

## **Chapter 6**

### **Prof. Ishikawa through the Eyes of His Siblings, Family, and Relatives**

#### 6.1 Talking about Elder Brother Kaoru

#### **Prof. Kaoru Ishikawa, My Elder Brother, and I**

Kiyoshi Ishikawa

My elder brother Kaoru and I were close in age. We also went to the same high school under the old system and graduated one year apart from the same department of the same university. Because of these, people often mistook me for my elder brother since we were students.

I was upset when a department professor started talking to me about graduation thesis, standing next to my stool in a bathroom. He mistook me of the sophomore for Kaoru of the junior. His students would greet me at Tokyo Station after the war and some executives of a large enterprise would address me Professor Ishikawa on the train or elsewhere. I have experienced these mistakes countless time. We lived close to each other, but it was fortunate our wives did not make the same mistake.

I am getting old recently, so I am afraid of the same thing might happen on me.

Three or four years ago when Kaoru got the latest sick, he recovered for a short period. I gave him a serious advice, but he did not listen to me. On the contrary, he became stubborn and did not take care of himself. He suddenly passed away after two years. He lived ten years shorter than our father, and 6 to 7 years shorter than our mother.

I suffered from intracerebral hemorrhage, the same disease with Kaoru even I took care of myself. Fortunately it was not serious and now I get rehabilitation training. I hope I will live longer than Kaoru and stay healthy till my parents' age. However I don't know what will turn out from now on because Kaoru and I are quite alike.

Kaoru was so stubborn about his health that he didn't listen to his family and younger brothers. He used to tell CEOs of some large enterprises that they had to

manage the company avoiding being confused in any case like CEO's absence for a month or two or becomes ill. However he insisted that, when he himself fell ill, he should attend the school's commencement and enrollment ceremony. Those were held just two weeks before he passed away. He attended those and collapsed afterward.

I may be biased for him because I am his brother. He learned statistical quality control in late 1940s, developed a sampling method of iron ores, contributed to the rationalization of the steel industry, initiated the QC Circle Movement and established the concept of TQC for all the industries. As a result, the Japanese economy had been extremely strengthened. In a way, I believe that Kaoru was one of Japanese wirepullers behind the today's Japan-US economic frictions.

I hope I will live as many years as possible not like Kaoru. Now my age is one year older than that of Kaoru's death. How many years longer can I live from now?

(Second brother; Chairman of Mitsubishi Oil Co.)

## **Memories of Brother Kaoru**

Makoto Ishikawa

Brother Kaoru, you have passed away too early. Everyone goes to the heaven sooner or later, I expected you could live at least ten years more, so I am very sorry indeed. Since you passed away, the Ishikawa family has lost its core. Of course, his sister-in-law Keiko does her role instead of Kaoru, however I realize that we really relied on Kaoru. Please observe us from the heaven.

Other people will write about him after he got into society. I will write about a few memories of him when I was a small child.

When I was a child, I was cheeky a little bit. I was selfish because I am the youngest one of four brothers. I would often take it out on Brother Kiyoshi. He was always patient and did not pay me much attention. However, finally his patience run out and he beat me. I resisted him with all my strength, but there is no help for it. At the time Brother Kaoru came and relieved me. I really felt relieved even I said nasty thing to Brother Kiyoshi.

In the first summer at his junior high school days, Kaoru's white school uniform pants looked like he was so smart for me. I remember how proud he was of himself. There were iron bars in the athletic field behind our house in Takinogawa. There were sand underneath the iron bar. Kaoru was practicing there for his school curriculum and he fell down from the bar. His lower jaw was cut with his teeth, and he had several

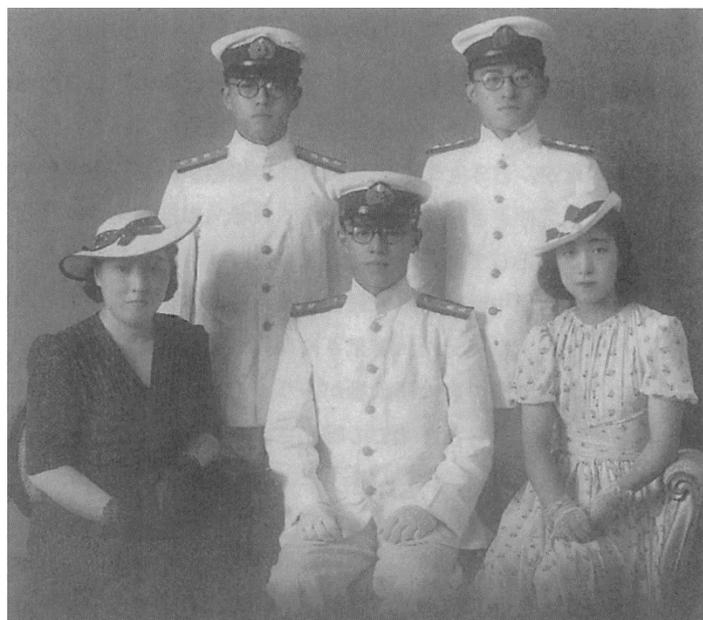
stitches. The scar had been remained for many years. Mom was quite worried about that. These iron bars were taken away soon after Kaoru got injured. Maybe because of this, Brother Kiyoshi and I were not good at iron bar.

Brother Kaoru was quite a hard worker and he had studied all the time. I think his success resulted from his constant efforts.

Here is one memory of him after I became an adult.

During the war, I think it was June or July of 1942. I was going to be transferred from the Fourth Naval Fuel Factory in Kyushu to the Naval Fuel Factory in Borneo in the south. I got on a naval ship in Kure after I once went home. Mom suggested that we all three brothers also should see him off together. At that moment Brother Kaoru who was already in the reserve unit however, he went there from Wakamatsu in Kyushu with Sister in law Keiko. They had just been married in this year's spring. Brother Kiyoshi went there from the Naval Fuel Factory in Tokuyama. Both of them put on their white summer uniform. Mom and I went there from Tokyo. We were all together at Suikosha in Tokuyama. Late at night, we decided to take a picture of all of us. We visited several photo studios in town. Finally one of them was willing to open and took photos. Mom looked very happy surrounded by all three sons putting on white uniform. I think Sister in law Keiko also put on a white dress. It was my farewell photo, though.

(Third brother; Special Adviser of Kashima Douro Co.)



**The person from the left in the front row is: mother Tomiko, Makoto, and Keiko. On the left in the back row is Kiyoshi and the right is Kaoru. (1942 in Tokuyama)**

## **Thinking of Brother Kaoru Ishikawa**

Rokuro Ishikawa

My brother literary grew up with expectations and faith of parents, siblings and surrounding people on his own shoulders, as the first and legitimate son of 8 brothers and one sister (8 men, 1 woman) in the Ishikawa family.

When a notice, in which my brother passed the exam for the Department of Applied Chemistry, at the University of Tokyo, came in, from Uncle Nobuo Seki who was a professor in the Department of Engineering at that time, I clearly remembered my parents happened to be at home, and were delighted with tears. As this kind of scene never happened with other brothers and sister, I could tell how much my parents expected of him.

Because there were a lot of boys, my parents tried to keep order in the family by bringing up my brother idealistically, as good examples for other brothers and sister. My brother steadily grew up following expectations, completed study with outstanding academic results, became a member of society, welcomed a beautiful, warm and clever wife (widow, Keiko) to our family in a nearly all-male environment, and built a happy family.

After graduating from the University of Tokyo, he joined the Nissan Liquid Fuel Company, which introduced technology from Germany “to manufacture artificial petroleum by liquefying coal,” in alignment with a national policy, at that time, in order to succeed our father’s business. Then, upon retiring from a short-term engineering service officer, in the Navy, he became an associate professor at the University of Tokyo, in response to their request.

Although he played an active role, as an authority on QC, in bridging academy and industry, I imagine that my brother would have been highly successful even as management, considering his personality and capability, if he had chosen to stay in the industry.

My brother was beloved by everyone, with respect, because he treated surrounding people calmly, evenly and reasonably out of goodwill, as a family head. He was also extremely precise and diligent in nature. In his school days, he used the Rolleiflex of Germany, which was rare in those days, and engaged himself in film development, printing, enlargement, trimming and producing an elaborate photo album, whenever he found himself free. His sorting and putting personal belongings in order, was an object of magnificence to our eyes.

When I became the President at Kajima Corporation in 1978, I introduced TQC, in

order to eliminate the negative effects created throughout its 140 year-history, to rejuvenate the company and to create a culture of openness, which resulted in a huge success through my brother's strong guidance and assistance. Now I recall, with appreciation to my brother, that we were able to achieve constitutional improvement, drastic improvement of business results, and were awarded the Deming Prize 5 years after introduction of TQC.

(6th brother; President, the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry;  
Chairman, Kajima Corporation)

## **Memories of My Brother-in-Law**

Mrs. Kiyoko Ishikawa

I joined the Ishikawa family as the wife of their seventh brother Shichiro and my brother-in-law Kaoru was always great to me. Shichiro, my husband, would tell me about Kaoru worked vigorously as a grand senior member of JUSE (Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers). I also was always impressed with his wife Keiko for the faithful and submissive manner she served him with. Her attitude which she gave the first priority to serve him was a role model for me.

We spent our holidays together at Karuizawa when our children were small. In one summer, some professors of JUSE also stayed overnight. In the daytime, they studied their quality control and played golf. In the evening, they had drinks and sang various songs one after another. Those who forgot tunes were called tone-deaf, and those who forgot words were labeled as word-deaf. I remember well the pleasant time we had together.

My contacts with Kaoru were usually through my husband Shichiro as a cushion, but in 1980 Shichiro developed an incurable illness. Since then I had to rely on Kaoru. Shichiro's parents had already passed away and Kaoru as the family head had to make up his mind whether tell me about Shichiro's cancer or not. He had talked about it with his brothers and relatives beforehand. He decided to tell me about the illness of my husband because I am tough. Then he came to Hotel Ohtani and told me that even his busy schedule. To meet his expectation, I determined to fight this situation. The doctor told us he would live only for six months. He received the latest treatments, thanks to Kaoru. He was in and out of the hospital for three years since then, and he was able to be at the wedding of our eldest daughter and at the birth of our first grandchild. He had no pains and died in 1983. We never told him about the cancer. I was always consoled

when his brothers visited him and encouraged him without telling anything about the illness. Kaoru with the deepest brotherly affection observed the illness calmly as a scientist and gave proper advice. I am deeply grateful to reliable Kaoru being there in those difficult moments. But he passed away so suddenly and I have no words to utter. Perhaps Kaoru and Shichiro are talking about QC in heaven.

(Wife of the late seventh brother, Shichiro Ishikawa,  
Managing Director of Honshu Paper Co.)

## **Thinking of My Big Brother-in-Law**

Shinichiro Shimojo

I met elder brother in law Kaoru for the first time in the fall of 1948. My wife-to-be and I were together in an interview arranged by the late Hisatada Hirose who was the second Minister of Health and Welfare. Kaoru, who is the eldest son of Ishikawa family was there to introduce me his sister Yasuyo, my wife-to-be. He must have approved me in the match-making interview. That was the beginning of my association with Prof. Kaoru. He was an academic and solid figure since his youth, but he was also very considerate to his sister. We became relatives after I married to her, and we would drink together and play golf. Those memories pass my eyes with nostalgia. I think he had in himself the fruit of the stern home education by his father Ichiro Ishikawa, the first chairman of Keidanren, and his mother Tomiko. Even though he grew up in a famous business family, he was always plain and modest. People were impressed with his attitude and they respected him.

After graduating from the university, he served in the Navy as a duty engineering officer. He still had some of his Navy habits even long after the war. For instance, he would call anyone “*Kisama*<sup>†</sup>” (you) in front of others, and I was often annoyed with it. He loved to drink, and he was a heavy drinker. When he had more drinks, he would become more talkative and argumentative. He would also utter more “*Kisamas*.” His speech was often not clear even when he was sober, and we did not understand him when his words were slurred as he got drunk, but he would still keep arguing.

His great contributions were his devotion to the study and promotion of QC as his life work. Japanese industries have become very competitive globally and largely thanks

---

<sup>†</sup> *Kisama* is a formal expression used by the officers of the Imperial Japanese Navy addressing each other. Outside the Navy, it was considered a very rough but friendly expression, therefore we seldom used it.

to his management guidance of quality control, and his works were highly appreciated not only in Japan but also in the western countries. We miss him very much.

He was a serious scholar and ran around all over for QC promotion. He studied late into the night. He was also a heavy smoker. Thus he did not take good care of himself. Shortly before he passed away, I played golf with him at Karuizawa. His score was not good then and I think his health steadily deteriorated afterwards. He was a dear brother-in-law for me, and he was an important scholar for the country. Prof. Kaoru Ishikawa passed away too early. I wish to pay my sincere respects for him.

(Husband of his sister Yasuyo; a member of House of Councilors;  
former Minister of Health and Welfare)

## **About Prof. Kaoru, My Elder Brother**

Hachiro Ishikawa

My eldest brother Kaoru was 15 years older than I. He was also my senior at the Applied Chemistry Dept. of the same university. Not only that, he was my teacher in the class of Design of Experiments. When I was in the kindergarten, he was in the university. I put on his school cap and pretended to be *Fukuchan* who was a character in the comic on *The Asahi Shimbun* (newspaper). When his wife Keiko asked me to write something in his memory, I accepted it right away as he had been such a dignified figure of almost 60 years for me.

Prof. Kaoru majored in Applied Chemistry. Even he was not particularly good at mathematics, he went from Design of Experiments to statistics, and then to quality control. Behind these, there is the fact that he had been involved in the work to produce fuel oil by liquidating coal in Northern Kyushu during the war.

In his experiments of processing coal, he was bothered with the quality dispersion of coal. He must have felt keenly that a statistical approach was required to analyze the result of his experiments. Thus he studied it hard and became an expert of quality control.

After I joined the company, I was disappointed when I used the Design of Experiments I had learned from Prof. Kaoru. If you plot experimental data on a graph, you could tell its correlation instantly. I easily thought you would get the same result if you take time by calculating in the Design of Experiments. But I gradually understood the significance of showing objective results of experiments in figures.

As he analyzed statistically the dispersion of quality of raw materials and the

experimental results, he must have stepped into the quality control which ensured products of stable quality and predictable experiment results with the use of stable-quality materials.

After the war, we decided to live close to our parents and Kaoru's family in Chofu-city; west of Tokyo. All our brothers gathered together, drank, argued, and lectured. The parents and brothers also played mahjong. On Sundays, we all worked on the field. I still remember clearly the odd-looking Brother Kaoru who was spreading chicken droppings in the field.

Whenever I visited him in the evening, he was always in *kotatsu*<sup>†</sup> and wrote something, a report or a lecture. A glass of whisky with ice and a large ashtray full of cigarettes butts were always by his side. We used to call each other stubborn, but Kaoru was after all the most stubborn as he never stopped smoking despite the serious warning from his wife. If he had listened to her, he would have lived ten more years and give me more guidance.

(Eighth brother; Managing Director of Mitsubishi Chemical Corporation)

## 6.2 Relatives talk about Kaoru

### **Kaoru's *Kisama***<sup>††</sup>

Eiichi Ujiie

Kaoru was famous for addressing his colleagues, schoolmates, students, and younger brothers alike as "*Kisama* (impolite way of addressing someone)." One day, I heard his mother, Tomiko, whispered to me "I hope he is not being bossy," when she heard him say *Kisama*. Well, it's not at all mean that he was arrogant. It was his way of addressing others with a sense of intimacy like there is a Japanese song "*Doki No Sakura* (literally, cherry blossoms of the same season)." It's a popular song of the Japanese Imperial Navy, whose lyrics include the phrase, *Kisama To Ore* (you and I).

We should say that it was based on the tradition of the Navy that he treasured, as he served as a 2nd short-term engineering officer of the Japanese Navy, as a naval

---

<sup>†</sup> *Kotatsu*: small table with charcoal (later an electric heater) underneath and covered by a quilt. Please refer to the photos of newlywed in the photograph collection.

<sup>††</sup> *Kisama* ("貴様" in Japanese Kanji, the pronoun "kisama") means "you" in English. *Kisama* is a formal expression used by officers of the Imperial Japanese Navy addressing each other. Outside the Navy it was considered a very rough but friendly expression, therefore seldom used. Prof. Ishikawa favored the use of this word among friends even outside the Navy.

ordnance lieutenant.

Kaoru boarded the *Maya*, a state-of-the-art heavy cruiser of the time, as a trainee in 1939. I also boarded the *Maya* in 1940 as a Paymaster Sub-Lieutenant, 1st Class, in service for two years. I was a Paymaster Lieutenant-Commander when the war ended, but I still have fond memories of the *Maya* on which I served as a 1st class officer. My sister, Keiko, married Kaoru on February 11, 1942 and I became a relative of the Ishikawa family. In 1944, my younger brother Takuya was ordered to board the *Maya* as a Paymaster Sub-Lieutenant, 1st Class, in service for two years.

I think it was an extremely rare occurrence in the Imperial Navy that three brothers, although in different periods, boarded the *Maya* as a lieutenant solely by chance. I am intrigued by the inexplicable connections between us. Under the Treaty for the Limitation and Reduction of Naval Armament, known as the London Naval Treaty of 1930, *Maya* was the last cruiser built. While it was being built, many additional requests and changes in design were made by the Naval General Staff and Imperial Japanese Navy Engineering Department. So, the inside of the cruiser was narrow and complicated.

As Kaoru was a neat and meticulous person, wearing a navy cap for on board use and the brownish-red work uniform of an engineer officer, he must have carefully checked from the main gun command post on the bridge to the engine room located in the ship's hull to complete the detailed journal of each day. And while in the gun room, he must have had heated discussions with lively young officers, addressing each other on a *kisama* basis.

As I reflect on the days gone by, I warmly and strongly remember his great personality.

(Brother of Mrs. Keiko Ishikawa;  
Director and Advisor to the Board, The 77 Bank)

## **“All the Managers of Your Company Look Young”**

Tsuguo Nozaki

To commemorate the 3rd anniversary of the death of Prof. Kaoru Ishikawa, they planned to publish his memoir and I was requested to contribute with my memories of Prof. Ishikawa. Right up to the end, Prof. Ishikawa performed his duties as the President of Musashi Institute of Technology, sustained his enthusiasm for companywide Japanese-style quality control and TQC activities and left a major mark in the world. I

am sure that his great achievements will be described by people in various industrial communities from their respective viewpoints.

I hardly had any dealings with him in the public place where he was very active until when his second son, Akira, and my second daughter Kazuko married in 1979. After that I had had family-like relations with him for about 10 years.

We were the generation that entered an old-style-education-system high school, and then the University of Tokyo, joined the military, and then became a member of the society almost simultaneously. Therefore, as soon as we had a drink together, we felt like we had been friends for years. Sometimes while chatting and drinking, we discovered that we had a mutual acquaintance, and episodes with him made us sing songs and drink many more cups of *Sake*. I think it was the year following the marriage of our children, when my wife and I invited Prof. and Mrs. Ishikawa, and Mr. and Mrs. Hibino, who are the parents-in-law of my first daughter, to hold a cherry-viewing party in our house, as we could enjoy the cherry blossoms in the grounds of Todoroki Fudomon temple as viewed from our house. When we got very drunk, Prof. Ishikawa suddenly stood up, leaned against the rail of the veranda, caught a few falling cherry blossom petals with his *Sake* cup and calmly drank them up. I can still see his graceful posture on that occasion.

On another occasion when the newlyweds' new house was completed in the premises of his house, we had a celebratory drink, sitting with our grandchildren under the wisteria trellis in his beautiful garden. I can still remember as if it were yesterday.

I think it was around that time that I had an opportunity to meet Prof. Ishikawa for the first time in his public capacity. This was a memorable experience in many ways which I would like to share. I was in the middle of a major turning point in my life; it was soon after I had retired from the position of the President of Tokyo Hoso Kogyo Corporation, a subsidiary of Mitsubishi Mining, where I had worked for many years and became the Senior Advisor to the company. As I was now related to Prof. Ishikawa, I wanted the executives of our company to listen to his lecture. As Prof. Ishikawa kindly accepted my request, I informed our company staff to gather as many employees as possible as it was an unrepeatable opportunity.

When I reached to the venue on the day, I saw many young employees there, but no executives. This made me annoyed. Prof. Ishikawa, however, discussed from Japanese style management to the essence of TQC activities in detail, which deeply impressed the entire audience.

Well, after the session, when there were just the three of us, that is, Prof. Ishikawa, the General Affairs Manager who served as the MC, and myself, he murmured, "All the

managers of your company look young.” The General Affairs Manager had a hard time coming up with what to say and finally explained that the company had offices in different locations and it was difficult for busy executives and mid-career workers to participate in the event, and all new employees had been assembled. Of course, the Doctor was well aware of that and had made his remarks in jest. I was so ashamed that I wanted to crawl under the rug. Our staff, including myself, deeply regretted for generally having had little interest in these activities. As the proverb goes, the sting of a reproach is the truth of it. His lecture, however, encouraged young employees to get enthusiastically involved in the activities. I hear that now a QC Group has been established in the company and even the President is deeply committed to the activities, which again impressed me a lot. Although this is a minor episode, I wanted to mention it here as evidence of his positive influence.

(Father-in-law of his second son, Akira;  
Company Friend, Mitsubishi Materials Corporation)

### 6.3 Thinking of Father

#### **“Have Three Children and Send One Abroad”**

Tadashi Ishikawa

It was midnight when my flight arrived in Sao Paulo one day behind schedule due to engine failure. When I finally checked into the hotel, a phone call was waiting for me. It was my wife calling from Chicago to tell me that my father had collapsed.

It was 2 years ago, and half a year from my relocation from Komatsu Ltd., Japan to Komatsu Dresser Company in the U.S. and shortly after my wife and 5 children joined me in Chicago. Before leaving Japan, I asked my father’s doctor if he would be OK and to please take good care of him, because he was not in the best of health at that time. But still, I was simply shocked to hear the news.

When I arrived back in Japan, he was unconscious and could not speak to me. It seemed to me, however, that he had left this life, saying, “Good things and bad things happen to everyone,” which was one of his pet phrases.

My father always came home late from work and seldom had a chance to have dinner with his family. While at home, it was usual for him to keep working in the room with a *kotatsu* heater until over midnight. He was a work-oriented, hard worker, stern in many ways. On the other hand, he was a good-natured person, cherishing his friends as

well as his wife, children and grandchildren, and often moved to tears while watching TV.

“Embrace good and evil alike,” “Constant pitch,” “Have three children and send one abroad,” and “Good things and bad things happen to everyone” were among his frequent sayings. When I fondly remember these phrases, I think we children should hand them down to his grandchildren.

Last but not least, I would like to thank all, including the editorial committee members and contributors of stories and other materials, who kindly took time out of their busy schedule to make the publication of his memoir possible.

(Eldest son; Komatsu Ltd.;  
currently Vice President of Komatsu Dresser Company, U.S.A.)

## **I Wanted to Thank You More**

Mrs. Noriko Ishikawa

When I heard the news that my father-in-law had broken down, it was only 3 weeks after I had moved to the U.S., with my 5 children to live with my husband, who had been transferred there for work.

I felt as if I heard my father-in-law’s voice saying that he was glad I had departed safely, and that I should be diligent.

My husband and I were at a major turning point a few times in our lives. On each occasion, my father-in-law gave us appropriate advice, supported and encouraged us. At the side of my father-in-law, who sat at the *kotatsu* having the same look on his face, with documents in front of him, my mother-in-law smiled and spoke for him. He only nodded for our words of appreciation, and she gazed at him with a smile on her face. A scene like that still floats vividly in my memory.

His tenderness and care were always nonchalant and wrapped broadly around us. Because of his support, I was always able to go on a new path with the sense of security, I believe.

I wish I could have said thanks to him more. That’s my only regret.

(Wife to the first son Tadashi)

## **Thank You, Father**

Yasushi Kurokawa

My emotional exchanges with my father-in-law, Prof. Kaoru Ishikawa, began in August 1968, before I married Hiroko, his eldest daughter, or at least that is my self-serving understanding. In April 1968, Prof. Ishikawa had Hiroko and I make a promise. He told us if we kept that promise for four months, he would give us permission to marry and August was the month when the promise was to be fulfilled.

On the day in August, I told him on the phone that we had kept our promise and he told me to come to his house. I was shown into the living room and nervously waited for him. As soon as he hurried into the room, he extended his right hand to shake hands with me, saying, “Good job.” As I heartily shook hands with him, in my mind, the terrifying father-in-law transformed into a sensible old man, and I felt a subtle emotional exchange between us.

Since then, the channel of exchange continuously broadened year after year for about 20 years until his death. In all those 20 years, I learned a lot from him.

“Good things and bad things happen to everyone,” “You are only a half-fledged businessman if you can make the best of your subordinate, but a full-fledged businessman if you can make the best of your superior,” “Turn a listening ear to others,” “Communication over a cup of *Sake*”—these are some of his frequent sayings, which I heard from him at the table and over a drink (Actually, I learned to drink from him.). On days off when I was feeling rather down or when I started getting lazy, I used to drop into his house, and quite often found him writing some draft in the living room with the TV on. Laying down his pen, he talked with me for a while, and each time I was encouraged by his words and often felt like the scales had fallen from my eyes.

There is not enough space to write all of these memories, but I would like to tell you.

It was when my father-in-law came to my company to teach quality control. As he was a leading figure in the field of quality control, my expectation was high for an interesting and informative lecture, and on the other hand, I was worried if we could live up to his expectations. So, I was all ears on the first day with other participants in the lecture. But the session from start to end was disarmingly easy to understand.

In the evening of that day, I said to him a little disapprovingly, “It was rather elementary.” He said, “Speaking of quality control often involves difficult mathematical formulas and some people think that a good teacher is one who teaches hard to understand concepts. But it will not help anyone. What is important is to make everyone

understand, so as to make their company better. Some teachers easily get mad and act bossy, which also will never work. The point is how to communicate your idea...”

Now I have 1,400 people in my division and am often keenly aware of the difficulty of communication. On such occasions, I remember what he said at that time: “What matters is not whether you said it or not, but rather, whether you successfully communicated it or not.”

Early on the morning of April 13, 1989, he suddenly collapsed. In the hospital, he was losing consciousness quickly. Kneeling down by his bedside, I said in a loud voice, “Thank you,” to him with my mind filled with thousands of thoughts from the day when he permitted me to marry his daughter, to all the things he taught me. I am sure he heard me.

(Husband of Prof. Ishikawa’s eldest daughter, Hiroko;  
General Manager, Visual Media Development Division, NEC Corporation;  
Director, Visual Media Development, NEC Home Electronics, Ltd.)

## **Memories of Father**

Mrs. Hiroko Kurokawa

The first thing that comes to mind when I think of my late father is the image of him sitting at the *kotatsu* heater, writing some draft. And my mother was always sitting beside him. It is almost three years since he died. I would like to describe my father as I see him in my mind.

### **Systematic person**

He did everything systematically. If you are to buy a car, you should get a quality car and keep it at least 10 years. This was his motto. The first family car was a Volkswagen, which we drove for 17 years. Next came a Cedric that lasted 10 years. We visited quite a lot of places. During each of these travels, he kept a record of everything in his pocketbook, such as what time we left, how many hours it took from a certain place to another, how many liters of gasoline we purchased, and how long our break was. He wrote down everything throughout our travels. There are many such pocketbooks of my father, serving as a reminder of our travel history.

### **Family Mahjong player**

My father was so busy that he seldom dined with us. On rare occasions when he came home early, his mother almost always called him, saying “Kaoru dear, are you there?” She was inviting him to a game of Mahjong. He always accepted the invitation,

tired he was. I think it was his way of being a good son, but my mother and we children felt indignant at this game. It was a family mahjong played by my grandparents, my uncle and my father in a room we could not get near to.

### **Stubborn but gentle father**

My father was in a sense very stubborn. There were times when everyone else in the family was sure about what he had said, but if he said, “I did not say it,” then everything got cancelled. Once on a winter’s day during our family travel, he was sitting by the window, half naked with no shirt on, and getting goose flesh. Someone said, “Why don’t you close the window? It’s cold in here,” and he stubbornly said, “No, I don’t think so.”

But that stubborn father who at first said no to my marriage, probably out of concern, eventually gave willing permission that even seemed all too easy.

As his work can be applied to, from time to time during the past three years, I heard my father’s name mentioned while I was getting acquainted with someone, which makes me aware of the fact that my father was a great man, which I never knew while he was alive and active. (Eldest daughter)



**A family picnic: In a Volkswagen, our precious car (Spring 1956)**

## **My Dad**

Akira Ishikawa

When I recall my father, I wonder what the source of his dynamism was. In the chaos after the War, QC started with a desire to reconstruct the country. Having people from JUSE at the center, my father compiled QC into one structure and made every effort to promote it, not only in Japan, but also to countries in the world. Though he had a sharp tongue, he always valued people’s hearts. Also, he was never short of defiant spirit, and he looked so full of life and brightened up, when it came to a talk about QC.

Even when coming home late at night, he always took a bath which he loved, firmly sat at the *kotatsu* in the living room, only wearing underwear, and worked until 1 or 2 o'clock while smoking, and having a glass of drink. Thanks to that, there was always a pile of documents in the living room, and it troubled my mother. When he wrote, he methodically brought all documents from the past and checked to make sure there was no error. He left the TV turned on, even when working, and it appeared he was focused on his work and wasn't watching it, but he also had an aspect of multi-tasking ability, and was listening to it. I believe his passion for his work was supported by his desire that "make society (individuals, companies, countries and the world) happy and better through QC."

It was my pleasure and also learning opportunity to hear about my father's experience while sitting together at the *kotatsu*, in the living room with him, facing each other. Needless to say, the lectures were very helpful, even after I started working. There were also many occasions when I sought his advice on work and my worries. He was never carried away by his feelings, but always gave me a pin-point opinion, after confirming the data.

After his death, I left Daiwa Seiko, the company I had worked at for 19 years, put an end to my life as a corporate employee, and I am moving to a new business. I wonder how he sees me now. Through much advice he left, in my mind, his experience and way of thinking continue to live forever. (Second Son)

## **Father's Looks and Glances**

Mrs. Kazuko Ishikawa

Around the time when we got married, the three children and their family members often gathered in my parents-in-laws' house on weekends to have dinner together. We talked a lot in a close family atmosphere and Father, smoking and with a glass of whisky in his hand, always kept calm, nodding along to what we said and watching happily over his grandchildren. In Karuizawa, in summer, during the Bon holidays, we had a merry, happy and busy time under one roof. With a total of 10 grandchildren, it must have been rather noisy for him, as he was usually working at his desk. But he never complained about the noise we were making, and kept doing his work. So, I think his grandchildren were lucky to have such a grandfather, living freely and easily and enjoying the happy life of a large family. Moreover, I do not think he ever scolded or reprimanded us. I think that was an example of his thoughtfulness toward us. We were

greatly encouraged by the way he affectionately looked and glanced at us.

His stay in hospital started with his words: “Doctor says I have a polyp in the bowel and I think I will have it removed.” His recovery was delayed and he was forever in and out of hospital. It was soon after the family of my husband’s elder brother moved to the U.S. The family members remaining in Japan were busy supporting Mother, as she was exhausted due to the daily visit to St. Luke’s International Hospital throughout the daytime hours while Father was in hospital. On that morning, he was back home. There was an urgent phone call from Mother, and we rushed to the main house. My husband gave artificial respiration as best he could and kept encouraging his unconscious father in the ambulance and in the hospital, as if they understood each other. Mother kept watch at his bedside with almost no sleep. Hiroko, my sister-in-law, kept rubbing his hand and leg gently, hoping that he would react. I still vividly remember the days when all family members came together simply for the recovery of Father.

I now feel that Father is asking us bereaved how we will live and support each other from now on. His existence within us will never change, as he always taught us the guidelines for our life.

Since Father’s death, my husband has been making efforts, although he is faced with various problems. But I believe that he started moving forward, step by step, to answer the questions Father posed. I will brace myself and make efforts together with him. This is what I have been thinking about these days.

(Wife of his second son, Akira)



**Photos taken by Father**