

Densho Digital Repository  
Japanese American Service Committee (JASC) and  
Chicago Japanese American Historical Society (CJAHS)  
Oral History Project Collection  
Title: Chiyoko Chiyo Omachi Interview  
Narrator: Chiyoko Chiyo Omachi  
Interviewer: Anna Takada  
Location: Chicago, Illinois  
Date: March 30, 2018  
Densho ID: ddr-chi-1-17-1

<Begin Segment 1>

Anna Takada: 00:00:00 This is an interview with Chiyoko Omachi as part of the Japanese American Service Committee and Chicago Japanese American Historical Society Oral History Project. The interview is being conducted on March 30th, 2018 at about 1:15 PM at the Japanese American Service Committee in Chicago. Chiyoko Omachi is being interviewed by Anna Takada of the Japanese American Service Committee. So to start, can you please just state your full name?

Chiyoko Omachi: 00:00:31 My name is Chiyoko Omachi, Omachi.

AT: 00:00:36 And where, and when were you born?

CO: 00:00:38 I was born on Terminal Island, California, which is in Los Angeles harbor. I think the place exists no more. Um, I was born on July 12, 1926. And my folks had two children before me and these two died. And so when I came along they wanted to give me a long name, a Japanese name that had good vibes and Chiyoko means a thousand generations.

AT: 00:01:33 And your parents where, where were they from? Where were they born?

CO: 00:01:38 My father was from Japan-- Southern Japan, and he was a shipbuilder. He left Japan on an English ship and went to England and was in England for a while and then he came back to the United States. He met, a Japanese, shipbuilder and they decided to build ships together, on Terminal Island where there were very many Japanese fishermen and they thought that, you know, that they would build ships there and they could sell them. We have pictures of the shipyard. They did build very large ships. These two were strangers really. But my father was single, at the time this year [mumbles] the strange, stranger-- the two men, two Japanese from two different parts of Japan.

And I guess the, the old-- the older gentleman says, well, "I have a, a daughter in Japan, you'll have to meet her, and perhaps you would marry her." And so he called her over. And my-- turned out to be my mother. They got married and they lived happily for many, many years.

- AT: 00:03:25 And so that was when your father was in, or at Terminal Island
- CO: 00:03:30 Right.
- AT: 00:03:30 And she came into like--
- CO: 00:03:32 Right, and that was, oh, I don't know, 19-- I used to know exactly the, the years that they started the shipyards. But, it was way before I was born. I was born in 1926. I have a feeling it was about 1920. And we have pictures of this, of these shipyards. And they were very large, you know, places.
- 2nd Interviewer: 00:04:09 Your mother's family was from Wakayama Prefecture and your father's family was from Kawashima.
- CO: 00:04:15 Right. And in Japan they never would have met, you know.
- AT: 00:04:22 It was just through the connection of the [overlapping dialogue] right now.

**<End Segment 1> - Copyright © 2018 Japanese American Service Committee (JASC) and Chicago Japanese American Historical Society (CJAHS). All Rights Reserved.**