

Densho Digital Repository
Japanese American Service Committee (JASC) and
Chicago Japanese American Historical Society (CJAHS)
Oral History Project Collection
Title: Constance Yamashiro Interview
Narrator: Constance Yamashiro
Interviewer: Anna Takada
Location: Chicago, Illinois
Date: August 10, 2018
Densho ID: ddr-chi-1-18-9

<Begin Segment 9>

- AT: 00:36:14 So you, you shared a little bit about those earlier days and the South Side and you had mentioned that there is a bit of a Japanese American community there, that there were restaurants and.
- CY: 00:36:36 It was a huge community. Yeah.
- AT: 00:36:38 Grocery stores? Can you maybe go into a little bit more detail about, I guess to start maybe some of those businesses that you were recalling the grocery store, if you remember their names are, or where they were located?
- CY: 00:36:57 Well, the name of one's Fujimoto's grocery store. He owned the building. Actually, on 43rd street here. A lot of the real estate in the area. Fujimoto's. Well, I forgot the teapot in. I think my mother worked there for awhile as a waitress. Mmm. I'm trying to remember the, then you're asking for the names of these places. I don't remember the names, but I remember. You know, Oh, there was this, a store that sold a mochi, you know, flavored mochi down the street. And we would go in there and buy one just to munch on and that was run by an old, I thought at that time old, probably younger than me now, old, Issei man who did, who ran the business by himself.
- AT: 00:37:58 And, if you were to kind of map out the area where some of these businesses, and I imagine there were a lot of Japanese American families living there too, like residents. So in thinking about the South Side at that time, like where do you think those, I mean not to put it in borders in terms of borders, but that area, where would that have spanned to and from?
- CY: 00:38:30 Well, you're asking what the geography of that was? It was a huge area. You know, there were Japanese friends of mine that lived on 39th Street, way down, much more south and, or

maybe that would be north, I guess, excuse me. And there were a large, and these people that live more further up north, closer to the school. I went to Hyde Park High School. So going up and that area, you're going into a 51st or 52nd now called the Hyde Park area, you know? Yeah. So there were, it was quite a big area in a sense of speaking it dependent on financial too, if you like. My, my mother's family and we were all sort of like eking out a whatever living we could. We had a more of a rough time, but the Japanese who had came out or camp with more of a financial, let's say, cash co stash, so to speak. They were able to afford buying buildings. They bought a, some buildings and they lived more, north more south, more south, more, more in the Hyde Park area. It depended upon your financial situation.

<End Segment 9> - Copyright © 2018 Japanese American Service Committee (JASC) and Chicago Japanese American Historical Society (CJAHS). All Rights Reserved.