

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Gabriel Ka'eo, 78, stone wall builder, fisherman, farmer

"We all got together one with the other. . . We used to go up and pull our taro and bring it back down [to the beach] to our homes and cook it. Then everybody would gather and work together in peeling the skin off the taro and then we'd begin to pound the taro into poi. . . The farm lands upland, that's the only area farming was done, not at the beach. . . This man, Will Roy, allowed us to do our own farming in any spot on his property. That would be in the area between the mountains and the sea, the flat lowland area. And so sometimes we would come up from the beach and come to this area and plant our sweet potatoes."

Gabriel Ka'eo, Hawaiian, was born February 18, 1903 in Waiea, South Kona, Hawaii. His parents were Jones Emmanuel Ka'eo and Harriet Kamoku. In addition to Kealia and Hookena, Kona, Gabriel once made Honolulu his home.

Gabriel has had a variety of jobs, including that of sugar plantation laborer, coffee picker, stevedore, and contractor. He has also been a stone wall builder.

In 1926, he married Katherine Ka'ai and eventually had two children.

Gabriel today lives in Hookena.

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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Gabriel Ka'eo (GK)

December 17, 1980

Kealahou, Kona, Hawai'i

BY: Larry L. Kimura (LK)

[Note: Interview conducted in Hawaiian. Translation done by Larry L. Kimura.]

LK: I am here at the home of Katherine Domingo, at Kealahou, South Kona. This is the 17th of December 1980 and I am going to interview Gabriel Ka'eo this evening.

GK: Gee, you have a lot of work.

LK: I am going to review with you some things that I asked you previously in order to record them on this machine, namely, your birth place is Wai'ea, South Kona, in the year 1903.

GK: Yes.

LK: When you were born, you were the 11th of 16 children and you were brought up by your own parents. Do you recall how old you were when your parents died? Perhaps it was your father who passed away before your mother?

GK: Yes, my father died first.

LK: Were you very small then?

GK: No, I was grown. I was about 14 or 15 when my father died. Then when I got married my mom passed away.

LK: Oh. Your mother must have been quite old when she died.

GK: No. She wasn't that old. If you saw her you wouldn't think she was that old.

LK: Well, the main purpose of this interview is to get the story of Kona, here as well as what you did. And even if you worked on O'ahu somewhat it doesn't matter. When you were living with your parents it was a different lifestyle. There was no electricity as compared to today. How was life then?

- GK: As far as food was concerned, there was no problem. My father was a farmer. And electricity for lighting, well, we had these kukui nuts. We broke the shell and the kernel inside was strung onto coconut mid-ribs. It was about so long [gestures about a foot and a half]. We combined three of these strung coconut mid-ribs together and burned them for light. Another way was to squeeze the oil and put it into a container, then add a piece of rope or cloth to it as a wick and lighted the wick for light.
- LK: What sort of container was used for the oil?
- GK: There was no cup. We used the small gourd calabash.
- LK: Didn't it burn?
- GK: No, not if you were careful. You put some sort of mud in and then you put the oil in with the wick. The container wouldn't burn because it was shaped like a flat dish.
- LK: Concerning the light that was made with the kukui nut kernel strung to the coconut mid-rib. How were the coconut mid-ribs able to stand upright or were they laid down flat?
- GK: No, no problem, you would just stick those coconut mid-ribs into some kind of holder so they would stand upright and all you did was to light the top of the coconut mid-rib.
- LK: And the light would burn because of the kukui nut kernel oil?
- GK: Yes, that's the kind of light we had in those days, although I did not experience that for too long because later we got the oil lanterns or the kerosene lanterns. And the only problem with those kukui nut lanterns would be when you get up the next morning and you look at your sister or your brother and you'd see their noses all black because of the smoke that came from the kukui lanterns, and they'd look at you and you'd be the same thing, your face would be all black from the smoke from this lantern that had been burning overnight.
- LK: And the kind of house you folks had back then, was it a wooden house, a lumber house?
- GK: Yes, but really before that it was different. Our house was made with corrugated iron roofing on the roof, and the walls were made out of stone--building a stone wall for the walls covered with a corrugated iron roof.
- LK: And what about the floor?
- GK: The flooring was lau hala mats. Of course we had very nice beds. Our bed was a thick layer of lau hala mats and when we would jump onto this it was very nice and soft.

- LK: Was this very high? Was it maybe two or three feet?
- GK: Yes, about two feet, three feet high. But when you would jump on it, of course it would come down to about maybe a foot.
- LK: Seems very supple and soft.
- GK: Yes, because all the leftover scrap lau hala were filled within this mattresslike bed.
- LK: Did your mother folks make this mat mattress?
- GK: Yes, they made that and it was made with very thick mats and filled with the leftover lau hala scraps. And it came out to be just like our modern-type mattresses.
- LK: And this kind of old-style house, were there any rooms or no rooms at all?
- GK: There was just one big room.
- LK: And the whole family would live in this one big room?
- GK: Yes.
- LK: Was this used for sleeping only?
- GK: It was used for sleeping and there was a little separate section reserved for eating. Of course we did not have a table to sit at. We had a long mat that was placed on the floor on which the food was placed and everybody would sit around this dining mat to eat.
- LK: And where was the cooking house?
- GK: The cooking house was outside. We did all our cooking outside. Of course we had to cook with firewood and if we were living here in the upland side we had a lot of firewood and if we were down at the beach there was no lantana or no kiawe wood to be had then for firewood.
- LK: So there were not any of those plants at the beach in those days?
- GK: No, they were not there then. There was not even opiuma.
- LK: And so what about the firewood down at the beach, did you have to bring it there?
- GK: Yes, we would have to carry our bundles of firewood to the beach so when we went upland to do our farming we made sure to carry bundles of firewood to carry down to the beach for us to use there.
- LK: And yet when you look at the beach areas today it's just overgrown with kiawe and all kinds of plants and yet . . .

- GK: Yes, but people don't go and get that today, they just take their kerosene or gas with them.
- LK: And what was the firewood then?
- GK: Well, if you could get this pilo that would be firewood. There was a lot of that.
- LK: Where was this growing?
- GK: This was down at the beach areas. There was a lot of pilo there then. And there was lantana, but of course lantana was not there earlier. Lantana came to Hawaii. . . . The Greenwell's place was the first place to have lantana. These haole people brought this lantana to plant. They were planted alongside the road to beautify the area and they made very nice hedges.
- LK: Oh, so they were brought in as a decorative plant?
- GK: Yes, and of course then our parents would go and get the seeds. They would go to church and on their way home they would snatch a few seeds and bring them home to plant and before you know it lantana began to spread and establish itself. And of course the birds would eat the seeds and excrete the seeds all over the place and help to spread this lantana. And that became very good firewood; of course we didn't have guava then for firewood. The plants that were predominant then was this pili grass. And you could be staying down at the beach, and when you look upland it was nice and clear. There was no obstruction, you could see who was coming down to the beach. There were no bushes, just grass.
- LK: And what was the firewood upland?
- GK: Oh, there were a lot of trees up here, such as the 'ohi'a.
- LK: And the water for drinking back then, was that rain water?
- GK: Yes, our water was rain water for drinking, but of course when we went down to live at the beach it was brackish water.
- LK: Was that obtained by digging a well?
- GK: Yes, but at our place down at Ho'okena Beach, when the tide would go down, the brackish water springs would bubble up onto the flat area, and there would be some slight depressions there where the brackish water would collect.
- LK: I've heard about this spring called Pūhau, where is that?
- GK: It's down at the beach, at Ho'okena Beach.
- LK: Is that close to the shoreline?
- GK: No, it's a little further inland. It's about 20, 30 feet inland from the shore.

LK: Is that a pond?

GK: No, it's a spring.

LK: That must be very potable water?

GK: Oh, certainly. And when we were little kids and when there was no one around to see we would jump into this spring water to go swimming; and yet that was the water that was used to drink. You see how mischievous we were? We would go swimming in the ocean water and then we would go up there and see if there was nobody around then we would jump in and rinse off.

LK: And yet that was not allowed?

GK: Yes, that was not allowed. If our grandparents saw us we would get a good licking.

LK: And so that was your drinking water?

GK: Yes, for drinking and for cooking and all sorts of things for the people who lived there at the beach.

LK: And when the tide went down at the beach and this brackish water would be there, how would you go and get it?

GK: When the tide went down, there would be not that much brackish water. It would be mostly salt water. [GK is referring to the brackish water wells that were dug. Not the brackish water springs that were at the edge of the shoreline.] So when the tide starts to come up, then the brackish water would rise with the tide. And when you get that water it's very cold.

LK: And this water you're referring to, was it dug--was the sand dug so that you could get to this brackish water?

GK: No. That was done upland, further inland.

LK: Oh, I see, this was well water.

GK: Yes. There at Ho'okena Beach almost every home had a well that was dug and there is a very big well that was dug at Ki'ilae, and that well was called Waiku'iokekele. And that well was made because of some old men who used to go fishing there with their dog and the dog would disappear from them and come back to them soaking wet. This would always happen, the dog would disappear from them when they went fishing and then reappear soaking wet. And once when the dog was shaking himself free of the water, they tasted the water and it was fresh water. And yet that area had no fresh water known to the people. So the next day they planned a scheme. So they went to get the pōhuehue vine that grows abundantly down at the beach and these vines were very long and they were fashioned somewhat like a rope. And this dog was tied with this vine the next day when they went fishing. And the dog disappeared from them again

and it went down into this cavelike hole and the dog went all the way down until it got to the water. And these old men measured the depth of this hole by tying a knot on the pōhuehue vine. So when the dog came back up again, they measured with this pōhuehue vine from where the dog was tied to until the knot that they had made to measure the depth down to where the water would be found. And then they announced to all the people who were living in that area to bring firewood. Then the firewood was piled up above that location there and burned night and day. This was done for several days, and then the men from that area came to dig that area with sticks, and that's how that water was dug. [The surface above this water was all rock, and the purpose of burning the firewood on this surface was to crack this rock so the digging would be made easier.] And this water still exists until today and it's called Waiku'iokekela. Today a haole built a windmill there to pump water from that well.

- LK: Was Kekela the name of one of those people who made the well?
- GK: Yes, that's one of them who made that well. [An explanation of the name: wai is "water," ku'i is "pound," o is "of," Kekela is a name. Therefore the question, was Kekela a name of one of the persons who was responsible for making that well. So, a rough translation of the whole name would be: the water that had to be obtained by pounding which was done by burning the firewood on the rocks that cracked the rock. Then, pounding it with wooden implements to get to the water below. And the responsibility of this work was that of Kekela.]
- LK: Was this done just recently?
- GK: No, this was done way, way before in the old days.
- LK: This area Ki'ilae, was this by Hōnaunau?
- GK: Yes, there is Hōnaunau and this side of Hōnaunau is Ki'ilae. Actually, there's Pahumoa, then Ki'ilae.
- LK: And then after Ki'ilae would be what area?
- GK: Well, there is Keālia.
- LK: I wonder why that area is called Keālia. I wonder if there is a marsh saltbed area there.
- GK: I wonder. But there is a pond there.
- LK: At the beach?
- GK: Yes. When we used to stay there the pond would be right on the side of us and we would go torch fishing at night and catch the young of the mullet and throw the young of the mullet fish into this pond. So when the ocean got too rough for fishing, then we would go with our throw nets and catch the fish in the pond that had grown.

- LK: And so when you were young you folks used to live in this style of house that was constructed with stone wall and with a corrugated iron roof?
- GK: Yes. And later when my father worked with this haole, McDougall, who I believe was the superintendent for Castle & Cooke.
- LK: And this is the big Castle & Cooke Corporation?
- GK: Yes.
- LK: And what was their business here?
- GK: Well, I'm not too sure, but they were going to run a train here. The rail tracks were laid but it never came through; that haole's house burned down. Perhaps it was purposely burned down to collect the insurance. Of course, you know Hawaiians back then didn't know anything about insurance but the haoles knew all about that.
- LK: And so your father worked for this haole, McDougall, and did he help to construct the railroad?
- GK: No, he did all sorts of odd jobs. He helped build the house and the road there for the house.
- LK: So this Mr. McDougall just stayed in Kona for a short while?
- GK: No, he stayed pretty long.
- LK: How did this man make his living staying here?
- GK: I really don't know. Of course he belonged to this corporation.
- LK: So when your father worked with McDougall . . .
- GK: Well, that's when we got our house, our wood lumber house. And they built it, the workers of that hui and that corporation and that's how we got our nice house.
- LK: And this land that you folks were living on, was that your own land?
- GK: Yes, that was our own land.
- LK: From your grandparents?
- GK: Yes.
- LK: How many acres was that?
- GK: Gee whiz, that was from the ocean all the way up to the mountains. We had a house down at the beach, we had a house up in between here the beach and the mountain, and we had another dwelling up in the mountains, further upland where our farm was.

- LK: So these were many acres?
- GK: Yes, several hundred acres. My brother, Charles Ka'eo, he knows more about this.
- LK: Oh, is that your brother? Is that your older or younger brother?
- GK: He's my baby brother. He's the last born.
- LK: Yes, I know him, I know your younger brother, Charlie. I think he's still at the Ka Makua Mau Loa Church.
- GK: I think he's about 60 years old now because I'm 77 years old now.
- LK: What kind of furniture did you folks have at your dwelling outside of the lau hala mattress that you spoke of? Of course there were no tables.
- GK: There were no tables. They would weave a mat about this width. [Approximately 2-½ feet] And it was very long. It was the length of the home, the house. And everybody would sit at this mat to eat. It was placed away from where the sleeping area was.
- LK: What about the dishes?
- GK: According to what I saw, we had these calabashes, gourd calabashes. The top portion was cut off and used as a dish and the bottom portion would be used to hold the poi.
- LK: Was there only one big calabash for the poi?
- GK: No, there were big ones and smaller-sized ones.
- LK: So these calabashes were actually gourd that were grown?
- GK: Yes, and there was a variety that grew very long that was used to get water in and hold the water. And there were different gourds that were raised back then, like for making the poi calabash. They were bitter, the flesh was bitter, you couldn't eat them. That's called ipu'awa and some people had the seed for that, so I asked them to keep the seed because it's hard to get nowadays.
- LK: And so that's the variety of gourd that was used to make calabashes from?
- GK: Yes, its skin is a little thicker than other varieties.
- LK: I heard that it was strict living in those kinds of houses back then, especially a relationship between parents and children?
- GK: Yes, yes. If you played around and did not listen you would get the broom. You would get spanking with the broom. Of course there were so many children in our family [and] we pulled each other's blanket and try to steal it away from one another, and of course

then we would get a good spanking for doing that. Our parents would teach us, "Here is your blanket, you take care of your own blanket. If I see you going to get somebody else's, you're going to get a good spanking." (Laughs)

LK: When you got older to go to school, how far was it for you to go to school?

GK: One mile.

LK: Gee, that seems pretty far.

GK: Well, to us that's very short because when we would go to the store that was two miles from where we were living back then.

LK: So when you folks travelled, did you walk most of the time?

GK: Yes, we would walk and also go by donkey or horse.

LK: What was the largest nationality that lived in your area then?

GK: There were mostly Hawaiian people. Of course there weren't too many Hawaiians living upland then. Most of the Hawaiians were living down at the beach.

LK: At Ho'okena?

GK: Yes. Also at Kalāhiki and at Keālia because in those days there was no road up here. The road was down at the beach. This ma uka road is very recent.

LK: What kind of road was it down at the beach?

GK: That wasn't the kind of road that cars would go on because there were no cars then.

LK: Was it more like a foot trail?

GK: Yes, for people to walk on and for horses, donkeys, mules.

LK: And you mean upland there was no road there?

GK: Yes, that's right, there was no road then. I'm pretty sure it was built after we were born.

LK: So you went to school up until the fifth grade?

GK: Yes.

LK: So the majority of students that were going to school back then were Hawaiian?

GK: Yes.

LK: Weren't there any Japanese children?

GK: There were about three or four, I think, Japanese children. There was Torao Yamasaki, Tome Yamamoto, Katsuo Murakami. Those were the three that I know of.

LK: What about Chinese?

GK: There were a few of them.

LK: Do you know some of their names?

GK: Yes. There was Ah Lui because there was the Ah Lui Store, and there was the Akau family and that was another store, the Akau Store and Bakery. And Salo, that was a bakery, too. And there was the Sing Sang Store and the Aiona family.

LK: Gee, that sounds like a lot of Chinese people.

GK: Yes, there were plenty. There weren't too many Japanese; the Japanese people came later but of course the Japanese came before the Filipinos.

LK: What about the Portuguese?

GK: Well, some few places had Portuguese. Our place didn't have Portuguese.

LK: What about the haole?

GK: Not one.

LK: So the Hawaiians were in the majority?

GK: Yes, mostly all Hawaiians.

LK: So the big town back then, Ho'okena, was down at the beach?

GK: Yes, it was at the beach. And when the steamer day came, when the steamers came in, there would be so many people crowded down there. You would see all these girls coming down to the beach with leis on. (Laughs) They would dress themselves up with leis, they were after the sailors. (Laughs)

LK: I've seen down at the beach at Ho'okena these lamp poles standing alongside the road.

GK: Yes.

LK: You don't see that all over the place.

GK: Yes, previously there were a lot more of those lamp poles or lamp-posts. Some of those lampposts were stolen.

LK: Were those gas lamps on those posts?

GK: Yes, they were gas lampposts. The gas lantern would be put into these big bulblike containers at the top of the post and then they were lit by this certain man. I still remember his name, his name was Kaulana. These lampposts would be lit every steamer day during the evening and the Queen Lili'u would visit Ho'okena. She had a home there and presently some hippies are living in that house. That property and house became Magoon's and Magoon has a son who is sort of hippie and they are the people who are living in that house now.

LK: Who was this Magoon?

GK: He was a big shot. He's from Honolulu.

LK: Did he buy the property there in Ho'okena?

GK: I guess so, I really don't know the story. Those people own a lot of property there and also at Miloli'i he has a home there. Also at Pāhoehoe he has property.

LK: Lili'uokalani used to come to Ho'okena?

GK: Yes. She used to come to Ho'okena.

LK: Did you see her?

GK: I didn't see her because we were just very small then but I used to hear a lot about her. We used to see all our older sisters and brothers getting all dressed up and we'd ask them where they were going and they said they were going to go down the beach to be with the queen. And when the queen came, there would be a lot of dancing and festivity going on. The dancing then was very pretty to see; that was the waltz-type dancing. And when you saw these women swinging around, their dresses would look just like peacock birds. But now, when you see them dancing, people look like ducks (gestures like a waddling duck).

(Laughter)

Oh yes, that's how it is nowadays. Once, my daughter took me to the Kona Inn Hotel and then the band began to play this music and people started to stand up and dance this funny way. I got fed up and walked out. My daughter asked what's wrong and I told her there's no sense in looking at that kind of dancing.

LK: I have to agree with you in a certain way. When you look at the dancing today, looks like a lot of shaking all over the place. Ballroom dancing was done at Ho'okena?

- GK: Yes, it was done there at Ho'okena. There was this man, Ka'au'a who used to live on this side of the wharf before at Ho'okena. He used to teach dancing. Also, Mr. Lincoln, he was the postmaster down there and his wife. He was a tall haole and his wife was Hawaiian. They were very beautiful dancers.
- LK: Did you have a regular dance hall?
- GK: Yes, there was a hall there for dancing where Lili'u stayed. There also used to be a dancing hall down at Keālia Beach, so there were two dancing halls down at the beach area, one at Ho'okena and one there at Keālia.
- LK: And what about the band, were there any musicians then for bands?
- GK: Oh yes, there were so many people who participated in band music. Of course they didn't play the kind of instruments that are being played nowadays. Back then it wasn't bad music. It was the violin, the banjo.
- LK: And what about the flute?
- GK: Oh yes, there was that too. My brother used to play the flute, but I was one of those that just didn't learn how to play an instrument. And these were all Hawaiian musicians. I've seen a lot of them who played flute. They would take the sections and piece them together to put the instrument together.
- LK: Wow, that was a regular orchestra then.
- GK: Oh yes.
- LK: So your older brothers went to ballroom dance at Ho'okena?
- GK: I didn't hear anything about that.
- LK: Then what was this you were telling us about wearing these nice clothes to go down to Ho'okena Beach? Wasn't that so your older brothers and sisters would do that when the queen came to Ho'okena?
- GK: No, that was when the steamers came and they would all dress up in their nice clothes and put their leis on and they would go down to Ho'okena Beach. And then we would say to each other, "There they go, down to look for sailors."
- LK: What kind of food did you folks eat back then?
- GK: Poi; we had taro, sweet potatoes and whenever we got crackers, Saloon Pilot crackers, that was a big thing for us. Those days when you bought five cents worth of crackers, you'd get about ten pieces. Yes, the crackers were cheap back then but it was sure hard getting the five cents.
- LK: There seemed to be a lot of bakeries then owned by the Chinese.

- GK: That's right, there were a lot of Chinese and, of course, a lot of Hawaiians back then. And the Chinese would peddle the bread. They would pack the bread on the donkeys in boxes and go around from house to house to sell bread, and if you didn't have any cash or money, you could exchange with parchment coffee for the bread.
- LK: What kind of bread did they sell?
- GK: Well, there was this kind of bread that was like a double loaf. There was a line right in the middle of the loaf and we used to call that palaoa wahine [female or woman bread] so when you go to the Chinese bakery and they ask you what kind of bread you want; then if you say "palaoa wahine" then they know that's the kind of bread. Of course, if you said "palaoa kāne" then that would be just one big loaf with no line in the middle. And that kind of bread is longer. The loaf is longer. So those were the two kinds of bread that we had that were called palaoa wahine and palaoa kāne.
- LK: Did those Chinese people speak Hawaiian?
- GK: Of course they spoke in Hawaiian.
- LK: Was their Hawaiian any different, was it more like Chinese Hawaiian?
- GK: Well, to a certain extent it was a little like Chinese Hawaiian.
- LK: What was the difference?
- GK: Well, their Hawaiian was just plain, regular Hawaiian.
- LK: Can you tell us or give us an example of how they used to speak in Hawaiian? Did they speak just like how we are speaking right now?
- GK: Yes, just like how we're talking right now. They sounded just like any other Hawaiian speaker, and if you were outside of the store and hearing them speak you would think they were just regular old Hawaiians talking.
- LK: Was there any store up in the upper regions?
- GK: No, there wasn't any store upland.
- LK: So not a single store was upland?
- GK: No, the store was down at the beach. Of course there was also the bakeries; there was a tailor. In the old days, Ho'okena was crowded, Ho'okena Beach.
- LK: Perhaps it was because you folks had a wharf down at Ho'okena Beach; but did the boats stand outside or did they come in?
- GK: No, they had to anchor offshore outside and the cargo was rowed in on little boats.

- LK: And what was transported onto the ship from you folks?
- GK: Oh, there was coffee of course, cattle, also oranges sometimes and banana. There was so much banana before they would be hauled down on trucks brought in from all the surrounding areas; from here as well.
- LK: What kind of bananas did you folks raise?
- GK: The Hawaiian variety.
- LK: What kind of banana was that?
- GK: The maoli banana, as well as the pōpō'ulu banana, they're a little shorter and there was a variety that had two colors, green and white.
- LK: So this present road that goes down to Ho'okena Beach, was that the old road? Of course I presume it's not paved.
- GK: Right, that was the old road. Of course that road and even the road upland was not paved it was just dirt road. Before, when we used to go and visit our grandparents at Keauhou, we would leave Ho'okena--I mean to say Kalāhiki--at about five o'clock in the morning and arrive at Keauhou at around twelve noon. We'd travel by carriage being pulled by two horses.
- LK: Was the road that you travelled on on the beach side or the mountain side?
- GK: No, it's this present road being used now upland.
- LK: Do you know what year that upland road was built?
- GK: No, I don't know.
- LK: How old were you when that road was built?
- GK: Well, I was born then but I was very young. I don't really know how old I was when the road was built and so my mother said the road was very nice then. Of course when we saw the road it looked nice to us but it was just a gravel road. And when we would go down to the beach our grandparents would show us where the old road was.
- LK: And so while you folks lived at Ho'okena, there were these other places that were inhabited such as the Keauhou and Ki'ilae and at Ka'ohe and at Miloli'i. Your living at different villages, did this make a difference in your relationships one to the other?
- GK: No, our homes are very close together and we lived close together.
- LK: What I mean is that did different areas get together with different areas? Did Ka'ohe people get to visit with Ho'okena and vice versa?

GK: Oh, yes, yes.

LK: So in spite of the distance that separated each village from the other, you still got together?

GK: Yes, we all did that. We all got together one with the other. You know, there's one thing that sets Ho'okena apart. There's this little story about when we used to go up and pull our taro and bring it back down to our homes and cook it. Then everybody would gather and work together in peeling the skin off the taro and then we'd begin to pound the taro into poi. And there's some people who gathered there to help peel the taro, and as they were peeling the taro they would cover up some of the cooked taro with the peels from the taro that was being peeled. And later on they would say, "Can we take all these scraps and parings home to feed to the pig?"

And so everyone would say, "Yes, you can."

So they would take all the scraps along with the whole taro hidden with the scraps home with them and then later on you'd hear their poi boards being pounded with the stone, the poi stones, and everybody would turn one to the other and wonder how the heck they got their taro to pound. You see how smart these people were? They weren't dummies.

LK: So the people who stayed down at the beach, they also had farm lands upland?

GK: Yes, they had the farm lands upland; that's the only area farming was done, not at the beach. Before this ranch, this man, Will Roy, allowed us to do our farming in any spot on his property. That would be in the area between the mountains and the sea, the flat lowland area. And so sometimes we would come up from the beach and come to this area and plant our sweet potatoes.

LK: Didn't the cattle go and damage the farming area? Maybe you folks built some stone walls?

GK: Yes, that's what we did. We would build these stone wall enclosures and then we would plant our sweet potatoes and whatever we planted.

LK: What kind of variety of sweet potatoes did you plant?

GK: We planted mōhihi and this other variety called laukūkū.

LK: What is this kūkū variety?

GK: Well, our grandparents [kūkū is the familiar term for grandparents] gave the planting slips to us and so we just called it the "grandparents planting slip" [laukūkū]. And there were several other varieties too, that we planted.

- LK: And the taro was planted further upland?
- GK: Yes, the taro was planted above this main highway that we have now. That area would be more suitable for planting taro. We had to go up pretty far to get to our taro planting area. This would be above, of course, this present highway now, this main belt road. We would climb up, and of course the higher you planted it, it would be better because you could get taro all year around. Because [even] if there wouldn't be any rain up there, well, because of the altitude it would still be nice and cool and the taro would stay fresh. Gee, that would be pretty far when we used to come up to plant taro, that would be quite far from the beach that we would have to travel.
- LK: So, how many homes did you actually have?
- GK: Well, we had one home down at the beach, one in between the beach and the mountains and one up at the mountain farm land area.
- LK: What kind of house did you folks have up where the taro area was?
- GK: It was nothing fancy, just a little shed, just something to protect yourself in case it rained and some place to sleep.
- LK: Was this in the forest area?
- GK: Well, it was all cleared.
- LK: So you folks cleared the forest area?
- GK: And in those days it was mostly 'ōhi'a trees. We farmed where it was mostly grass; we cleared the grass away and planted there but if the 'ōhi'a trees were growing densely, well, we cut them down and cleared that land for planting and kept the 'ōhi'a for firewood. In those days we kept everything, we didn't waste anything.
- LK: And did you folks plant bananas?
- GK: Yes, we planted banana there too, where we planted our taro. We planted our bananas and sugarcane, too, on the border of our taro patches.
- LK: Did you folks raise pigs?
- GK: Yes, that was the duty of my grandmother. She and her dog would go out to round them up and she would let her dog go, and her dog would go and fetch the pigs and bring them back. Then all the pigs would go home.
- LK: Were these tame pigs?
- GK: Yes, tame pigs.

LK: But when you let these pigs roam wherever they wanted to, didn't anybody steal them?

GK: No, nobody fooled around with them because everybody kept pigs in those days, too.

LK: How did you know which pigs were yours?

GK: Oh, they just knew, they were very familiar with their own pigs.

LK: And what did you folks feed the pigs?

GK: Papaya and pumpkins and pear, but there weren't that many avocados back then. The avocado is a new fruit to the area.

LK: And were these the black wild variety of pigs?

GK: No, the regular red and white and whatever colors you have.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

LK: So, the black colored pigs were called hiwa in Hawaiian and the spotted white pig or spotted black pig was called the pūko'a in Hawaiian?

GK: Yes.

LK: What other kind of colors did you folks have for pigs?

GK: That's about it. Most of the pigs were those colors.

LK: What about the coloration of chickens?

GK: Well, there was one we called 'ulahiwa, and just your white variety.

LK: What is your 'ulahiwa?

GK: You know, the more reddish colored chicken, well, those are the 'ulahiwa variety.

LK: Was chicken eaten a lot?

GK: Oh yes, my brother-in-law used to raise chickens by the hundreds. We would eat chicken until we got sick of them.

LK: What about the egg?

GK: Oh yes, if we wanted eggs we would have to go and hunt for their nest in the coffee land. They didn't lay their eggs close to the house because that wouldn't be a good place to lay their eggs. And

of course, sometimes you would see the mother hen cackling and leading all her little chicks behind her and bringing them to the house. And if you found a nest full of eggs, well, you would be very lucky. You know this lard tin, we would get that and fill it full of eggs and bring it home and boil the eggs and eat them. That's what we kids used to do.

LK: What did the chickens eat in those days?

GK: Well, some people planted corn to feed the chickens.

LK: What about coconut?

GK: Yes, that too, but back then they didn't feed the chickens coconut too much because coconuts were being sold.

LK: Oh, so they were being sold?

GK: Yes, we sold them to the Chinese.

LK: What for?

GK: To make coconut pies and whatever they used them for, and making their pastries. I remember down at Kalāhiki Beach, Willy Roy used to have a man there taking care of all the coconut trees and if that man ever caught you climbing those coconut trees he'd come after you with a long stick, because in those days coconuts brought money. It was also sent to Honolulu to Yick Lung.

LK: Were there that much coconuts there?

GK: Oh yes, there were a lot of coconuts there.

LK: And who climbed the trees to get them?

GK: We did, we climbed the trees and where we used to stay, Ho'okena Beach, we had 37 trees growing at our house lot. And the trees aren't that tall. One young coconut and one dry coconut would be fifteen cents. Of course, we had to climb the trees and clean all the dry leaves off of it, too. So you see, we made some money off of the coconuts.

LK: Are there different names for the different stages of the coconut fruit?

GK: Yes, the young coconut, that would be the best. If you knew how to look for the right stage of that young coconut then you'd be lucky; you have to see if the back portion is swollen and close to the stem of the coconut, then you know that's the good young coconut. That's what we call spoon meat coconut. If you see the back portion kind of flat, not swollen, then you know the coconut is getting older; it's not very good for eating with a spoon. Of course, then the coconut would eventually get dry and fall off the tree.

LK: And did you folks plant the coconut trees or did they just grow on their own?

GK: No, those trees were planted, we planted them. Puna is probably the only area that I know of where coconut grows on its own, it doesn't have to be planted. Coconuts just fall off the tree and then sprout up.

LK: And this church, Puka'ana, is that the original foundation, the original site of that church?

GK: Yes.

LK: So that's where it is, that's its original site where it is now, upland?

GK: No, the original church was down at the beach.

LK: Oh, I see, the original site was down at the beach.

GK: Yes, that's where it was before. And this present church standing there at Keālia, that is a branch of the main church.

LK: But it still takes the Puka'ana name?

GK: Yes, but it is a branch of the original Puka'ana Church.

LK: But the old church down at the beach is no longer standing.

GK: Yes, it's all fallen apart now. Before I was the one that took care of that church and I ring the bell. That was done at the beach then.

LK: Who were some of the ministers back then?

GK: There was Ke'ala.

LK: Was this Ke'ala, senior or junior?

GK: No, this was Ke'ala senior.

LK: Was his name Samuel?

GK: No, his name was John Ke'ala and Samuel is his son.

LK: Is this minister from Ho'okena?

GK: He is from Keālia.

LK: There must have been quite a few members back then.

GK: Oh yes, the church would be absolutely full with members.

- LK: And wasn't there also a Catholic church?
- GK: Yes, there's a Catholic church further in from the beach at Ho'okena.
- LK: Were those the two major churches at Ho'okena Beach in those days?
- GK: Yes, because in those days sometimes there wouldn't be services at the Protestant church so everybody would just go over to the Catholic church and join them. They're not biased as to what religion they go to to worship. Sometimes our minister would have to be engaged at Miloli'i or at Lanakila Church and so my grandfather would take over as minister of the church. And my grandfather Ka'eo, he was blind. And my sister would assist him sometimes. He had a horse that knew where to go and all you had to do was head him in the right direction and he'd take my grandfather exactly to where he wanted to go; and those people at Miloli'i and Kealakekua side, they were familiar with this horse and my grandfather so they'd watch out for him and open the gate for him when he arrived. [Apparently GK's grandfather did not serve only as a substitute at their own church at Ho'okena but also went to visit other churches, as he mentioned at Miloli'i and at Kealakekua.]
- LK: Was your grandfather born blind?
- GK: No, he became blind later in his life.
- LK: In those days, I bet the people were very staunch members of the church?
- GK: Yes.
- LK: They hold their own services in their own homes every day, as well as in the morning or evening?
- GK: Yes, that was done daily. If your parents saw you going to bed before having prayed, you'd get a whack from them.
- LK: And how was the Sunday treated?
- GK: You had to go to church, and after church you did no work. It was a very sacred day; we had a sheriff down at Ho'okena Beach and if he saw you going fishing that Sunday, you better watch out the next day. Sunday was a very sacred day, you couldn't even burn fires or light the cooking fire. You had to do all your cooking on Saturday.
- LK: What about fishing, would you folks fish on Sunday?
- GK: No. You can go fishing up until midnight on Saturday night, and you better be back before then.
- LK: It sure seemed strict.
- GK: Oh yes, it was. And this old man, Lakalo, he was the sheriff then. He was a strict old man.

- LK: Could they catch you on Sunday and arrest you on Sunday?
- GK: Well, they could but most of the time they just gave you a good scolding. If you answered back, you better watch out.
- LK: Who was the sheriff back then?
- GK: Well, Sam Pua was the sheriff, he was the head. And Lakalo, he was the deputy sheriff.
- LK: Were those sheriffs elected?
- GK: No, they were appointed. The sheriff appointed his deputies and Kilinahe, he was another deputy sheriff at Kainaliu.
- LK: Did you folks have a courthouse at Ho'okena?
- GK: Yes, we had a big courthouse there.
- LK: Was this down at the beach?
- GK: No, this was ma uka.
- LK: What about a jailhouse?
- GK: Yes, there was one, it was upland. They said there was one down at the beach a long time ago but I never saw that myself.
- LK: Were there a lot of people who were jailed?
- GK: Well, sometimes there would be a lot.
- LK: What sort of people were jailed?
- GK: Well, there'd be these thieves and burglars. We used to kind of enjoy that when they caught somebody and put him in the jail because we kids could go down and eat together with the prisoners because they had to prepare food for the prisoners.
- LK: Oh, you folks ate with the prisoners?
- GK: Yes, if they called us to go and eat, then we'd go over and eat what they prepared to feed the prisoners. Of course, now when I think about it that's kind of a shameful thing to do.
- LK: How could you folks just go and eat there?
- GK: Well, they just told us to come and eat so we did. Just like what I told you about that person who was a lazy farmer. You know, he camouflaged his taro with the parings from the taro that was cooked, and then he carried everything home. Pretty soon, you know, you'd hear his poi pounding board sounding with his pounding the poi with the taro that he had sneaked and stole. When you think about it, he must have been pretty daring because everybody knew he wasn't a

farmer and didn't have taro, so how in the world did he get that taro to pound to make poi for him. You see how sneaky he was?

LK: So everybody pounded his own poi, each person pounded his own?

GK: Yes.

LK: Wasn't there any poi factory then?

GK: No, not really, but there was the Chinese down here at Aiona Store.

LK: Where was that?

GK: That was at Keālia.

LK: So the Chinese pounded the poi?

GK: No, the Chinese didn't pound the poi, the Hawaiians did. There was A'alona and Elia and Mahia. I think there were about three or four Hawaiians who pounded the poi for the Chinese. They pounded the poi every other day. The Chinese would buy taro from the Hawaiians if you had any taro to sell, because in those days the price was very cheap. It was a dollar per bag.

LK: So you folks planted your own taro?

GK: Oh yes, of course, my father did that. When we were young, every Friday after school, we would go home and in the evening time as we're getting into our bed we'd kind of peep out of our blanket and we could hear my father telling my mother to be sure to wake us up the next morning because we would have to go up to the taro patch the next day. And we hearing this, we'd begin to cry in our beds. We just hated to go up to the farm land. It was very cold to go up there and of course, very far. Of course if we heard that we could go down to the beach to go swimming, boy, were we happy and we just couldn't wait for the next day to come.

LK: And when you folks went up to the farm land upland, you folks had to walk that distance?

GK: Oh yes, and of course we had no shoes, and boy, was it cold and far. It was over a mile we had to walk.

LK: And so when you folks got there you folks did your weeding and whatever?

GK: Yes, we weeded and also mulched.

LK: What did you use to mulch?

GK: Ma'u [a kind of fern].

LK: I see, you mean 'ama'u? [variation of the name ma'u]

GK: Yes, that's it.

LK: So when you folks planted your taro there, did you keep planting in the same area?

GK: No, we planted maybe two crops and then we would go to a new location. There was a lot of area there that could be used for planting, then we would rest the place we had been previously using while using a new place. And so we would just leave that older place for about a year or two and let the grass and weeds grow all over, and then we'd go back later to it, we'd plant again. And we would have several acres planted with taro.

LK: And so you would go every week up to your farm land area?

GK: Well, my father went practically every day to the taro land.

LK: So your father was really a farmer?

GK: Well, he was a farmer and a fisherman. He had his own koa canoe.

LK: Who made the canoe, did he make it himself?

GK: I really don't know.

LK: Was he an 'ōpelu fisherman?

GK: Yes. He also fished for 'ahi and went hand-line fishing, too.

LK: Did he fish for the family only?

GK: Yes, fishing was done only for the family.

LK: Did you go with him when he went fishing?

GK: I would go with him and afterwards I used to go on my own. I had my own canoe. I made my own koa canoe. I made three canoes myself.

LK: Were these koa canoes?

GK: Oh yes.

LK: Who taught you how to carve canoes?

GK: I used to go with this person, his name was Charlie Moku'ōhai and he was the one who taught me how to carve canoes. And of course during our time when we carved canoes there was no machinery. But of course, like now, we have our power saw so that's much easier, you just turn the motor on and zzzt, the tree would be falling down already. But before we had to use the axe to cut the tree down and sometimes it would take the whole day to cut the tree down. And when the tree fell down you would cut the top off and the father of

this man, Moku'ōhai, he would let the tree fall and when the tree fell he would go into a shady spot and sit down to rest. And there he would wait until a bird would come to the log that had been knocked down, and this little bird would fly onto this log and jump all over it. And you would watch this bird as it hopped around the log, and where you saw this bird peck, that's where you would cut the top off. And if you tried to cut beyond that, you would find for sure a rotten spot where that bird had pecked. Of course, your canoe would then be no good. I thought that was just all a big farce so me and Charlie, the son, tried it out once. So we knocked this tree down. When we knocked it down I saw that it looked like a very good tree. It was a very long tree so I asked my friend, "Where should we cut the top off, how long should we make the cut?" And he told me to wait and I said, "Why should we wait?"

And he said, "We're going to wait for that bird to come and fly on this log and you watch that bird carefully, wherever he pecks, that's where we'll cut off; that's the length of our log because the rest of that log is not good."

Hey, you know, funny thing, that thing is correct, what he said is true.

LK: What does the bird look like?

GK: It's just a bird jumping on the log.

LK: Was it a black colored bird or what kind of bird was it?

GK: Well, it looked something like the small rice bird that we have, something like that. So it would fly on this log and then it just hopped along and then it would peck and then fly away. And where it pecked, from there on it would not be good. Yes, I saw that with my own eyes and it is true.

LK: How did you select your log?

GK: Well, you just go up there in the forest and select one. There is so many koa up there.

LK: Where would this area be?

GK: Oh, all up here, like above Kalāhiki.

LK: You folks had to walk up?

GK: Of course we hike up, we walked up.

LK: How did you folks bring this log down?

GK: Well, we would roughly make the canoe up there, not finish it but just roughly carve the canoe up in the mountain and it would be much lighter. It would be lighter for us to pull.

LK: Oh, you actually just pulled it?

GK: Oh yes, we pulled it by hand. Of course you couldn't lift it, it was too heavy. But my own canoes that I made, well, there's a road now in the forest, so we went up with the ranch truck to go and get the logs. We make good with the cowboys and they get the ranch truck, go up there with the bulldozer and pull this log. Then we would just load it on the truck and take it home. It was very easy.

LK: And before how did you folks do it?

GK: We pulled it all by hand.

LK: Just you two pulled it?

GK: No, when it was time to pull the canoe down we would announce it all to the people to come and help. If the canoe was to be for the Keālia people, then we would call all those people there. And of course they would enjoy that because they knew they were going to be eating kālua pig. So when we got home after our work the pig would already be cooked.

LK: Did it take only a day to haul this log down?

GK: Well, in one day's time you would be down at the beach.

LK: So a lot of the work would be completed up in the mountains?

GK: Yes, but of course the hull of this canoe would still be quite thick. You can't make it too thin because if you pulled it down and if it hits something, then it'll crack.

LK: Must be kind of scary pulling a heavy log down like that by hand?

GK: Oh yes, one thing you have to remember when you're pulling this log and if you happen to be in the front and fall down, don't let go of the rope. You hang on to that rope because the people in the front of you will still be pulling the log, and so they'll be pulling and then when your rope gets taut you can stand up again and join the rest of the group. If you let your rope go, then the canoe will bang into you.

LK: And would there be a head man in this activity?

GK: Oh yes. Charlie Moku'ōhai's father would be the head canoe carver. He would be the palewa'a.

LK: What is the palewa'a?

GK: He is the person to direct [the] hauling down of the log. So as they're pulling the log and if the log starts to slide down too quickly, then this person would call out a certain command--I have forgotten what that word is now--and then this person would jump

into the canoe and everybody would let it go as it will go real fast and people would pull it. And sometimes there would be horses to pull, too, and this log would go sliding down very fast. Those days seemed like a lot of fun, but now when you think about it, gee whiz.

LK: Gee, that seems kind of scary.

GK: Well, the main thing is that you hang onto the rope and keep it tight.

LK: But how could you hang on and keep the rope tight if the canoe was moving at such a rapid speed sometimes?

GK: Well, the people up at the front, they pulled--and of course there might be some horses at the front too, that were pulling--and sometimes we would lose our shoes in the mud up there, but we couldn't turn back to go and get it because was too late already. We have to keep going, so we'd go home with one shoe only, one side with no shoe.

LK: So you folks pulled this log all the way down to the beach?

GK: Yes, and of course, more recently, they pull it just down to the main road and then load it on the truck, and then the truck would take it down to the beach.

LK: What about the cliff areas, when you folks got to a cliff, what did you folks do?

GK: Well, then all the men would leave the canoe alone and only the horses would help guide this canoe down to keep it in a straight line.

LK: So when you got down to the beach you folks finished carving the canoe?

GK: Yes.

LK: So you carved your own canoes?

GK: Yes.

LK: What year was that you carved your canoes?

GK: Gee, I can't remember.

LK: Where was this, down at Ho'okena Beach?

GK: No, it was at our place at Kōmakawai.

LK: Where was that place?

GK: It's up at Ho'okena.

LK: Is that your property?

GK: No, that property belongs to McCandless. So I made good with the cowboys and they helped me haul the log down.

LK: So the kind of canoe you carved were fishing canoes?

GK: Yes.

LK: Were racing canoes carved in those days?

GK: Yes, our racing canoes were all carved, and some [of the] racing canoes that were sent to Honolulu, they were from Ho'okena. About two or three canoes came from Ho'okena.

LK: Did those racing canoes have names? Do you know some of the names?

GK: Yes, that canoe of ours at Ho'okena, the name of that canoe was Heleuluulu, and Ka'au'a was the one that made that canoe.

LK: Did it go fast?

GK: Yes, but if you had light paddlers on it would be good. But if you had heavy people like us maybe then the canoe would dip into the water.

LK: So you folks held competitions between the areas?

GK: Oh yes. The Ka'ohe people were good at racing canoe and then, lately, Miloli'i had a good team. They would go all over the place, all the way until Kailua. No other teams could beat them because those people were strong paddlers, and they had stamina, too.

LK: Were there many people living at Ka'ohe?

GK: Yes, there were a lot of people there before but not anymore now.

LK: This family, Kaleohano, are you familiar with them?

GK: Oh yes.

LK: And what would you get if you won a canoe race?

GK: Not a thing. At Hōnaunau we would paddle out and then head towards Ka'awaloa, and then we would turn around and come back into Hōnaunau.

LK: Were there buoys to mark the course?

GK: Yes, there would be flags placed on these buoys that we followed.

LK: Did you folks really enjoy doing that sport?

GK: Oh yes, we did. Of course later on our shoulders began to hurt and then you'd think, was it really all that worth it? Then you would think, gee, it might have been a waste to end up getting pains in your shoulder.

LK: How did you folks train, did you do any training?

GK: Oh yes, our coach at Ho'okena was Ka'au'a. One week before the race, we couldn't stay at home. We couldn't sleep at home with our wives. We had to all go and stay at his place. That was his way, his rule. And this man sure kept an eye out on us. He never let us get out of his sight.

LK: Were you on special diet then?

GK: No, we just ate regular food. We ate poi, like usual.

LK: So you folks paddled every day to practice for the race?

GK: Yes, we did. And there would be also Julian Yates, he would be a coach, too. He would call out, "Come on, number two or number three, pull water."

LK: And of these three canoes that you carved, are any of them left?

GK: There is one left. It's been five years now that I've never been out on that canoe, so I've left it for my grandchildren. They told me to leave the canoe for them and they'd take care and fix it up, and I haven't seen them go in that canoe not once yet.

LK: You put together the outrigger and everything?

GK: I did everything.

LK: What kind of wood did you use for the outrigger and the outrigger boom?

GK: Hau.

LK: Was the body of the canoe painted?

GK: Oh yes.

LK: What kind of paint did you use?

GK: Any kind of paint, whatever kind of color you wanted. But before, the most common paint colors that were used was black and white. The body would be painted black and the gunnels would be painted white.

LK: Was the gunnel a different wood, a separate wood?

GK: Yes. It would be a separate piece of wood. Also, the bow portion and the back portion would be separate pieces, too.

LK: What kind of tools did you use to carve the canoe?

GK: We used special adze.

LK: So you folks didn't use the regular axe?

GK: No, we used carving adze, different kinds of adze. One we called ko'i lipi and another called ko'i holu. And for cutting the side of the canoe right under the seat cleat you have to use a special adze and that's the one we call the ko'i 'o'oma. That's a good adze for cutting under the seat cleat because that kind of adze had a special bent blade.

LK: What is the ko'i lipi?

GK: Well, that's the main axe.

LK: So it's really an axe?

GK: Yes, it's an axe, it's a straight metal blade.

LK: And the other adze would be carving adze?

GK: Yes.

LK: What is the ko'i holu? Is that used to carve the outside of the canoe?

GK: No, it's used to carve the inside of the canoe.

LK: And what about the sides of the canoe?

GK: That's where the the ko'i 'o'oma is used. That's used for carving the sides of the inside of the canoe, such as below the seat cleats.

LK: Is that adze a little smaller than the others?

GK: Well, it's not that big. It's just about the right size and it has a kind of a rounded blade and curve.

LK: Can these adze blades be removed by removing the binding, the cord that binds the blade to the handle?

GK: Yes. But during our time we used screws, so we just took the screws out and then when we wanted to put them back we just screwed them back on again. But of course, earlier, no screws were used, they were just lashed onto the handle. Screws were better, of course, because the lashing sometimes would break apart.

LK: What type of wood was used for the gunnel?

GK: Well, not koa but any other kind of wood you wanted to use, you could use. Koa is a little bit too heavy for the gunnels. It would make the canoe even more heavy. Redwood is good.

LK: Is that what you used?

GK: Yes.

LK: And how did you attach the gunnel to the body of the canoe?

GK: Well, some people used nails and some people sewed it on.

LK: Would that really hold firm?

GK: Oh yes indeed. You use a small drill to make the holes and then you lash the gunnel to the body of the canoe by sewing it. Of course in the old days they had to make their own cord with the husk of the coconut. Some people would go up into the mountains and get this, what do you call it, 'ie'ie. They used the root of this plant.

LK: So you used your canoes only for fishing?

GK: Yes.

LK: What kind of major fishing did you do?

GK: Hand line fishing. I also fished for 'ahi.

LK: Oh, similar to what your father did?

GK: Yes.

LK: Are there about two kinds of 'ahi fish? How many different kinds of 'ahi fish are there?

GK: Well, the 'ahi that's caught at night, it's flesh is white. Of course, the regular 'ahi has red to yellowish flesh. The best one is the daytime kind. The night time one has the white meat. Of course, the bigger the fish the better. Yet, today the fish that tastes very good is the ono because they smoke it, and boy, does it taste good when they smoke the ono. It tastes even better than 'ahi.

LK: In the days before, like when your father was fishing for 'ōpelu, wasn't there a season just for feeding and a season for actually catching the fish?

GK: That's correct. [We take a break here since the granddaughter and daughter come into the room and we are introduced to the granddaughter.]

(Taping stops, then resumes)

LK: Your house down at Ho'okena Beach is probably the only dwelling that's being lived in by you?

GK: No. Just ma kai of me there is a house being lived in now. A Hawaiian family is living there, and on the other side of me towards Kealakekua side of my house are two homes that are being lived in.

LK: But if you compare today with before, it must be pretty lonely down there.

GK: Certainly.

LK: Was Ho'okena a coffee growing area, too?

GK: Yes.

LK: I guess you were also involved with that?

GK: Yes.

LK: Was your main job to pick coffee?

GK: Yes, that's what I did, I was a coffee picker. Of course in those days it was very cheap. We got paid thirty-five cents a bag.

LK: Is your wife from Ho'okena?

GK: Yes, but her mother is from Maui. Her mother was a Ka'ai and her father is Kahumu, I think.

LK: And that's how you folks are related to Flora Hayes?

GK: Yes, Flora Hayes is the sister of my wife.

LK: But wasn't Flora raised in Hāna, Maui?

GK: Well, she also stayed here in Kona. She was raised here. They have a home up above here in Ho'okena, I mean in Keālia. And then Homer [Flora Hayes' son] sold that place.

LK: There are a lot of privately owned lands at Ho'okena, isn't there?

GK: Yes, there is a lot down at the beach area and also upland.

LK: And many of the original owners still have them until today?

GK: Well, some of them still own and some of them don't own anymore. Waia'u had some property down at the beach.

LK: Those people are from Hilo?

GK: No, they're from Ho'okena and then they moved to Hilo. And these Waia'us that are in Hilo are really grandchildren of the old Waia'u. But too bad that property has been sold. It was the wife that sold the property to a haole from Hilo. She was the only one paying the taxes on it.

LK: Seems like most of these new homes that are coming up are being built by retired haole people.

GK: Yes, that's right. There's so many of them now, just like this man, Po'ahā, he sold some property. That property belonged to his wife, Loke. This property is down at the beach at Ho'okena so he went to get this haole by the name of Basque and so he gave Basque the land down at the beach in return for a house to be built on his ma uka land.

END OF SIDE TWO

SIDE ONE; TAPE NO. 9-41-1-80 TR

GK: The way the ancient hula was conducted in the old days was very sacred.

LK: What kind of clothing did they wear?

GK: Just regular old clothing, we wear.

LK: What kind of musical instruments did they use to dance with?

GK: They used 'uli'uli.

LK: Did they make their own 'uli'uli.

GK: Yes.

LK: And so the nature of the landscape of Ho'okena back then was very open, not that much trees, mostly grass?

GK: That's true, mostly grass and it was very open, no obstruction with all these bushes and trees that we have now. The main plants were pili grass and 'ōhi'a trees. Of course, the pili grass grew more down the ocean side and the 'ōhi'a grew only in the uplands. And there were so many Hawaiian people living then in the area. I had a grandfather who used to have property down at the beach in between the ocean and the mountains and he would walk all the way to these areas in one day. He would stop in the midland areas and plant his sweet potatoes (and watermelon) and he'd continue up the mountains where his taro patch was and then he would plant a few taro there. And then come home to the beach with a load of sugar cane from his mountain farming area. He was a real strong and industrious person.

LK: Did the old people wear malo, the loin cloth in those days?

GK: No, not really.

LK: So they just wore regular trousers?

GK: Yes.

LK: What kind of trousers did they have?

GK: This kind that we're wearing now and like denim. [What we were wearing were corduroy and khaki.] The only time I saw them wear malo was when they went fishing, then you would see them put their malo on and that's something I laugh about when I think about it. There was this man, he went fishing for 'ōpelu and we would go fishing, too, with my uncle on our canoe. And when they were a lot of 'ōpelu to be caught that man would play tricks with us. We would be so involved laughing at what he'd be doing and you wouldn't know that he would be catching all the 'ōpelu for himself. He would do mischievous things to attract your attention, like turn his 'ōkole towards you and slip his scrotum from his malo and show it to you. Of course you would just bust out laughing.

(Laughter)

GK: And of course with this kind of fishing it's team effort, so when your partner would call to you to throw out the bait you'd be so involved laughing that you wouldn't do what he told you to do. There were sure some naughty people around in those days up to mischief. By the time you would throw your bait out, there wouldn't be no 'ōpelu, that other guy would have caught them all.

LK: And so when you began to fish, did you sell any of your fish?

GK: Yes, I sold my fish.

LK: Where was the market that you sold your fish to?

GK: There was no market, the people who bought the fish came down to the beach on donkey, and people came down with three donkeys, some came with nine or ten donkeys. There was a Portuguese man, he had about ten donkeys. His name was John Vinesa. And there was a Chinese man, his name was Ah Kim Siu. There was also a Japanese man who bought our fish, and later more Japanese people came down to buy fish from us. And by that time they had Model-T cars.

LK: And what kind of fish was this that you sold to them?

GK: 'Ōpelu.

LK: Was that dried 'ōpelu?

GK: Yes, they took some dried fish but also they took the fresh fish, too. When we brought our fish in on our canoe, we would have

'ōpelu by the four hundreds, each canoe would have at least four hundred apiece. [The terminology used in counting four hundred is lau and the predominant method of Hawaiian counting was by four and so the unusual number, four hundred.]

LK: And who dried the fish?

GK: It was the women's job to dry the fish. You would sell whatever fresh fish you could to these peddlers who came down, and the rest of it you would dry.

LK: How was the fresh fish kept fresh?

GK: No, they sold the fish straight from the boat, fresh; they would peddle the fish from house to house. They did that by donkey, and before they used to peddle fish up until midnight. Whatever leftover 'ōpelu they had they could still take it home and salt it and dry it and that 'ōpelu would not be itchy. But today you can't do that with the 'ōpelu. The only way you can keep the 'ōpelu fresh today is with ice. If you don't have ice, well, as soon as the sun sets nobody would want to buy that if you don't have ice. Nobody would want to buy your fish unless it's on ice because they know that fish will be itchy if they ate it. And the reason is that nowadays they use a different kind of bait to feed the 'ōpelu. In our time we used mostly just taro and also papaya, that's what we used to feed the fish, to chum fish. That's the major difference between now and before. Now they feed what they call "chop-chop" to the fish, that's chopped up fish scraps and whatnot all chopped together to chum the fish. So when that gets into the stomach of the fish, it begins to ferment once you catch the fish. That spreads into the body of the fish and spoils the fish very quickly. That's the trouble now. The people nowadays don't care about that because as long as you can catch plenty, then you can sell and get more money.

LK: Nowadays, nobody knows about just feeding the 'ōpelu.

GK: That's right, nowadays all year round people fish and fish the 'ōpelu. Before it wasn't that way; before, three months out of the year was spent just feeding the 'ōpelu, then they would pull and catch the fish in November, December and January, and if you had a good net, boy, do you scoop up. Just several times drop your net and pull it up and that's all you need.

LK: What is the good kind of net, is it through luck?

GK: Well, a good net goes down very quickly and before, the net was coarser and heavier. The cord was bigger and thicker. Today, it's very light. The line is very small but, of course, very strong nowadays.

LK: What kind of stick was used before to extend the net?

GK: We used 'ūlei [a kind of native wood], also hala, this was the hala tree.

LK: What part of the hala was used for this purpose?

GK: Well, you know, there's not just one kind of hala. There's two kinds of pūhala tree. [Pūhala is the same term used for the pandanus tree, as well as hala.] One kind of pūhala grows straight by itself and that's the kind we look for. Then you cut that down and you split the trunk open and you dry that. So actually, you scrape the inside of this split pūhala trunk and the outside is what's left. And when you dry it it becomes very strong; it's very tough and you can bend it without breaking it. Because inside of this trunk is threadlike, you have to scrape all of that out. Then there's a layer between the outer skin and that fibrous portion that you scrape out and that's the layer that you want. That's the portion that you keep. Then you leave it like that in about so wide. [GK forms a circle with his thumb and his index finger to form a diameter of approximately an inch.] And 'ūlei is about the same way, too.

LK: But the stick for the 'ōpelu net is pretty long, it's several fathoms, isn't it?

GK: Yes, it requires a long stick but if you get one hala tree, that's enough. Maybe sometimes you have to get two trees instead of just one.

LK: So you look for a hala tree that grows straight?

GK: Yes, but even if it's crooked, just as long as it has no branches--it just grows by itself with no branches and you see quite a sum of hala trees that have a lot of branches on them. But you look for the one that is not branching, but maybe sometimes there's a few branches at the top, but the base portion is still branchless, that's the kind you look for.

LK: Well, the 'ūlei just naturally grows long, almost like a vine, in a way.

GK: That's right, but it really is not a vine, nowadays nobody thinks about those things because they use wire.

LK: That's true, nowadays everything is done very quickly. Everything is pre-made, there's no great work involved. All you have to do is buy it from the store. That's to include the netting and stick and everything.

GK: That's right, we had to make everything on our own in our time and I think the net that we made on our own is much better than the kind that is being made today, because our net before was made in sections. You see, there was a hope section and, of course, the kino, then there was the 'ekewaiū section.

LK: What is the 'ekewaiū?

- GK: Well, you see, that's somewhat like the four corners of the net. It kind of sags and that's where you tie your lead in order to sink your net down.
- LK: Is the lead tied outside of the net or inside of the net?
- GK: Outside of the net.
- LK: So in those days, the 'ōpelu net was made by sections?
- GK: Yes. Of course you have to know how to make each section the right shape. I think there's a total of about four pieces that have to be made. There's the 'eke, then the hope and the mua, then the kino. The net does not look like a cone when it opens, it looks more like a calabash when it opens. When you drop your net down it's kind of bunched, up but then once you start to pull it up it takes the shape; it begins to swell out and the fish doesn't escape that easily because they are so involved in eating. Those people really knew how to make the nets. Nowadays it looks like a throw net the way they make the 'ōpelu net. It's shaped just like a V-shape and sometimes when there's only about two or three more feet before the net hits the surface as you're pulling it up, the 'ōpelu would just swim straight up that net and right out. But with the old net there was a lot of space in that net so the 'ōpelu didn't notice they were getting closer to the surface or whether they were being pulled up; and of course they would be so involved with eating, too, they would never notice what's happening to them.
- LK: And what kind of fish did you catch by hand line fishing?
- GK: Well, there were all kinds, there's the pō'ou and also the moano, weke.
- LK: What about the 'ula'ula?
- GK: Oh, that fish is caught by the kaka method.
- LK: What is the kaka method?
- GK: Well, you use ten hooks on your line.
- LK: And with the hand line you're using one hook?
- GK: One or two hooks for hand line fishing. And this 'ula'ula is caught in the deep water.
- LK: So there's ten hooks on one line?
- GK: Yes, if you want ten, or some people want more.
- LK: Isn't there some kind of stick involved?
- GK: Yes, there is a stick that is used about, oh, so long. [GK gestures about two or three feet; he doesn't quite explain the function of

the stick but it is used to separate the ten or more hooks so that they will not tangle up; it's more like a cross piece on the main line and you would have maybe two hooks to one piece of wood, one hook on either end. And then you would attach it to the middle of the main line, in that way these two hooks would be separated one from the other and you would go on down the line with more sticks and each stick having two hooks. So for ten hooks you would need, I guess, five sticks.]

LK: And how did this line go down into the water?

GK: Way at the end of this line you would have a lead to sink the line.

LK: So you caught 'ula'ula that way?

GK: Yes.

LK: And what other fish were caught by that method?

GK: Nohu, 'ōpakapaka and also 'ūkīkiki.

LK: What about uku?

GK: No. To catch uku you have to fish it by pōhakumau.

LK: What is pōhakumau?

GK: That's using two hooks. You tie these two hooks to the main line and where you tie these two hooks to the main line you have a sort of a bag there to hold your chum. Then you put these two hooks in with the chum, then you wrap up this whole thing in this bag or clothlike thing and then you wrap your main line around it, too. Then you put a stone with that, too, and you throw it out and you pull it to release it.

LK: And they call that pōhakumau?

GK: Yes.

LK: And so when you throw this out into the water then . . .

GK: Then you pull your main line to release the stone and then the chum will come out too.

LK: Do you have to measure how many fathoms you want it to go down before jerking the line?

GK: No, you let the line go all the way down until it hits the bottom then you gently pull some of the line up until you feel that it is suspended, then you jerk it to release the chum. You can feel the rock floating out, then you know the chum is released.

LK: Is that also done for catching 'ahi?

GK: Yes, some people, yes, that's what we do. We used to do that for catching 'ahi and now, of course, you see them doing something like that. They just take a piece of 'ōpelu, put it on a hook and wrap it up on the stone and then throw it into the water. But before, we used to do the pōhakumau way where we would get a ball of chum and put it in this rag and put the hooks in there and wrap it with the main line until it got to the bottom. And then we would throw that into the water and then we would measure, maybe 15, 20 or 30 fathoms and then we would jerk the lines to release this chum and hooks. If there was fish down at that depth then well, they'd grab your hook.

LK: This is done for uku and for 'ahi?

GK: Yes, and as well as for ulua, mahimahi and a'u.

LK: Did you folks catch a'u, too?

GK: Oh sure. My canoe was about 17 feet; I caught one about 800 pounds once. It was bigger than my canoe and to bring it back was sure humbug. You feel like cutting it and letting it go because, you know, we had to paddle by hand in those days. Not like today, you have a motor to do all that work. Before we had to do it all by hand.

LK: Weren't you afraid of the sharks?

GK: No, no. I've caught sharks myself. There was this haole once, his name was Ford, he came down to the beach, he wanted me to catch a shark for him because he wanted to get the teeth and jaw. So I caught one for him once. Then, while I was fishing I began to feel the canoe jerking a little bit, but of course I already had a shark. I had tied it to the canoe, so I was thinking I would tie it there and when I was ready to go home I just cut the head and keep only the head and bring just the head home. So as I was fishing I had no time to do that, and every time I started to fish, I would feel this jerking so I looked around and there I saw another big shark biting this other shark. I tell you my hair stood up. So I grabbed the line that the shark was tied to and I untied it and threw the whole works into the water and let that shark go.

(Laughter)

GK: But if you're on a regular big boat, well, you know, sometimes I used to go out flag line fishing. That was good fun.

LK: Who did you flag line fish with?

GK: Oh, just some of the boys.

LK: Were they from Ho'okena?

GK: Yes. And this Charlie Moku'ōhai, well, he had two boats so I'd go with him. And I also used to with this other guy, he's from Hilo, his name is Ah Kwai.

LK: What is flag line fishing?

GK: Well, you have to have about 10 to 20 hooks and each hook will have a basket to coil its line in. There is one main line and each line would be tied to this main line. Each line was about 20 fathoms, so when you go on the boat you just drop the line off as the boat travels along. Before you know it, sometimes before you finish all 10 baskets or all 10 lines, you would see the a'u [marlin] jumping; you already caught one fish already. By the time you haven't even dropped all the lines from the boat; but you cannot quit and go and get that fish, you have to keep dropping your lines until you're all done. And if that line happens to break while you're still dropping your line, well, that's hard luck.

LK: What kind of bait do you use?

GK: 'Ōpelu, we just hook the head of the 'ōpelu to the hook.

LK: And is there a flag involved?

GK: Yes, you see, there would be a flag for every two hooks, there would be a flag.

LK: And how would this flag stay afloat?

GK: Yes, we used floaters. Before, we used these plastic bottles as floaters so these floaters would help to hold the line up. That would be every two hooks. You would have these gallon floaters and that would be sufficient, and when you see the flag going down then you know you have a fish on that line there. So you would speed over there and hook that fish up, pull the fish into the boat, put another 'ōpelu bait onto the hook and throw the hook into the water again. That's how you would be doing it all day.

LK: But these plastic gallons are really recent things?

GK: Yes, that's right, in the old days we used this wiliwili wood. It's similar to hau. We used blocks of this wiliwili wood, it's a very light wood. That's what we used before. Nowadays it's hard to get.

LK: Is that method of fishing a Hawaiian method of fishing?

GK: Well, I think it's Japanese or haole way of fishing. I think it comes from the Mainland. I think maybe the Japanese brought it to Hawaii. I'm not so sure.

LK: How long would this flag line be?

GK: Gee, about one or two miles. And of course if you're catching fish you're not tired at all, but if no fish is biting, boy, do you get bored.

LK: How do you know where to drop this flag line?

GK: Well, you go out and you can tell when you're out far enough. You look at this island, the Big Island, and then pretty soon you start seeing Maui and it's all open, then you know more or less it's far out enough already and you can drop your line. If you want to lay it sideways or shoot straight, any way you want you can lay it that way.

LK: And does each hook have a lead to take it down?

GK: No.

LK: Doesn't it float up?

GK: No, the reason being that the line is very heavy. If the current is too strong. . . . Well, the thing is that the line would be at an angle and not straight down.

LK: So you catch all kinds of fish by that method?

GK: Yes, 'ahi, but if your line gets to be more in the shallow, then you never miss, you're going to catch mahimahi. Before we used to catch mahimahi a lot and we'd throw them back in the water. That's when we used to catch fish by canoe, and of course nowadays mahimahi is a good priced fish. It brings in a better price than the 'ahi. Before, when we catch mahimahi, we just play with them and let them pull the canoe a little bit and that's it. When they get weak we pull them near and then let them go.

LK: And so when you folks used to fish in the canoe, you'd just pull the fish into the canoe and just leave it there with no ice or anything?

GK: Yes, that's how we had to do it.

LK: Didn't it spoil?

GK: No, of course when we went out in the canoe, we'd take bags with us, some kind of thing to cover the fish. That's the only thing we took. But most times we took with us coconut leaves to cover the fish, because you're fishing out at the front of the canoe and in the back is all open. You're at the front so you can also hold the canoe steady.

LK: So you folks didn't use any anchors?

GK: No, we didn't have that. We only used the paddle because you can't use an anchor when you're fishing.

LK: Is that because it was too deep?

GK: Yes, that and also you're going to put an anchor and you throw your line down, and if the current is strong going in another direction, well, your fishing line is only going to float up. You have to watch that and so when you drop your line with your bait, you have to watch how your line is going, in what direction the current is carrying it. And you have to paddle every now and then to follow that current so your line more or less stays straight down and goes with the current. And you look at your markers on land and if you go too far off the markers then you have to paddle back again.

LK: Gee, boy, there's all sorts of ways of fishing, isn't there?

GK: Yes, oh, yes.

LK: Do you folks see whales sometimes, out there?

GK: Oh yes, we see them out there. I remember the first time I went fishing and saw those whales, we had a lot of fun paddling close to these whales. Our grandparents would get so angry at us and tell us, "Don't you folks do that way, if that whale comes close to your canoe and slaps its tail, there goes your canoe."

LK: What about the akule fish?

GK: Well, that's one fish we didn't fish for in our area but at Nāpo'opo'o, that's the fish they catch a lot there. Before Ho'okena used to have [akule] and this man, Ka'au'a, well, he brought this kū'ula. [A kū'ula is a fishing god] Well, he brought this from Honolulu and this kū'ula was given to him by Mrs. Hayes. They found this kū'ula on Mo'okai and Mrs. Hayes had it and gave it to him. And so when Ka'au'a went to Honolulu with a Hawaiian minister --gee, I forgot his name, I think it was Poepoe--and so that man told Mrs. Hayes that it was a fishing god, the fish rock. And the fish of this rock is the akule [Ka'au'a brought this ku'ula to Ho'okena.] Mrs. Hayes told this man that the first akule that he catches he should give to this stone as an offering. And I was the watchman for the akule at Ho'okena so when the fish would come in, well, I would call up Leslie at Nāpo'opo'o and he'd come with his net and catch the akule. Well, the first akule they caught, well, they sold all of it. That's how they fished for the akule for about three times, and after that there was no akule, no more akule came to Ho'okena because they never offered any to the kū'ula. Maybe for that reason the akule never came back, I don't know.

LK: Well, that's what they say, that if you don't keep the kū'ula, the akule won't come in.

GK: That's true, that's right. So I used to stay down by the pavilion at Ho'okena Beach and that's where I kept the stone. That's when

this kahuna man from up here came down to the beach once, his name is Kahananui and he told me that's why all the Ho'okena people died, because of that stone. And I asked him, "Why did the people die?"

And he said, because of that stone, it's not a good stone.

So I told him, "You mean to tell me that this stone kills men?"

He said, "Yes."

And I told him, "Well, you want me to break this stone to prove to you that this is not a God, he's not God." [GK is referring to the single Christian God.]

Then he told me, "No, no, don't do that, give me that stone."

Then I told him, "No, no, I'll break this stone."

So he said, "No, don't do that, give it to me, I don't want you to die."

Then later I heard he took that stone and then he sold it in Kailua at that Hulihe'e Palace. That's where that stone is now.

LK: It sounds just like a mischievous thing he did?

GK: Yes.

LK: Were there many sorcerers or black magic type of people?

GK: Well, before, there was a lot and during my time there were a few.

LK: What about doctors, were there doctors?

GK: Oh yes, there were doctors, but the doctors before, well, you'd laugh because the only medicine they knew was castor oil. There was a Dr. Ross and a Dr. Goodhill; that's the first thing they'd ask you--if you were moving your bowels. If you said sometimes, then they'd say, "Oh, you need castor oil." (Laughs)

LK: Where was the largest ranch at Ho'okena then?

GK: The largest was McCandless, there's only the McCandless Ranch.

LK: Weren't there any wild cattle roaming wild back then?

GK: Oh yes, there were a lot of wild cattle running free. They would charge and try to hook you. And on shipping cattle day the steamers would come in and anchor off Ho'okena. You have to watch when the cattle start charging; you have to climb up the coconut tree or whatever. Some people would run on top of their house--their roof of their home--and lock the gate to their yards. Previous to McCandless there was Will Roy. He's the first to run the ranch here.

LK: So the cattle was shipped at Ho'okena?

GK: Yes, it was shipped at the beach there from the holding pen. The cowboys would drag the cattle into the water and then swim out to the little boats and tie the cattle up alongside the rowboats. Then these rowboats would take the cattle out to the steamer standing offshore.

LK: Did the steamers come pretty close to shore at your place at Ho'okena?

GK: No, it was pretty far out that they had to anchor.

LK: In the song for Ho'okena, there is a saying about the manini . . .

GK: The Kīlauea, Hawai'i, as well as some other steamers also.

LK: What about the Claudine?

GK: Yes, there was the Claudine as well. And Kīna'u. Yes, there were several other steamers as well.

LK: You said that the girls wore leis on steamer day, what kind of leis did they wear?

GK: This 'awapuhi [ginger]. When the ginger was in season, boy, everybody was wearing the ginger leis.

LK: The white and yellow ginger?

GK: Yes.

LK: What about the plumeria?

GK: Oh no, that's called the make man flower. Nobody wanted to wear that kind of lei. Of course just recently now they're using it in leis.

LK: Now they're planting it by the acres.

GK: Yes, that's what happened here. Several acres have been planted with plumeria and it's then sent to the Mainland. It makes the Japanese people rich, some of my relatives are picking plumeria flowers for some Japanese people.

LK: And you know the bougainvillea flower, does that have a Hawaiian name? You know those kind of flowers that appear to be paperlike and are very bright in colors?

GK: Yes, I know what kind of flower you're speaking of. I don't know what the Hawaiian name for that kind of flower is.

LK: Was that found before, during your time?

- GK: No, I never saw that kind of flower before.
- LK: What about maile, did you folks have that?
- GK: Yes, we had a lot of maile. We tried planting it but it didn't grow.
- LK: Well, isn't that found up in the forest?
- GK: Yes. You can find a lot of it over that side where 'Opihali is and beyond that, too.
- LK: Was the hala lei [pandanas lei] made?
- GK: That was made into leis. Today no one makes that into leis.
- LK: Wasn't that a bad luck or hard luck lei?
- GK: Well, that's what some people say.
- LK: But it's still being worn.
- GK: Yes, you see it being worn entwined with maile and it's very pretty to see.
- LK: Yes, there are all kinds of leis in the olden days.
- GK: Yes.
- LK: Did you folks used to go to Kailua sometimes?
- GK: Yes, sometimes. I don't go there often.
- LK: How did you folks go there before?
- GK: Oh, you mean before, in the olden days? Well, no, no, I didn't go there. It's very seldom we used to go to Keauhou but I never went to Kailua before. But I had a grandparent living there in Kailua by the name of Kaulukou.
- LK: You mean at Kailua?
- GK: Yes.
- LK: And what about Keauhou?
- GK: Yes, I had an uncle living there, his name was Kawewehi and I had an aunt there, her name was Julia.
- LK: Well, it seems there was no reason to go to Kailua because Ho'okena was just as much of a town as Kailua was, probably.
- GK: Yes, but I think Ho'okena was a larger town than Kailua was. If not, at least Ho'okena was a close second in size to Kailua town.

There were so many people living in Ho'okena in those days. And of course we had our own street lights and all those things.

LK: And of course Ho'okena had it's own school. Now, what is this 'Ala'ē School?

GK: 'Ala'ē, that's an area that has its own school by the name of 'Ala'ē School. It's just a small little school.

LK: Did Keālia have its own school?

GK: No. Before, the school was down at the beach.

LK: What school?

GK: The Ho'okena School. Close to where my place is, down at Ho'okena Beach. It's just sea side of my place, close to the ocean. And then there was the church close by to that.

LK: This place you mentioned earlier, is it 'Opihale or is it 'Opihali?

GK: 'Opihali.

LK: Is that a densely populated area?

GK: No, it's really a backwoods area.

LK: And in the areas of Pāpā and Pāhoehoe, there were just a few houses there?

GK: Yes. And in the area of Pāpā and for Ho'ōpuloa.

LK: Do you remember the lava flow that came down and destroyed Ho'ōpuloa?

GK: Yes. I went to see that flow. But the flow that moved the fastest was at Pāhoehoe and at Honokua. There were three separate lava flows that came down in that area and I was staying down at the beach that time. You could even read the paper at night with no light because you had enough light from the glare of that flow. That was the fastest flow that came down, this one at Ho'opuloa. [there may be a confusion in place names, or it is really in that area that the flow was the fastest, please note next line.] Now, 'Ālika was not as fast because I was on my canoe going towards that area to see the flow and the flow was still above the main highway. But when I got to Kalāhiki Point, I could hear the flow entering into the ocean. It sounded like firecrackers bursting. But I kept going on my canoe. Of course, you can't go on the outside, you have to keep close to shore because the water outside is hot and you touch the water out there and it feels like you're in hot bathtub water.

LK: So you couldn't go out in the deeper water?

GK: Yes, you couldn't go out there because the water would be too hot, because the flow is travelling under the water and going out into the deep water.

LK: So you kept close to shore?

GK: Yes, I kept close to the cliffs along the shoreline flow, and I came around to the point there and kept close to shore, and I felt the water was still cold there. It wasn't hot. Boy, if you ever tried to go further out into deeper water you better watch out.

LK: Were there a lot of dead fish?

GK: Yes, a lot of dead fish.

LK: And did they just float to the surface?

GK: Yes, they would just float to the surface. Because when I went down there, was this haole in there--I forgot what was his name --he's from Hilo and he told me to pick up whatever fish I could to bring home. So I went with two of his younger daughters and they were saying, "Look, there's the fish over there." And so we would go over there and pick up the fish, and I got about a half a bag of fish to take home. So, when I brought it back to him he just looked at it, and I thought maybe he would take it home but no, he told me he just wanted to see them. So he told me to take the fish back and throw it back in the water. So I took it outside beyond our wharf and threw it out in the ocean there. And you know this humuhumu fish, when you peel the skin off, all you see inside is the bone. There would be no flesh. Isn't that strange? Maybe Pele ate that.

LK: This is the end of the Gabriel Ka'eo interview.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 9-71-2-81 TR
ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Gabriel Ka'eo (GK)

January 13, 1981

Kealakekua, Kona, Hawai'i

BY: Larry L. Kimura (LK)

[Note: Interview conducted in Hawaiian. Translation done by Larry L. Kimura.]

LK: This is a follow-up interview with Gabriel Ka'eo on January 13, 1981 at his daughter's home in Kealakekua, South Kona, Hawai'i, by Larry Kimura.

You were talking about how your sister folks used to dress up to go dancing when the Queen came to visit. Was there a dance hall down at Ho'okena Beach?

GK: Yes, there was a dance hall. In fact there were two dance places down in Ho'okena and a dance hall also at Keālia. This was all down at the beach area.

LK: So the dancing was not only done when the Queen came [ballroom-type dancing] but for whatever occasion arose?

GK: Yes, most likely but I wasn't too involved with that because most of the time we were up ma uka.

LK: But the Queen Lili'u came to visit on several occasions?

GK: Yes.

LK: And when you went to school did you have any problem learning the English language?

GK: Oh yes, a very hard time. We only spoke Hawaiian, but if we spoke Hawaiian in school we were given a whack, we were punished for that.

LK: Who were your teachers back then?

GK: Well, our principal then was Thomas Ha'ae. There was also George Apela and John Wright.

LK: These were Hawaiians?

GK: Yes.

LK: And they could speak Hawaiian?

GK: Yes, they sure could speak Hawaiian but they didn't want us to speak in Hawaiian. If they ever caught you speaking Hawaiian on the premises, then you were punished for that. You had to go and haul rocks.

(Laughter)

LK: And when you came back, did you speak at home?

GK: We only spoke Hawaiian at home. My grandparents were Hawaiian, my parents were Hawaiian; we were Hawaiian people and we spoke our Hawaiian language at home.

LK: So I guess when you first went to school you had a difficult time speaking English?

GK: Yes, that is right.

LK: In what way did they teach you to speak English at school, because you mentioned that most of the kids were Hawaiian students?

GK: Well, there were just a few Japanese and a few Chinese, about two or three Chinese and the majority were Hawaiian students. There were no haole students and there were no Filipino.

LK: Do you remember any English-type lessons that were taught to you folks in school in order to speak English?

GK: Well, there was geography.

LK: But what about learning the language, the English language?

GK: Well, they spoke to us in English and we had to understand and listen to them.

LK: And this man you mentioned by the name of Will Roy . . .

GK: You mean Willie Roy?

LK: Yes. He was a rancher, wasn't he?

GK: His father was; you see there was a junior and a senior Willie Roy.

- LK: They were the first ranchers there at Ho'okena?
- GK: No, they were not at Ho'okena, they were at Keauhou. The very first at Ho'okena was McCandless and Dowsett, they were the very first to ranch cattle at Ho'okena. They raised cattle there at Wai'ea, Kalāhiki, Keālia and all those places. They were one company that was McCandless and Dowsett, they were the first to raise cattle in this area. Before, there were only Hawaiians raising cattle, you know, you had a little plot of land and took care of your cattle on your property.
- LK: And you mentioned that you folks were allowed to do a little farming on the property of theirs?
- GK: Yes, of course you had to enclose your farming area with a fence to keep the cattle out.
- LK: So Willie Roy didn't have any land in this area, Ho'okena area?
- GK: No, his was at Keauhou and at Kainaliu.
- LK: And you also mentioned concerning Sunday that it was a very sacred day?
- GK: Right, it was very holy day. Everybody went to church. Protestants went to their church, Catholics to theirs and the Mormons to theirs. Those were the first religions here at Ho'okena.
- LK: And keeping this sabbath day sacred, was that a rule that was followed mainly only by Hawaiians or by other nationalities as well?
- GK: Well, our sheriff down at Ho'okena Beach was a Hawaiian, you know Lakalo, he was our deputy sheriff. If he ever saw you going fishing, whether you were Japanese or whatever nationality, he would send you straight home if you did that on Sunday.
- LK: Sounds like it was a regular law then?
- GK: Could be, I don't know, we were very young then. We enjoyed fishing actually, and we would have wanted to go out fishing but we were not allowed to on Sunday. But during our days, nobody went out fishing on Sundays, it was a very sacred day.
- LK: So most of the population back then lived down at the beach at Ho'okena?
- GK: Yes, that is right. Only when this new road up ma uka was completed that people began moving up ma uka to live. That would put them closer to their farming areas, you know. Whereas if they stayed down at the beach, that was quite a distance to travel to go up to their farming areas.

- LK: But I guess you folks had your house up there in the farming area way up in the mountain, and you had a house in between, and of course down at the beach?
- GK: Yes.
- LK: And you walked most of the time?
- GK: Yes, and also by donkey, horse.
- LK: And in your farming and planting taro, how did you insure that you would have taro every day?
- GK: Oh, we sure had enough, we had enough to eat every day. Our family cooked taro twice a week.
- LK: And you still had enough taro to pull at that rate every week?
- GK: Yes we did, we still had taro growing all the time because we did not plant only one patch of taro, we always kept our supply up. We'd maintain more than one garden, we had several that were constantly being attended to and our taro kept growing to supply a continuous supply of taro. Of course, when Japanese and haole farmers came in they started to fertilize and the taro sure grew much more with the fertilizer. Before, we didn't use fertilizer; the only thing we used to use was the dry grass as mulch and let it rot for fertilizer.
- LK: Do you know about using fish traps for fishing?
- GK: Yes.
- LK: Do you know how to make that fish trap?
- GK: No. I used to go with my grandfather, but that wasn't the really big fish traps. That was the kind of trap used to catch hīnālea. And when the hīnālea season came around, that was the only kind of fish people caught. And of course, when it was the moi season, that was the kind of fish we caught. We didn't go and catch only one kind all the time.
- LK: Do you know what was made into fish traps?
- GK: Yes.
- LK: What is that?
- GK: Pōhuehue. That was braided and woven into something like a basket. The 'ina or wana was crushed, smashed and thrown into this basket as bait for the fish to go into the trap. And when the fish got into this trap, they would be stuck in there so you just pull the trap out, throw the fish up on shore and put the trap back again into the water to catch more.

LK: So during hīnālea season, there was a lot of that fish being eaten?

GK: Oh yes, we didn't waste any fish. Because when it was hīnālea season we would catch a lot of it and enjoy eating it.

LK: How was the hīnālea eaten, was it eaten raw?

GK: Some people ate that raw. My father ate that raw but we used to broil it over the coals and eat it that way.

LK: The whole thing, scales, guts and all?

GK: Yes, just as it was. We would broil the whole thing. Just like that, just like it was. Just like this fish called nabeta, we used to catch that in hand line fishing and then scale it and broil it. But then I was working with this Japanese guy and he told me, "Don't scale that fish, come over to my house and I'll show you how we eat it." So when I went over to his house he showed me how they did it; they just fried it, scales and all, and then they ate the fish and boy, was it good.

LK: Did you hear this Hawaiian word, hē'i?

GK: Yes, isn't that the papaya? Of course some people call that mīkana.

LK: And what is 'olo?

GK: I don't know what that is. All I know is the papaya, the gourd, squash and pumpkin. A pumpkin is a squash too. Maybe you mean the 'olo squash?

LK: Yes, that's it.

GK: Well, that's what you should say, the old name is ipu 'olo because according to how you interpret it, 'olo [scrotum] could pertain to males only.

(Laughter)

LK: And what is the nature of this 'olo type squash?

GK: That's a long type squash, that's what people used to use before to go to work with. They used that to put their water in and take it to work with them. That's what our father did when he used to go and work on the county road, he would take that kind of gourd to carry his water in. And you know, sometimes when some guys get rascal, they could hit your gourd with a rock and all the water would come out and you would have no water to drink. (Laughs)

LK: There are all kinds of gourds, aren't there?

GK: Yes, we have the ipu 'awa, that was bitter, that was not edible. Of course, nowadays we have all sorts of edible squash but the ipu 'awa was used just for making poi calabashes and for containers

to put our fishing line in. It was also used to put our fish bait in, too.

LK: There was also wooden calabashes, wasn't there?

GK: Yes, we have some, I think my daughter brought some up here to her home. When my wife died, I think she brought some up here. You know how some people are, if you leave it at your home they come in and say, give this to me, give this to me.

LK: Well, those are about the only little questions I wanted to ask you about, you know, pertaining to the visits that the Queen used to make.

GK: Well, we were just small then, about five or six years old, so I don't remember too much about her visits. Of course, we lived most of the time upland and only when the steamers came in then we would sneak and go down to the beach. As soon as school was out, we wouldn't go home because if we did we would have all these chores to do, like get firewood and get water and things like that, cut grass for the donkey and for the horses. As soon as school was finished we went straight down to the beach to where the steamer was. When we go home we knew we would get a spanking, you know. We were kind of smart by then, and the pants that had a hole in it, we would patch it and kept patching it until it got pretty thick around that area there around our buttocks. So when we got hit, we would just scream and make believe that it hurt, but it really didn't.

END OF INTERVIEW

**A SOCIAL HISTORY
OF KONA**

Volume I

ETHNIC STUDIES ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

**Ethnic Studies Program
University of Hawaii, Manoa**

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