you ever slept on that? ^{the}
Aw gee, in the morning your back is... (laughs) And/men's

dormitory was the Forum. It was a double-decker bed. And that place was just crammed with double-decker bed. And you try to sleep in there. They're playing card games all night. Many fortunes were won and lost in that building. And they'd make (imitates coughing) you wake up and / ~~there's~~ ^{there's} somebody's coughing. Oh, all times of day and night, somebody's coughing away. But the most sorry part, that I can't erase from my head, was when I went down to the Agricultural Building, where the animals ~~were~~ ^{are} kept, each has a stall -- you know, even now you see that.

Ms. Yeah.

Mr. Wakabayashi: And the ~~family's~~ ^{families} living in there. Mother and children.

Ms. Oh, really?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yeah. And the only privacy they ~~had~~ ^{have} is pull the curtain in front, and that's all the privacy they have. So I couldn't ask you, "Would you live in a place like that?"

Ms. No. Not if I could help it.

Mr. Wakabayashi: But you know, we were forced to. And we were moved out, and then we went to the... I went to a self-supporting project. We had to pay our own way, and the community where we are going must accept us. So we went. And this Englishman said, "If you go and build a sawmill and make a living, that's a lot ^{the} better than going to / concentration camp." So, Sure, it's nice.

So we went there in April and start building the mill, in Blind Bay, which is near Sorrento. Built the mill and started producing lumber and our first paycheque was in August. I remember getting about eighty dollars.

Ms. How did you live from -- did you say June, you went up?

Mr. Wakabayashi: We went out there in April.

Ms. April. And you didn't... what did you live on? (laughs)

Mr. Wakabayashi: Your own money. Then from August, we worked till Christmas Eve, *all*.... yeah, and by that time we were grumbling away and, "If you won't pay us, we won't run the mill after Christmas." "Oh, we'll bring it right up." On Christmas Eve, they gave us twenty

dollars apiece.

Ms. Oh... Wow! That was your second paycheque?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Second paycheque. And that was the last, because the rel--... labour he declared bankruptcy. We took him to the court, /labour/depart- from ment, and we all went to Kamloops / Salmon Arm, paying our way. We won the case. We got two dollars and fifty cents from the government.

Ms. (laughs) Two dollars!? And fifty cents!?

Mr. Wakabayashi: ... and fifty cents, from the government. And our expenses to and back, and night in Kamloops...

Ms. Crazy.

Mr. Wakabayashi: ... sure made money. (laughs)

Ms. How many of you were involved in the sawmill, then?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well there was... I think there was about, offhand, about ten of us. Um-hmm. We brought the logs down and we really built the mill from scratch. So...

Ms. Sounds like you should have taken it down, too. (laughs) who

Mr. Wakabayashi: But the people then/went to the Slocan Valley...oh I felt sorry for them because the year of '42 was the coldest winter we ever had. Even our place, we didn't get any windows, so... there's no window in our shack. Two-by-four and *slap a* board across it, put the tar paper over it, then put the two-- one-by-four to hold the tar paper in place, and that was all. No insulation. And no windows. And the wood was wet, you know. And the temperature went down to thirty-two below, Fahrenheit. I remember that. Because in the morning, you wake up and where/^{your}breath was hitting the blanket was all white, Coated with frost. So when I went to visit my folks in Lemon Creek, that was near Slocan, and when I saw the house they were living in--they had to move the furniture, moved about -- well at least a foot away from the wall, because from the floor to about four feet height, frost. Right around the house. You know, the height of the stove above was fine. But below that, ~~there was~~ all frost, and that's how the people lived in the winter of '42.

Ms. Oh, gee. Did they lose anybody? Pneumonia or anything?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Well, maybe they might have through a natural cause

and things like that, but... Even ourself, we were cold. We didn't have any winter clothes. You know, we just come from the coast, you never expect to find thirty below. But we managed. And by that time our ^{pocket} ~~tar paper~~ was getting thinner and thinner, and finally you're able to reach the bottom ^{of the pocket.} (laughs) But we built up enough sawdust supplies, so my brother-in-law started hauling sawdust into Kamloops.

Ms. And selling it as fuel?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yeah. In those days, ^{the} /sawdust burner was quite popular. So, to this day, whenever I see dumplings, you know, in the stew?

Ms. Uh-huh.

Mr. Wakabayashi: (laughs) ^{Oh! It was} Either that and rice... (laughs)

Ms. Oh... oh.

Mr. Wakabayashi: No... we went through a lot of hardship but now we are able to smile instead of holding ^{our} ~~the~~ animosity. Because ^{we} ~~you~~ really must realize, there's no sense in holding it, because ^[of] the event that led everything up to that point... and... these rabble-rousers in Vancouver. Especially the politicians. They wanted to make hay, so they took that opportunity, and I still remember three of them: J.H. ^{Green} ~~Reeve~~, a Conservative, ~~he~~'s still living; Harold Wilson was an alderman, City of Vancouver; Senator Tom Reid. Those three I still remember.

Ms. Reed, is it?

Mr. Wakabayashi: R-e-i-d.

Ms. You stayed in the Interior until 1960. What was your business there during those years?

Mr. Wakabayashi: I worked in the... see, after this company went bankrupt, well we had to do something, so for the first time in my life I went into the bush, start cutting logs. And those days, they want railroad ties, and there was a lot of tie mills going around. And Mr. Nakamura, he started one and he hired men and so forth, and he had a number of small, portable mills, and I was working in the bush cutting logs. Yes. But the funny part is, this m---... I always called her "Mother" Reid... ^{Reedman}. She passed away

a couple of years ago, but... she's one lady that befriended me and that's the reason why I call her "Mother" Reedman. But, funny part is, I still... we still corresponding with the daughter-in-law, and I hope she never finds out, but... she was a teacher at ^{Lloyd?} Lord Roberts and in that small community, she / ^{spread} the rumours around that, "Don't turn your back to the Japanese. They'll knife you." And "Mother" Reedman, when we first went into Blind Bay, she had a small service station and a grocery store and we went there, "We'd like to have this." "Oh, I'm sorry, we haven't got any." "Oh, have you got this?" "No, we haven't. Sorry." She didn't have it. See, those people out there are self-supporting. They grow their own vegetables during the summer and ~~canned~~ it and put it away, and here we're in there with nothing...

Ms. Yeah.

Mr. Wakabayashi: So naturally we'd like to have a can of beans, can of peas, or can of carrots, coffee or something like that. And she wouldn't have it in stock. So she say, "If you wait a week, *well*, I'll have it in for you." So we wait, and eventually her store got, you know, bigger and bigger and... and she got to know us, and start talking to her. Me and my big mouth, you know? Just try to be friendly. And then, we had a ration cards, that time. And... *we* was talking away and ^{saying} / she has a son in Africa. And he always writes back and wants tea, and she said, "I can't give him any tea, because this is all I get, *half* a pound a month." So I said, "Oh, don't feel bad about it," so I ripped the page out of the ration book and give it to her. She was so happy. That's how we got to be friendly. And that's the time when she told me about the Japanese... "Don't turn your back to the Japanese." Then there / ^{was an elderly} ~~another~~ gentleman there by the name of Dobert. He ^{of} was ~~a~~ German extract. He was very friendly. And he helped us a lot. But eventually, you know, when you live in a small community like that, and if you respect yourself then they respect you, too. Yes.

Ms. That's true.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Um-hmm.

Ms. You have to sort of *prove* yourself^{at} first.

Mr. Wakabayashi: You have to... It's not... See, it's a two-way street, isn't it?

Ms. Yeah. (laughs)

Mr. Wakabayashi: Isn't that right?

Ms. That's true.

Mr. Wakabayashi: Yeah?

Ms. Uh-huh.

Mr. Wakabayashi: It's not a one-way street. It's a two-way street.
don't

If you / go around the other way, and he comes around his way, you never will meet. Isn't that right? And you have to give and take. And when the community has something, in a small way you participate in that, too. And they appreciate, because then they get to know you. So even to this day, we know quite a few people in Blind Bay.

Ms. And you spent all that time in that area?

Mr. Wakabayashi: No. Then... we moved around. My family... we moved to Notch Hill.

Ms. Notch...?

Mr. Wakabayashi: Notch Hill. N-o-t-c-h. It's a railroad town. And... there's no white people, that you'd speak of. It's mostly Ukrainians and Poles and so forth, you know. And, you know, they were friendly. But the Postmaster... Mrs. -- was a little ^{discriminating} ~~discrimination~~. But we overcame that. Yeah.

End of Track 2.