Background:
Kenneth Takehara was born on Maui in 1923, and grew up with only limited contact with his Japanese heritage, despite years of Japanese language schooling. He felt very involved with the American environment in Hawaii, more so than he believes another Nisei like himself would have felt on the mainland, and volunteered in 1943 to delay his graduation from Simpson College in Iowa to volunteer to serve in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, in the European theater of World War II. Already working on a degree in Biology before he enlisted, Mr. Takehara became an army medic after arriving in Europe. Recipient of two Purple Hearts and two Bronze Stars, he returned to earn a Master’s degree at the University of Iowa, which began a career as a medical laboratory director, mainly in hospitals. He specialized in updating and modernizing labs, maintaining thorough knowledge of current technology, and also spent time teaching at the University of Maryland, even without a complete Ph.D.

Setting:
The interview, like the entire project, focuses on the effects of labor and capital on the life decisions of immigrants to the United States. The interview covers the life of Mr. Takehara through his childhood, war service, and career in biochemistry.

The interview was conducted in the living room of the Takehara family’s home. Mr. Takehara’s comments are notable for his frequent equation of Japanese-ness and self-perception as Japanese with discrimination against himself or others for being Japanese. The interviewer did all possible to avoid inadvertently priming these answers through his questions, but a pattern to the answers does exist in the interview. Unfortunately Mr. Takehara’s memory for much of World War II was not particularly detailed on the day, and is becoming less clear in general, but there are longer interviews specific to his war experiences already in the Archive’s possession, one from 2003 on VHS and one from 2009 on DVD. A photo album previously compiled by Mr. Takehara and viewed during the interview, partly to provoke memories and discussion from Mr. Takehara, can also be seen in scanned form through the Archive. The reader of this interview can follow along with the pictures of the war period and the certificates mentioned. The interviewer, however, failed to note the pictures from Mr. Takehara’s childhood in the back of the album, obscured at the time by large certificates, which Mr. Takehara also did not bring to his attention. The scans of these pictures are nonetheless also available in the Archive as part of the album.

Interview Transcript:
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CB: Well, how about you start with where your parents were from; were they from Hawaii, or were they born in Japan?

KT: No, they were born in Japan.

CB: Ah. Um—how long had they been, had they been living in Hawaii, when you were born?

KT: Oh, I have no idea.

CB: Really? No idea of when they came over there?

KT: No.

CB: [pause] Um, how old were your parents at that time, when you were born?

KT: [faintly irritated] I have no idea.

CB: [pause] Um—what had they, um, do you know how they decided to come to Hawaii?

KT: [pause] No.

CB: Was it for—was it for work?

KT: Probably.

CB: Uh—what were they doing for a living at the time that, at the time that they moved there?

KT: I don’t know. [almost defensive, as if annoyed that he would be asked]

CB: Um—when—do you know what, what work they were doing when you were born?

KT: No. [the same almost defensive voice]

CB: Were they involved in, I dunno, shipping, or, or—

KT: Hmm?
CB: Were they involved in anything that was, like, specific to Hawaii, like shipping or something like that?

KT: No. I don’t know anything about that.

CB: [pause] Um—but both of your parents were born in Japan, then.

KT: Yeah.

CB: Yeah. Um. [pause] Di—what did your parents do when you were growing up? What was their work?

KT: Well—he worked in the sugar mills. In Hawaii.

CB: The, the what mills?

KT: Sugar. Sugar—

CB: Sugar mills! Okay. Yeah.

KT: —yeah. [pause] And he was a foreman [pause] of a group, that, um— mechanical engineering.

CB: Oh yeah. Where did he, where did he study engineering, in Japan?

KT: Huh? [not hearing the question]

CB: Did he study—engineering in Japan?


CB: [pause] Do you have any idea how much money he made in the, the mills?

KT: No.

CB: [pause] So then was your, was your mother working or was she at home?

KT: No, she was at home.

CB: She was at home. Um. [pause] Hmm, now—your siblings, uh—

KT: Hmm?

CB: How many siblings—did you have?

KT: Three.

CB: Wow, where were you in the, like, order of—who was born?

KT: Middle.
CB: Okay. [very long pause] You give your, your first language as being—English, and you spoke English at home, um—could you talk about how that came to be, why, why your parents wanted you to be speaking English at home rather than Japanese?

KT: I don’t know.

CB: [pause] Did you ever talk about that with them?

KT: [pause] No.

CB: Do you think it—do you think it could’ve had something to do with—trying to make you feel more American?

KT: No—

CB: It was just the, the practical thing to do, maybe?

KT: Yeah. See, in Hawaii, you didn’t have that feeling, you know? I mean, everything was so—nice and equal—

CB: Yeah.

KT: —that you didn’t have to worry about anything. No prejudice or anything.

CB: And you feel like that was different from the mainland.

KT: Oh, yeah. Because—after I graduated from high school, I went to the—Midwest to go to college—

CB: Right.

(0:05:03)

KT: —Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa. Then—war broke out, when I was uh—in college.

CB: Right.

KT: Then—well, I got into a little trouble then, but—people called me a Jap and all that—

CB: Yeah.

KT: —but then I went into the army from there, and—went to North Africa, Italy, France, Germany, for—two and a half years and I got injured twice then, during that time.

CB: I, I mean, I really do want to get back to that soon, but, um—I, I first wanted to ask you, um—if that was the first time, when the war broke out, if that was the first time when you really felt like—people had been prejudiced against you.

KT: [as if surprised he is realizing it] Yeah.
CB: And was it sort of like a, sort of a sudden switch over, like that?

KT: Yeah—you could call it that. Cause this was a college town, and everybody was—pretty nice, except you had some troublemakers, and I—got into a fight with one of the—guys, I don’t know what his name is anymore, but he called me a Jap, and so we had a fight at the—at the college campus.

CB: Really. [slightly amused, reacting to KT’s expression] Who won?

KT: I did. [pause] So—they didn’t want to fool with me because they knew that I could fight, you know.

CB: Yeah.

KT: Yeah. So, I didn’t have a bad time at all.

CB: Do you think you wanted more to fight him, just so you could get everybody off your back?

KT: No—no, I didn’t want to fight. [long pause] Well, in high school, I trained to be a boxer.

CB: [surprised, interested] Oh, really.

KT: Yeah.

CB: Huh.

KT: He saw I was a flyweight, so—I fought in a lot of amateur contests in—when in high school.

CB: Hmm.

KT: So I wasn’t worried about taking care of myself at all.

CB: [amused] I bet. Yeah.

KT: Yeah.

CB: Did you, did you—keep going with any of that in college?

KT: Huh?

CB: Did you keep going with any of the boxing in college?

KT: No. No.

CB: [pause] What did your family do to—keep connected to your Japanese heritage when you were growing up?

KT: [almost under his breath] Nothing much.

CB: Yeah?
KT: No. We didn’t have any kind of tie with any Japanese organization. We belonged to a—[clears throat] a Christian church, and—I went to Japanese language school for twelve years.

CB: Oh! Okay.

KT: You know, while there—went to regular school till the afternoon and then I went to the Japanese school for twelve years. So—I was—pretty good in Japanese also, so—when the war broke out, I took an examination to see if I could be a translator.

CB: Oh yeah?

KT: And I passed the test real well, so they wanted to know if I would volunteer for that service, and I said no, I don’t want anything to do with the Pacific—

CB: Yeah.

KT: —cause my brother was in the Pacific theater, and—I went to the European theater.

CB: Was your brother doing that—that kind of translation work, or—

KT: Huh?

CB: Was your brother doing that kind of translation work, or intelligence, or something like that?

KT: Yeah. Yeah, he—I dunno what outfit he was with but he was in—Indochina, China.

(0:10:05)

CB: Yeah?

KT: [pause] He was a good interpreter.

CB: So it was only the two of you out of your family who—

KT: —were in the service.

CB: —were in the service, yeah. [pause] Did you have any younger brothers?

KT: No.

CB: [pause] When you were growing up, did you think of yourself as—I mean, did you think of any sort of specific labels for yourself like American, or Japanese, or—

KT: No.

CB: —Japanese-American, or something?

KT: No.
CB: Yeah, it’s—it’s been interesting, um—

KT: Not in Hawaii, anyhow.

CB: Yeah, I—yeah, of course, in Hawaii. It’s, you know, it’s been interesting, um, doing these interviews because I’ve talked to—I’ve talked to several people who have—who have said that they didn’t really give much thought when they were growing up to whether or not, like, the term ‘American’ really applied to them specifically or not, it wasn’t like they were saying they weren’t but they weren’t— thinking about it in that way, and I think that’s— probably true of most people, um, that they don’t really—

KT: Yeah—

CB: —think about it in those terms like that. You know, you don’t think about—

KT: No.

CB: —what word to, like, define yourself with? [pause] Now, were you at all interested in biology or medicine when you were growing up, in Hawaii?

KT: What?

CB: When you were growing up, were you, were you interested, already, in biology or medicine?

KT: [quickly] Yeah.

CB: Were you, you good with those in school?

KT: Hmm?

CB: Were you good with those in school? Biology, and things like that?

KT: Yeah. And [clears throat] I majored in biochemistry.

CB: Right, yeah, yeah.

KT: So—I worked on, uh, bachelor’s, master’s, and Ph.D. on that level, but—I got a job before I got my Ph.D. so I just—didn’t go back to get my Ph.D., I just went on. Cause they accepted me at that level, cause I had taken all the examinations and passed—for all my Ph.D. requirements.

CB: Yeah.

KT: German, French, and biochemistry.

CB: Yeah.

KT: So I had a job as a laboratory director, so I took that.

CB: With—this was with LabCorp, already, or—
KT: No, this is a—a hospital.

CB: Okay.

KT: Then I went with LabCorp.

CB: Which hospital was it?

KT: Oh—the first hospital was in, um, Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

CB: Oh, this is— not yet in Houston, this is in a much earlier timeframe, okay. Well, I’ll get to that later, um. [pause] Were many of your family’s friends—Japanese when you were growing up—

KT: Yeah.

CB: —in Hawaii? [pause] Do you think you saw any differences in how, um, the first generation from Japan lived, compared to people who were born in the States like you?

KT: Yeah.

CB: What kind of, what kind of differences did you see?

KT: Well, mainly in the language. The first-generation people spoke more Japanese than English.

CB: Yeah.

KT: And, of course, we spoke Japanese because we had to but then most of the time, our conversation was in English, not in Japanese.

CB: Right.

KT: So—I mean, we lived more—as an American than we did as a Japanese.

CB: What else did that mean besides the language, to be, to be living more as an American than as a Japanese?

(0:15:05)

KT: Well—the food and everything was more American than Japanese. [long pause] So life on the whole was—an ordinary American way of life. There was no—Japanese included in our everyday living.

CB: Yeah. Okay. How did you choose, uh, Simpson College to go to?

KT: Oh, I had a scholarship.

CB: Yeah?

KT: Yeah.
CB: Was that—for biochemistry, or just sort of a general one?

KT: No, just a general college…[sounded as if the sentence would continue but it did not]

CB: What was the application process like for scholarships like that? How did you, how did you get it?

KT: Well, I had to take a—examination; I don’t know what the—examination was called, but I had to take an examination, and you had to pass with a certain mark—

CB: Yeah.

KT: —but I dunno what it was but I passed it anyhow, so I didn’t have any problem—being admitted to any college at that time.

CB: Hmm.

KT: Cause—I was also accepted at the University of Hawaii, University of Iowa, and Simpson College, but Simpson College gave me the best scholarship so I took Simpson.

CB: [positively] It’s a good reason. [pause] Um—how different did Iowa feel from Hawaii? Where, where did it feel different for you?

KT: Well, the only difference was the weather.

CB: Yeah, [laughs] well that would, that would be big.

KT: Yeah, you know, you had winter over there whereas in Hawaii, you don’t have any. It’s the same all year round.

CB: Right.

KT: So that was the first thing I had to get accustomed to, was the weather. Otherwise I wouldn’t say there was that much difference.

CB: [as if trying to coax out more] Yeah?

KT: [firmly ending the impression that there was more to be coaxed out] No.

CB: Hmm. [pause] Do you have any memory of how much college cost for you at that time?

KT: Hmm?

CB: Do you have any memory of how much it cost, um, college, at that time?
KT: Nah.

CB: Did you work at all while you were in college, to—make some extra money, or—anything like that?

KT: Yeah—I worked as a lifeguard.
CB: [pause] I saw you had, um, that you’d done that back in, in Hawaii—

KT: Yeah.

CB: —when you were 16, I guess.

KT: I was, uh—

CB: And you kept up with that, um, in college?

KT: I was a certified lifeguard when I was in high school, and, so—when I went to college, they had a swimming pool they, they needed a lifeguard, so I applied for the position and got it. I dunno what I was paid then, but—then in the summer I had a job as a lifeguard at a lake there. So that’s the only kind of job I did while I was in college.

CB: Hmm. Did you ever go back to Hawaii while you were in college?

KT: [pause] Yeah.

CB: For like—holidays, or something like that?

KT: Just for the—summer.

CB: Okay.

KT: Yeah, just for the summer, and—I had a sister in Chicago.

CB: Okay.

KT: So—[clears throat] my holidays instead of going back to Hawaii were spent in Chicago, instead of staying at school.

CB: Yeah. Well, that’s great, what was she doing in Chicago?

KT: Oh, she was a social worker.

CB: Okay.

[KT coughs]

CB: [pause] Did you start on your, on your—on your major in college before you went into the service?

(0:20:04)

KT: No—I didn’t graduate when I went into the service; I had a—one more year left.

CB: Right, yeah.
KT: But then I went into the service. Infantry.

CB: Yeah. [pause] Do you remember hearing about Pearl Harbor, and—what that was like?

KT: No, I was out in the Midwest. I knew about Pearl Harbor, but—I didn’t know anything that—actually happened. So it was a surprise to me, as to anyone else. [coughs]

CB: Did you—did you talk to your family, who was still in Hawaii, at all, about—about what they—had seen, what had happened?

KT: No—no.

CB: [long pause] Now—how much—when you were in, in school, how much were you, were you aware of the, of—of, like, the martial law situation in Hawaii?

KT: Well, I didn’t know anything about it.

CB: Did you ever talk to your family much in—

KT: No.

CB: —that period of time?

KT: No, they never told me anything about it.

CB: And you never—

KT: I never asked.

CB: And you never heard anything in the news or anything like that?

KT: No.

CB: Wow. [pause] How much were you aware of the, of the internment camps—

KT: Hmm?

CB: How much were you aware of the internment camps, and what was going on with those?

KT: Hmm—I didn’t know anything about it while I was in college.

CB: Yeah.

KT: But then, after the war then I heard about it. Of course my wife was in an internment camp.

CB: Right.

KT: Yeah. But otherwise I didn’t know anything about it.
CB: Well. Did you know other guys in college who were, who were drafted while you were still there?

KT: No. I didn’t know anybody when I, when I went into the service.

CB: Well, I mean, I don’t, I don’t necessarily mean anybody that you, like, saw later, I just mean, like, were there other people who were also Simpson students that—

KT: [quickly] No.

CB: —you saw getting drafted? [surprised] Hmm. Um—now, you would’ve volunteered for the 442nd, is that right?

KT: Yeah.

CB: Yeah. When did you, when did you make the decision to do that?

KT: Oh, I don’t know. I’d say 1943.

CB: Yeah.

KT: [louder] They didn’t know what to do with me, because—I didn’t want to go into the intelligence service, in the Pacific, cause I knew my brother was in there and I didn’t want any part of it, so they didn’t know what to do with me—

CB: Yeah.

KT: —but then just at the same time they were forming the 442nd, so they shipped me down from Iowa to Mississippi. So then I joined the 44—442nd there.

CB: Yeah. So you would have gone into training in like the—fall of ’43, something like that?

KT: Yeah.

CB: What was training like?

KT: Eh—regular basic training. Nothing special.

CB: What was it like to be around so many other people who had all—volunteered for this same, you know, huge thing?

KT: Hmm—it wasn’t strange.

CB: You guys were all—very used to the idea very early on?

[KT makes faint noise of assent]
CB: [pause] Do you have any idea how much money you were—how much money you were making as a soldier at that time?

KT: No. Maybe fifty dollars a month.

CB: [pause] Now, you would’ve gone to—to North Africa next to, like, stage for Italy, right?

KT: Yeah.

CB: How did you—how did you feel as you were going over there?

KT: No different. All I knew was that I was going into war, and that was it.

CB: What did you think it was going to mean, to go into war?

KT: [quickly] Had no idea.

CB: Do you think—anybody you were with did, or was it—

KT: [thoughtfully] No.

CB: —a lot of people who sort of—didn’t know what was coming?

KT: We just didn’t give a damn.

CB: Yeah?

KT: [pause] Most of us just took things—no matter what happened, you know, you just went along with ‘em. [long pause] Yeah, we were scared. ‘Course we, ‘course we knew that we could get killed in a war, and, uh—aside from that we didn’t have any thoughts.

CB: That’s interesting, because—you would have had to be—you would have had to be—you know, incredibly bold and motivated to volunteer for this—

KT: [vaguely] Oh, yeah, well.

CB: —and yet—

KT: I would say—

CB: —after that you sort of quickly get into the flow of it, and—

KT: That’s right.

CB: —it just sorta starts to happen. [pause] What was the first combat that you were involved in?

KT: I don’t know. It was in [clears throat] Italy.
CB: Yeah. Would that have been—Naples, maybe?

KT: Huh?

CB: Would that have been Naples, maybe?

KT: [vaguely] Nah—it was above Naples. [pause] Anzio.

CB: Anzio. What do you remember from that?

KT: Eh, nothing much. Combat. Only word about it was, ‘I hope I don’t get killed.’

CB: Yeah.

KT: Every day, that’s all you thought about, and you—followed orders and—went on from one combat to another combat, and—we fought all the way up to Rome. Then we got pulled off. Then I got—injured for the first time, in the battle up there in northern Italy. [pause] And then—after spending about three months in the hospital, I was sent right back to the same regiment again, and fought again in Italy, then we went to southern France, and fought in France—oh I dunno how long. Then from France, we went back again to Italy, then I got wounded again the second time. And that’s when I said to myself, I said, ‘Boy, if this war doesn’t—doesn’t end, I’m not gonna be able to make it,’ you know? ‘Cause I was wounded twice then, but—oh, I guess, a couple of months after that the war ended, so I was all right.

CB: What was it like to be in the hospital for three months?

KT: I—not that unusual. More boring than anything else.

CB: Yeah.

KT: [pause] You can’t do anything.

CB: So it was frustrating, to—

KT: Yeah.

CB: —be held back like that.

(0:30:00)

CB: When you were in the hospital, for the first time there, did you—did you want to get back to the front, or were you—more glad to be away from it, even if it was—boring—

KT: Well—

CB: —and kept you in one place?

KT: —I wanted to be with my buddies more than anything else.
CB: Yeah.

KT: Instead of being in the hospital. But I didn’t care about anything else.

CB: Yeah.

KT: I didn’t want to be a hero or anything.

CB: Yeah. [pause] Do you think you e—do you think you knew guys who did? Guys who—guys who went over there wanting to be heroes and—thinking that was what they were gonna do?

KT: No—no, a lot of men became heroes, but—they became heroes because they were just there when something happened—

CB: Yeah.

KT: —you know, not because they wanted to be.

CB: Yeah. [pause] It seems like soldiers say this a lot—

KT: Hmm?

CB: It seems to me like soldiers say this a lot, that when you—when you are in the position of doing something heroic, it’s almost not even—something you could’ve tried to bring about—

KT: That’s right.

CB: —it was just, it was just the timing—

KT: It’s like it just happens.

CB: —and the place.

KT: It’s like it just happens but—you were the one that was there at that time.

CB: Yeah.

KT: You know? More chance than anything else. Something that you have to do at that particular time—

CB: Yeah.

KT: —therefore they made it a—they made you a hero.

CB: [pause] When you went to—France, you would’ve been in the Vosges eventually, right?
KT: Mm-hmm.

CB: That would’ve been a big change in terrain and—
KT: Oh, yeah.

CB: —everything from Italy; what was that, what was that like, the change in what was going on?

KT: Well—it was in the—winter.

CB: Yeah.

KT: And—

CB: This was like—the beginning of ’44—

KT: —we’d fought in forests before but not that, like the forest that was in France. It was, it was wooded, big trees and everything. When we got in there, nothing was—scratched, you couldn’t see any marks of a—battle, but when we left there, all the trees around you were shattered, you know. So you know that you got shelled like hell. [pause] And that’s about all that I can remember of that.

CB: Do you remember being involved with the, the Lost Battalion, and that?

KT: Yeah. [clears throat] We didn’t do that much, we fought—we were on one side, when the Third Battalion went in to rescue the battalion itself, we were just the support, so—we actually didn’t take direct part in the rescue of the battalion.

CB: Yeah?

KT: We were—just around there, helping. I mean, it—we were part of the—saving plan, but I mean—we didn’t get to see the actual prisoners.

CB: Right. And you would’ve—probably not taken the brunt of the fire, then.

KT: Yeah.

CB: Yeah. [pause] Now, you say you were pulled back to Italy eventually, so you weren’t part of the group that went into Germany itself.

KT: No.

CB: Yeah.

KT: No, I went back to Italy.

CB: Yeah.

KT: Never made it into Germany. [laughing audible from another room]

CB: How long did you—stay over there when the war ended?

KT: Hmm?
CB: How long did you stay over there when the war ended? How long did it take you to get home?

KT: Oh, I dunno.

CB: I mean, was that a matter of weeks, or was it—

KT: Yeah, probably months.

CB: —maybe months?

KT: I don’t—I don’t know exactly how long it took but—it didn’t matter at that time anyhow cause the war was over.

CB: Yeah.

KT: It was just getting out.

CB: [pause] Were you—still in the hospital after the second time you were wounded, when the war ended?

KT: What? Was I in the hospital?

CB: Yeah, you were wounded a second time in Italy.

KT: Yeah.

CB: Um—were you out of the hospital before the war ended?

KT: Yeah.

CB: Yeah. So where would you have been when it, when it ended?

KT: Well, I went back with the outfit, and—I dunno how long after that then the war was over, but—we were still in combat, when the war ended.

CB: Yeah. Was this around the, the Gothic Line, then?

KT: Hmm?

CB: Was this around the Gothic Line, then?

KT: [becomes apparent that he is confused, rather than just mishearing] The what?

CB: The Gothic Line.

KT: [incredulous] The what?
CB: The Gothic Line?

KT: [prickly] I dunno. Gothic Line?

CB: There was a—there was a German defensive position in Italy, the Gothic Line.

KT: Oh, I don’t remember.

CB: Yeah. I read that the—after France the 442nd was involved with that.

KT: I don’t remember that. [pause] In fact—I don’t remember most of the places we were, until I—read [present tense, sic] the history, oh, this was so-and-so, oh, yeah, I was there, but, you know, I didn’t remember that place.

CB: Yeah. Well—let’s look at some of these. [takes out photo album—scans of this album available in Woodson Research Center] I wanted to—ask about some of this. [pause]. So these were all taken—

KT: Hmm?

CB: So these were taken—with your—

KT: Yeah.

CB: —with your outfit?

KT: Yeah.

CB: —in France. [long pause] Were any of these your—

KT: Hmm?

CB: Were any of these your direct superiors?

KT: Yeah, he was a lieutenant colonel [James M. Hawley] who was the—commander of our Second Battalion. At that time I was with, uh—oh, Company G or Company H.

CB: [pause] When did you, uh—so this is you, in—with the marker?

KT: [almost disbelieving what he is saying] Yeah.

CB: When—when do you think this was?

KT: Well, that was before I was overseas, that was taken at, uh, Georgia.

CB: Was this—

KT: Hart Mountain, Georgia. [the relevant picture in fact shows the marker at Stone Mountain, although there is a Hart County in Georgia]
CB: —this—around the time you were training?

KT: Hmm?

CB: Was this when you were in training, then?

KT: Yeah.

CB: Yeah. [long pause] This is, this is when you were on furlough [photo caption reads February 1944], and this would’ve been your—sister’s husband?

KT: Husband, yeah. [Teruo Mukoyama]

CB: Now, if you were on furlough in February of ’44, that—was that—before you had been over to Europe at all, then?

KT: Yeah. Yeah, we—

CB: So you would’ve been—

KT: That date is wrong.

CB: The date is wrong? [pause] So you don’t think this was—

KT: Huh?

CB: So you think this was earlier than—

KT: Yeah.

CB: —than that? [pause] Because—when exactly would you have gone over, to—

KT: I don’t know.

CB: —to Oran, was that—

KT: I don’t know.

CB: —the end, very end of ’43, maybe?

KT: Yeah.

(0:40:00)

CB: Well, hmm. This is interesting, cause—it says here— ‘Camp Dodge, Iowa, ’43’—

KT: That’s where I went in.
CB: And that was—

KT: Inducted.

CB: —but—it was says you were there for about like a three-month span of time [photo caption reads September 15, 1944-November 1944]—

KT: Hmm?

CB: —didn’t you do basic in—Alabama? Mississippi?

KT: No, I’m not there yet. See, the—Camp Dodge is in Iowa.

CB: Right. So you—you wouldn’t have been at Camp Dodge—

KT: No.

CB: —for three months? No. And then—Mississippi—

KT: Yeah.

CB: —where you woulda done basic.

KT: Yeah.

CB: The album thinks you were there ‘till April of ’44; you think that makes sense?

KT: I dunno. I—I don’t think that’s right.

CB: It seems like you would’ve been over there already. [the date in the album is in fact likely correct—the original membership of the 442nd sailed for Europe May 1, 1944] [pause] So now was this your—

KT: This was my induction papers into the army.

CB: This is the original one? Huh.

KT: The orders of, of induction.

CB: Yeah.

KT: It’s one of—when I went in the army.

CB: This was your—hmm. ‘Notice to Appear for Physical Examination.’

KT: Yeah. [long pause]

CB: This was a while later in France, we hadn’t talked about this—
KT: Yeah.

CB: —period yet, um—the Champagne campaign. [pause] So you guys had—um— [pause] this says you were at Fort Barbonnet. [photo caption reads January 14, 1945] This says, that, um, these pictures were taken at, um, Fort Barbonnet, um—

KT: I don’t remember that.

CB: —some place called Sospel, in France?

KT: Sospel, yeah.

CB: Um—so what’s this, what’s this wall, that you’re all sitting on with these mountains behind you?

KT: Well, that’s with, uh—the forts all had a wall like that, all around the mountain. [pause]

CB: These all look almost like civilian clothes, like—

KT: Hmm?

CB: These all look almost like civilian clothes, like you’re just sort of—

KT: No, it’s all army clothes.

CB: —hangin’ around. This guy’s got like a—like a sweater vest almost—

KT: Yeah.

CB: [bemused] Huh. [pause] Oh, so this was part of the Maginot Line. [mispronounces with hard g]

KT: Hmm?

CB: The, the fort was part of the Maginot Line—

KT: Yeah, Maginot Line, the French. [mispronounces in the same way]

CB: Wow. [long pause]

CB: So you were infantry, and you aren’t anything more specific like a—

KT: Mm-hmm.

CB: —mortar man or anything like that. [pause] Is this you at the—badminton courts, at the University of Florence?

KT: [long pause] Yeah, it was me.

CB: Wow. Huh.
CB: So—who are the guys that you're in these pictures [at Ft. Barbonnet] with?

KT: [almost irritated] I have no idea.

CB: Would they have been in your—company?

KT: Yeah.

CB: Okay.

KT: I didn't—I don't even know who they are.

CB: Well—I think they had some—think they had some names—here—um—got Buster, and George Okomoto. Lieutenant Okumura. You remember any of these guys?

KT: Mm-mm.

CB: Uh—Mitsuo Oka?

KT: Mm-mm.

CB: This says he was somebody else from, from—

KT: Hmm?

CB: This says he was somebody else from Hawaii, um—

KT: Nope.

CB: —Oka.

KT: Corporal Mitsuo Oka, I don’t know who it is.

CB: Hmm. [pause] You don’t know, you don’t know—Kamon Suzuki, either?

KT: Uh, I can't remember any of them. I probably knew them, at that time, but—I can’t remember them now. [pause]

CB: How about these guys? I mean—we’ve seen them before, but—

KT: Yeah, I don’t know. [pause]

CB: Were these the kinds of tents that you—
KT: Yeah. [captions of tent photos read May 18, 1945]

CB: —guys were camping in on the campaign? [pause] I read that the guys in Italy—used to—used to rather sleep on rocks than—ground, because—rocks might at least be dry.

KT: Hmm.

CB: Is there any truth to that? [long pause] Was there ever much cause to—to be—

KT: Hmm?

CB: Was there ever a lot of cause to be in the, in the—in the dress uniform like this?

KT: Was there any what?

CB: Was there, was there much cause when you were in—when you were over there to be in the uniform like this.

KT: No.

CB: What do you think was—going on, on a day that you wore it like that?

KT: I have no idea.

CB: It says, ‘ready to go out on pass.’

KT: ‘—on pass.’

CB: So—so that’s what’s going on in this picture—

KT: Yep.

CB: —you guys are out in Naples. [pause] And this was a city that, you know—had just been captured, you know, in a matter of weeks before that, probably, right? [unclear from album—Naples photo is undated, and the only dated pictures on the facing pages are dated to after the end of the war in Europe] [pause] This is an, this is an interesting—because it says, this is—like, shortly after the—the war ended—

KT: Yeah.

CB: —actually. And this one is—even a little further later, September of ’45, so that’s—you were definitely still, um, still in camp in Italy at that time.

KT: We were. [long pause]

CB: This one says Buster is—always in the picture. That ring any bells for you?

KT: Hmm-mm. [long pause]

CB: What’s this picture?
KT: I was a Boy Scout.

CB: So this is you.

KT: Yeah.

CB: When you were a Boy Scout, so you were a Boy Scout in Hawaii. Now—I know that, uh, your wife told me that you were a medic during the war.

KT: Hmm?

CB: Your wife told me that—you were a medic, during the war. Was that something you had signed on for—before you went over there or was it a, a decision that you made after you got there?

KT: No. I dunno how I got in there, but—they thought—I, I'd be a better medic than an infantryman.

CB: So did you—

KT: Was cause of the biology, I suppose.

CB: —so did you start out as just—a regular infantryman and then—

KT: Yeah.

CB: —later, became a medic? Was that while you were still in Italy, or—was it maybe not until you went to France?

KT: Hmm.

CB: You think you were still in Italy?

[long pause]

KT: This is my—my school diploma.

CB: Oh, really?

KT: Yeah. Japanese—schools. [pause] [inaudible 3 words] [points to date] June 7, 1941. Hmm.

[pause 51:35 - 52:05]

KT: I don’t remember.

CB: You mean you don’t remember your, the graduation? Yeah. [pause] Now since you were a medic in the war, um—do you think that influenced, um—
KT: Hmm?

CB: Do you think that that influenced your later career at all—

KT: Yeah.

CB: —the, the experience with medicine and, and that?

KT: I guess.

CB: I mean, you had already been, um—you, you had already been interested in biology, before that—

KT: Yeah.

CB: —and you’d probably been taking some of that in college too.

KT: Yeah. [pause]

CB: Um—so you would’ve, um—would’ve come back, then, after the war, um—and finished college, finished your major and all that, and this is when you would’ve met—your wife.

KT: Yeah.

CB: Yeah. Um—talk about that, how did you guys meet?

KT: Well—[clears throat] She was at Simpson College—

CB: Right.

KT: —when I went back, and—I was a—graduate assistant in biology, so she was a student under me.

CB: Yeah.

KT: In—one of the biology classes. So we got to know one another and—then—uh—[more self-deprecating than confused] I dunno how, but then we got married. [CB laughs slightly] It was after she—she graduated, I graduated—

CB: Yeah.

KT: —then we got married. [clears throat]

CB: Um—what was your first job after college? It was, it was there in Iowa, um—

KT: Yes, it was at a hospital.

CB: Yeah.

KT: I was a—biochemist and laboratory director, and, uh—it looks a nice hospital, Conemaugh Valley. It’s about a thousand-bed hospital.
CB: What’s the name of the hospital again?

KT: Conemaugh Valley.

CB: Okay.

(0:55:00)

KT: Conemaugh Valley Memorial Hospital.

CB: And this was in—

KT: Johnstown.

CB: —in which town? Oh, you’re talking about Johnstown now.

KT: Yeah.

CB: Um—you say on your, your sheet here that after—between ’47 and ’53, so this would’ve been after you finished—college—

KT: Yeah.

CB: —and after you finished, um, being, you know, the graduate instructor there and everything, from ’47 to ’53 you were still in Iowa, you were in, um, I think the town is Iowata? [no such town; the survey had been misread]


CB: Right here.

KT: Oh, it’s Iowa City.

CB: Oh, I see—

KT: See, I went to college here. Then I went to Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

CB: Yeah. What did you do in—Iowa City?

KT: Oh, I was a student.

CB: So this was—when you were getting your master’s?

KT: Yeah.

CB: Okay, okay, and that was at—that was at, Uni—University of Iowa?

KT: Yeah.
CB: Yeah [pause]

KT: Then I took my first job—in Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

CB: Yeah. [pause]

KT: So I stayed there for 1953 to 1966. Then we went to Cumberland, Maryland. To another hospital there. And stayed there till 1973. Hmm.

CB: Um—when you were in Iowa City, that would’ve been—that would’ve been the timeframe when, when—um, when Anne was born, right?

KT: I dunno.

CB: I think it is, I think she’s—

KT: [uncertain, but not a question] Yeah.

CB: —I think she’s the age where she would’ve been born in—

KT: She would’ve been [inaudible 2 words]

CB: —’50 or ’51. [pause] Um—how do you think that—how do you think that her Japanese background has affected—Anne? What do you think it’s—it’s meant to her?

KT: [firmly] Didn’t do anything. I never had a problem with that.

CB: Well, it wouldn’t—I’m, I’m not thinking of it as a problem, necessarily, you know, um—just thinking, you know, what would it—you know, what would it, what would it mean to you to be—to be growing up when she was and to have—

KT: Nothing.

CB: —you know, this—sort of mixed Japanese and American—history.

KT: All I know is that I was different from—all the rest of the people there. You know, being Oriental and—[inaudible 2 words] being white. Aside from that, I mean—that there weren’t any animosity or any—anything between us.

CB: Yeah.


[pause]

CB: You’re talking now about when you were—

KT: In college.
CB: —in Iowa City, or when you were in co—okay, Simpson.

KT: Yeah. Both.

CB: So you still had some smart-alecks around in—

KT: Oh, yeah.

CB: —Iowa City. [pause] So you found this job in—in Johnstown, right, at the hospital—

KT: Hmm?

CB: At the hospital, being the lab director at the hospital.

KT: Yes, Johnstown, Conemaugh Valley.

CB: Yeah, how did you find the, how did you find the job?

KT: Well, they had a—ad in something, I forget what, so I applied for that position, and they called me in for an interview and—asked me all kinds of questions, and I must’ve been—the highest-rated individual at that time.

CB: Hmm.

KT: So—when I entered the hospital, they didn’t have, uh—a regular laboratory in the hospital, the lab was there but it wasn’t organized at all—

CB: Okay.

(1:00:00)

KT: —so when I got there then I reorganized the whole laboratory, put [clears throat] different departments of hematology, chemistry, uh—let’s think of what else—but I set it all up in different departments and had different people working there day and night.

CB: So you really did a lot, to reorganize—

KT: [as if how could someone fail to notice] Oh, yeah.

CB: —the way they were doin’ things.

KT: I made it a [inaudible 1 word]—modern laboratory, when I got there. Moved in all new equipment, and—I ran into a problem with the administration, because—they didn’t wanna put out that much money.

CB: Yeah? [laughs slightly]

KT: Yeah.

CB: I can imagine it would be—
KT: I mean, after all—

CB: —kinda hard for them to spend.

KT: —I mean, you want everything all modernized, and—just at that time, the most popular thing was the—uh—
twelve-test instrument. Automated. And I wanted to get the thing in the hospital, and—they didn’t wanna—undergo
the cost of [sic] the hospital, and I showed them that if they don’t get this, then we’re gonna get ten more technicians,
you know, to do the same job as this one instrument, so I finally convinced them. I had a—what I call a dumb
pathologist at that time—

CB: Hmm.

KT: —that—he wasn’t up—to snuff, he wasn’t up at the level, of where he shoulda been.

CB: Yeah.

KT: So I brought ‘em all up. So—the hospital was really grateful for—my being there and changing the laboratory,
so I stayed the whole works in the hospital, and they liked it very much.

CB: And then you were—[clears throat] you were there for—thirteen years, so you must’ve been—

KT: Oh, yeah.

CB: —fairly satisfied with how things went.

KT: Yeah, those were—pretty—so they didn’t wanna see me leave, but—this hospital in Cumberland, Maryland,
offered me more money, and—Johnstown—couldn’t—meet the—difference, so I took the job in Cumberland,
Maryland.

CB: Hmm.

KT: I mean—I think it amounted to $5000 a year difference.

CB: And that’d be major.

KT: Oh, yeah.

CB: Yeah.

KT: So—they didn’t want me to—difference in price and I said, ‘I’m sorry but—I’m gonna go down there build that
laboratory up.’ Because that laboratory in Cumberland, Maryland, was—way behind too.

CB: Hmm.

KT: See, they were—way back, cause they didn’t have anybody there that—knew all the modern tests and
everything, so they were willing to pay me to build that laboratory up, so that—in one year’s time that I brought
them up to a—a level of, uh—all the—Maryland state had—included in the University, that they were all so
surprised to see me come in there and reorganize the laboratory to—a first-rate laboratory. So I got—pretty much of a recognition there, and—University of Maryland then gave me a professorship in biochemistry—

CB: [genuine surprise] Oh, wow.

KT: —and I used to teach biochemistry there to—at the University of Maryland.

CB: Wow! Even without the—official Ph.D.

KT: Cause I’d had enough experience.

CB: Yeah.

KT: And knowledge of all the—that was going on in laboratory testing. I kept up with everything and it was going on at that time, and—if anybody knew anything at all, I knew it just as much as the next guy.

CB: Yeah.

KT: So I kept up with all the latest, so—they didn’t have any worry about my taking over—so have I, I took over, then—in Maryland, then we picked up—uh—two hospitals in West Virginia, and another one in Maryland, were, went in there, and—changed the laboratory, to a modern laboratory, and the tests that they couldn’t do over there they just sent to me then.

(1:05:26)

CB: So you sort of consulted for—

KT: Oh, yeah.

CB: —those other hospitals to—figure things out for—how was it, uh, to have to balance your, your regular lab director work with the professorship stuff?

KT: Oh, it’s pretty tough. Cause—I had to be—at the University of Maryland Monday Wednesday, Friday, at, uh—I forget what the hours were, but I had to be there certain hours to teach, and back again to the hospital.

CB: Yeah.

KT: So I had a pretty busy schedule. [pause]

CB: What did you think of teaching?

KT: Huh?

CB: Did you like teaching, was it—

KT: Yeah, I enjoyed teaching. Because—I knew at that time that nobody else knew as much as I did, in biochemistry. Especially with all the latest tests. So I had no problem, any time I had any questions I had an answer
for it. There weren’t anything that—I wasn’t able to give them a—satisfactory answer. So [inaudible 3 words] pleased with that.

CB: Yeah. Yeah, I can imagine.

KT: And, uh—staff at all of these hospitals, were grateful, cause I brought them up to a higher level—

CB: Yeah.

KT: —and instead of s—not being able to get a test, I would get ‘em, and if they heard of a test, they’d come and ask me what I thought about this test before it was incorporated, and I told ‘em that ‘No, this is another test that, that was better than this one, so I’m gonna incorporate these [inaudible 2 words],’ and—we got into arguments, and I told ‘em I said ‘If you wanna see if we can do this test, let’s see if we can do this test, but I’ll have this as an option which is better,’ and they—finally a lot agreed to—what I had set up. So they were well pleased with that.

CB: Yeah.

KT: And they were glad that I stood up for—my rights—over some of those older hospital [inaudible 1 word] that didn’t want to make any change, you know, they wanted to stay in the old-fashioned way. And I told ‘em , I said, ‘Oh, no, today you gotta keep up with the best, and you can’t be using all the old methods, so I’m changing all that,’ and I changed all that. So they finally, gradually, started getting around and ordering the tests the way I wanted them to do it, because—every Friday, we have a—a seminar, and I would discuss all the new laboratory tests, to them, and ask them that—this is the test that they ought to use for this condition, and so forth, so I submitted them all to all the latest, and they were real happy with that. And it was University of Maryland was also pleased— with my teaching there.

CB: What do you think the—the dates were, when you were—with the University of Maryland?

KT: The what?

CB: What do you think the, the specific years were that you were with the University of Maryland?

KT: The—

CB: Would that have been like—um, ’69 to ’73, maybe? [pause]

KT: The what?

CB: What were the—what were the years when you were with the University of Maryland?

KT: Oh I don’t remember.

CB: Um—you were in Maryland—between ’66 and ’73.

KT: Yeah.

CB: And I’m figuring you might’ve been—with the university up until you left Maryland.
KT: I don’t know, there were so many changes made, that I can’t remember all of the changes.

CB: Yeah.

KT: But—all the changes that I made were all for the better. But I don’t remember. [pause]

CB: Well, you moved to Houston, in ’76, and that was—um—and, and that was partly—to be closer to your daughter and partly—because you had this new—job opportunity, right?

KT: [wary] Yeah.

CB: Um—how did you find the—the LabCorp position? That would’ve been different from—you know, the hospital-centric stuff you’d been doing before, um—how did you settle on that?

KT: Well—with LabCorp, there was a business to make money.

CB: Yeah.

KT: So—any time we all wanted to make any changes, I had to really prove that it was gonna be worthwhile. So I had a tough time in introducing a new test, even, to the—corporation, but I succeeded in—in all the—so they were thankful, they gave me a bonus every time—some test was paying and making more money than what they did the previous quarter. See—they judged everything by the quarter, and—so I figured, ain’t gonna matter if it pays us every quarter, then as long as I kept getting an interest, I knew I was doing all right and—the corporation was happy with my being there.

CB: Well. Um—was that a big—leap in pay, over what you had been doing in hospitals?

KT: Yeah.

CB: Was that part of why you—you picked that job?

KT: [pause] Yeah.

CB: Hmm. [pause] Now that you’ve been in Houston longer than—I think any other place that you’ve lived, um—how do you compare it to other places that you’ve lived, what are the things that have made Houston different from those other places?

KT: Well—one of the reasons I wanted to move to Houston was because—I had two daughters here, uh—then—I think it was—that as a family we’ll be closer together.

CB: Yeah.

KT: And—I wasn’t—too concerned with the job because I knew I could build a laboratory up to what it should be, and I built it up to what it should be and—I took it easy from that point on and I retired.
CB: Hmm.

KT: So the—hospital labs where I were—were grateful that I was there, and they still kept me on as a consultant, even after I retired. So that was a good job.

CB: How long did you stay involved with consulting for them?

KT: Oh, I dunno. [long pause] Couple of years, more than that, I guess. Five years, at least.

CB: Okay. [pause] What do you think makes Houston different from—the northeast, say? You spent a lot of time around, you know, Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey.

KT: Yeah, well—it was hard to convince the doctors in Houston—to keep up with the medicine in the East.

CB: Hmm.

KT: I mean, they were that far behind. And—I, I had a tough time convincing—the older physicians in particular—

(1:15:10)

CB: Yeah?

KT: —to accept the new methods. The younger physicians were all with me, they wanted to see progress, and they knew that my way of—would show them—how a laboratory should be so they agreed with me, and—I stayed with them. The pathologist that was head of the whole works was a—oh—older gentleman, and—the assistant pathologist was a young guy, that was more up to date, but he didn’t have enough power to change things.

CB: Yeah.

KT: Until I got there and I helped him—make the changes, so we got along real well.

CB: Hmm.

KT: We made the changes, that’s finally the pathologist retired, and he became head, and then things really changed, we made it into a completely modern laboratory, bought new equipment, hired more technicians.

CB: And this all happened before you retired—

KT: Yeah.

CB: —so you got to be part of the whole thing.

KT: Oh, yeah.

[pause]

CB: Why do you think that Houston was slower to—adopt the things that they were doing in the East?
KT: I dunno. But I knew that—they weren’t up to the par level, I’d say from—uh—any other bigger laboratory, the ones that brought them up to the same level—then they didn’t have any qualms at all, it didn’t even—they could—be compared with any other hospital.

CB: Yeah.

KT: So they were real pleased.

CB: Do you think that part of the issue was—was what you were saying before about how—it was a—it was for profit and it was, you know, it was that much harder for you to justify every new expense?

KT: Yeah.

CB: You think that was—part of why they were slower?

KT: Uh, I had to really fight, to make changes, and—lotta the—older physicians in particular didn’t wanna spend the money.

CB: Yeah.

KT: You know they were so money-conscious, but I showed them that money-wise, if they went my way, they were gonna make more money than what they were making now.

CB: Yeah.

KT: Then finally—they agreed and we went on with the new way. Then the [inaudible 3 syllables] used to come and said ‘Well, we didn’t know—how you knew that this was gonna come out the way that it did, you know.’ I said, ‘Well, it just makes sense cause it’s working—this way in every other part of the country, so it’s gotta work out.’ And I guess they finally—agreed, and—they went along with all the changes, but I had a tough time—making that.

CB: Yeah.

KT: Yes—some of those guys were really hardheaded. I couldn’t fight them because they had the position. I didn’t.

CB: Right.

KT: I was just—kept on anyhow, and finally—got my leg in, and worked my way up. Then they became—grateful that I—stuck out with them.

CB: Yeah.

KT: Yeah, so. [pause] A lot of them then one day retired, came out to me, and said—how grateful they were for my being there because—lot of them had changed their minds about the way—they were practicing medicine. And I said, ‘Well, you just gotta keep up with the times.’

(1:20:15)

CB: That must’ve felt good, to know that you had—you’d influenced people to—
KT: Oh, yeah.

CB: —think differently about it.

KT: Yeah. The—all of the administration—it was really tough. So, um—when I went up for a new job, and I went to the administration, I wanted to see who the boss was, and how long he was there, and when he was gonna retire, cause I knew that was gonna make a lot of difference in my position.

CB: Yeah.

KT: And—most of the time I guessed right, when I made the change in jobs.

CB: Yeah. [pause] Was that something that you had—that you had known you needed to look for, back when you were finding the job in Johnstown?

KT: Yeah.

CB: So that was a hospital where—you looked at—you looked at them and you thought, yeah, you know—

KT: Oh, yeah.

CB: —I can work with them and they can work with me.

KT: Yeah. I looked at the hospital, I knew that—they were so way behind that it’s gonna be a—a hell of a job to bring ’em up to par, you know, because the biggest part is the expense of going to my laboratory from what it is there. So I knew that I had to proceed slowly, one step at a time, instead of making that—direct change. I wanted to make a direct change, but I couldn’t. I had to go step by step by step by step.

CB: Yeah.

KT: Which—I think they finally realized that—look, I was here to help them, not to—you know, keep ’em down, and they finally dawned on that what I was trying to do, so they were all in favor of my—actions, and activities. So after that, I didn’t have any problem at all.

CB: Yeah. [long pause] Have you seen the—the environment, um, in science and in, you know, working in medicine—have you seen that—the environment of working in medicine change—

KT: Yeah.

CB: —over your life for—Asian Americans specifically?

KT: Yeah. [pause] Of course—I didn’t know of—any other Asian—chemists, or laboratory director. I knew some pathologists, but there wasn’t very many.

CB: So you saw that change over the course of your career, then.

KT: Yeah.
CB: Did you ever see a—a role for—for formal or informal professional networks, between Asian Americans or—anything like that?

KT: [quickly] No.

CB: Do you think that ever happened, where—

KT: No.

CB: —people—where people found jobs based on, like, people who knew and—

KT: [slightly surprised] No. I mean they were—pretty good about that the way they judged the individual by his qualifications more than anything else—

CB: Well, I’m not saying that, you know, people were like sneaking in under—false pretenses or something, it was just—just wondering if there were connections like that, that you’d seen in work.

KT: Yeah—it’s always your—qualified, you’re secure in your position. I mean, I never felt insecure—wherever I was—

(1:25:01)

CB: Sure.

KT: [inaudible 4 words] I would stand up and fight anybody for my position, and why I was there, and how I wanted to keep it going, so I had no problem at all once I got established.

CB: What do you think you would tell—an—an Asian American scientist or—or chemist, who was starting out today?

KT: Oh, I think he has—just as much—or just as easy a time as anybody else.

CB: Sure.

KT: If he’s—qualified. I mean, the individual must be qualified if he’s going to go up in—go up against anybody for competition over a job. I mean, you can’t be a mediocre guy. You gotta prove that you’re better than the next guy.

CB: Yeah. [pause] Seems like you never had much of a problem doing that.

KT: No.

CB: I wanted to take a minute to talk about your Bronze Star, um—what did you win it for?

[pause]

KT: Huh?

CB: How did you—how were you awarded the—
KT: Oh, I dunno.

CB: —the Bronze Star?

KT: It’s for doing something.

CB: Is there a citation in—

KT: What, I dunno. [pause] [inaudible 4 words] [goes to pick up medal boxes] I have two Bronze Stars.

CB: Two?


CB: Did you ever get a—a citation, associated with them, like a certificate to—

KT: Yeah, there was something.

CB: —say anything about that? [pause] That might be in here, actually. [reaches for photo album]

KT: No.

CB: You don’t think so? [pause] I think we may as well take a look. And that’s the— what’s the other medal that’s in the, the European Theater?

KT: No, this is American Defense.

CB: Okay. [pause]

KT: This is, this is the European Theater.

CB: Oh.

KT: And this is the Good Conduct Medal. And these are the Purple Hearts. I thought there was a medal in here but it’s just—I got a medal some place, I don’t know where the—

[pause]

CB: My grandpa was a—

KT: Where?

CB: —he was a radio operator on a—C-47 in North Africa.

KT: Yeah?

CB: He never saw—near as much action as you did, and I—I guess he was— fortunate. [quietly] I dunno.

KT: I dunno where it was.
CB: These are amazing. ‘Junior Police.’ You were captain of—Junior Police when you were in high school?

KT: [surprised] What? [pause]

CB: It looks like you were—helping out at the police department.

KT: [bemused] Huh.

CB: Something like that.

KT: Mmm don’t remember that.

CB: Huh. We got the—Boy Scouts.

(1:30:00)

KT: [inaudible 3 words, under breath]

CB: Something written on the back, actually.

[long pause]

KT: Cause they—do it for our service—[inaudible 5 words] do?

CB: Well, this was the—rescue of the Lost Battalion, I believe.

KT: [inaudible 5 words] rescue—[mostly inaudible but reading date of rescue]—yeah.

CB: Wow. [pause] Those are both very similar-looking pages. And the next one too, what’s—what do these have in common?

KT: Same thing, it’s the—my—Japanese—high school diploma.

CB: There’s like—there’s like many—

KT: High school.

CB: —sheets involved.

KT: [inaudible, reads under breath] Well, I dunno.

CB: Well, there’s a whole ton of them. I think that’s the whole rest of the—the scrapbook in fact, is, is—except for the very end, we saw that.

KT: This goes to—1933.

CB: So there was a new certificate for every year you finished probably.
KT: And this is 1934.

CB: There you go.

KT: This—is ’37.

CB: Hmm. So not quite all—there—

KT: Yeah.

CB: —not quite all in order.

KT: Thirty-nine.

CB: All right. I think this is the one you said was from when you—graduated in—’40.

KT: Forty-one, yeah.

CB: Forty-one. [pause]

KT: [points to characters as he reads] 19—41.

CB: All right. There we go. Uh, no—no—no medal citations, but—there’s that.

KT: I dunno where the—citations are. [pause] They’re some place in the records. I dunno where they are, but—

CB: You know, they might even actually be in here, um—[reaches for envelope of certificates]

KT: No.

CB: —there were a couple of—things in this envelope. [long pause]

CB: This is something your—your wife prepared for us to—for us to look over for the archive and whether or not we wanted to—add any of the, any of these—

KT: [skeptical] What?

CB: —things to it. [pause] Hmm.

KT: Let me see that.

CB: This is all from, um—just last year, I think, um, the—a reunion of the 442<sup>nd</sup> with the—141st. [pause] That’s different, I guess—

KT: All with the Lost Battalion.

CB: Yeah.
KT: I dunno what [inaudible 2 words]

CB: What?

KT: I said I dunno what [inaudible 2 words] [pause] Why do you think they did this?

CB: In—recognition of what your unit did. Far as I understand.

[KT mutters under breath, inaudible]

CB: Hmm. [long pause] Well, I think I’ve covered all the—the questions I really wanted to get to, um, today, and if you have anything else that—you want to mention, then—

KT: Oh, I dunno.

CB: —this would be the moment.

(1:36:13)
[recording ends]