

15. Item # MANZ 5181 – 5187 (100th/442nd-related artifacts)

John Wakamatsu [JW], MANZ 1276, interviewed by Richard Potashin [RP]

Disc 1 of 1 (DVD), 34:36 – 35:38

JW: After World War II my father met a fellow who was, who was from the 1st Marine Division, and he actually fought against the Japanese, and he—they had heard about the exploits of the 442nd, and he shook my father's hand. He said, "You don't have to like a person, but at least you can respect them." And for somebody who's fought against the Japanese, you know, that's not an easy thing to say. But my father said he actually shook his hand. He introduced himself and he was from the 1st Marine Division. And so I think that respect is something that you need. You know, issei worked here many, many years; they didn't get any respect. But when you die for a country, the other soldiers can respect the, you know, sacrifice of the veterans because they all died together, whether you were, you know, Asian, Hispanic, Black, or Caucasian. And I think it did make a huge difference because my father wouldn't expect a 1st Marine soldier to say that. He shook his hand and he said that he had heard that they had done great things. And that's not easy to do.