BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Eric McD. "Iki" Moir

"In 1948, my dad flew me home for Christmas vacation and I participated in the parties, the farewell party at the plantation office for my father and mother and for the end of Kōloa. And that was December 31st, '47, January 1st, '48, was the magic time when Kōloa pau at midnight and Grove Farm took over January 1st. And so we had a party. I have a picture of it with all the guys, and my father and mother and me taken in front of old Kōloa Plantation office building. . . . And she was feeling down and he was feeling down because he was out of a job."

"Iki" Moir is the only child of Hector Moir and Alexandria Knudson Moir. Hector Moir was the manager of Kōloa Sugar Company from 1933 to 1948; he stepped down when Kōloa Sugar Company merged with Grove Farm. Alexandria Knudson Moir is a descendent of the Sinclair, Gay and Robinson families who owned Ni'ihau and parts of Kaua'i.

Iki, born and raised in Po'ipū, attended Kōloa School. He left the islands in 1944 to attend high school in New Mexico. He then worked in the construction business in California.

In 1976, he returned to Kaua'i and built a home in Po'ipū, where he currently resides.

Iki has a strong interest in Kaua'i history and has read and lectured extensively on the subject. He sits on the board of the Kaua'i Historical Society and conducts tours for the Grove Farm Homestead Museum. Iki also is active with the Friends of the Kōloa Public/School Library and helps with observances and celebrations relating to Kōloa's plantation history.

Tape No. 15-17-1-87

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Eric McD."Iki" Moir (EM)

April 14, 1987

Po'ipū, Kaua'i

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Mr. Eric "Iki" Moir, on April 14, 1987, at his home in Po'ipū. The interviewer is Warren Nishimoto.

Okay, Iki, why don't you tell me first of all where and when you were born.

EM: When, May 23, 1931, Waimea Hospital, Kaua'i.

WN: Let's talk about your family background. First let's talk about your father's side, the Moir side.

EM: Moir, Big Island. Actually, Moir, Scotland. Be here a hundred years next year. The grandfather came here in [18]88, because things were the pits in Scotland. And well, there was just no work there. Large families, the whole economy was very depressed. So he found out that they were hiring Scotsmen in Hawai'i, so he bought a ticket and left Scotland, and went to Hilo and went to work, Waiākea Mill Company as a pack mule luna. He had eighteen pack mules, in charge of, and he made sixty bucks a month, and he was very happy. And so he wrote home and paid the way of his wife-to-be, and she came out in '89, and they were married in July of '89, and had five children.

WN: What was your grandfather's name?

EM: Moir, John Troup.

WN: John Troup [Moir]. And his wife?

EM: His wife? Louisa, no middle name. And by 1900, twelve years later, he was manager of Onomea. And he was manager of Onomea Sugar until he died in 1933. He left school just before his twelfth birthday. And went to work for his father, age fifteen went to work for the Scottish railroad, age twenty or twenty-one went back to work for his father, plowing, basically he was a plowman. And then he came out here and I guess he was at the right place at the right time. And Scotsmen were farmers, at least he was. Most of the Scots that

came out here were either farmers or bookkeepers. I think (on) most of the plantations, if you look back at that time, you'll find either the Scotsmen who were here were in the bookkeeping department or they were out in the fields, in agriculture.

WN: What part of Scotland was he from?

EM: Okay, the Eastern coast. Around Montrose, north of Carnoustie, south of Aberdeen. And there were a whole bunch (of Scots), I don't know how many of them, and somebody at one time said that Scotland's biggest export at that time were people. And they were all out here, there were also some engineers in the mills, most of them self-educated. And they hired their own. One of the reasons they hired their own, by the way, was that these guys paid their own way out here. Didn't cost you to bring 'em. You know, for a lot of people that they brought here it cost money to bring 'em here, but the Scotsman came out here and paid his own way. And if he wasn't any good and got fired, he had to pay his way home again.

WN: Do you know what other options there were for them, besides coming to Hawai'i and working for the sugar companies?

EM: A lot of them went to America. His uncle went to Canada. His wife's brothers, two of them went to New Hampshire. I think one of them went back to Scotland. And in his letters (home) he's saying that there is not that much work here, yet, and he's saying, "Go to California, there's a need for servants in California." They thought of themselves as servants. My grandfather says that---he refers to a man on the plantation at Waiākea as his master. So he felt he was a servant and these were the masters. That's what they were used to in Scotland. The laird (was) the lord of the manor, and they worked for 'em as gardeners, gamekeepers, grounds keepers, plowmen, and so (chuckles) anything was better than that. So they came here and there was a good opportunity for 'em.

WN: How many Moirs actually came over here?

EM: Oh, well, he brought nine nephews, and his brother-in-law. And his brother-in-law succeeded him as manager of Onomea after he died. William Silver. And so there are Silvers, Andersons, Moirs, all came out of the same family basically. Then my grandfather, hey, he did well enough to send all his kids to school. His three sons graduated from Cornell as agriculturalist engineers. And for a very short period of time, between August of 1933 and when he died in October, he was manager of Onomea, his oldest son was manager of Pioneer Mill Company on Maui, the next son was the head of the agriculture department for Amfac in Honolulu, and his youngest son, my father, was the manager of Kōloa Sugar Company. And that's not bad in, you know (laughs), a generation and a half.

WN: And the oldest son who was with Pioneer used to be Kōloa, right?

EM: Yeah, Uncle Jack [John T.] was Kōloa, for about eleven years, I

think. And then Jack went to Pioneer and my dad [Hector McD.] became manager here.

WN: In 1933.

EM: [19]33, August.

WN: Tell me what you remember about your dad.

EM: Hmm, goodness. He was big. Six [feet] four-and-a-half [inches], 250 [pounds]. And for me I thought he was a very gentle person, good with his hands, good agriculturalist. And fixed things, make things, liked to landscape, grow orchids, grow flowers, a good shot. Bright, interested in a lot of things, collected Hawaiian artifacts. History preservationist. And so was my mother, so they got along well together. And because I was an only child, that's probably where I picked up all of my interests, 'cause we used to sit out on our front porch at night, you know, in the evening before dinner and talk. We had nothing else to do, there were no other kids around. Our closest neighbor was my grandfather and he was a quarter of a mile away, and you don't play with your grandfather a whole lot (chuckles). And so, you know, you sit at home and talk to your folks. And you know, we didn't have any radio. Well, we had a radio, but in those days, KGMB and KGU usually went on low power at six o'clock at night, so you couldn't hear 'em anyway. So you didn't listen (chuckles) to the radio. So you read or you talked to the folks, and so we'd talk family, and Hawaiian legend, artifacts, plants, birds, identify birds, identify plants, all that. And he managed the plantation. You know, it depends on who you talked to on the plantation, some people loved him and some people didn't. And I got to admit I'm too young to really know whether he was good manager or bad manager. He was a good old man though.

WN: To be a manager in those days was it absolutely necessary to know a lot about sugar?

EM: Yeah. Sure. And a lot of other things.

WN: Uh huh, well, how do they learn about sugar when they. . . .

EM: Well, they were agriculturalists, they were born on the plantation. They were born on, you know, Onomea. And my grandfather learned it from just doing it. And he must have been good, when John T[roup Moir] took over at Onomea in 1900, they were producing about a little over 7,000 tons of sugar a year. And in the late 1920s, his best year was 29,000 tons. So that's four times the tonnage. I guess from what I've read, he did it by better cane varieties and better preparation of the soil, well, whatever, just trial and error, I guess. And Uncle Jack was a good agriculturalist, Uncle Goodale was a hell of an agriculturalist or he wouldn't have been the head of the plantation department for Amfac. And my dad was too, they were all good. And they all had the engineering mind. I don't know where that comes from, I suppose maybe it's sort of a Scottish

trait. But they enjoy building. My father in fact, when he first got out of college, stayed in New York State and was a construction foreman for a company in New York State. And I didn't know that until years later. But I ended up going to the Mainland and was a construction foreman in California. (Laughs) And I didn't even know it then that he had been a construction foreman. I only found that years later, reading. I knew he had worked for Bethlehem Steel Company, but I never knew that he was a construction foreman. So I guess that's why he thought I had a good job when I was a construction foreman (laughs) I don't know how many years later, forty years later? Or longer.

WN: Your father was born and grew up in Onomea?

EM: Yeah.

WN: And when did they come over to Kōloa?

EM: My dad came to Kōloa in 1930. No, he came in I think, December of '29. And January 15, 1930, Uncle Jack had a party and my father went, and one of the guests was Mr. Eric Knudsen and his daughter. And my father met his daughter, and they went fell of love, and in September they got married.

WN: So your dad was in Onomea and your Uncle Jack was managing Kōloa, and then he came over.

EM: Yeah, my dad came back from the Mainland, went to work as night engineer at Onomea Mill. Most of the Scotsmen in those days felt that sons should not work for fathers.

WN: Why?

EM: I don't know. I think it's a style, and also in those days, and in fact today, most sons don't want to work for their fathers anyway. Because the father usually expected more, or put more demands on the sons, so that it didn't look like he favored the son. I never would have worked for my father.

WN: So it's not a cultural thing.

EM: Well, I think it might be sort of a cultural thing.

(Laughter)

EM: I think that's Scottish, in that book that the Caledonian Society put out, it's mentioned that you would go to work for one of your relations and he makes it tougher on you than he does on maybe some of the other people, just to not show favoritism. Which is probably unfair, but anyway. So my father was working for his father when he was at Onomea. And so he came to Kōloa and worked for his brother. And then, fortunately, his brother went to Pioneer. So we ended up with the father on the Big Island, one (son on) Maui, one O'ahu, one

Kaua'i. Covered the islands (laughs).

WN: How was it that your Uncle Jack went from Kōloa to Pioneer [in 1933]?

EM: It was a promotion. Pioneer was---I suppose, within a company like Amfac, the plantations with bigger production, usually the manager got a little more pay. Say on Kaua'i, Līhu'e was considered to be the top plantation at that time. So the manager of Līhu'e was, quote, unquote, the top Amfac manager on Kaua'i. And this was true on all the other islands. And so he went to Pioneer. Jack then never left Pioneer, he retired there in '52. And my dad never left Kōloa. Kōloa left him, but he didn't leave Kōloa. In other words, the plantation was sold [in 1948]. And so when there was no more Kōloa Plantation, they had no more Kōloa Plantation manager, but he never transferred either.

One reason he didn't transfer was that my father was, at that time, the only plantation manager in Hawai'i who owned his own house. Because managers didn't own houses. They transferred all the time.

WN: But there was a plantation manager's house?

EM: Yeah, the house that Uncle Jack lived in. When he went to Pioneer, my dad already had his own house at Po'ipū. And Kōloa needed a new plantation office, so my dad made the old manager's house the plantation office building. And so Kōloa basically didn't have a manager's house anymore. And we lived [in a house] down at the beach.

WN: So that was like a big consideration for having your father become manager? (Laughs)

EM: I don't think it made any difference. I doubt it. If somebody else had come they would have expanded the office, the office was on the same piece of property. And they could have expanded the office just as easily, but it was easier at that point to just move the whole thing into the big manager's house. Because it was a much bigger place than the office. Then I think the old office became the field office for harvesting, or where the lunas met. And the old house---the big house was where the bookkeeping department (was), and the engineer was upstairs, and they put a big vault in it, you know, for fireproof, and keep the money in. No, we had banks by then. But, mostly for the papers and all (the records). But anyway, that's one of the reasons why we no longer had a manager's house at Kōloa.

WN: So your father became manager in '33, you were born in '31. Okay, so tell me something about your mother's side. The Knudsen side.

EM: Knudsen. More stories. Actually my mother's great-grandmother came here and brought her grandmother, and her grandmother met her grandfather. So that makes sense, yeah. Eliza Sinclair, the lady

who bought Ni'ihau, came here from New Zealand. She was a Scot, from Scotland originally. She brought three girls and two boys, they weren't girls and boys, they were all adults. And one of them was Mrs. [Jean Sinclair] Gay, one was Mrs. [Helen Sinclair] Robinson, and one was Miss Sinclair, Annie Sinclair. And so she met my great-grandfather, Valdemar Knudsen, who really came here from California, but was a Norwegian.

He joined the gold rush in California, and then had to leave there for health (reasons). When he had crossed the Isthmus of Panama he'd gotten yellow fever. And at the time that he left California he had a store and was a Wells Fargo agent. You know, part of the store was they had the scales, and the miners brought the gold and they weighed it and paid the miners, and did this sort of thing. And so he came out here and left his partner in charge of the store. And the minute he left, I guess, his partner sold everything, took the money, and went back East, so he was broke.

(Laughs) So he started all over again on Kaua'i. And so he met Annie--because he was living at Waiawa, past Kekaha, and he spoke Hawaiian, fluent Hawaiian. And when Mrs. Sinclair bought Ni'ihau, and then some of the lands on Kaua'i, at Makaweli, he translated for them. Though they caught on to Hawaiian quite fast because they could all speak Maori, from living in New Zealand, and the languages are fairly similar.

And so he met Annie, and they got married and had children and one of their children was Eric Knudsen, who married and they had children, and one of his children was Alexandra Lilikoi Knudsen who married Hector Moir. How easy.

(Laughter)

WN: So on your mother's side there's Norwegian-Scot blood?

EM: Yeah, right. Yeah, her father was half and half, he was Scot-Norwegian. And his wife was Norwegian. So that would make my mother what, three-eighths, five-eighths? I think, or something. Anyway, she married a pure Scot.

WN: So the Gays and Robinsons are all Sinclairs, then?

EM: Yeah, yeah. And the Knudsens, depends on which side. On the maternal side, the Gays, the Robinsons, and the Knudsens are all Sinclairs.

WN: So who was the landowner on the Knudsen side? Who originally acquired a lot of the lands in this area?

EM: My great-grandmother. The lands in Kōloa, I think, were bought with Sinclair money as her dowry. Because, as I understand it, her brother paid the monies that bought the land for her. See, this is the style of the time. The girl gets a dowry and then she's out. So she got a dowry. And whatever the price that was paid for the

Kōloa lands, that was the dowry, I think it was $10,000. But anyway, she basically is the one who acquired the lands that everybody calls Knudsen lands now.

WN: Around when was this?

EM: Oh, boy. I think around 1870, '72, somewhere around in there. But they continued to live on the west side. See, Knudsen had his place at Waiawa, the old man, Valdemar. And that's where he and Annie lived. But he was leasing lands, I don't know how many acres, I think he leased something like 40,000 acres, or whatever it was, from the monarchy. And he ran cattle. Junk land in those days, terrible land. You know, in those days, in rainy weather, you could go by canoe from Waimea to Mānā and not go in the ocean. All the lands past Kekaha, that's all reclaimed land. You know, Kekaha Plantation put in big ditches and pumps. And pumped that [water] out. But that was all swamp before. My mother remembered as a kid, lots of birds and swamp. My grandfather used to go out and hunt birds in the swamp. And my mother used to retrieve. Yeah. She always said he was too cheap to buy a dog. (Laughs) So my mother would go out and retrieve the birds that he would shoot.

So a lot of that was real junk land, and a lot of the land that Knudsen had was the high ground above Kekaha. Up, you know like you're going to Kōke'e, you go up on top, sort of an extension of the Nāpali Coast. And I guess his cattle ran all the way up into Kōke'e, in those days. I was just reading something this morning which said that Valdemar Knudsen was one of the early, great sugar pioneers. I, personally, have never really thought of Valdemar Knudsen as being a great sugar grower. Mostly he was a rancher, and ran cattle. He grew some cane, but if you go back and look at it historically, Kekaha side at that time wasn't that good for cane. And it was really more his nephew that created the sugar industry in Kekaha side. H. P. Faye. And though my grandfather---my great-grandfather, excuse me, Valdemar, worked with H. P. and had something to do with the beginnings of that, Knudsen was not that involved in it. Also, he was quite a bit older, you know. And gosh, by the time Kekaha Plantation started, I'd almost bet that he was dead. Because I think he died in the 1890s, and I don't think Kekaha was started until about 1898 or (so). I believe Kekaha and Waimea were started about the time, I could be wrong, but I think that they were both started about in the 1890s. And by then he was an old man, and he was, you know, not necessarily an old man, but he was pretty well done. Because he died, as I say, I think he died in the 1890s.

WN: What did he do with the lands in Kōloa?

EM: Well, they were. . . .

WN: Was it ranching, or . . .

EM: Again, Kōloa lands, I don't think he had a whole heck of a lot to do

with them. I just have a hunch that those were more her lands to do with (more) than his.

WN: So this is Valdemar's mother who acquired the land?

EM: No, Valdemar's wife, Annie, Annie Sinclair, as her dowry. So after Valdemar died, Annie set up a trust. Annie died in the early 1920s. But by then she had two of her three sons, Eric and Augustus, here running the ranch, or whatever it is. And so they were still doing some ranching over on the far side. They'd lost most of their leases over there. So they were doing a little bit of ranching. But most of her Kōloa land she was leasing to Kōloa Plantation. And then in the 1920s, after she died, my grandfather, Eric, moved to Kōloa, he lived up in the [Knudsen] Gap, in the tree tunnel.

WN: That's Knudsen Gap?

EM: Yeah. There was a house up there, was a nice house and stables. He lived up there, and he tried raising sugar and was not successful. And he tried ranching and was not particularly successful, and so he retired, which was a pretty good move.

(Laughter)

EM: And then his brother Augustus basically left Hawai'i and traveled around the world. He was a theologist, Augustus was. He had studied religions in India and the Oriental philosophies, and all of that sort of thing.

WN: This was your uncle?

EM: My great-uncle, my grandfather's brother, yeah. And the other brother, Uncle Arthur, who I never knew, was back East. And then there were two Knudsen girls. One married von Holt, in Honolulu. And one married a Dr. Garston, and they lived in Redlands, California.

It was interesting to go back a little bit. My great-grandmother, Annie Sinclair, took her five children to New Zealand for a year, I mean way back when, and put 'em in school. And then I think she took 'em to, like Vienna, and then like Norway, or Berlin, or somewhere--you know, it's amazing. And so my grandfather Eric, he was taught at home, he went to school in New Zealand, he went to school in Vienna, he went to school I think in Norway. All over the place. Then he ended up going to Harvard. And Harvard Law School. Passed the bar, he was a practicing lawyer in Massachusetts. And then his mother put out the call, and he came back to run the ranch after his father died.

Again, if you consider that Valdemar Knudsen came here broke, and in not that many years, he came here in about 1852, he got married in, I don't know, maybe '64, or '65, '66, maybe even as late as '68, I just don't know now, have to look it up. But anyway, in a

relatively short period of time, he went from broke to being able to afford to send the wife and five kids (to all those places).

And education was very important for everyone. Just like the Japanese, just like the Chinese. We were all the same in that we all came basically uneducated or with very little education. And the thing was, make the money, educate the children so they don't have to start out in the mud like we started out in the mud. My father's father, he didn't want his kids starting out leaving school at the age of eleven or twelve, and plowing in the fields and all that stuff. He wanted to get 'em educated, and once they were educated, they were on their own, that's for sure.

But equip them. So the same thing with the Knudsen side, that same mentality, basically, of getting the kids educated. Arthur Knudsen was a doctor. I think he was even offered a chair of instruction or to be a professor or something, he was very, very good. So they were all well educated, my grandfather was a good lawyer. Better lawyer than he was a rancher.

So this was the whole trend, was education, education. And I know in reading and doing Grove Farm tours and talking to people and all of this, it's surprising the number of Japanese families here that sent children home to Japan, you know, proportionately. And you know, when you consider that it is thought that they were really quite low on the pay scale, to be able to afford to send kids back to Japan and bring them home again. Yamamoto Store in Kōloa, I think all of the sons went to college. But if you consider that here was a family of storekeepers in Kōloa, and you look at it from the outside, and you go, "Gee, these poor struggling storekeepers." But yet, they were able to send, oh boy, three or four sons. Harold, Hubert, Howard, Wally, four? And they all went---I don't know if all of them went, but I know a number of 'em all went to college. And they sent 'em, equipped 'em. Give 'em the tools and then, when we get old, let the kids take care of us.

(Laughter)

WN: You know you've been a lay historian of Kaua'i for a long time, and I was wondering if you can tell me---let's just start talking about what you know about Kōloa's history.

EM: Mostly what I read. Unfortunately. But maybe a lot of people don't read, and mostly I'm a saver. I want to try and collect it and not let it get away. And try and get people before they get too old to remember or too old to talk. And keep it out in the public, and this is why I'm doing the Moir thing [i.e., family history], and this is why through the [Kaua'i] Historical Society we urged the republishing of Kōloa Plantation [1835-1935] and. . . .

WN: [Arthur C.] Alexander's book.

EM: Yeah. And I wrote the epilogue to it to bring it up to date. And

we got involved with the Friends of the Kōloa [Public-] School Library thing, and the historical guide that Martha Hoverson did [Historic Kōloa: A Guide], and all of that, Ike [Okamura], them. So that's just trying to keep the information from getting lost. So as long as you keep doing that, you keep learning, it's bound to rub off. And you know, it's an interest thing, every time I run across something somewhere. I found something over in the Grove Farm records the other day. It was a list of all the employees. And it was all the employees of Kōloa Plantation who had worked here five years and over. From five to ten, ten to fifteen, fifteen to twenty, all the way up to (1948). I think it was one of the Bukoskis or one of the Catalunas, had been here like forty-eight years. Oh, I found this list, I was so happy. Ran it off, brought a copy home.

(Laughter)

EM: But it lists every man. Not just the supervisors, everybody. Louis Jacintho's on the list, and he was in the five to ten, he'd been here over five. So it's good. This stuff is spread out all over the place. And if through people like you who can (do) what you guys are doing. And the Kōloa History Project, and the historical society, and if we can keep all this stuff from getting lost, and try and put it together, and make some sense out of it, we're doing a job.

WN: Do you think there's more to learn in Kōloa than at other places?

EM: Yeah, I think maybe. Well, not more than Grove Farm [Homestead Museum], because they're keeping, and they didn't let it all go. And also, Grove Farm is lucky. What did they have? They had two spinster ladies, and spinster ladies historically keep things. And they make order out of it. I wouldn't have all my Moir family information if it wasn't for my spinster aunt. And she wrote to relatives in Scotland, she kept everything, she kept it all in order. If it wasn't for her, this stuff would be all gone. So if it wasn't for like the Wilcoxes, with Miss Mabel and Miss Elsie, if it wasn't for those two ladies, probably all of that would have been gone.

In fact, Pat Palama who works over there, she and her husband and my wife and I, we went to Australia a few years back. And we went to a place outside of Melbourne, and here was this big old house and this estate that had been turned over to the government. And everything had been saved, and all the letters had been kept. And we walked in, and the tour lady said, "This place was turned over to us, and was saved by two spinster sisters who lived here." And we all looked at each other and said, "That fits." (Laughs) You know, because again, why it's that same mentality in there that this is what these old spinster ladies did. And they kept it all, and many of them resisted change to a certain extent and kept it like it was.

And I think that in Kōloa, there's two things. First of all, Kōloa is no longer a plantation as such. It was Kōloa Plantation up until

1948, right, January 1, when Grove Farm took it over. So you can sort of collect all of that stuff that is laying around. It has an ending. Has a beginning and has an end. And of course, secondly, it is the oldest sugar plantation, so this is where it all began, so that makes it historically significant. In fact that's why Alexander wrote his book. And that book probably is the best book ever written as a history of a sugar plantation. It was done over fifty years ago, which is significant too. Done back in the 1930s. He did a real fine job of it, he was a very meticulous scholar, and everything was checked and rechecked, and doublechecked.

There is a lot of information around, (but) I must say, unfortunately, a lot of Kōloa's records were lost when Grove Farm took over, because when they abandoned the office (in Kōloa) they dumped a lot of stuff, and that was too bad. But some of the very valuable historical records and old maps, and photographs, and things like that, my father took over and gave to Bill Moragne at Grove Farm when Moragne was assistant manager. Bill was always a historical type. And so this was good, and my dad said, "Here, Bill." So some of the old maps that hung in the plantation office are still in the vaults at Grove Farm. And then Moragne took a lot of the pictures and made a big album of it. So actually, some of the real good photographic records of early Kōloa, Bill Moragne, the assistant manager, and then manager of Grove Farm, kept, put into an album, and they are now in the files of the Grove Farm Homestead Museum. (Chuckles)

And again, it was good with Miss Mabel [Wilcox]. She saved our old locomotive. But the first person to save it was my dad. Because when he came here, Paulo, the old 1880 Hohenzollern, was in the back of the warehouse, it was pretty much junked. And so, in 1933, he knew that two years later he was going to be having the celebration, the centennial celebration. So he got the old train out and put it up in the plantation office yard. Built a little railroad, little bed, and put a section of rail. Set the train, and they chipped all the rust off. And they painted it and polished the bell. And so the whole time that he was at Kōloa, the train was always kept looking good. You know, always nicely painted and preserved. Didn't run, the boiler fell apart, but at least it was being painted and taken care of. And the kids played on it and all of this. So then when Grove Farm took over Kōloa, they put the train in the warehouse at Grove Farm. And then it was Miss Mabel Wilcox, basically, who wanted the train saved and restored. So Grove Farm Homestead Museum restored our train. "Our" being Kōloa, because I keep still thinking that (laughs) when I say "our," I keep thinking of me, or Moir, you know. What the hell, he was the last manager, right?

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

WN: I know Kōloa has a very heavy missionary influence, but prior to the missionaries coming, is there any historical evidence of what was here in Kōloa?

EM: Well, it was, as I understand, comparatively speaking, a huge Hawaiian population. Hawaiians are bright. This is a very nice Po'ipū, Kōloa area, very nice area. Obviously, we're up to our ears in tourists. The weather's nice here, south shore. When the ocean was too rough to go fishing, Nāpali, or north shore, and Līhu'e side, it was nice down here. I fished for about two years on a charter boat when I first came back. And it's amazing, you come out of Nāwiliwili Harbor, and you come down and you make the turn, depending on the winds and all, but either you make the turn and you start picking up nice weather at Kīpū Kai area, or even if it's choppy over there, you may, coming down, when you come past Makahu'ena Point, right here, she's nice, down here. You can fish, nice fishing, and you can go all the way down to Waimea side. And also these are, in many cases, rather gentler beaches. It's just a nicer area. And there was ample water here, and lots and lots of Hawaiians lived here. This is why they had the big whaling port (at Kōloa), because again, it was a nice anchorage. When it was too rough in the early days to go to Honolulu from Līhu'e side, people left from Kōloa. You caught the boat to Honolulu from Kōloa Landing.

And when Valdemar Knudsen came here, evidently the ship that he arrived on, arrived late enough or whatever, that he didn't get off the ship that night. He stayed overnight on the ship. And he said [wrote] that there were hundreds, whatever that means, but there were many, many, many cooking fires. And this is before all the koa haole and all of this, and you could see all the way up to Kōloa. Well, it was all open, it was open grasslands. Well, basically, we know that each Hawaiian family did not cook a meal every night. A lot of times they cooked maybe only once or twice a week. So if you figure a hundred cooking fires could have represented 400 families or something. And so there must have been many, many thousands of people living from Māhā'ulepū, probably all the way to Lāwa'i Kai. And you had streams and rivers, and further down, (no rivers), but you did have Waikomo Stream, good water source, 'Ōma'o Stream, all coming down back where Kiahuna Golf Club is. I don't know that anyone's ever counted, but there were just all kinds of pāhale house sites. Very unique irrigation system, an "on top of the ground" irrigation system. And they grew taro, they had salt ponds, mullet ponds, this whole area must have sustained many thousands of people.

And so I'm sure that's probably why the white man first ended up here. They put the mission stations where there were lots of people to convert. And so they put Waimea Mission Station because why? That's where Kaumuali'i, that's where the king was, that was sort of the capital. That's where you go, first mission station. You go where the royalty is. You get accepted by the ali'i, then the common people, the maka'āinana, will accept. So then we go north shore, Hanalei Valley, lots of people living in the Hanalei Valley,

highly agricultural over there. Mission station. One more place, here. A lack of mission station in Līhu'e (laughs) if you think about it. Not too many people there at that time. Līhu'e really didn't become much until it became a political center, more (like) a concocted city.

WN: West Kaua'i was actually the early center of the population.

EM: Well, I would say the south shore all the way over. But Waimea would be, that's where Kaumuali'i was, I guess that was considered (the capital). Coincidentally, [Captain James] Cook landed where the king was. But anyway, that's generally thought, I guess, that the last king of Kaua'i had his home there, and that's where he is basically thought to come out of, the west side. But again though, you have lots of signs of Hawaiians living on the south shore. And of course, you do, too, on all the valleys of Nāpali, and again, all of those had water, lots of water. You know, every valley was formed by a stream or a river, so there must have been one running through the middle of it. So all the valleys, you had lots of water. Hanalei Valley, because you had lots of water. Where you don't have water, you don't have people.

WN: What was the name of the ahupua'a of this area?

EM: Well, there's Kōloa, and Weliweli, Pā'ā, Māhā'ulepū. And then going that way you have, what? Oh, I'm not sure of my order, but anyway, you know we have Wahiawā, Lāwa'i?

So basically, Knudsen, Annie Sinclair bought a majority of the ahupua'a of Kōloa. Kōloa Plantation had acquired Pā'ā, Weliweli, and Maha'ulepū.

WN: This was in the early years of the plantation.

EM: Yeah. And they also acquired, I guess, some of the lands around Kōloa. Smaller pieces bought from different--I don't know who, maybe lesser ali'i who owned some land, too. I'm not sure, but I think the ahupua'a of Māhā'ulepū was owned by Princess Ruth [Ke'elikolani]. And she sold it to Kōloa [Plantation], probably about the time she also sold the ahupua'a of Ha'ikū to [George Norton] Wilcox. But, you have to understand that the Kamehamehas stole Kaua'i from the Kaua'i royalty. Because if the Kamehamehas were not from Kaua'i, how come all of a sudden we end up with Princess Ruth, Emma, Victoria Kamamalu, Kamehameha the Third. All of these are Kamehamehas, all owning big land pieces on Kaua'i. Because they stole them. They kidnapped our king, and then they took the lands of Kaua'i from the Kaua'i ali'i. And then they ended up selling it to the white man. It's a very interesting bit of history. And I think if you go back far enough, you'll find that there are a few Hawaiians around who do not think very highly of the Kamehamehas for having stolen Kaua'i. You know they kidnapped Kaumuali'i, for all intents and purposes, and then when he died, they buried him on Mau'i.

My question has always been, "What happened to the ali'i of Kaua'i?" There is none. Suddenly in the early 1800s, during the first quarter or third of the 1800s, we pop up with this whole island, damned near, owned by Kamehamehas. And yet they never conquered it. (Laughs) I think they paper stole it. And so that's where all the great majority of the lands went. In fact I heard, I don't know if it's true, but I have heard that Victoria [Kamamalu], who sold the ahupua'a of Makaweli to the Sinclairs, had never seen the land. I've only heard that. But anyway, come on, you know, the Kamehamehas sold Ni'ihau, how did they own it? That used to be part of the kingdom of Kaua'i, yet they sold it. They sold Makaweli; Kamehameha III sold Kōloa; Ruth sold all (her lands). Very, very confusing.

(Laughter)

WN: I wonder if [Edward] Joesting covers that [in his book Kauai: The Separate Kingdom]?

EM: To the victor belongs the spoils. Yeah, he does. He talks about it, too. But you know, (Kōloa) was a very (important) place. In the early days, Kōloa had enough international traffic that the kingdom had a customs agent at Kōloa. They had one at, you know like Lahaina, Hilo, Kōloa, we had customs agent. Went down and collected the taxes for the materials brought in. You know, the goods, whatever it is, foreign imports. All of it was taxed.

In fact, in my Scottish letters, my father's father, John [Troup] Moir, he writes back to Grandma, and then there's a lady called Mrs. Tosh, and she cooks for the bachelors. Mrs. Tosh writes a letter to my grandmother to advise her on things to bring and what not to bring. You know, bring white dresses, bring print dresses, don't bring wool, don't bring white silk gloves because they spot. All of this ladies talk kind of thing. And also she says to bring certain types of material which aren't available in Hilo. And my grandfather also writes and says, bring a certain kind of, oh, a type of material that he can have some shirts made out of, because the shirts in Hilo aren't very good. But everybody is telling my grandmother in Scotland, when you buy material, make something out of it. Make a skirt, or make a big night shirt, or something like that, because customs didn't charge you for clothing, but they charged you for material. So you phony up a skirt, right? You take some pleats in this big piece of material, you baste it, you put it together, you make a little button hole, or something. And you say, hey, this is a skirt. And then when you get it here, you pull all the thread back out, and you make something you want out of it. And so basically they were doing this to avoid paying duty on this stuff, because there was no duty on clothing but there was duty on yardage. Those sneaky eels, you know. That's why the Scots have that reputation. (Laughs)

WN: Who were some of the other landowners in Kōloa besides the Knudsens?

EM: Early on, it was Kōloa Plantation and Knudsens, and the missionary,

the Mission church, owned land. And then there were, I guess, that depends, that depends on how far back you go. Then if you're asking in light of the Waterhouses, I'm a little vague on the history of that. But the Smith family that was here, Doctor [Joseph] Smith, that family sort of petered out, or died out, or whatever. And then Dr. [Alfred] Herbert Waterhouse married a descendant of the Smiths and came back, and then he bought lands that had belonged to the Smiths back again. So, it's not that long ago in the structure of things, it's not as many generations back as some of the other lands. Because, I can remember Dr. Waterhouse when I was a kid, so he probably was more my grandfather's age, rather than my great-grandmother's age.

WN: This is the plantation doctor?

EM: Yeah, he was both. He was a plantation doctor and community doctor also.

WN: Do you know if there was a Charman family?

EM: Charman, yeah. George came here. Again that would be a fascinating history. George Charman was---my father thought that George Charman's name might have been Martell, and that he changed his name. Because the name Martell pops back up in the family as a first name.

WN: What kind of a name is that?

EM: French.

WN: French?

EM: Yeah. But he came here early on. Some of his family ended up (here as) the Wright family that was one Charman daughter marrying a Wright. And Mr. Wright was the postmaster here for a long time. And I think it was the Wrights that ended up calling one of their kids Martell Wright. (Another was) Sinclair Wright. (Charman) was a---what was he? He was a teamster, I think, one of his primary businesses was as a teamster, you know, wagons, hauling, oxen, this sort of thing. And then he acquired lands. I think he was involved in starting a small plantation that grew sugar and then sold it to Kōloa. Kōloa ground it for them on shares, so he was here.

Then early on, gosh, you have the ancestors of the Blakes, he came here, I think, as a brick layer. The Neals. Neal was I think a British sailor who came here. N-E-A-L. And married quite a young Hawaiian girl and had a fairly large family, and he was a carpenter and a furniture maker. And then some of his ancestors married into Schimmelfennig---are all tied up with the Schimmelfennigs. One of his ancestors married a Conant. And Blakeslee Conant still lives on the north shore. One of the Schimmelfennigs was Neal Schimmelfennig, N-E-A-L. Of course the Schimmelfennigs are all tied

in with the Brandts. And that's the Germans that came here (to) the plantation.

WN: So mainly it was Germans and Scots who came as managers?

EM: Well, not here. Kōloa was mostly Americans, I guess, and Germans. See, started out with Americans, and then [Paul] Isenberg got involved, who was a German, by buying stock [in Kōloa Plantation in the 1870s]. And then Hackfeld & Co. [later Amfac], a German company in Honolulu, becomes the factoring agent for Kōloa. So now we have the definite German influence. And a lot of our equipment came from Germany, the locomotives came from Germany. And so then you end up with people like the Cropps, I think father [W. E. Anton Cropp] and son [Ernest Cropp], who were managers. And you have people working on the plantation, Schimmelfennigs, Brandts, all out of Germany originally.

And (on) a lot of the plantations, if a plantation has a lot of Germans on it, you go check and you'll probably find out that a lot of the equipment came from Germany. Or if the plantation has lots of equipment that came from Scotland and England, you'll find a lot of Scots and English on the plantation. And whether the equipment followed the people or the people followed the equipment, it's hard to say. But you know, in many cases if you bought a whole bunch of milling equipment from a company in Germany, they might send the technician out with it. The technician brings the wife. He says, "I like it here," he stays here, he writes his brother, and Carl comes out, and then he writes Gustav. On the Hāmākua Coast of the Big Island, lot of the equipment came from Scotland. So, a Scottish technician comes. Our first trains came from Germany, so probably some German came with the trains. So you get these connections. And you have Hackfeld & Co., factoring agent.

You could say if Kōloa had a nationalistic bent as far as the supervisory personnel, you could probably say German. Līhu'e [Sugar Company], German again. Again, Isenberg. And the oldest Lutheran church is on German Hill (chuckles). Again, factoring agent, Amfac. Kekaha's [Sugar Company] factoring agent, Amfac, but not Germans particularly, but Germanic, Norwegians. McBryde Sugar Company, [Walter] Duncan McBryde, (laughs) little bit Scottish. But not like the Big Island.

At one time, somebody went through the records, and at one point in history there were like twenty-six sugar plantations up and down the Hāmākua Coast. Twenty-six managers from Scotland. Every single one, (laughs) every one. But again, they were shipping equipment out here. My grandfather Moir gets a letter from his father. And his father says that someone he knows in Scotland just sent a large shipment of harnesses to Hawai'i. So in the 1890s they're shipping harnesses for plows, the sulky plows, the kind of plows you stand on prior to the steam plows. And so they're shipping harnesses and things out of Scotland, and they're shipping milling equipment (too). Maybe you go where they can understand you. So back to Kōloa. Kōloa I'd say, by and large, in the early years, a German plantation.

WN: Germans and Scots get along?

EM: I don't know, I guess.

(Laughter)

EM: I don't know how, they're both so damned hardheaded.

(Laughter)

EM: Terribly so. But maybe they could get along because they were hardheaded. Gosh knows. My dad always got along good with [Kōloa Mill engineer] Herman Brandt, [Jr.].

WN: Are there more churches, per capita, in Kōloa than other parts of Hawai'i?

EM: Got to be.

WN: Why is that?

EM: Had more sinners.

(Laughter)

EM: No. (Laughs) We might have, I don't know. I would only be guessing, but we (did have) a nice seaport. So where does the first Catholic priest get off? He gets off here. He has his first sermon on the beach at Po'ipū. He goes up the town, and he ends up with the land, and so we have a Catholic church. Then we have the Buddhist churches, we have a missionary---we have a mission church. To start with, we have the [Kōloa] Missionary Church. And I would just guess-timate that when you have a large diverse population in a major trading center, that everybody would put up their churches. And when we had a fairly strong Korean (group) here, I guess working on the plantation, we had our Korean church. And of course we have our two Japanese churches, Hongwanji and Jōdo. And then the old Missionary church, gosh, I don't know, we just seem to have a lot of churches. Always have had churches.

Salvation Army must have come here (too) because we had a fairly large population base. They wouldn't go to a place that didn't have a population base. And again, early days, Yamamoto Store, behind it they had a hotel. Why would they have a hotel in Kōloa? Because the seaport again. And we were centrally located. It's more or less the same distance to the Hanalei side and to the Waimea side from Kōloa. And it was just easier---it was just a better anchorage. And then some years later, in more modern times, when they had the skills, they built the breakwater for the Ahukini [Landing]. But that was a tough harbor to get into when you had a following sea and it was really windy. The ships had a dickens of a time getting into Ahukini. Nāwiliwili was not good. You couldn't get in there, it was tough. So it really wasn't until Wilcox bought

the total bond issue in the late 1920s that they built the big breakwater at Nāwiliwili and had that harbor over there.

WN: That's when Līhu'e grew?

EM: Moreso, yeah. Plus you had Wilcox who was very influential over there, and you had the Rices, and they were quite influential and you did have Līhu'e Plantation.

WN: Līhu'e was always the biggest plantation in the end?

EM: I don't know that it was always the biggest plantation. I'm not that familiar with the history of Līhu'e Plantation. That was a little bit of a unusual situation, in that Wilcox [of Grove Farm] never had his own mill. So Wilcox always ground his cane at the Līhu'e Mill on shares. So they had a big mill because they were not only milling their own, but they were milling another plantation's cane. Of course, we have basically the same situation with Gay and Robinson and Olokele. But Gay and Robinson and Olokele are a little more closely married in that a lot of the Olokele land that they farm is Robinson land. So Gay and Robinson raises sugarcane and Olokele raises sugarcane on Gay and Robinson land but Olokele has the mill.

WN: What about the situation with Grove Farm in Kōloa prior to the merger? Is that where Grove Farm did their cane?

EM: When Grove Farm bought Kōloa, then they ended up with the mill.

WN: Prior to that, how did Grove Farm manage?

EM: Līhu'e. All of Grove Farm's cane went to the Līhu'e Mill. And then they bought Kōloa, and they had to put in the [Wilcox] Tunnel [in 1949] to get the cane from Ha'ikū section to Kōloa. And Grove Farm was good for Kōloa. Kōloa was, I think, up close to a million bucks in debt by the time the merger went through.

Though the first sugar plantation started here, a lot of the lands of Kōloa are not the greatest for sugar because they're so rocky. Terrible rock. Especially the makai sections down here, the ones all down to Māhā'ulepū. But even up top, my gosh, you know, some of these lands have been in sugar for (150) years, and still, every time they plow 'em they come up with rocks as big as a car, or half a car, that are still coming up, still coming up. So it's very, very hard on the equipment, very hard on the mill for all the rock that was going in. In the old days, before mechanization, no rocks went into the mill because everything was hand cut and hand loaded, so your cane was clean. But the minute you started mechanical harvesting, you started scooping up rocks, and the rocks would go into the cane washer, and break the cane washer. You get rocks into the rollers, you ruined a good set of rollers. So mechanical harvesting made a great amount of difference. I don't know, maybe Kōloa was inefficiently run.

But they had a tough time during the war [World War II] for lack of personnel. I think one year, they ended up bulldozing over 300 acres of cane that they just didn't have the personnel to harvest. And by the time the war was over, the railroad system was shot. The trains needed (repair) every five years, or (so). You should take your locomotives completely apart and rebuild them again. Well, during the war, everything just fell apart. And so Kōloa needed a good infusion of money and Grove Farm had it.

So (Grove Farm) did a heck of a job, you know, the tunnel and improving the capacity of the mill way beyond what it had been. Suddenly the mill was required to handle twice the sugar, twice the cane. The Kōloa cane and the Grove Farm cane, so tremendous amount of dollars went into the mill. And taking out the railroad system, and putting in the haul cane roads. Miles of haul cane roads had to be put in. A lot of the rock, I guess that came out of the tunnel was crushed and became the base for a lot of the haul cane roads. And then buying all the rubber-tired equipment and all of this, so, big changes, they did a whole lot of changes.

And there were other plantations that were going out at about the same time. There were plantations on the Hāmākua Coast that had become inefficient. Time had maybe passed them by or whatever it is. And so plantations were consolidating. Look, Waimea is out of business already. Waimea went out of business relatively early in the scheme of things. Kealia, when I was a kid, there was a plantation, you know, a mill at Kealia, it's gone. So things (changed), they've drawn back the horns.

WN: How about if we stop here and then we pick up the next time starting with your childhood? How's that?

EM: I was born.

WN: (Laughs) Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 15-25-2-87

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Eric McD. "Iki" Moir (EM)

April 28, 1987

Po'ipū, Kaua'i

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Mr. Eric "Iki" Moir, on April 28, 1987, at his home in Po'ipū, Kōloa, Kaua'i. The interviewer is Warren Nishimoto.

Okay, let's pick up from---let's see, you were born in 1931, right?

EM: Right.

WN: Okay.

EM: At Waimea.

WN: At Waimea, okay. Why don't you tell me something about your childhood in Kōloa. What do you remember about your childhood in Kōloa?

EM: Not a whole lot. (Laughs) Of course, raised Po'ipū, I really didn't have too many people to play with, so my folks bought some dogs. And my grandfather's house was close. Mostly, when I was real young, it was playing, you know, a kid playing in the yard and all of that, until school started. And then some of us, six of us I think--six or seven of us, went to school in Līhu'e.

WN: Where?

EM: Līhu'e Grammar School. There were, I think two schools on Kaua'i that had an annex, what they call annex. So they had 1 and 1-A, you know first grade and first grade-A; 2, 2-A, 3 and 3-A. There was Līhu'e School, and Makaweli School, I think, was the other one. And the children who could speak good English, or English was considered to be their primary language, went to the annexes.

WN: That was like a English-standard school?

EM: I guess so. But it wasn't necessarily Haoles, though, of course, most of the kids were Haole, because they spoke at home. But there

were Japanese and Hawaiians. If they could speak good English, then they were put into this accelerated class, which was terrible, boring. Because, (laughs) we didn't know anybody at Līhu'e. In fact, two of the kids who went were the children of Mrs. [Rebecca] Maxey, who was Brandt. Her son Homer [Jr.], and the daughter Myrtle May; and the Gillin twins, Mrs. [Adena] Gillin's two; and there was a guy that worked at Kōloa called [Fred] Deverill, his son, and myself. So what is that? Two, four, six--six of us. Every day we went all the way to Līhu'e to school.

And thank goodness for the war. Because when the war started, they couldn't afford the gas anymore. So we got---I got to go to Kōloa School. (Laughs) It was so much nicer, because everybody, you know, all the kids in Kōloa went to Kōloa School, except for these few of us.

WN: They ever consider boarding school for you?

EM: No. No, not then. Anyway, I didn't want to go to Punahou. Because, (laughs) I shouldn't say this on the air. No, mostly I was not too fond of most of the kids that I knew that went to Punahou. And so, there were a few of us here on Kaua'i who never went to Punahou, and we're rather pleased with that.

(Laughter)

EM: Well, it's unique, you know. Every Haole you ran into on Kaua'i, practically, went to Punahou. So there's Holbrook Goodale and myself are about the only two I can think of. Dougie Pratt did not go to Punahou. Another thing, too, the war started, and I don't know whether Punahou had boarding school during the war. But some of the kids, like the Gillin's children, evacuated to the Mainland in '42. But, I stayed. The folks figured there were only three of us, and if something happened to any of us, might as well all. That was their logic, anyway. So we stayed here, and I got to go to Kōloa School, and that was terrific.

WN: What was it like being the manager's kid, going to Kōloa School with, you know, the laborers' kids? Was that tough on you?

EM: No, not that I know of. I had a good time. My folks--I don't know what's the word, liberal or whatever. Some of the Haole families would orient their children, it seems, to play only with the Haole kids. But my folks never aimed me in that direction.

It was lucky the war came along for me because there was gas rationing. Oh, and that was terrific, because [before the war] my father would never let me on a bicycle. I wanted a bicycle. But he said the roads were too dangerous for a bicycle. So if I wanted to go to, maybe down Kukui'ula side to play with some kids or something, my mother would take me in the car. So when the war came, there was gas rationing, so Mama couldn't take me in the car anymore. So I would whine and grumble and I was a pest, so my dad

paid fifteen bucks for a used Schwinn bicycle, and it was all rusty so we took it to Kaua'i Motors and they painted it orange. And then they put electric tape on the handles because the rubber grips were gone. And I had a bicycle for the first time in my life. So thank God for the war (laughs). Only had one bicycle in my whole life, and that was it. Fifteen-buck bike.

WN: Was your dad a particularly economical person?

EM: No, no, he just got a good deal whenever he could get a good deal. Well, by the time the war started, bikes you couldn't buy anymore. Probably the bike was only worth two dollars, but you couldn't get 'em anymore. And it had good tires. That was important because you couldn't buy tires for bicycles. So probably the tires were worth fourteen dollars and the rest of the bike was worth a dollar.

(Laughter)

EM: I'm serious. So, I had a bicycle! And Homer Maxey, [Jr.] got a bicycle. And we couldn't leave Po'ipū, according to (our folks). So we used to go up the back road, come out by the Catholic church, and go to Kōloa. And sneak back down the back road. And then nobody would see you on the main road.

WN: Where was your house at the time?

EM: Out at Po'ipū. Right where Plantation Gardens Restaurant is. Right across [where the] the Sheraton [is today].

WN: What was that house like?

EM: Big, stone house.

WN: How many bedrooms?

EM: Four. We had a maid's room and bathroom, and then four bedrooms. Mine, my father and mother's, and two guest rooms. A plantation manager was expected to entertain and if somebody from Amfac came to Kaua'i on an inspection tour and brought his wife, you put 'em in the house. There were no hotels, and no condos, no restaurants. So you put 'em in the house. They'd stay for maybe two, three days because that's when the boat went back and forth. And you had a dinner party for 'em. Unfortunately, managers didn't get expense accounts. I think this must have come out of their pocket. And then my uncle used to come down, he worked with HSPA, and he used to come down, I think about every other month, and he used to stay a couple days. So you needed a big (house), we already had three bedrooms of the five used already, because we had two maids.

I think the plantation paid for one, that was one of the perks that managers got. You got either, I think, two people that the plantation paid for. Like two yardmen, or two maids, or two of anything and then any more, you had to hire. And we had sisters,

Yuasa sisters from Kōloa, from Mill Camp. Mrs. Yuasa, the mother, was a widow and . . .

WN: She's still alive, right?

EM: Yeah, right. I saw Hiro, my number two mother, just yesterday at the post office. We see everybody at the post office. Hiro was, I think nineteen when she came to work for us in 1930. And then her sister Kiyoko came and worked. Hiro, until 1933, when my dad became manager, then he could afford one more. So then we had two maids. And the two of them worked for us until Hiro got married and then she left, and her older sister Shinobu came. And then Kiyoko got married, and then the youngest sister Chiyoko came. So there were four sisters. All four worked for us.

WN: So you were nineteen when somebody came . . .

EM: No. Hiro was nineteen when I was born.

WN: I see.

EM: I think she had worked for my uncle when my uncle was manager. Anyway, we had a big house, and about three acres, I guess, of land. Real junk land, nobody wanted it. And that's why my father got it because it was cheap. In fact, when the folks built the house, there was no electricity at Po'ipū yet. They moved in in September of '30. And electricity was on the way, and it got here in, I think, '31. First part of '31 sometime. The water lines had just gone in. And the new road had just gone in. Not the mauka one, but the one that goes right along the water, by the Kōloa Landing, and goes to the Sheraton. That road went straight through and went right past Po'ipū Beach Park.

There was our house, and then my grandfather's was at [the site of the present] Waiohai Hotel. The Ishii family, on the mauka side, they raised eggs and chickens. Next to that was [Enoka] Mikaele, Hawaiian man, had a taro patch. He lived there. And then the Po'ipū pavilion. So that's all that was there. There was one more beach house, belonged to Daisy Wilcox, was next to my grandfather's, but nobody lived there permanently, it was only beach house. And the Fayes had a beach house from the Kekaha side. And then there was nothing until past the pavilion. Waterhouse had a place there, Corstorphine, Kelii Aka them lived down there, New Year Keawe, the Kimokeos, Mr. Ogata who was with the bank in Kōloa lived down there.

But there weren't that many people. And good fun, you sit on the front porch, and you know, people didn't change cars that often, so in the evening before dinner, the folks would have a drink before dinner on the front porch, and we could see the government road. And you knew every car that went by. You always waved. And everybody who lived down there knew the folks' schedule from six until about a quarter of seven, they would be on the front porch. So if Jim Kimokeo was coming home from work, he would be looking,

and if we were on the front porch, he'd wave, and we'd wave. Every night (laughs).

And where Sheraton is [today], my grandfather kept horses sometimes. And in fact, he kept horses there off and on until we got our dogs. Our dogs were Australian fox terriers, and they used to like to dig for rats. So the dogs would go across the road and dig holes all in the pasture. Grandfather got very mad at us, because he was afraid the horses would break their legs in the holes, so he couldn't put his horses there anymore because the dogs kept going there. Family feud.

(Laughter)

EM: And something you don't see anymore, we had a cattle crossing (at) our gate. You know, rails with a hole dug underneath. In other words, you dig a pit, and you put railroad rails across, because cows don't like to walk across that. And people's cattle used to get out, because they were running cattle in the pasture where the [Kiahuna] Golf Club is [today]. Sometimes the cows would get out, and if they came in your yard, they'd eat all your plants. So we had the cattle guard. My grandfather's house had a cattle guard (too). Lots of the old places had cattle guards.

WN: Who owned the cattle?

EM: I think those were Kōloa Plantation cattle at that time. They were running in the pasture below the Catholic church. Junk land, though. So I think you ran 'em there for a while, if there was grass. If it had been a wet winter you ran 'em there, and then you put 'em up to the mauka pastures, up by Kaluahonu.

But manager's son, there were advantages. You know, the plantation had horses, and my mother and I had saddles, and we could go up and ride the plantation horses. So we would go horseback riding in the summer. We used to go to Kōke'e for three weeks every summer. Kōloa Plantation house in Halemanu Valley.

WN: You used to ride horses to Kōke'e?

EM: No, the plantation would haul 'em up. Another perk. (Laughs) So, they would send two trucks. One truck with, I think, three horses, and one truck with two horses and firewood. Because you needed the firewood for hot water and all that. There was no electricity, no gas, no nothing in Halemanu Valley at that time. So Mrs. [Adena] Gillin, and her two daughters, and my mother and I would go up for three weeks. My father and Mr. [Elbert] Gillin would come up Friday afternoon. And they would stay Friday night, Saturday night, Sunday night, and then go home early enough Monday, they would leave from Kōke'e to make it to work by eight o'clock at Kōloa. So that was summertime. Always looked forward to it.

Knudsens had a house at Kōke'e for (years). I think was the oldest

house in the mountains. My grandfather was usually up there during the summer. And so, gee, we could ride horseback through the mountains, and my mother knew the trails of Kōke'e as good as my grandfather. And he knew 'em really well. He would go hunting for goats on the cliffs, and we would go (to his house) and he would tell us scary stories at night. Scared the hell out of the kids. It was so different, because it was cool, you know, no electric lights, fireplace, take a bath in the tin tub. (Laughs) All the kids in the tub one time because hot water was hard to make. And all we did, we'd get up, we'd ride horseback, picnic, ride out until lunchtime, picnic, and ride home.

WN: Mmm, nice life, huh?

EM: It was good, it was good.

WN: You know the families in Po'ipū that you're talking about, what kind of jobs did they have generally?

EM: Well, Jim Kimokeo was a police sergeant. And New Year, I think, New Year worked for the county. I think Kelii [Aka] worked for the county. Mr. Ishii raised eggs. The Hawaiian man, [Enoka] Mikaele, I don't know what he did. The Ishii family also, some of the girls worked for my grandfather as maids, and some of the boys would help clean yard. My grandfather had a Japanese couple that lived with him. And the man took care of the yard and the wife cooked. Uchiyama was her last name. Her name was Oichi, and Mr. Uchiyama, everybody just called "Uchiyama." So he's the one that took care of the yard and she cooked. And they lived over my grandfather's garage, they had their (own) place.

WN: Where was your grandfather's place?

EM: Waiohai Hotel.

WN: Where the Waiohai is now?

EM: Yeah. He had a garage that was about, oh, I don't know, twenty-five yards maybe, thirty yards or something, back of the house. And it was a two-story garage, and it was a two-car garage. Behind was a storeroom. I think the washhouse was in there. Yeah, I think the washhouse was in the garage. And then upstairs is where Oichi and her husband lived. And that was their home. As long as they worked there, that's where they lived.

Hiro and Kiyoko [Yuasa], who worked for us, (had) room and board, and they lived in the house. They had their own room and bathroom. And Mom bought a sewing machine so they could make their own clothes. She bought the material. And then Sunday was their day off, they would go home to the camp, and you know, go play and all. Then come back for Monday morning, go to work. And then we had yardmen. We had three, I think. Racelo's from Kōloa. Saturnino Racelo, Mauro. . . . Who else worked for us? Monico worked for us. Sat worked for us

the most, Saturnino. And Salvadore Patricio. And then Sally went into the army, and I lost track of what happened to him.

And we had a old Japanese man called--well, he was old to me, he must not have been old then, Mr. Kawakami. I was introduced to him as, "This is Mr. Kawakami." And if I didn't call him Mr. Kawakami, then I called him Kawakami-san, but never Kawakami. That was not polite, because he was my elder. And he called me Mr. Iki, or Iki-san (laughs). So we were always very polite to each other.

(Laughter)

EM: I used to see him in Kōloa when he was retired, and he was deaf as a post by then. But whenever I'd always come over and say hello to him and yell at him, and he'd always recognize me and he'd always tell people that he used to carry me when I was a baby. I don't know whether that was true or not. He had respiratory problems, and Kōloa was too damp for him. And he couldn't work on the plantation, so my father put him on (his) payroll, so to speak, he worked at the garden, and he built all our stone walls, the water lily ponds, and he always had something to do. So when I was a kid I'd go watch him build stone walls, and carry rock for him. Pretty soon I'm walking around, squatting down like a Japanese, and I could talk to him easier than my mother could.

(Laughter)

EM: You know, he'd look at my mother, and so my mom would tell me to please tell Mr. Kawakami to do something. And I'd say, "Kawakami-san, koko de (Mr. Kawakami, here you). . . ." He'd say, oh, okay, fine, you know, he'd understand.

(Laughter)

EM: I don't know how many years he worked for us. But he built beautiful rock work. He retired, (but) he used to come down, I think, about once a year. He used to catch a ride from somebody, and come down and call on the folks, around Christmastime. Wish us Merry Christmas. And then maybe have a beer or something, and then my dad would drive him home to (chuckles) Kōloa. He wouldn't have been comfortable working, if my father hadn't taken care of him and brought him down here.

WN: By the way, how did you get the name, "Iki"?

EM: "Iki" in Hawaiian means small, the lesser. Like on the Big Island. Kīlau'ea, Kīlau'ea Iki. My grandfather was Eric, he spoke Hawaiian. So when I was born he said, "Only one Eric," and that was him. I was Eric Iki, the small Eric, the diminutive Eric. And Eric Iki was too long to say so everybody dropped the Eric and I was Iki from then on.

WN: But your father is Hector.

EM: Yeah. But I was named after my grandfather. I was the first grandchild of Eric Knudsen. And first grandson, so named after the grandfather. And the second grandson of Eric Knudsen, they called Eric also. And then about the fourth grandson of Eric Knudsen, they called Eric also.

(Laughter)

WN: Is that right?

EM: There's Eric Moir, I'm the first one; Eric Knudsen, that's my uncle Val's son, is the second one; and then Eric Toulon is the third one. All kinds of Erics.

WN: They all have different last names, huh?

EM: Yeah right. But actually Eric Toulon never knew my grandfather, really. I'm not sure when Eric was born. Eric was born, I think, about a year or two before my grandfather died. Eric Knudsen was younger. I was very lucky with my grandfather. When he was still young enough to go horseback riding out on the cliffs, and go goat hunting Nāpali, I was old enough to go with him. And I went goat hunting with him about three times. Just the two of us. Big thrill, oh, what a thrill to be able to go with your grandfather, you know. And just the two--the two men going out. What was I? Eight years old.

And then in later years, after the war, because you couldn't hunt during the war, by the time the war was over he was really too old by then to go out and do much hunting in the cliffs anymore. But by then I was old enough and I was grown-up enough, that I could go down in the afternoon after he took his nap, and have a beer with him and talk story. And so I was just at that lucky age that I was able to know him as a kid and as an adult. The rest of the grandchildren of Eric Knudsen really never had that. Never had that opportunity. To go to a cocktail party with him. Well, gosh, in the early part of the 1950s, I was twenty, twenty-one, twenty-two years old, and I was going to adult cocktail parties. And I could stand there with my grandfather, and have a bourbon and water, eye to eye, and talk story. I was the only one that ever did it. And it was great, it was a real thrill, just to be able to do this, to be an adult with your grandfather, instead of just a kid.

WN: The parties were usually here in Kōloa?

EM: All over the island. People, you know, even today, entertain a lot at home. No matter where you are. Whether you're manager or somebody in the plantation. There was nowhere else to go, you always had your parties at home. And I noticed this when I went to the Mainland, that people on the Mainland don't entertain much. When we lived in Santa Rosa, people never had parties. We never had parties. Maybe once a year, you might go to a party. Here, you know, lots of parties, and they're at home. It's just the style,

it's a holdover from the old days. I don't know about Honolulu, maybe Honolulu doesn't have this holdover anymore. But in the rural areas, you have parties. Or maybe you'd go to the pavilion and have a whole bunch of people, or if you have a big house, you have a lot of people in, or whatever it is. And you entertain guests who come (at home).

People got married in our house. So you have a wedding, you got a hundred people already running around in your house. And you have the party there. On the Mainland somebody gets married and you go and rent a hall somewhere. Here, lot of times, you go back to the house, to the backyard, or wherever it might be. Put up a tent in the backyard, have a luau, have chicken hekka, whatever it might be. I think maybe that's because of the rural atmosphere.

I went to the Mainland during the war, but I went late in the war. I went 1944, so I was here almost the whole war, because the war was pau in what, '45, summer of '45. So I only missed a year of the war in Hawai'i. So I was here from '41 until July of 1944. My mother and I went to Honolulu, and they wouldn't tell you when the boat would sail because it was a military secret. They told you to be there on such-and-such a date and within a week, I think it was, somewhere in that week, the boat would sail. So you couldn't be away from the hotel for very long. They like to give you four hours notice. We stayed at the Young Hotel, and then if we went to my uncle's house, then you'd tell the switchboard operator we were going to be at my uncle's house in Nu'uanu. Then you go up and have dinner and then you go back, and so you were on this short leash. And then they would call up and say, "Be at the pier in so many hours." And grab everything, run down. I got on a ship that hauled cement for Permanente Cement, and it also had cabins, so everybody got on the ship, and we had one little destroyer escort, and I went to San Francisco.

WN: You couldn't go to the Mainland directly from here?

EM: No. You had to go through Honolulu. There was a war on.

WN: When there wasn't a war on, could you do that?

EM: No, no.

WN: You still had to go to Honolulu?

EM: Still had to go to Honolulu, you'd go inter-island (boat), by Wai'ale'ale, Humu'ula, Hualalai.

(Telephone rings. Taping stops, then resumes.)

WN: Let's see, where were we? We were talking about the inter-island ships.

EM: Oh, yeah.

WN: Kōloa Landing was pau by then.

EM: Yeah. There was a train that went down to Kōloa Landing. (Kōloa Plantation) abandoned the train to Kōloa Landing in about 1934, '35, I suspect. [The last recorded use of Kōloa Landing was in 1928.] If you turn in to the golf course at Kiahuna, and start up the road to the golf course, on your left-hand side is a long stone wall. And everybody says, "Look at the pretty stone wall." That's the railroad bed. If you climb on top of that stone wall, you realize that it's not just a three- or four-foot wide stone wall. That sucker's (about) ten feet wide, or whatever. And that's the railroad bed. That's where the train ran. And it made a big loop and went down to the Kōloa Landing. Then Kōloa had a few fields in sugarcane (near) where Waikomo Stream Villas are and where [Eduardo] Malapit, the ex-mayor lives. Behind that in that area, was sugarcane. Then in '34 or '35, it wasn't really worth coming all the way down anymore to the landing, and so they abandoned the railroad tracks. They gave up those fields and abandoned the tracks.

When I was a kid, I can remember standing on the corner of the front porch, and you could see the train go by, because it was right behind the house. And if Kapa Moke was the engineer, especially him, and he loved kids, big Hawaiian guy, and if he saw me there, he'd blow the whistle. Oh, my goodness, what a thrill! And he'd blow the whistle for me. And it was (all right) going downhill, but when Kapa went uphill and blew the whistle, sometimes he'd blow it too much and lose steam pressure in the boiler. (Laughs) And then he'd have to stop the train. And my dad would look at the heavens, (because he knew it would take a while for the train to get going again).

(Laughter)

EM: But, oh, he couldn't get mad because Kapa was blowing the whistle at his son, right? In later years he told me, "You know, darned Kapa." He said, "But I couldn't get mad because he was blowing 'em at you." Only son, right? In fact, only child.

WN: It was in the mid-'30s when they abandoned Kōloa Landing altogether? [The last recorded use of Kōloa Landing was in 1928.]

EM: Yeah, I guess. I'm not real clear. Somewhere in that period they were still bringing fertilizer in to Kōloa Landing, and I believe that McBryde was hauling out of there, too. Fertilizer. But I'm not real sure. That part's a little hazy. Before that, though, that was the train that the plantation used to bring the people down on the Fourth of July, and would let 'em off, then they would all walk down to Po'ipū Beach and have a picnic. And then the train would take 'em back. But after they abandoned the lines, of course, that was pau.

WN: Who coordinated that Fourth of July thing?

EM: I believe it was Dr. Waterhouse. I think he was in charge. But you see that was really before I was---if it was abandoned in '35, I was only four years old, so. That part I don't remember. But I do remember the train and I can well remember because of the haole koa, that you never saw the whole train. You only saw about the top half of it. You never saw the wheels or anything, and so you'd look out, and there sort of floating through the (chuckles) haole koa was the locomotive with the cars behind it going up or coming down, whichever. And that part I remember, but I don't remember the rest of it.

WN: What about the 1935 centennial [celebration], do you remember that at all?

EM: Again, what was I, four? But vaguely, because it was such a big crowd, and also because everybody was in costume, and that was terrific.

WN: What kind of costumes?

EM: Costumes of the previous hundred years, so to speak . . .

WN: Oh, 1835 . . .

EM: You know, bonnets, and the ladies were in long dresses, and the men came in long-tail coats. A lot of the people came on horseback. My grandfather had an old wagon that still ran. You know, a surrey with a top on it. And it was a pickup truck wagon, if you can understand. In the back end of it was like the back end of a pickup where you could carry stuff, and the front had the cover on it, with the seat. He came up with that, and his wife and her daughter, and two of my aunts, Mrs. Baldwin and Mrs. Toulon, riding in the back. All in costume. And he was wearing riding pants, boots, long-tail coat and a big, black, high hat.

WN: Stove[pipe] top hat?

EM: Stove[pipe] top, yeah. I'd never seen my grandfather (like that). I mean, that's why it was so fascinating. And my mother was in a bonnet and a long dress, my father had on a long-tail coat and vest . . .

WN: Well, there's a picture of all of you, and you're in it, right?

EM: Yeah, yeah. And so everybody were wearing old costumes. The Filipino workers, if they had it, came in the Filipino costumes; the Japanese women were in kimonos, people wore as much as possible the ethnic costumes of whatever country they came from. We had a big luau, sit-down luau for 1,200 people. Big imu. The train was there, and there were a lot of speeches, and so that part I remember. And then people from Amfac, and a lot of the Big Five plantations came down, Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association, and then all of these people came down to our house. So I remember that

too, except I had to go to bed at seven. You know, I can remember the house full of people, and then I had to go to bed, waste time. Terrible, you know. I wanted to stay up and party.

(Laughter)

EM: I do remember the people and the train and the food. It was fascinating, and watching them open the imu. Big, oh, huge. And I'd never seen big drums of poi, but you had lots of poi and all of that, so that part I remember. And it was good fun.

WN: Your father helped restore one of the old locomotives, right?

EM: Mm hmm. All ties in again. The oldest train was the German train, Paulo, and 1888 train, came from Germany. Nineteen twenty, the last man to drive the train was Kapa Moke, and they abandoned the train in 1920 because it was small. And they had bought oil-burning trains and Paulo burned wood, so they gave it up and they put it, for some reason, whoever the manager was in 1920 put the train in a warehouse. So when my dad became manager in '33, and he realized that two more years was going to be the centennial, and he found the train. So he had 'em bring the train out, they built up a little mound, like a railroad bed, put one section of track with the ties on it, in the plantation office yard. Put the train, chipped it, cleaned it up, painted it black, shined the bell, and that was one of the displays. And then it stayed there until Grove Farm took over Kōloa in '48. And then Grove Farm put it in the warehouse at Puhi, and then through Miss Mabel Wilcox and Grove Farm Homestead [Museum], they restored the locomotive.

WN: Where is it now? At the . . .

EM: Grove Farm, Grove Farm [Homestead] Museum. Well, it's at Puhi, they have it in the roundhouse, but it's fully operational. Yeah, runs, beautiful. And in fact when we had the 150th celebration in 1985, we borrowed it. And they brought it down on a low-boy, and we put 400-something (yards) of track in Kōloa, and we ran the train.

WN: Is that right?

EM: Yeah. Well, Governor [George] Ariyoshi rode the train.

(Laughter)

EM: And [Mayor] Tony Kunimura. And funny, just like kids. You put 'em on the train, dignified, you know, that's the mayor and the governor, right? Put 'em on the train and blow the whistle, and they are in a car with all these children, and they were smiling just like the rest of the kids, getting a big kick out of the bell and the whistle and all that. Everybody are children anyway. We borrowed it, and it was good fun. Well, it should (be here), it's Kōloa's train. I don't care what. Maybe Grove Farm owns it, but that train is Kōloa's train still. Just like the mill, this is

Kōloa Mill. I don't care if Grove Farm owns it, that's Kōloa Mill (laughs).

WN: Tell me something about Kōloa School. What do you remember about it? Who were some of your teachers?

EM: Oh, my goodness. Mrs. [Rebecca] Maxey. Who did I---Mrs. Luke, I think. No, Mrs. Luke was eighth grade. Mrs. [Elizabeth] Schimmelfennig. Mr. [David] Isoda was shop and garden. Mr. [Ross] Bachman, I think, was the principal. Miss Higa ran the kitchen. I think she's still alive.

You'd pull KP duty. They had a kitchen, you know, with tin plate. And so we ate (in the cafeteria), and some of the kids went and pulled duty. You wore the little white hat, and washed pots, dumped the garbage in the back, and all of that (laughs).

WN: Did they give you any kind of preferential treatment because you were the manager's son or anything like that?

EM: No way. No way (laughs), come on. But again, you know, it was exciting, we had slit trenches behind the school buildings, and all of the kids carried gas masks. So you can imagine.

WN: War?

EM: Yeah, it was wartime. You can imagine, you know, some little, tiny first grade, second grade, little Japanese girls. The gas mask went from under their armpit to their ankle.

(Laughter)

EM: Really! The gas mask had to be sixteen or eighteen inches long, and some of those little girls, they were maybe only two feet tall. And the poor little kids walking around with this big gas mask on 'em. I don't know what good it would do, because they could never get the (face) straps tight enough to (work). But anyway, everybody had gas masks. You carried 'em home, and they were hot and ugly. So you had gas mask under one arm, across your shoulder, and then the old-fashioned thing which you put your books in, carry 'em on the other side. Walk home from school, barefeet on the government road. Catch a ride in the morning to go to school, then we walked home every day.

WN: What government road was this?

EM: The one that comes through, down from the school (to Poi'pū).

WN: Po'ipū Road?

EM: Yeah, Po'ipū Road. We walked (home). The school had a garden. Vegetable garden, wartime, you know, victory garden. All the vegetables went to the cafeteria. Mr. Isoda ran the garden. So all

the classes--all the boys in all the classes, when the girls would go to home economics, or whatever it was, the boys would either have shop or go in the garden, and you know pull weeds, kālai, put mud press. The plantation used to bring two cars of mud press every year, and park it on the siding, the track ran right behind the school. The railroad track came right behind the [Tao] Shell station, right through Kōloa, right above the monument now, you know where that round sugar monument is? In downtown Kōloa?

WN: Oh, yeah, where the old mill used to be?

EM: Right. It went right mauka of that, and it came across the road just behind the Shell station. Went right down behind Kōloa School, and tied into the tracks with McBryde. And the McBryde tracks went right down to Kukui'ula and then up to the McBryde side. Actually the Kōloa lines hooked (in with) Grove Farm, too. So you could take a train from Līhu'e, or Grove Farm, you'd cross Līhu'e lands, Grove Farm lands, Kōloa lands, you could go all the way to McBryde Mill on the rails because all the plantations were hooked together.

So they would bring two cars of mud press. Park it right behind the hedge, and the kids would unload the mud press. And then every once in a while we'd steal the cars. Downhill all the way to Kukui'ula, you know.

(Laughter)

WN: Oh, how did you do that?

EM: You'd pull the pin.

WN: Oh, you pulled the pin (laughs).

EM Only one car at a time. And then you'd release the brake. And you would get it going, you could get it rolling if you have enough kids. And you'd ride it all the way to Kukui'ula. Good fun.

WN: You had brakes, though?

EM: No, no need.

WN: How fast did it go?

EM: I don't know (laughs). Who cared?

(Laughter)

EM: And then if you could get both of 'em, then you have two rides . . .

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

EM: If you could get both cars, you'd have two rides. It was always during off-season, they weren't harvesting when they brought (mud press). So we were pretty sure we were never going to meet anything.

WN: (Laughs) Pretty sure.

EM: (Laughs) I don't know. Maybe we never thought about it, I don't know. But then Mr. [John] Sandison, who was the manager of McBryde, would have to call up my father, and tell him that there were two Kōloa cane cars on the McBryde tracks. So then Kōloa would have to send a train all the way to Kukui'ula to pick up the cars. When I was about nineteen I told my dad, and he said that he always had an idea who did it. (Laughs)

Then coming home there was the Kimokeos, some of the Kimokeo boys, there was Buddy, Nicky, and Kelii Aka's nephew, we used to all walk home together. You know, it's boring, walking. We used to climb the fence, the stone wall, then borrow a piece of cane from McBryde. There was cane--left side was Kōloa, and right side was McBryde. We always stole from McBryde. We didn't want to steal from my dad, right?

(Laughter)

EM: We were, you know, we were nice kids. At least you don't steal from the hand that feeds you. (Chuckles)

WN: That's all that separated the cane lands, the stone walls?

EM: No, well, there was the road. See, you walk down the road, and on the right side was a stone wall, and then behind that was McBryde cane lands.

WN: What road was this?

EM: The same one. The government road, the Po'ipū Road. Right past where the blinking light is now. You keep going down and the road curves around to the right . . .

WN: Near the present Kukui'ula Store?

EM: Yeah, before that though, it curves to the right, and then right there, on the left side is Waikomo Stream, and on the right side, the stone wall's gone now. But if you go a little further you can see a stone wall, and that stone wall extended all the way up. So right around the corner you could climb the wall, and that way you were around the corner so the cars couldn't see you if they were coming. And then somebody would look out, and then you'd go, cut, one piece, we only took small piece. The young one, nice young piece. Cut it up, chew, eat, go home. Every day. Well, we didn't

take cane every day. I think we only got chased once by some guy on a horse. We thought he had a whip, I think he only had a rope, but anyway, it made a good story. We were telling all the guys, "Ho-o-o, terrible big luna, oh the guy was nine feet tall. Chase us with a whip." Oh, boy. (Chuckles) That sounds better at school. You got to tell good stories.

(Laughter)

WN: Wondering, by the time you were a kid growing up, was the main belt road finished that went down to Waimea, or did you still have to come down through Kōloa to go to work?

EM: Yeah. I think that was pau in '35. By '35 or '36 maybe, completed, but when you went to Līhu'e when I was young, that part I can still remember. When you came out of the tree tunnel, you went kind of straight ahead, across the belt, what is now the belt road. You went straight ahead, kind of half right, and the road curved around, and the eucalyptus trees, the tree tunnel, I guess they call it now, was at least twice as long as it is now. And it kept going and it curved up and then it went around to the east, and the road went behind the hill that the cut goes through. It went behind that hill, and basically it followed the haul cane road. You know when you go through the cut, and before you get to the Halfway Bridge, the haul cane road goes across the government road? That's where the road went. Went down, and then it wandered back down over the Hulē'ia River and. . . . If you had no traffic or anything at all, it took you twenty-five or thirty minutes to get to Līhu'e. Because the road wound, you know, it was so much longer. And then the old road went to 'Ōma'o. Went to the 'Ōma'o area. And then I kind of lose it in there, where it went.

WN: You mean, from Kōloa?

EM: You didn't have to come all the way into Kōloa to get to 'Ōma'o. There was like a cutoff, I think.

WN: There was another road? You mean, before Sueoka Store?

EM: I think it was up around the tree tunnel, or somewhere, that you could go to 'Ōma'o without having to go down to Kōloa and back up to 'Ōma'o. Because the road that goes up to 'Ōma'o tied into something. It wasn't a dead-end road. I know you had to go through 'Ele'elē, so that was part of the old road. You went up near Hanapēpē Valley. You can still see a little part of that old road up there. And you went down through 'Ele'ele, you went down past Port Allen, down into Hanapēpē, that was all about the same. See, the west side was flatter. Flatter and more open, and the road went fairly straight. Well, no, it didn't. It cut way back into Olokele Canyon and came back out again on that side.

But it took a long time. You went in the old cars. My father had a 1930 or '31 Chevrolet two-door sedan. And he drove that until Gus

Hackbarth bought it. Mr. Hackbarth worked for the plantation. Lived across from the neighborhood center [i.e., Koloa Civic Center] now, and Mr. Hackbarth used to raise Concord grapes. You know, the kind you pop the grape out of the skin in your mouth and swallow it seeds and all. The purple kind grapes. Good grapes, real good grapes.

WN: Hard to find though, nowadays, yeah?

EM: I guess.

WN: I mean, in the supermarkets.

EM: Yeah. But he grew 'em over there. So he bought that car. And then my dad had a '35 Chevy banana wagon. Real banana wagon, wooden sides. The termites ate it, you know, serious. "How come your car's falling apart?"

"The termites ate it."

Can't have a car fumigated. He bought that because Sat Racelo drove us to school in Lihu'e. So in the front seat was Homer Maxey, because he was the oldest, and then in the back were the Gillin twins, myself, Myrtle May, and Bobby Deverill. He took us to school and picked us up every day from Koloa. That's why the old man had the banana wagon. And then he got a company car, so we had that. We had our good car and the company car.

He shipped our car to the Big Island once. You couldn't rent cars on the Big Island or anywhere, and every two years we went to the Big Island, because that's where my grandmother lived, my father's mother. So every other vacation, we would go up and stay with my grandmother in Hilo. Actually, all in all, it was quite inexpensive in those days. You drove the car down, and in those days you could leave stuff in the car. You know, now when you ship a car you can't leave anything in it or whatever. In those days you could put extra stuff in the car, maybe my tricycle if I had it, something like that. You could put all of this in your car and drive it down and they drove it right on the boat. And then if you went by boat, when you got there, the car was on the boat. You got off the boat, got in your car. And we would go up for a little over two weeks. And we stayed with my grandmother. So the expense, if you think about it, wasn't that much, because maybe he could have rented a car up there, but what it would have cost to rent a car was the same price to ship it up there. We stayed free at my grandmother's house.

So we had our own car, and the one year that we did take it up there, I remember we drove to Kona on the old Mamalahoa Highway. Went all the way to Kona and stayed at Kona Inn. That was the year that Duke Kahanamoku married Nadine. My father knew Duke and they had the reception at the dining room of the Kona Inn. And we were there (laughs). Then we went from there up to Kahua Ranch where my mother's cousin was ranch manager. Ronald von Holt. Then we went all the way around. We went around the island of Hawai'i in about

1938, I think it was. And I think it was the only time we ever took the car up there.

WN: What about different stores and businesses that were down in the main part of Kōloa?

EM: The post office, the hairdresser, the watchmaker, Johnny Awa for crack seed.

WN: He was a watchmaker and [sold] crack seed?

EM: No. The watchmaker was next door. And then Johnny Awa, or did Johnny take away the watchmaker's place? Maybe he did. Yamamoto Store was always (there). Okutsu Store, Usa, who else? Okumura, lots of stores.

WN: Mostly Japanese . . .

EM: Muranaka. Yeah, the great majority of them. Of course, Johnny Awa, he's not Japanese. And I think the main---the big store early on was owned by Portuguese [Ornellas], I think. But then it became the Kōloa Plantation Store. Yeah, I think mostly Japanese. There was a tailor, I think he was Filipino. [The tailor was Chung, who was Korean.] The fish market was what? Japanese, I think [Tanaka]. But all kinds of different stores.

After school every once in a while we would go up to Kōloa. Usually by the time we got out of school and walked home, unless we really hustled, we didn't have time to go to Kōloa. And if we got to Kōloa, what would we do, we didn't have any money, anyway. But every once in a while, if we had money, we'd go up and get ice cream at Yamamoto Store. But if you figure the distance from Kōloa School to Yamamoto Store and then back again, you really had to walk fast to get home about the same time every day or your folks would worry, or they'd, "Where were you?" You go to Yamamoto Store, you look in the freezer, you had the free sticks in the ice cream. You pull the stick out, push 'em back in, pull the stick out, until you found the free one, and you (bought) it.

(Laughter)

WN: What do you mean, "free stick?"

EM: They had a stick inside the ice cream. And if you ate your ice cream, and then you had the stick and it said "free" on it, you got a free one.

WN: Oh, I see. So you eat it first, then you pay?

EM: No, no, no, no. But you try to find the one with the stick in it that was free. Then you bought that one, and then you share. Maybe you only had enough for one ice cream. And there were four guys, so you share, then you had the free one, you got one more, you had two.

The girls used to get mad at us because they knew we were doing it.

(Laughter)

EM: They never got any frees because all the boys usually got all the frees. Smart, you know.

WN: Movies?

EM: No. Matinee, Saturday.

WN: Where was that?

EM: Kōloa Theater, right across Sueoka Store.

WN: Oh, where the old mill was?

EM: So, yeah, matinees, not that often. Again, you had to be good. I mean, you know, I had to have done my homework, sort of earned it. The folks had to drive me all the way to Kōloa and drive me all the way home. Because that's a long walk to go to the movie on a matinee. Or let's put it this way, if I had to walk, I wouldn't have gone anyway. So maybe if something was good, or maybe cartoons, or something, then maybe two or three kids would all go and one of the mothers would pick 'em up and take 'em to Kōloa. Go see the matinee and come home. But not very often. In fact I envied the kids in Kōloa because they could walk. Like the Gillin girls, they could walk, it was what, maybe three-quarters of a mile or something. But this was two-and-a-half miles, and uphill, and I'm lazy. So I don't remember going to the movies that often.

If there was a good movie on a weekend, the folks would go. And they could make reservations. So we'd call up and reserve seats. When the theater was built, it opened in 1936, the new one. Manuel Teves was the manager. Manuel was the--I think he was head bookkeeper in the bookkeeping department at Kōloa Plantation, and my dad had helped smooth the way for Manuel to become [theater] manager. Then the house which is now the Wilcox Hospital dispensary [i.e., Kōloa Clinic], which is behind that mill stack, the (house) in the back, that was built for Manuel Teves. That was his home when he was theater manager.

So when the theater was built---see my father was six foot four-and a-half [inches], and weighed about 250 [pounds], and it was very uncomfortable for him to sit in a normal theater seat because his knees were right up against the seats in front. So in the center section of Kōloa Theater, about halfway up, was one row that was built wider than the rest. That was just for (my dad).

(Laughter)

EM: See, the times were different. So you went up and all the rows were the same, and then this row that was a little bit more than halfway

up was extra wide. And then of course the row behind it was for midgets because it was extra narrow so the next rows could be regular. My dad would always call up, or my mother, and we would tell them that we were coming to the movie, and then they would save the first three seats facing the screen on the left-hand side. And that's where we always sat. Now if I went by myself, matinee, you sit anywhere, but when I went with the folks we always sat there. My father sat on the aisle, my mother next and me next.

To digress a little bit, Mr. [Edward] Broadbent who was the manager of Grove Farm was a tall man. The Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association had meetings on O'ahu, and all the managers went every year. I think it was twice a year, in fact. And at one time Mr. Broadbent and my father went up and the bunks on the ships were only six foot long. They happened to be at a party with Mr. [Stanley C.] Kennedy who was the president and head of Inter-Island Steam [Navigation] Company in Honolulu. And they kidded with him, you know, kiddingly raised hell with him and said, "Boy, I'll tell you. We're so tired when we get to Honolulu because we can't sleep on the boat because the bunks are so short." And they gave him a hard time. So the next time they went to Honolulu, they got on the boat and the purser on the boat took my father and Mr. Broadbent down to a particular room and said, "This is your (cabin)." (When) they walked in, they had taken the bunks out, and they had two regulation beds. You know the six-foot six-[inch] beds. Real house beds. They had them sitting in the cabin, tied to the walls, so that they (chuckles) wouldn't slide around. That was (Mr. Kennedy's) answer. "Don't give me a hard time anymore. We have a room for you now, you can't complain." So things like this happened. In those days it was a more personal touch. So anyway, Koloa Theater had one row for my father.

WN: That theater eventually burned down, right?

EM: Yeah. I think when it burned down it was no longer being used. I think it had lost money and it was out of business. I think that---what is that? Something amusement company, still in business.

WN: Consolidated?

EM: Consolidated Amusement. And they built a whole bunch of theaters. I think, I may be wrong, but I think that there was some government money involved in that, having to do with the recovery from the depression and all. Because there were a number of theaters built all at about the same time. I don't know, you might look that up, I'm not sure. But it seems to me that Līhu'e Theater, Kōloa Theater, the Waimea Theater, I think Hanapēpē, were all built within a few years of each other. And they were quite modern. I think Kōloa was the last one built. But they were quite modern theaters and they had good sound systems, and, you know, full-blown projection rooms, and all this sort of thing.

Before that, we had the movies in the old Wilcox Gymnasium which is

gone, the hurricane blew it down. But it was behind the post office, next to the Hongwanji. And in there, you know, folding chairs, you went to the movie, you took the chair, you walked up, unfolded it, sat down. And the acoustics were terrible. I mean it was a gymnasium, you know. So the acoustics were bad. You know, [so we later had a] big modern movie theater, and they held political rallies in it. Sam King came down, I remember that, had a big political rally. And then during the war Hollywood people appeared, for entertaining the GI's, the service people. You know Joe E. Brown, remember the comedian years ago with the big mouth?

WN: Big mouth, yeah.

EM: I saw him at Kōloa Theater. And he had a piano player with him called Johnny Marvin. And Johnny Marvin played. And Joe E. Brown entertained and sang and told jokes. A lot of times they would have two shows, one for the soldiers and one mixed, you know, where civilians could go. And then filled out the audience with the soldiers and all. But you know, we had lots of soldiers here. You couldn't go on the beaches during the war.

WN: Where were they staying?

EM: Oh, everywhere.

WN: You mean, they built barracks for 'em?

EM: No, tents. At the Po'ipū pavilion they had a platoon of infantry. They had the big squad tents, what they call six-man squad tents. Next door to our house, on the east side, right across the stone wall in the haole koa, under the kiawe trees, were guys in tents. And right across the road where the Sheraton[-Kauai Hotel] is [today], were two thirty-caliber, water-cooled machine-gun nests, connected by an underground tunnel. On the point at the Sheraton where they have the Drum Lounge now, the bar (that) sits out front, right there was a thirty-seven-millimeter anti-tank gun. You know, when you go to Spouting Horn, have you been there lately?

WN: Maybe about six months ago.

EM: Well, when you go to Spouting Horn, and you walk out to look at it, there's a little place that's about maybe eight feet by eight feet with a little stone wall on it. You walk out, it's like a little balcony. You look at it and wonder why it's there, and it has a cement floor. Well, the cement floor is the cement floor of a machine-gun nest that was there. And it had little walls (about) eight-inch thick. And they were supposed to be the more modern ones. The early ones (were) made out of eucalyptus logs. They cut 'em from the forest up Knudsen Gap, and they would make (log) gun emplacements, (covered with) sandbags, covered with sand, grow naupaka (on that) for camouflage.

During the war, we had total blackout, of course. And we blacked

out the front guest room and the bathroom. All the soldiers that were stationed, I think twelve of 'em, that were stationed at the anti-tank gun. And the ones on the side and, I think, there were twelve over there, used to come to the house on a rotating basis, they didn't all come every night. They would come in the front door, walk in the bathroom, take a shower, (and) shave (with) hot water. They (GI's) kept a case of beer in our icebox. That was theirs, we left 'em a whole shelf. They would say good evening to my folks, go get a beer, sit down for half an hour and read a magazine, and then say, "Well, good night." And we'd say good night, and he'd leave.

Then later on my father ran a galvanized pipeline from a faucet we had, a tap right by the stone wall, over the stone wall to the ones who were right next to us, not the ones across the road, that was too far. That pipe ran about sixty feet. So if those guys really watched it, turned on the water, turned it off, that pipe got hot enough that they had hot water. So then they didn't come in the house anymore. And so in the kiawe in the haole koa, the pipe ran to a shower head, and they had boards on the ground. And that's where they took their shower. One of those guys used to come up and cook for us. He was Italian. (Sgt.) Illio Bizzari from New York, and he used to come up and make spaghetti and meatballs. And then all the guys would come and have spaghetti and meatballs . . .

WN: Were these officers, or were these . . .

EM: No, all enlisted men.

WN: All enlisted men.

EM: Yeah, all GI's. We heard from 'em for years. (After the war) they'd send us Christmas cards and pictures of their family.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 15-54-3-87

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Eric McD. "Iki" Moir (EM)

October 29, 1987

Po'ipū, Kaua'i

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Mr. Eric "Iki" Moir on October 29, 1987 at his home in Po'ipū, Kaua'i. The interviewer is Warren Nishimoto.

Well, let's see, last time, which was about, what, six months ago . . .

EM: This is like a soap opera, "Dallas," right?

WN: . . . (chuckles) we ended up at Kōloa during the war. I think we pretty much covered that--what you remembered about Kōloa during the wartime. And so, after the war or during the war, actually, you left for the Mainland. Can you tell me why you left?

EM: Why did I leave for the Mainland? Of course.

WN: Nineteen forty-four.

EM: Well, partly, there was gas rationing. And we lived at Po'ipū, very far away from neighbors. There were no neighbor kids. And with gas rationing, Mom couldn't drive me around. So other than seeing kids in school, I never saw any kids to play with. So I used to go across the road where they had a thirty-seven-millimeter anti-tank gun, or to the two machine-gun nests that were dug in where the Sheraton[-Kaua'i Hotel] is [today]. And I would play with the soldiers. And pretty soon, in 1944, I'm thirteen years old and I think I'm big people, I think I'm an adult. And my folks are saying, "He's not an adult." So they sent me (chuckles) to boarding school where I'd be with people my age. And that was the main reason. I was going to go away in '46, anyway. I was going to go to military school in New Mexico. But the folks said, "Boy, two more years and we're going to lose the handle on this kid." 'Cause, you know, when the folks had a party, I saw no reason why I couldn't stay up with everybody else and dance with the army nurses and stand around and have a good time. Have a beer if I wanted to, but they didn't let me have a beer.

WN: What was your father's and mother's social obligation to the

military?

EM: Well, the plantation manager was the head of the district where the plantation was located. He was the head of the civilian defense, so to speak. (For example), the plantation fire trucks became emergency fire stations. On the plantation we had a evacuation place up by Kaluahonu Crater. Big area that had been cleared by the plantation with tractors in amongst the eucalyptus trees. And there were lean-tos, and people had gone up there so they knew how to get there, and when the big attack came on the shore, that's where we're supposed to go. I'm not answering your question exactly yet. In our house we had, in one cupboard, we had knapsacks with can goods, and blankets, and flashlights, and all of these good stuff. So that when the invasion came--because we didn't know whether there would be one or not, that was our evacuation point. It was right up here (above the mill), it was a big area as I remember. I remember going up here once with the folks, with my dad.

WN: Which crater was this?

EM: I think Kaluahonu, I think where it was.

WN: Kaluahonu?

EM: I think that's where it was, which was just mauka of the mill. Up in that area somewhere. And I don't know if I mentioned in the previous segment, but, you know, the island was literally surrounded by barbed wire. And not just little posts with single strand but big--they cut maybe six- or eight-inch eucalyptus logs. Maybe they were--gosh, I don't know, twelve feet long. And then they crossed them and put a crosspiece. And then they strung barbed wire on the X's, and then underneath the X and on top of the X they put what they call concertina, which is when you take the roll of barbed wire, lay it on its side and just pull it out like an accordion. And so that was all the sand beaches and in many places across the rock points. Only where the cliffs were high they didn't put it.

It was a different life, a completely different life. And because my dad was the head of Koloa area, he had to work with the government for housing. You know, they would come along and say, "We want that building."

My dad would say, "I really wish you wouldn't take that building because it's so-and-so, something important to the community. I will show you another building that maybe you would like that's not as important."

So you gotta make deals. They needed places to quarter troops. Well, they needed permission to chop down eucalyptus trees on your property and all of that. They didn't come right in and do it because the military was told to work with the civilians. But this was martial law time. You know, you got a traffic ticket and you

went not before the judge, you went before the provost marshal. You had no appeal, he gave you a choice. I don't know exactly what the amount was, but it was something like twenty-five dollars or a pint of blood. (Laughs) So you go Wilcox Hospital and give 'em pint blood (chuckles) for breaking a law. So there was no justice system as we think of it now. The civilians were under the same laws the military were. The chief of police was the provost marshal, I guess. Though the chief was still here, he worked with him, but by and large he was the ruling authority as far as military law.

So---yeah, the folks entertained a lot. The parties would have to start earlier because of blackout or you got permission from the provost marshal. If you were going to have a party past sundown, everybody at your party applied for passes. So when they went home and got stopped at every bridge, they had a pass, temporary pass for that night. And there were guards on every bridge all the way. You know, you had little slit headlights, no headlights. And they painted a one-foot white square--maybe it's a little bigger--on your driver's side left front fender. Real white, white enamel pointing forward so that if you were sneaking along at night and you saw another white square coming at you, then you kept that white square on your left and then the two cars could pass. (Chuckles) That was one of the things.

WN: Was there any restrictions on coming onto the plantation, in those days?

EM: Nope. No. You just had to watch where you were going because all of a sudden you'd turn around and here'd come four M24 tanks and two half-tracks roaring down a (road).

WN: (Inaudible) to go down to Po'ipū, but not onto the beach?

EM: Right. Okay. If you applied to the provost marshal, you could get a fishing pass. But you had to go through the rigmarole. You had to go to Līhu'e and fill out the forms and get a fishing pass. Then you could go on the beach.

WN: Shore fishing?

EM: Yeah. If you were a little ten-year-old kid and you wanted to go on the beach to swim or play with your dogs, you still had to go to the provost marshal and get a fishing pass.

WN: That's what you did?

EM: Yeah. (Chuckles) Just so that I could go on the sand.

WN: Even though you guys lived not too far from the beach?

EM: Yeah, I would. Well, rules are rules. You know, maybe their rules are dumb but rules are rules, so that to go to Kōke'e, you had to have a pass. Separate pass. I still have mine. Kōke'e pass,

fishing pass. And then military ran all over the place. Right down here at Keoneloa--Shipwreck--whatever they want to call it, where they're going to build the Hyatt--the half-tracks would come and practice in the sand. And then they set mortars up at this end and fired 'em toward the other end, mortar range, eighty-one-millimeter mortars. Tanks used to practice down here. They used to put artillery pieces up on the ridges and fire into the ocean at targets 105 millimeters--155 millimeter, the big ones. It was amazing. You'd look out your front door and there'd go a jeep and four tanks roaring down the road.

It was a whole different world. The population doubled here. I think there were about twenty some-odd thousand servicemen here and our population was about 25,000, 28,000, something like that. The general took over the [plantation] manager's house at McBryde. Brideswood was where the commanding general was stationed. But there were good parts too because most of these were National Guard outfits. And in most cities on the Mainland, and in fact, here too probably, a lot of people higher up in business also belong to the National Guard. I think a lot of them didn't think a war was going to start, that's why they belonged.

But anyway, I know that when 33rd Division was here, they were from Illnois, and my mother was going to have a party to welcome the new general. No, no, no, no. She was going to have a party after she had met 'em all or whatever. Anyway, the guy said, "Could I volunteer some help?"

And Mom said, "Well, gee, we could sure use a bartender."

And he said, "Would you like some music?"

And Mom told him, "Sure, we'll take some music."

So the bartender--and these guys are all in special services--the bartender they sent down was the assistant wine steward from the Pump Room in Chicago, which is one of the better well-known eating restaurants in the city of Chicago. And the guy was a sergeant in the army and so, (chuckles) he was special services. They sent down, I (think a) four-piece group, five-piece group, whatever. And every one of 'em had played for people like Artie Shaw, Benny Goodman, you know, big name bands of that time. But they'd been drafted. But they were hell of a musician so they were in special services, they entertained the troops. And so if the general loaned you these people. . . . Oh, one of the outfits here had a--I think it was the 40th Division--had the pastry chef from the Claremont Hotel. You know (chuckles), come on, these are high-class people (chuckles).

And so it was different. It was good, (and) not good, but it was different. It was a whole different life. And it changed Hawai'i too because, well, my folks said that one thing about the war is that for five or six years, we never had to travel. They came to

us. And for months at a time you had the 27th Division who came first, they were New York National Guard. Then it was the 40th California National Guard, then the 33rd which was Illinois, and then the 98th which is a composite of, I think, Illinois, Ohio, and few of those midwestern states. But you met some very amazing people. Instead of going to stay in their town, you could sit around and talk to them and learn all kinds of things about 'em. They were interested and interesting and so were we in what they were doing. I know one of the people that the folks became real good friends of, was the judge advocate for the 33rd Division. And he was in politics and a lawyer, and he was one of the Cook County Democrats, you know, the famous Chicago Cook County Democrat. In fact, he ended up being the campaign manager for Adlai Stevenson when he ran for president of the United States. His name was Jake Arvey. And in the old days if you went to Chicago and said Jake Arvey, everybody just went, "Oop, yeah, we know who that is."

WN: Jake Harvey?

EM: Arvey. A-R-V-E-Y. So the folks visited Chicago in 1948 or '49, whenever it was. Forty-nine, I guess it was. They had written ahead, and Arvey's limousine with his assistant who they also knew 'cause Jake Arvey's assistant in Chicago in politics was also his assistant here in Hawai'i as a lieutenant, you know. So go back civilian life, same thing. I can't remember his name now, Bud Wolf, I think. Anyway, he met the folks at the train station in Arvey's big Cadi, took 'em to the hotel, waited while they changed clothes, took 'em to the Pump Room for lunch. Had a nice lunch, had dinner with the family, all that stuff. Just from connections here.

WN: All in all, what was your father's relationship with the military? Good?

EM: Sure. Yeah. They worked real well to the best of my knowledge. What the hell did I know, I was ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen. As far as I know, it seems that the plantation managers and the military work--throughout the island--work well together. Well, it was the patriotic thing to do. You know, there was war on. That was the thing. And the only thing he used to get mad about was their inattention to the fact that we still had to run a plantation. And every once in a while they'd leave a gate open after maneuvering around and all the cows would get out or all the horses would get out, and he'd get real angry. Not real angry, but, he fixed their wagon somehow. He found out one time they left the gate open down there where we had the jackass and the mules at Māhā'ulepū. So he told Bill Kuhlman, who was our head cowboy, to go take care of it. Bill went down and took the gate out and he put a concrete post right in the middle of the road and strung a wire across it so it looked like it was a solid fence. Next day the military came down and, oop, solid fence. They didn't cut wire, they were very good. They came back to the office and they said, "We can't get in to maneuver, we have to maneuver."

And my dad said, "Oh, well, you guys keep leaving the gate open so they had a cowboy put a solid fence up so that. . . ."

And oh, from then on they said, "Oh, we'll right it." So they said, "If you put the gate back, we'll put a guard there all the time who'll make sure the gates close and he'll be the last one to leave."

And my dad said, "Well, all right."

So he went down and they followed Kuhlman back down. Kuhlman went down in a pick-up. And they thought that this cement post was dug into the ground. And he went over there with another guy and they cut the wire and just picked up the post and carried it on the side. (Chuckles) But it taught 'em a lesson, you know. From then on they've always kept the gates closed.

WN: Besides---well, did the plantation and the military share facilities at all?

EM: I don't know. I don't think so.

WN: What about the cane land? Were any cane lands converted into non-cane land for maneuvers?

EM: To the best of my knowledge, no. Sugar was vital to the war effort. They put it in chewing gum, Coca-Cola, stuff like that. So it was a vital industry. Plus the plantations had so much extra empty land. Plus most of the military was stationed fairly near the ocean because that's where the "invasion" was going to come from. And like here at Po'ipū, there was, oh, a squad of infantry up with a thirty-seven-millimeter up here at the lighthouse. There was a platoon headquarters at Po'ipū pavilion. A squad of infantry next to our house that manned the two machine guns. A separate group had the thirty-seven-millimeter gun out on the point where the Drum Lounge is for the Sheraton. All the way down, there were little squads. They had outposts, and they dug foxholes and dug underground trenches and covered them with eucalyptus logs and sandbags and threw sand on 'em. (Telephone rings.) And the naupaka grew back.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

WN: Okay. Let's see, what were we talking about here?

EM: Military.

WN: Yeah.

EM: I think about the only time my dad really got mad at the military was (when) they used to fly around--the air corps--and drop flares and take night photographs because I think that the definition was better (at night). So here we have total blackout and these dummies

are flying around in the sky dropping flares that you can see for hundreds and thousands of miles away. But they used to tell the plantation what areas of the island they were going to take pictures of. Because if a hot flare fell in a cane field, you would set the sugarcane field on fire. Seems to me they came to photograph from Li'hue to Hanalei side. And the phone rang at home--and we were in bed already. It was about maybe eleven or twelve o'clock. And after we went to bed, my dad would open up the windows in the blacked-out areas so that we get fresh air in the house. So they called up and it was the plantation saying, "Mr. Moir, there's a fire in--" I think it was the fields going up to the [Knudsen] Gap up to tunnel of trees out of Koloa.

He said, "How did it start?"

They said (chuckles) a flare from the air corps. And he was so mad because if you knew that they were going to be there, you'd have crews out and you'd be alert. You know, there's lots of money in acres of cane. He walked through the house getting dressed turning on every light in the house. And my mother was walking along behind him turning 'em out (chuckles) because she was afraid that he might get arrested for violating the blackout. And he was walking through the house saying, "Goddammit, if they can light a cane fire that you can see a hundred miles out to sea, I can turn my own lights on."

WN: Was it at night?

EM: Midnight about. And I'm a kid and I'm up and I'm watching and I'm going, "Wow, I never seen the old man mad like this." You know, I learned a new word or two. And Mom's walking around going click, click off the lights; he's going click, click on the lights. And he's going, "Leave the goddamned lights on!" (Laughs) I don't think he came home [until] four or five o'clock, all smokey and dirty. And they lost, I don't know, they lost a lot of acreage. It seems to me in cost of cane and overtime and all that stuff, he submitted a bill to the government for $23[,000] or $27,000, and got reimbursed. The plantation got reimbursed for boners like that. That was the big to-do down here.

WN: What about relations with the local Japanese and the military? Did you notice any strain at all?

EM: I wasn't there. I mean, you know, not to my knowledge. We had Japanese maids. And all the military that came to our house knew them by name, always asked them how they were, how were the kids. They'd meet the little kids, they'd bring 'em chocolate and stuff like that. Same thing with my grandfather's maids. I don't think so. Maybe some, you know, I think that's a personal thing between each man and his own feelings. And there were probably guys walking around saying, "Look at all them Japs." And there were other ones who said, "Eh, you know, these people have been here for generations," and so. . . . I think if there was any animosity it was more between the Filipinos and the Japanese, because the

Filipinos were sitting there listening that Manila was falling. So I think that if there was any problems anywhere, I know my folks didn't worry about it because if they were worried they probably would have done something about the fact that after December 7th, I lived at home with Hiro and Kiyoko for the week before they got home (from Honolulu). And they weren't worried about it.

WN: Okay. So 1944, before the war was over you left . . .

EM: I went to Mainland.

WN: . . . for boarding school. Now, why didn't they send you to a school in Honolulu, for example?

EM: 'Cause I didn't want to go to Punahou.

WN: So you would rather have gone to the Mainland than go to Punahou?

EM: Sure.

WN: Why?

EM: I didn't really like most of the kids I'd ever met who'd gone to Punahou. (Laughs) And away was away. You know, if I'd gone to Punahou I was no closer to my folks than if I was 2,000 miles away because you couldn't come home anyway. And so, I had an auntie in Oakland, I had two cousins going to the same school in San Raphael, California, from Kaua'i. So it wasn't like I was (alone), I can jump on a Greyhound bus, go to San Francisco, jump on a key system train. Take the A-train to the end of the line in Oakland, walk over two blocks, up one, and my auntie's house. You know, away is away, that basically was our philosophy.

WN: So prior to that you were going to Kōloa School?

EM: Yeah.

WN: All the way. Okay.

EM: And then went (to the States) and I stayed there for two years. Came home after the war. So I left when I was thirteen, came home when I was fifteen.

WN: And then where did you go to school?

EM: I went back, New Mexico, military school.

WN: Oh, I see.

EM: Four more years. Then I went college in Florida.

WN: Did you want to stay here to go to high school?

EM: I don't know that I ever thought about it particularly. My folks said go, I went. (Laughs) They were paying the bills. Again, it's everybody's mindset. Plus, I guess they talked it up some. One of the reasons I wanted to go to New Mexico was, there was an army major here called Gatlin with the 762nd Tank Battalion which was stationed at Kukuiolono Park, who I liked very much. He was a real nice man with kids, he liked kids. I was the same age as his son and he had gone to New Mexico. And again, understand the time. There was lots of military around. I enjoyed the military. Therefore, I wanted to be a soldier. 'Cause that was the thing to be. They were heroes. Some people want to be firemen, I wanted to be a soldier. And New Mexico Military Institute is one of the top two or three military schools in the United States. Not counting the service academies. Not counting West Point, Annapolis at that time. But between Culver, VMI [Virginia Military Institute], and New Mexico, when they had their annual inspection out of the IG's office in Washington, D.C., the three different schools pretty much change places. Some years you were one, and next year you might be two or whatever, but, you know, they were the top three. Plus New Mexico Military had polo and had horses and I love to ride. My first year there, we were still training in mounted cavalry. So this fifty-six-year-old kid had one year of training in mounted cavalry formations on horses. You know, prepared 'em out, "Odd numbers, lead out!" you know. (Chuckles) All of this. "Force, right. Ho!" Just like in the movies, you know. In fact, at New Mexico, our corps of cadets or some of 'em appeared in two westerns.

WN: Oh yeah?

EM: We were the cavalry. 'Cause Hollywood couldn't train anybody as they could . . .

WN: What two westerns is this?

EM: Oh, they were dogs. I think one of 'em was with Gene Autrey, the Singing Cowboy, or something, and they were dogs. But all we did was put on our uniforms and charge, you know. Race across the big, open prairie.

But we had polo. I played a little polo. Fooled around. But mostly we could ride. On the weekends you could go over to the stable and get a horse, get your horse or a horse. Saddle it up and go and ride the acres that the school had. This is out in nowhere. I mean, from back of the stables you look for flat, I don't know, miles and saw nothing. Desert, desert, desert. But that's what I wanted to do.

WN: How did you feel about leaving your friends here in Kōloa?

EM: Not that much.

WN: Did you come home for summers?

EM: Ah, as much as I could. I came home in summer of '46, '47, '48, '49, '51, '52. I missed two summers.

WN: I was wondering, then you were on the Mainland when Grove Farm took over Kōloa Plantation in '48, the merger?

EM: Well, my father was very soft-hearted, or very nostalgic or something. Anyway, I was the first kid, I think, to ever fly home from the Mainland for Christmas vacation. And in 1948, my dad flew me home for Christmas vacation and I participated in the parties, the farewell party at the plantation office for my father and mother and for the end of Kōloa. And that was December 31st, '47, January 1st, '48, was the magic time when Kōloa pau at midnight and Grove Farm took over January 1st. And so we had a party. I have a picture of it with all the guys, and my father and mother and me taken in front of old Kōloa Plantation office building. So that's basically why he brought me home. Partly that, and my mother. I was an only child and my mother liked her baby boy. And she was feeling down and he was feeling down because he was out of a job. So that's what he did.

WN: Did you understand what it meant at the time?

EM: Yeah. I understood broke. I understood maybe I wouldn't be in school anymore. I thought. I didn't know, but evidently he'd saved his money well or whatever and so I never had to leave school or drop out of school.

WN: Was there any kind of talk of retaining your father in some other capacity or anything like that?

EM: No. No, in sugar plantations you don't go down. And also Kōloa was an Amfac plantation. And Amfac is notorious for the way that they treat their top people, to this day, to this day.

WN: So prior to Grove Farm's takeover, it was Amfac?

EM: Yeah. It was an Amfac plantation.

WN: Mm hmm. And after that, who was the major . . .

EM: I don't know who was the factoring agent for Grove Farm. I really don't. [Grove Farm was an independent corporation under the Wilcox family.] I should know and I've forgotten. But no, my father's case is typical, he'd worked for Amfac for eighteen years and fifteen as manager. And he got a six-month vacation with pay. There was no retirement. My uncle Jack [John T. Moir] who had worked for Amfac for, I don't know how many years, was manager of Pioneer [Mill Company]. They let him go while he was on vacation. When he got home he found out he wasn't a manager anymore. (Laughs) I can---Lefty Ozawa just recently in Līhu'e.

WN: Who?

EM: Lefty, the manager at Līhu'e. They released him early. He'll probably get his full retirement, but that's not the point. You know, you sort of aim, "Well in eight months is when I'm going to retire and that's when my house will be ready," or you know, whatever it is. You planned this and all of a sudden, eight months early, you're out. Well, it changes a lot.

WN: How old was your father?

EM: Forty-eight.

WN: I mean, when he was let go in '48 how old was he?

EM: Forty-eight. He was a century baby. Born 1900. Uncle Jack was well into his fifties. They did it with others, you know, we could go on. We may not have enough fingers to count (chuckles) the people. But that was their style then and still is, basically, I think. Oh my goodness, when they read this, won't they be upset. Well, that's how it goes.

(Laughter)

EM: Well, he was on the beach for a while not doing anything. And then, I don't remember in which order. He worked for a short time for Garden Island Motors. They had a branch at Waimea and he managed that branch over there. And I don't know when that was. Whether that was before or after Hawaiian Equipment Company. But Hawaiian Equipment Company opened a store at Nāwiliwili. Early '50s, he and Wilfred Nishioka. Wilfred was working for the company in Honolulu as a parts clerk. So they sent Wilfred down here. And it was just my dad and Wilfred. And they handled Letourneau International Harvester. And they opened a shop, sold tractors, and all that sort of thing.

TD24 was big at that time. TD24 was a tractor that--you know, full-track vehicle, that International had developed that had what they called a planetary gear system. Planetary gear systems were taken after what had been developed toward the end of the war in military tanks. Which means that when you turn left or right in the old Caterpillar tractors and things, when you wanted to turn left you pulled on the left lateral, you braked the left side and the right side walked around. Planetary gear system, you wanted to turn left, you pulled on the left handle, it shifted gears down on that side so that side was still pulling with the same amount of power as the outside, the right side, but only at a slower speed. And therefore, you had better power, much better power. You could pull more with the horsepower with the tonnage with the TD24 than you could with a Caterpillar. See all these great things you learn? Anyway, so Wilfred and my dad--Wilfred's here now, back on Kaua'i. He's the Kaua'i manager for Marsh & Mclennan Insurance. So all these years have gone around and Wilfred's still here. I see him every once in a while.

WN: When did your dad pass away?

EM: Oh, boy, seventy--February of ('74).

WN: Seventy-three years old?

EM: Yeah. He was young. Comparatively speaking, what's young? Yes, so he did that, and then in '54 or '55, they put a guy from Honolulu in charge of Hawaiian Equipment. So my dad was out again. So they opened our garden to the public.

WN: Oh, your house?

EM: The garden, not the house.

WN: Oh.

EM: The gardens around it. So from '54 until '68, we were in the tourist business. We took tourists through the garden. Hundreds of thousands of those people wandered through (chuckles) the garden. They were open from 8:00 or 8:30 till 5:00, seven days a week. And everybody who came had a conducted tour. We didn't just let people wander. So either my father or my mother--they had no help in taking the tours--would take the group around, depending on the length of time they had. We had twenty-minute tours, thirty-minute tours, hour tours, whatever you wanted to do. And lot of times two bus loads of 100 people would come from Greyline and all these people would pile out. Half would go with my mom and half would go with my dad and they would go in different directions and all come out the same. And they got money for this. This is what paid for the yardmen to keep the yard. In other words, the garden was paying for itself. And built an outdoor toilet area, a toilet with flush--men and women's side--flush da kine stuff. Had a Coke machine, too. And it kept the garden and it kept (them) going.

WN: Today it's a restaurant, right?

EM: Yeah.

WN: Run by who?

EM: Well, in '68, the folks wanted to retire. And because my dad had no retirement, they used their only asset which was the garden and the house and they leased it. And they lived on the income from that. And they moved to Arizona, where there's more cactus, and built a house. A neat little house in Arizona. They had two bedrooms, two baths. Little house on a little tiny lot, and it was about a 5,000-square-foot lot. And enjoyed themselves.

WN: I'm wondering in '48, wasn't there any kind of move or anything to transfer your father to another plantation of Amfac?

EM: No. Because they would have to fire another manager. You never

went backward. You never went from manager back to assistant manager, I don't think.

WN: Was your uncle still manager at Pioneer at the time?

EM: Yeah. For I think about four or five more years. You know, you didn't displace another manager.

WN: Yeah. I guess at that time plantations were closing down, anyway?

EM: Yeah, right. Seems to me I recall my dad one time saying that in Hawai'i, there were something like seven or eleven unemployed plantation managers. There was no other job for 'em. So when you're out, you're out. Not like the Mainland where you can go, you know, you drive somewhere else. I guess they could have gone to the Mainland but gee, I don't think they even ever considered that. What's he going to do? He knows how to grow sugar. (Chuckles) And to start all over again in a whole new country, so to speak, at the age of forty-eight is a little spooky.

WN: I guess looking back at it, well, what did 1948 mean for Kōloa?

EM: I don't know. I wasn't here. I think most of that is history.

WN: Yeah, okay. Let's think of it in retrospect.

EM: Well, you know, between the end of the war and '48, we had the big sugar strike [in 1946]. Plantations were going through terrific changes. You had unionization, the sugar strike, the negotiations. It was not a very friendly strike at all.

WN: Were you here at the time?

EM: I don't know whether I was or not. If the strike was going on during the summer, I was here. If it wasn't, I don't know. [The 1946 strike lasted from September 1st to November 18th.] But anyway, you had the sugar strike, you had unionization which meant wages going up, the perks going down. As wages went up, the plantation took back free housing or free water or free electricity, this sort of thing. So there was a tremendous change. Politically, too, of course, and that's history. There was a terrific change with the 442nd coming home. And the whole face of politics changed and already you're getting talks of statehood.

But I don't know if that affected a kid who was home for two-and-a-half months from high school or college. I mean, you still went down the beach. You still worked and then after you finished your working, you went down the beach and swam and surfed and partied. And when it was pau you heard about it at the table. When it was pau, you got on a plane. Summer pau, you got on the plane, you went back to the states. In my case, college. I don't know about nowadays, but it seems a lot of the kids, not just the Haoles, but even the ones, I think, who went to the UH or whoever it

would be, if your folks were willing to pay for you to go away to school, then you went. For me, I figured I'd go as far as I could go. Because again, away is away. When you talking about eight hours more travel or two hours more travel or whatever, it's away.

You're not going to see your folks for Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, your birthday. I sit down and every once in a while try and remember where I've spent Christmases. I never really spent a Christmas at home. I spent one Christmas at home after I was thirteen. So you didn't worry about that. You just went. My birthday, I got, you know, four pair of jockey shorts, six pair of socks, and a twenty-dollar bill. That was my perennial birthday present. And I would always send a card home for my dad, and then I think in later years we got brave and called once a year. Picked up the phone and called. But you'd write ahead and say, "I'm going to call on such and such a night about so-and-so time," and then you would call them at that time. Now, my kids call every week. But in those days, I think it was twelve dollars for the first three minutes. So it was a lot of money. Once a year, and then you'd write down everything you were going to say and they'd write down so you wouldn't miss anything, and then you'd talk over each other so nobody heard anything.

WN: Talk real fast. (Chuckles)

EM: So I figured if I'm going--go, go, so that's why I went to University of Miami in Florida for college. See, from there, you can branch out. And everywhere you go in those days, the people who you met always were interested and or felt sorry for the poor little island boy. They didn't know where Hawai'i was. They still thought there were hula skirts and grass houses, right. So you didn't tell them a whole lot. You didn't deny it, unless they asked you flat. And so they'd take you home for Christmas, they'd take you home for summer, they'd take you for Easter. I was taken care of so well by an Italian family in Miami, I couldn't believe it. They took me with their family to Sunday dinner every Sunday night. I was one of their family. And because I was by myself, single, living in the dorm, I got the doggy bags. Ho, and they ate, you know, Italian-style veal and filets cut in half so that they were little round filets over fast (EM makes sizzling sound) on the barbecue. Ho, they were so good. So then, you know, Mrs. Polizzi would give me all this stuff and I would take it home and I'd eat till Tuesday or Wednesday from Sunday dinner. And, you know, I was living on $500 a semester so that helped, I tell you. (Laughs)

WN: When did you come back to Kōloa to live?

EM: Gosh, 1976.

WN: Why did you do that?

EM: 'Cause I wanted to come home. (Chuckles) Plus I could afford it. Same thing I tell my kids. Either live here and not make a whole

lot because tourism is not an industry that generates high-paying jobs. So you either stay here and work two jobs and try and make ends meet or you go Mainland, get a good job, make lots of money, and then you can come home anytime you want. And if you save your money and you live your life right, maybe in your fifties or sixties you can come back here and live if you can afford it by then. And I'm not unusual in that particular regard. There are---well, two years ago or three years ago 94 percent, I think it was, of the graduating class in electrical engineering from UH took jobs on the Mainland. That's where it's at, right? (Laughs) They just don't need too many electrical engineers carrying suitcases to the room or whatever, working in the tourist industry. It handles, it hires, and employs masses of people but not very good jobs. I haven't seen the president of the Sheraton or the manager of a Sheraton or any of the hotels here on this island yet, who was a local boy. And I think I might be very old before I do.

WN: When did you start noticing the changes taking place in Po'ipū and Kōloa in terms of development?

EM: Oh, in the '50s already. When they built Waiohai. That was a start. You know, when Waiohai changed--the old Waiohai--when it changed from a private dwelling to a hotel. And then not too far behind that was, you know, in terms of years, I think it was '64, the Sheraton. And then PBH [Po'ipū Beach Hotel]. But the minute the first--well, Waiohai didn't have an effect. But the Sheraton, I guess, was what changed rather dramatically the concept. Waiohai sort of blended in. It was little cottages and you didn't notice 'em. But Sheraton was a full-blown hotel. You know, two-story and all these rooms side by side. A hotel hotel. You know, we've never seen a hotel on this (side of the) island before. And so, I think, that might mark the beginning of the big change.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

WN: Okay.

EM: And by then, you know, traffic is getting bigger. Of course, the folks and I knew there were tourists because we were living on 'em, as it were. Since '54. But they came, they walked through the yard, and they went away. They didn't stay here. They stayed, I don't know, Coco Palms, maybe Kaua'i Surf, Līhu'e Hotel when it was still open. So you saw 'em, and you said hi, and then you didn't see 'em anymore. They weren't walking all over your beaches. You could still go fishing at Po'ipū and you could still surf cast on the beach in front of our house. But when the Sheraton came along, that changed it dramatically. It made a big, big difference. And people would--you know, unfortunately, they advertise so much about wonderful Hawaiian hospitality that so many of the tourists thought

that we were so hospitable that they could walk in your yard and pick flowers and pick your mangoes, and you'd have to yell at 'em (laughs). "What are you doing?"

"Oh, your beautiful flowers."

"Kindly ask permission if you want flowers," you know.

I guess that was the big turning point. And now the snowball is rolling, it's going bigger and bigger and bigger.

WN: Do you think tourism is good for this part of the island?

EM: (Pause) Yeah, I guess. I don't think it's that good anymore for the people who live here. Because as of today, we have on Kaua'i what is considered zero unemployment. Anything below 4 percent is zero. We're at 3.8. Those 3.8, by and large, are people who are probably never going to work anyway. And when [Christopher] Hemmeter builds his 700[-room hotel] and when [Mel] Ventura builds his 600 right here [Hyatt Regency Kaua'i], they're going to need another 2,000 people. And Kaua'i doesn't have two more thousand people. So we're going to have to start importing labor. So somewhere, something is wrong when we've created the situation where we have to import labor. And especially waitress type minimum-wage labor or minimum-wage-plus-a-dollar labor. I don't personally think that that's productive.

WN: You're saying that tourism is good to a point where it can employ the majority of the residents, but once you go beyond that, it starts to have a negative effect?

EM: Yeah, I would think so. Fact or not, by the time these hotels come on line, one of the guys in the county government said that our home construction on this island has to quadruple what it has been to catch up with housing. We're going to end up like Lahaina. There are people in Lahaina living in Volkswagen buses parked in people's yards, sleeping in their car. There's no place to live. There is no place to live here anymore. If I have a nice place, I'm not going to rent it to two waitresses or three waitresses for $500 bucks a month. I'm going to put that sucker in the market for $1,500 a month or $1,200 a week, and I'm going to rent it to tourists. So, we need housing, we need roads, and--we're not listening to Maui. Maui was talking about a moratorium on building until they get roads fixed and this sort of thing. We're not learning from Maui. We're, with our eyes wide open, running down the same road and we're going to crash into the wall.

WN: What about all this cane lands? What's going to happen, do you think?

EM: Golf courses. Golf courses, condominiums, houses all the way from here to Māhā'ulepū. It's on the books. It's there already.

WN: Kōloa Sugar is going to--I mean, the plantation's going to go down,

you think?

EM: I think. I think that Grove Farm will take their lands back after the leases are up with McBryde.

WN: Is that soon?

EM: Yeah. I'm only ballparking it, but (some by) '92, '93. That's soon. McBryde still has land over there. Now the [Kōloa] Mill's going to be a problem. I don't know what's going to happen with the mill. 'Cause the mill belongs to Grove Farm. Possibly, they will continue to use it. If they don't, then maybe McBryde will by then be diversified enough. Because already they're planning many acres of macadamia nuts, coffee; they're experimenting with tea, all of this and in a diversified agriculture. And which, by the way, I don't think is going to create more jobs. I think probably what will happen is that as people retire, the plantation won't hire anymore. So it's not like young guys can go in and start--oh, in time maybe. But I think for a while they're going to have to cut down 'cause you don't need the number of people to raise macadamia nuts. I don't think. Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe they need more.

WN: You're saying that the lands will probably still be controlled by Grove Farm and . . .

EM: Well, this land (east of Kōloa Mill) belongs to Grove Farm.

WN: Yeah. But do you think---is there any kind of trend or desire for Grove Farm to sell land to private owners?

EM: Well, sure. They'll develop all this out here and sell it. Lease some of it, sell some of it. Why not? You do things like lease golf courses. You build a golf course and you lease it to Japanese, by and large. They love golf, they own Kiahuna. And in fact, who was it, the Bass family from Texas and Aoki from Japan just bought the whole Westin chain for 23 billion. So probably, what will happen is, either the Australians or the Japanese or someone will come along, if Grove Farm builds golf courses, then they'd come in to buy the golf course. Or they buy the lease basically. Keep the land, lease it, somebody buys the lease, this sort of thing. And then fee simple, sell house lots. See this land right here, Po'ipū Kai, that belonged to Grove Farm. And they sold it to, hmm, (Leadership) Homes. So it's been developed into this. Ventura's going to have his big hotel right here. So if we put a couple of golf courses and we build roads and streets and subdivisions and movie houses and Kukui Groves [i.e., shopping malls] and all that from here all the way [from] Ha'upu Mountain all the way to Kōloa. Then gotta build freeways.

But the land's getting too valuable. My daughter's in the travel business. The three most in places to go in the world today are: I don't know, I don't know, and Kaua'i. It's one of the top three places in the travel industry nationwide to go to. So they're

coming here and, my gosh, I talked to a guy last night on the phone from Washington. He said, "We've come to Hawai'i six times. First time we've been to Kaua'i," and he said, "We're coming back." He said, "We're going to be back next year--I think I want to live here." (Chuckles) So you got that type of people moving here, they're willing to pay tons. They've got the money. You know, the rich doctor from Malibu. He's got a whole lot more than us local-type people. So they can come here and buy and build, and everytime they do that, our taxes go galley-west. Because, you know, our taxes are based on the newest construction nearest you. That's what determines. . . . If somebody came along and bought one of these little houses in Po'ipū Kai for a million dollars because they didn't know what else to do with it, my taxes would be based--my house taxes, they'd compare my house to that house and say mine was worth a million dollars and that's my tax base. A doctor not too long ago last year bought two on-the-water lots next to each other. Not one, but two. Built his house on one, a swimming pool's on the other one. Two hundred seventy-five thousand dollars per lot. Then he builds a million-dollar house. Hah. Some guy from the Mainland, he's in his eighties, he bought two lots on the golf course at Kiahuna. Built a big, huge place. I'm telling you, it's monstrous. I don't know what the lots were, maybe got the lots for a quarter of a million dollars. But I think the house is 1.2 mil.

WN: What would you personally like to see of this area? I mean, give me your ideas?

EM: (Chuckles) Leave it like it is. Personally, I wish that they would have greater setbacks for hotels than they do. Five hundred yards or something.

WN: In between hotels?

EM: No, from the ocean. Back off the water. I know it's tough, but I think the state and the county missed a golden opportunity after the hurricane. All along Kukui'ula till Spouting Horn practically, almost all those houses were gone. They should have bought the lots. They should have said, "You cannot build on the makai side of the road anymore."

WN: But they're starting to rebuild?

EM: Oh, they've rebuilt already. And unfortunately now, we have people coming along who, Mainland style, are building eight-foot walls. So in some places, you drive for a quarter of a mile or something--eighth of a mile, quarter of a mile, whatever--and you can't see the ocean. On the ocean side is this eight-foot wall of white stucco or a fence with vines or something so, virtually, you know, some places you don't even know you're on the island until you get to the Spouting Horn and then it's covered with vendors anyway. The hawkers. I've never been there but my kids have been there--one of the prettiest cities is Rio. And Rio has that large boulevard. There's the ocean, big beach, big boulevard, and the hotels are all

mauka. Nothing right near the ocean. So that the people who live, the local people, feel like that you're not walking through a hotel or on private property or whatever to get to the beach. The stupid things should be back. Personal opinion. (Chuckles)

WN: How does the Hurricane [Iwa] affect you, personally?

EM: Oh, I had about $16,000 worth of damage. I lost roof tile. Water came in so I had sheet rock damage, paint, the whole inside needed painting. Had to redo part of the roof. Not bad. Not bad. Could have been worse. Some of the roof tile fell off the roof, fell on my deck, so I had to replace some deck boards and some railing and some of the pickets.

WN: So that's a tribute to your knowledge of house building?

EM: I hope.

(Laughter)

EM: That and the fact that the neighbor's house didn't fall down. So it protected me, it was a windbreak. You are right, it is partly the way the house was built. Because in a hurricane you've gotta have windows open to relieve the pressure in the inside. And I've got this six-foot long breezeway that splits the house. And so I left all those windows wide open and that let the house breathe. So I didn't lose glass and that's what happened with the houses that got lost. They lost glass. The minute they lost windows, the wind got inside and then started lifting the ceiling. You know, lifting the roof, lifting the roof and pushing the walls out.

WN: I heard some of those old plantation homes that survived pretty good?

EM: Yeah. Yeah, they did. In fact, on the road going into the McBryde office, Abel Medeiros and I, we went over that morning after the hurricane. Jumped in my four-wheel-drive truck. He couldn't take any of his cars because they were all under his roof. In fact, they were under his house because the house blew in a crater and on top of his cars. Leveled, gone. So Abel said, "Gee, maybe I can go over and get or borrow a truck or something like that from McBryde." So we went haul cane road, snuck around, and came up to McBryde. On the road going in to McBryde office, from the main road, there is camp on both sides.

You know what is a gabled roof? A gabled roof--well, a hip roof is sort of Hawaiian style. The roof comes down with eaves all the way around. Gable is like a pup tent kind of. The ends are V-shaped. On the long way, the roof comes down and create eaves. But at the end it doesn't come down, it just stops. Hangs out two feet like a V. Okay? The gabled roofs where the V was pointing into the wind, they went. Because the wind got under the edge of the gable and peeled the roof off. But the houses where the side of the roof was

pointing at the wind, the wind could get under the edge but also the wind is pushing down on the slant of the roof. They didn't lose 'em. So Abel and I were driving down and Abel said, "Oh, look at all the roofs gone."

And I'm going, "Where?" 'Cause I'm looking out one side and he's looking out the other. (Laughs) And my side was fine. His side was a mess. (Laughs) And so we stopped and we looked and we said, "I wonder why?" And then we said, "Must be because of the way the roofs were built." And so, obviously, a hip roof, which is like what I have where the roof comes down on all sides, is a better roof to have by far than a gable end that's sticking out there. That's what happened to the house next door. He's got a gable end that was looking straight into the hurricane with, I think, three- or four-foot overhang. And so early in the hurricane, at about five minutes to 5:00, his whole upper roof blew off. Half of it landed in his yard, his front yard. The other half landed on the carport down here on top of a tourist car. With some tourist in it, I think. They move very quickly though. You (chuckles) notice how quick they move. I tell you one great hurricane story.

The road was blocked past Abel's house going around the crater. It was blocked down by Brennecke's Beach because it was gone. The hurricane had taken the road out. So this was a dead end. And the sightseers, lookers, local people, everybody, they were all coming down through these haul cane roads, they wanted to go look. And Abel and Lonny Furtado, his son-in-law, and Peter John Medeiros, me, we were all over there. We were trying to clean Abel's place up. We're trying to get his cars out. We needed to work on the street. And there were all these cars who wanted to go back and forth, back and forth just to look. So I would go up by the entrance to Po'ipū, the crater, condos. And I would stop traffic for a while, and then we would shift, and then Lonny would come do it. And we'd tell people that, you know, the road is blocked and unless you have business in here, you're not allowed in. And every once in a while people got a little upset, you know, "Who the hell you? Going tell me I no can go in there. I like go look."

So a big local gentlemen and his lady friend came up in a pick-up and I said, "You can't go."

And the guy, and he was big, and he wants to go. He got out of the truck and said he was going.

I would have said go ahead, it's all right, you know. But they were just pulling one of Abel's cars out and he's being a little ugly--and I'm going, "I don't need this."

And about at that moment, coming up out of Po'ipū Crater, was a tourist carrying his bags, his wife is behind carrying some more bags, and his little boy is behind dragging one more suitcase. And they're coming up the hill and the guy walks straight up to the pick-up, looks at me says, "Excuse me." Looks at the driver of the

pick-up and says, "I'll give you fifty dollars to take me to the airport."

And the guy says, "Shoot." (Chuckles)

You know, jumped out of the pick-up, helped them into the back of the truck, and I said, "See you, brah."

He said, "Okay, take care."

Brooom, gone. Well, that saved me.

(Laughter)

WN: Everybody's happy?

EM: Yeah. He didn't have to think about it. Lonny said, "Chee, well, you sure got rid of him fast."

I said, "Hey, fifty bucks does a lot." (Laughs)

You know, Lonny said, "Eh, I go airport for fifty bucks, how easy."

So that was good fun, right? Nah, that wasn't good fun, but it was. It was an experience. Nobody got hurt, nobody was killed on the island. Lots of damage, people lost personal effects. But then again a lot of the people who completely lost their houses up here on the hill, ended up with much, much better houses than they had. They had insurance, and the insurance covered it, and they rebuilt. I know Abel and Admiral Lawrence, his neighbor, both of their houses were blown flat. And their new houses are very nice houses.

And coincidentally, when the hurricane came along, it was '82, we'd been in the house since '77. So it was five years, the kids have been here for a while, living. So the house had taken some wear and tear. The kids aren't little kids but they're adults, but still, four or five adults living in the house does wear and tear. And my wife was saying, "Boy, you know, next year or so we're going to have to start thinking about painting the house."

I'm (saying), "Yeah. Oh, I don't want to paint the house because that's expensive." You know, paint this big house. And then Iwa came along. Water---little bit water in each room. Every room had to be painted. I got a free paint job. I got free deck (repair), I got some other stuff done, and it worked out real well. Plus I got my money, the $16,000 for the roof and all. I (temporarily) fixed the roof right after the hurricane so it didn't leak. I fixed that within three days after the hurricane. And because it didn't leak, I didn't care when it got fixed. And the roofers were busy. So I put the sixteen grand in the bank, savings account. And that was in December. And I didn't do anything until August. So from December to August, we drew interest on sixteen grand. (Chuckles) So that helped, every little bit helps.

WN: Just a couple more questions. You were in attendance or you were involved somewhat, as a kid, in the 1935 centennial? And then you were also present for the 1985 sesquicentennial? Is there going to be a 200th, do you think?

EM: I gotta check with my son. (Chuckles) I'm not going to be here for it. I'd be hundred and something. My dad did the '35 one. That was one of those things. One thing led to another and I was talking to Ike [Okamura] and the people at Kōloa School. And I was saying, "Gee, you know, we should do something to celebrate. Nobody else is doing anything." 'Cause we hadn't heard anybody say anything. So we said at least for ourselves we should have a little celebration of some sort. So then one thing led to another, and Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association and A&B [Alexander & Baldwin] wanted to do the monument, and then the county wanted to do something. And so we already had (things) moving so we just ended up going (for it), and it got bigger and bigger and bigger. Much bigger than we ever thought. (Chuckles) But I remember the '35 one. I was only four, little over four. But it was a big deal, you know, I'd never seen a parade before and all these people, I mean, I was impressed. And people came in old costumes, they came on horse and buggy, and on horseback, and I was in a costume. So I remembered it, I was impressed.

WN: There's a picture of that, right?

EM: Yeah.

WN: I think you're in it.

EM: I figured if my dad did the 100th, I did the 150. So if my son is around and he's interested, he can do the 200th. I'll let Will worry about that. But it was good fun. You know, it was a wish list, and we were talking, and they said, "What do you think we ought to do?"

And I said, well, in '35 they had a sit-down luau for practically everybody in town. And they had a little parade, everybody came in costume. You know, either like how you dressed on the plantation or in your native costume that you wore or your family would have worn when they arrived, that sort of thing. So I said, "Let's do that, let's have a parade." I remembered that they had a seed-cutting contest. So I said, "Let's have seed-cutting contest." Then I got carried away and I said, "Gee, why don't we get the Royal Hawaiian Band?" So we did that. (Chuckles) But we couldn't have done it without so much cooperation from everybody. You know, Aloha Airlines flew the Royal Hawaiian Band to Kaua'i and back for nothing.

WN: Is that right?

EM: The hotels and condos down here gave us rooms for the band--there were forty some-odd of 'em, for nothing. We had to feed 'em, too.

They're union, right? They don't pay (chuckles) anything. And so all of that was basically donated. Like Plantation Gardens, they're not open for breakfast or lunch, but they served breakfast to them. In the bar, they set up the things. Some guys came in special. They made scrambled eggs and rice and chouri[co]s, Portuguese sausage--and Haole sausage. And ho, those guys ate, you know, lot of 'em are Hawaiians. Without the help of all of these different people, the county, it really would have been impossible to do. And the carts, (Teddy Blake) had golf carts for security during the day of the festivities in Kōloa. Those were contributed by Kiahuna Golf Course. And their little radios from the security at Kiahuna, little hand radios, which was our security people. And the Rotary helped and the Lions helped, all of that. They directed traffic for us and parked cars.

WN: Do you think it's important to do this kind of stuff?

EM: I thought that was important because it only happens once every 150 years.

WN: So what really is the meaning of it? I mean, what were you celebrating in '85?

EM: Hundred and fiftieth birthday of Kōloa. It became the sugar industry. (It all started here.) But basically, we started real low key. We said, "Eh, you know, started 1835-1985, 150 years." Everybody else makes celebrations. Most of the people around here, then and still, are local people, either work on or owe their existence to sugar. I wouldn't be alive if it wasn't for sugar. I sure wouldn't be here. And if you didn't work on the plantation, the store that your daddy had was supported by people who were from the plantation. So we said, let's celebrate at least. And everybody likes to party every once in a while. We never thought of it as a yearly event. They're talking about trying to make it a yearly event. We never considered that. We went in, we did one time, and ran. There was no commercialism at all. All the food booths and all of that stuff were non-profit organizations. We had a sit-down luau for 2,000 at one sitting. And nobody had to wait. We had to pay for the tents to be put up, except that Waiohai gave us one of their big tents very inexpensively. And then we got a hold of Pop Warner and told 'em that we would contribute X number of dollars to the Pop Warner football if they would set up (tables), set up, take down, and return all the tables. So they did it. So that was a fundraiser. And everybody had fundraisers and this is how we did it. This is what I wanted to do. I didn't want any commercialism. I didn't want the merchants from the Spouting Horn setting up little stands and all that stuff.

The following year they did one more and by God, here came the merchants. You know, setting up their little cheap things which I didn't want. I don't think it should be done. I'd rather it be for the churches and the Chinese Society and like the Kōloa Canoe Club.

They brought a canoe up, set it up there. They're a non-profit organization. They need bucks. They made leis, sold 'em. That's what I like. That's what we all want. And then somebody set up one of the cheapy stands out on the road. They said, "Why, you can't make us leave the road because it's public property and we're taxpayers and so we can sell on the road." So next year or if it happens again, I think that can be killed by saying, "No, you can't use that without permission, or something." We just thought it would be good and that way everybody could make some money for their organizations. And they did. They did. They all did well. In fact, most of the food people were saying they didn't think there'd be that many people there and they wish they brought more food.

WN: What do you want people to remember about Kōloa?

EM: You know, I'm a history nut, right? The old history, you know, Kōloa and the Kōloa area was close to being probably the most important place on this island. I'm sure that they'll be people arguing with me. They say, "No, Waimea was, because the king lived there." But he didn't live there all the time. And Waimea, because Captain Cook landed. I don't think Captain Cook made reservations, he just happened to (chuckles)--that's where the wind ran out and he dropped anchor. It could have been anywhere. They didn't have that much control. But this was one of the top three whaling ports in the kingdom. Lahaina, Honolulu, Kōloa. I don't know which order they were in. But Kōloa was the third. Was considered being the capital of Kaua'i at one time, but it wasn't. More shipping really went out of Kōloa because it's on the lee side. The winter storms don't effect the south shore as much as they do the north and the east shores. The sugar industry started here.

Lots of Hawaiians lived here in ancient times. Because again, the weather was (so nice), the tourist industry is not dumb. In most respects, you'll find most tourist locations are in the nicest weather areas. And if you go and look, you'll find that by and large that's where most of the pre-discovery Hawaiians lived. Because they were smart as we are if not smarter. They knew that, you know, fishing, you can get your canoe out more days a year (here) and they did a lot of fishing. The weather was nicer, it didn't rain as much. Grass houses last maybe five years and then you have to build a new grass house. Hanalei side, maybe (they) only lasted three years because of the rain. So the good place is Kōloa. Waimea was too dry. Not enough water. So basically from Kīpū Kai, probably almost all the way to Hanapēpē, Olokele. Of course, some of that area over on Hanapēpē and all, you have more cliffs. You don't have the beaches that we have here. But lots of people--lots of Hawaiians lived here. Thousands. That's why the tourists are here. Nice place to live.

WN: Well, I think we're done. Before I turn off the recorder, anything you want to say?

EM: (Laughs) No, not really. I think I said most of it. So anyway,

thank you, thank you very much.

WN: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW

KŌLOA: An Oral History of a Kaua'i Community

VOLUME I

Center for Oral History
Social Science Research Institute
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

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