

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-1-17-17

<Begin Segment 17>

AT:	<u>01:25:45</u>	And, um, so was it your, your parents, they came to Chicago? Um, what brought them to Chicago?
CO:	<u>01:25:56</u>	Well, I think, um, there were only a few places they could leave uh from camp. They wanted them to go to, um, some of the larger, um, cities out here. A lot of Japanese went to Cleveland too I know. And not as many to New York, I guess that was a bit too far. And a lot of Japanese came to Chicago. And I worked at the Japanese Resettlers for about a year. Uh, there was Mr. Yastake and uh, Abe Hagiwara worked there. Um And I was there for a little bit.
AT:	<u>01:26:48</u>	What did your parents do? Or your?
CO:	<u>01:26:53</u>	Oh, my father. Oh, my father built a ship in the basement of a, of the place that we were renting. And then they took that boat up to my husband and his friend took that boat up to Grace Lake. They left it on the, on the, it's not a beach is it? Um, and someone stole it. We never told my father.
I2:	<u>01:27:24</u>	But what motivated, um, the people who went away from the West Coast were they bitter.
CO:	<u>01:27:34</u>	No, they couldn't go back for awhile, you couldn't go back to California.
I3:	<u>01:27:39</u>	She said they had to leave.
I2:	<u>01:27:40</u>	But some people did come, go back. I mean, didn't they?
AT:	<u>01:27:43</u>	That was after the war.
CO:	<u>01:27:46</u>	Yeah, after awhile.

I3:	<u>01:27:48</u>	So what they do? What did they do in Chicago?
CO:	<u>01:27:52</u>	They got jobs, you know. I worked at the Resettlers. Helped get jobs at Curtiss Candy. There were a number of places that hired a bunch of able bodied Japanese. They liked Japanese workers. Good workers.
AT:	<u>01:28:13</u>	And so when you came to meet your family here, where were you staying? What neighborhood or?
CO:	<u>01:28:22</u>	Oh, where was I? I was and did they come first? Let's see. Um they had an, they have very good friends. My mother's very good friend. They used to come and visit us on Terminal Island. So they're very old friends. Um, they settled in Chicago before my folks came and they had a place on the West Side and it was a three flat. So my folks rented a flat, then they didn't stay there too long. Um, then my folks went back to California and my, uh, father, well I think he was itching to build his own place. So he went, they went back and uh, uh, he was going to build his home. What did he do though? He built, um, a tea room or something, didn't he?
I3:	<u>01:29:53</u>	In Chicago?
CO:	<u>01:29:54</u>	No, in Cali, in L.A.
I3:	<u>01:29:59</u>	Did you live with them here?
CO:	<u>01:30:00</u>	Pardon?
I3:	<u>01:30:01</u>	Did you live with them here in Chicago when you all met up?
CO:	<u>01:30:04</u>	I was here with them for only a short time and then they left. Uh, and then I got married. Um, and, and Michi was already married to also, she had.
I2:	<u>01:30:22</u>	Mark.
CO:	<u>01:30:22</u>	Mark O'Polo already.
I2:	<u>01:30:23</u>	Yeah.
CO:	<u>01:30:23</u>	Yeah.
I3:	<u>01:30:26</u>	Where did she meet her?
I2:	<u>01:30:26</u>	Where did who meet who?

I3: 01:30:29 Where did Michi meet her husband?

I2: 01:30:32 Well, probably here.

I3: 01:30:37 Where did Auntie Michi meet?

I2: 01:30:37 Met Frank, here?

CO: 01:30:37 Yeah, here in Chicago, yeah.

I2: 01:30:37 And then they went back to California.

CO: 01:30:41 And that's a big family.

**<End Segment 17> - Copyright © 2018 Japanese American Service Committee (JASC) and
Chicago Japanese American Historical Society (CJAHS). All Rights Reserved.**