

Eddie Taniguchi, Jr.



They said he might never be a cowboy, after an accident when he was 9 years old. I guess they didn't realize it would take more than a kick in the face by a horse to keep a Taniguchi out of the saddle! Instead he followed in the tradition of his father and his father, as a Makaweli Ranch paniolo on Kauai and now he is the ranch foreman.

Eddie learned many things about being a paniolo from his father.

There's a story about his father's favorite horse that would't eat when Eddie's dad was in the hospital. So Eddie packed up Big Jim and drove him to the hospital and parked him outside his father's window so he could talk to the horse. When Eddie got him back home, Big Jim started eating again. Eddie's skill as a horse trainer must run in his veins.

Besides ranching, Eddie loves rodeo riding and roping, and he has a taro farm. Most of all he loves being with his family and spends a lot of time passing on the tradition to his grandchildren in the true paniolo tradition.

Series 2, Tape 5
ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
Eddie Taniguchi, Jr. (ET)
on January 2, 2001

in Makaweli

BY: Anna Loomis (AL)

AL: Interview with Eddie Taniguchi, Junior, at his home in Makaweli, Kauai, by Anna Loomis, January 2, 2001.

AL: Ok, well, today I just wanted to talk a little bit about what we started talking about—your life working out here on Kauai, your life with the horses and cattle. But could we just start—if you'll tell me when and where you were born?

ET: I was born in Waimea [on Kauai], August 9, 1939.

AL: Could you tell me—you were born in Waimea town?

ET: Yeah.

AL: Did you grow up there?

ET: Yes.

AL: Could you tell me what the town was like when you were growing up there?

ET: It was a small little community, you know. . . .

AL: Was there a school in town where you went to school?

ET: Yeah. Was Waimea High School.

AL: How big was your school?

ET: Oh, we had from kindergarten to twelfth grade.

AL: But how many kids went there?

ET: I can't tell you how many, but I know a lot of kids was there.

AL: Could you tell me about just some of the buildings that were in town? Like if I was walking through the main street of Waimea town when you were growing up there, what would I see?

ET: Well, small little stores . . . nothing big. Was all small little stores that they had at that time. I think the biggest store was HS Kawakami store.

AL: Was that a general . . .

ET: Yeah, a general store. And next was the Ishihara Market, that was the next biggest in Waimea, and it's still operating.

AL: Still today?

ET: Still today. Of course, they changed locations, but. . . .

AL: And your neighbors—did you know your neighbors real well?

ET: Yeah, we knew majority of them.

AL: Did most of the people who lived in town work for Gay & Robinson?

ET: No. Not too many. Majority worked—from Waimea—worked for Waimea Sugar Mill. Waimea Sugar Plantation. Then they went out of business, it was hard to go work.

AL: The house where you lived, was it in town or was it on Gay & Robinson property?

ET: The house we lived on was my dad's property. He had his own house on it, small little shack.

AL: Yeah. And what was your house like?

ET: It was a small little dinky one. I think two bedroom. We had about ten of us living in there, his brothers and his sister, and us small little children.

AL: Where did everyone sleep?

ET: In the parlor, in the kitchen . . .

AL: Yeah? Did you enjoy growing up there?

ET: Well, it was alright, you know. I survived it.

AL: Did your dad have a lot of animals around the house?

ET: He had a lot of horses. Horses, mules. . . .

AL: So, most of your friends must have come from sugar worker families, right?

ET: Yeah, majority of them.

AL: So were you like the big man on campus because you had all the horses at your house?

ET: No, I played a small role in that. A lot of people had horses, but he had the most.

AL: When did you first learn to ride on a horse?

ET: Well, when I was six years old, according to my mom, then used to go round-up in Waimea. The cowboys used to stop over, and had me going with them.

AL: When you were six?

ET: Yep.

AL: Could your feet reach the stirrups yet?

ET: Well, they had a small saddle for me. . . . It wasn't my dad, it was most of the cowboy workers would come over and . . . "we're taking this boy with us" (quiet laughter).

AL: So, could you give me some of the names of the cowboys that you remember taking you out?

ET: Well, they had this old-timer, Paul Kamae, Eugene Makaila. . . .

AL: Were they Gay & Robinson?

ET: Yeah, Gay & Robinson cowboys.

AL: What kind of—what kind of men were they?

ET: Well, they were Hawaiians. And they had that other cowboy, Teru Kajiwara, was one of them. They all take—make sure I went with them. Cause they were older than my dad, so . . .

AL: They were old-timers . . .

ET: Yeah . . . and Shima, my *tutu*, Shima—Shima Taniguchi. And then they had Kauai Hookano.

AL: When you were a small kid, and these cowboys would come up and put you on the horse and take you off with them, what was that like for you? Was that something you looked forward to?

ET: Oh yeah, that was a big thing. You going with the old-timers, so that was a real big thing. Stay home from school, and . . . I'm gone.

AL: (Laughing) Any time you get to stay home from school it's a big thing.

ET: (Laughing) Yeah, it's a big thing.

AL: So they would take you out, and where would you go?

ET: Up Waimea Canyon. There was a lot of cattle running up there. So they had to go in and get it out.

AL: Was it wild cattle up in the canyon?

ET: No. Well, when they put it up there—when they leave it a year and a half, almost two years, before they go up there and get it, it wasn't wild, that was—the thing is we had to get them together and bring them out.

AL: So do you remember any days in particular when you went up with them and you had some kind of special adventure, or something that made a big impression on you?

ET: The most was that when we get there, and the cowboys used to run and, you know, you had to tag along. So that was the thrills of it, running here, running there. You can get your horse up and get going.

AL: What's the area up in the canyon like? I've never been there.

ET: There are river crossings that you got to cross, and cold water. Before they had a lot of that *panini*, what they call cactus.

AL: Is it real dry up there?

ET: Yeah. The thrill is just in getting up there and running around, get a chance to run with your horse, and try to keep up with the old folks.

AL: Did the old timers stop and teach you things along the way? Or were you just expected to follow and watch?

ET: The way you learn is you try to keep up with them and see what they doing. That's the only way you going to learn, and like you say, is learn by experience. What they try to do is out-**think** the cattle.

AL: Is what?

ET: Out-**think** the cattle.

AL: So when you were riding with them up in the canyon, how would they try to do that? Do you remember any examples of that?

ET: Well, the cattle had certain places where they get away. So when the cowboys hit there, they had to be there before the cows come. So you always had to be ahead, one step ahead of the cattle. So they—the thing is they going to get away here, the cowboy gets there, so the next place they're going to head for is the next place that they know they can get away, then the next cowboy takes over and he gets there, so by the time we get there, the cattle is past all the places that they were supposed to have escaped.

AL: So it's like you cut them off at the pass.

ET: Yeah, head them off.

AL: How did the cowboys know where the cattle were going to go?

ET: I guess through experience, you know. I guess they learned from the generation before them. So that's how they learned, and we had to follow what they doing. Those cattle—cattle is, the thing is you got to out think them. Otherwise there's no sense in your trying to raise cattle, because they'll outfox you anyway they can. So you got to just be one step ahead of them.

AL: Some of those cattle that were up there, they hadn't seen a man in a year and a half.

ET: Two years.

AL: So were there any special things that you remember watching the cowboys do to get out those wild ones?

ET: What they try to do is put them in a herd. When you try to work one or two, it's kind of difficult. What they had to do is try to get them to the next one; each time you got to put it in the herd, and then you move them in that direction that you want them to go. And cattle is funny, like I said. You always got to out think them. You always got to be ahead. I guess all kind of animals you got to out think them—horses, cattle, they all operate the same way.

AL: So the man has an advantage . . .

ET: Yeah. Yeah. The man has—well, you got to out-think them, you know.

AL: At that time, had you already learned how to throw a rope?

ET: Well, as soon as we was old enough to handle a rope we was playing with it, but roping cattle from a horse is different. When at that young age, they wouldn't let you, because that thing would be twelve-hundred to fourteen-hundred pounds. You can get hurt, you don't know what you're doing. So the old-timers used to do the roping.

AL: Mm. Out on the . . .

ET: Yeah. Until you know how to handle a horse, and you know how to handle cattle. **Then** they pull a good rope for you. Otherwise you got to lay one Tonka Toy rope on your saddle, just to go through the motions that you got a rope.

AL: What about your dad—what kind of stuff did he teach you when you were growing up?

ET: Well, he try to keep us in line. And put it the animals was first. Before you had dinner, horses had to be fed. Animals had to eat before you have dinner. You don't feed them, you don't eat. That's the style that they had, the old-timers. It's always the animals first.

AL: And was he the one who first put you on a horse?

ET: Yep. And I can still remember the horses' names.

AL: Oh yeah? What was it?

ET: We had Jingle Bell, and Mokehana. So all these horses' names was Jingle Bell, Mokehana. Then he had a mule, Forty-Five.

AL: Forty-Five was the name of the mule?

ET: Yep.

AL: How'd he give it that name?

ET: He bought it for forty-five dollars (laughter). So that was the mule's name.

AL: What kind of a—you know, I wanted to come back later and talk about your dad because he's in the Hall of Fame . . .

ET: Yeah.

AL: But when you were growing up, what kind of a man was he? What kind of a dad was he to live with?

ET: Well, everything to him was work. Work. And [when he was working on the ranch], in eight hours he used to shoe seventeen horses. In eight hours. Seventeen and a half, and that's all four legs. The seventeenth horse, he put two leg: eight hours has gone. So you can imagine how fast he was shoeing. And it's not like today's shoers. When he shoe a horse, that thing last three and a half months before you change the shoe or that shoe comes off. He used to weld it on, just like.

AL: Welded it on?

ET: Was so **unreal**, man, the way he shoe.

AL: What kind of equipment did he work with?

ET: What is that, shoeing the horses?

AL: Yeah.

ET: Just block and hammer. That's it. No aligator, what they using now—aligator—no way. They never had that. Just block and hammer, and a file.

AL: And a fire?

ET: No, they never had fire. Put it on the anvil and—cold shoeing.

AL: **Cold?** I didn't even know you could do that.

ET: Cold shoeing.

AL: Wow, that must have been really hard.

ET: Put it on the anvil, and bonk bonk here, and shape it according to him. Nowadays, they shoe three, four horses in eight hours. So he must have been doing something different, to shoe seventeen and a half horses. And nowadays, they only shoe two front. Those days, they used to shoe all four legs.

AL: So that amounts to . . . like, more than two horses an hour. That's like one foot every—that's less than fifteen minutes, that's like five minutes a foot!

ET: (Chuckling) I think so. That's how he was going.

AL: So he was a real hardworking man.

ET: Yeah, he was: hardworking. And he was **strong**—he was a strong man. **Real** strong man. He was a good provider, and he used to go in the mountain—he didn't only kill the goats, he didn't only kill the goats. He used to bring them home alive.

AL: How did he do that?

ET: Try to ask me, I'm not sure (laughter). But a lot of the old brothers and friends used to say he used to bring them all alive: eighteen, nineteen goats, alive.

AL: Did you ever go with him in the mountains?

ET: No. I went with him maybe about six times. The rest of the times I had to take care the animals. I went with him about six times. But he was the type that, two goats, that's it, he's going to catch it, he's going to bring it home alive.

AL: What kind of—you said that you would have to take care of the animals when he was in the mountains—what were your chores around the house?

ET: We had horses at home, we had pigs at home, we had goats at home, and he was partners with another friend of his, they had hundred-fifty hogs, so that was our job. We had taro farm. We had taro farm. We had passion-fruit farm.

AL: So how often would you have to go out to your taro farm to work?

ET: During the week-ends, we had to harvest. So I—actually we was brought up with a hard life, you know, work, work, work.

AL: Hardworking life.

ET: Don't kill nobody.

AL: I was going to ask you about—how old were you when you started working for Gay & Robinson yourself?

ET: Actually getting paid? From 1957. I graduated from high-school, but I used to go down during the summers, go with help, learn all the ins and outs, it was in the learning stage that time. So now I get my grand-daughter goes with me.

AL: You teaching her?

ET: Teaching her.

AL: Could you tell me about some of the work you did when you were working there in the fifties and sixties?

ET: Well, handling cattle, then we fix fence. You know, all that goes with being a rancher.

AL: Maybe could you start out just telling me—in this, in the *makai* area, what kind of work did you do in the *makai* side?

ET: Well we had to maintain the ditches, fix fence, then move cattle from pen to pen, and branding.

AL: At the time you started Gay & Robinson, it wasn't doing any intensive grazing?

ET: No. Everything was range.

AL: When did they make the switch to intensive grazing?

ET: In 1987.

AL: That late?

ET: Yep.

AL: So how often would you move the cattle from pasture to pasture?

ET: Every two days. And get something like two acres where we had maybe hundred head, every two days.

AL: That was in the **sixties**?

ET: Uh, in the eighty-sevens. But in the sixties, we had maybe twenty, thirty heads just as we were going into—from—they separate it and grow it out. Just pasture raise it. And two years and we go get that herd, but we had pens all over the place. Now they're going into that intensive. All that pens that we used to use for wean them, now we have cows in them—cows, calves.

AL: When you started out here working, did Gay & Robinson have its own slaughterhouse?

ET: Yeah.

AL: Did it slaughter all its cattle here?

ET: Just for the local markets. Then they used to send out to Honolulu, then Kahua slaughterhouse used to take. But then they had local markets here that they would slaughter six, seven heads a week.

AL: Could you tell me, for someone like me, who's never done this work myself, if I was to come to like a branding, what are the different types of jobs that go on at a branding? What's the whole process?

ET: Got to go out, get them. Bring it in the pen, separate the calves from the cows. Then we separate the wean-offs, then we separate the old brands, and the young ones that we put a brand and ear-tag on them. Castrate and do all that things. But right now in June, that's when we do the vaccination. I mean—we do them in October, the vaccination, bring in the cows and we give them injections. Then we cut all the tails. Then we round-up in January—we know the ones we missed all have long tails. So we can give them their shots.

AL: So that's the way you're doing it now.

ET: That's the way we're going it now.

AL: How was the branding—all that process—how was it different when you first started, in the late fifties?

ET: They had a wood fire. They'd make a fire and put it on. Now we have that gas light, the torch, the gas torch. The old days they used to put it on the—make a fire, put it on, then put a brand on them. But now days, they have a gas torch, so you don't have to find wood. That's the only thing that they changed out of that, you know, the branding.

AL: When you were working at Gay & Robinson, how many days would you be working down here on the ranch, and how often would you go up-country, to the mountains to work? To get the cattle?

ET: Well, on the lower section, they tried to—they smaller pens, so they tried to put two days of the week on the low. Three days of hard work way out in the big pasture. So the horses don't get too—you do all the big pastures in a week, they used to go maybe one day, work the small pens.

AL: So this is for the horses.

ET: For the horses. Because right now we only using two horse during the branding drive and it's about four weeks, five weeks, on the branding drive—we only got two horses that we got to use. Where in the old days, when we go on a branding drive, every cowboy had four horses. Every cowboy had four horses, so we had about ten cowboys. Now we doing it with about four cowboys, then you have our retired boss, and his wife comes out, so that's six, and our boss comes out, and that's seven of us. Where before we used to have ten.

AL: Ten cowboys.

ET: Ten.

AL: What is a branding drive?

ET: Just get the head-count of the cows, and separate the weaners from the kind, and then they put down in the book what they brand, numbers, just to get a regular count of what they have.

AL: And is that something you do up in the mountain pastures?

ET: Yeah.

AL: Tell me about some of the work that you do when you're up in the mountains, for your job.

ET: Well . . . thing is that everybody got their own area that they got to cover. It's like I was telling you—from ten to seven. The ten of the old-timers, everybody had their section. Now you almost half of that. So you got to double-up your schedule. Otherwise you man and a half short.

AL: So could you describe for me what—just the typical day when you're up there working? You say you double-up the territory that you cover.

ET: Well, yeah, the majority of the time. So you gotta be here then go there. It's big areas.

AL: So if you're going up to the mountains to work that day—if today you're going up to work in the mountains, how does the day start? Do you saddle up here and ride up [from] here?

ET: Saddle up, we load up on the truck and trailer and drive up there, and we start from there.

AL: So you get up there, and you take the horse out of the trailer, and then where do you go?

ET: Everybody got their own section where they got to go. You take care of your valley, I take care of mine. And we all meet at a certain place, that we leave—if we've got seven, maybe we leave four there, and they just contain the herd. The other three go back.

AL: So you go off by yourself to your own section.

ET: Yep.

AL: Or do you go off with a partner?

ET: Sometimes you don't have enough, so what you got to do is, if somebody get in trouble, send—you do it by yourself.

AL: So you go off by yourself to your section, and what do you do when you get to your area?

ET: Well, you got to check here and there. Then if they're finished, then they send one man to come and help. The thing is, you can handle so much, but after you reach a certain place, you have to have somebody come help you. So if you get there first and you know he's getting hard time, stay there, wait. Don't try, because cattle might run back. So you stay there, wait. Somebody will come help you.

AL: Can you tell me—is there a time that you remember going up in the mountains, and—what was maybe the most difficult time that you went up there?

ET: I don't have difficult, the thing is that everything's hard work. Like I told you, you got to out-think the cattle. Be one step ahead. I've busted ribs, and, you know, fell over with the horse, crash-bang, broken ribs. Keep a-going.

AL: Is it dangerous riding in the mountains up there?

ET: Sometimes. But most of the time is: you get careless. Like anything, you get careless, you get hurt.

AL: You get callous?

ET: Careless.

AL: What do you mean?

ET: You take it for granted. You pass there one time, you pass there three times. Next time you go three-quarter speed. Oh, you know, was alright. Next time you go—a little faster. Horse crash.

AL: So what are some of the dangers up there?

ET: Like I said, it's not danger, it's just that you get careless. So many times you go back and forth, take it for granted, that's it. That's when you get hurt.

AL: So, were you ever hurt?

ET: (Smiles) I ain't got a good rib. Every one's been busted. Every last one.

AL: Every rib?

ET: Every rib.

AL: Could you tell me the story of how some of those accidents happened?

ET: Tuck and roll with the horse.

AL: You rolled over with the horse?

ET: (Breaking into a sly smile) It happens.

AL: How did that happen? Do you remember the day?

ET: Trying to take a short-cut. There's no road—it's a big wash-out. Horse was air bound, next thing I know, crash! And nothing you can do. It happened. Take a short-cut.

AL: One thing I'm curious about, you know, in all the time you were working with the old-timers, what tricks of the trade did they teach you? What type of special . . .

ET: Like I said, they teach you to out-think the cattle. That's the tricks of the trade. In any trade you got to out-think animals. That's why you got your head on your shoulders. Like you get your head on your shoulders—it's not to separate your two ears, now. That's what they said—that's what the old-timers saying. You got your head—your head, it's not to separate your two ears—you got to use your head.

AL: So what were some of the ways that you out-think the cow?

ET: You know where they going to escape. You go up there so many times, you know where they going to escape. So you get there. The next thing they going to is head for the next place they going to escape. So they head over there. Somebody get there ahead of them. So he—so now they're not coming back. They know in front there's another place that they can get away. So the next guy, or the guy was—every time, somebody's got to be there. So always they're thinking of getting away ahead of them, the men. So if you're there, what's the next stage? Go to the next place—you'll be there. Then they go to the next.

AL: So it sounds like you get a lot of teamwork going with some of the other riders.

ET: Supposed to be, yeah. So you always got to be one step ahead.

AL: How do you communicate? Because there's probably great distance between you guys. How do you . . .

ET: Now we communicate with radios. Before, was **shouting** at each other, and hoping you could understand the next guy.

AL: How far away would you be?

ET: From here to the main road [perhaps a hundred yards]. And you had to try to make out what they was trying to tell you. Now days we have radio.

AL: That must make it a lot easier.

ET: Yeah. But according to the radio, I can be [just] twenty feet away from you, and I can still answer the radio. When they used to communicate [by shouting] and you used to communicate back to them you **know** that they're there. Then with the radio I can be just twenty feet away, and answering you on the radio, and I'm not where I'm supposed to be. But the old-timers, they used to scream and yell, and holler, and you had to try to make-out what they're trying to tell you.

AL: But you could also tell by hearing their voice where they were . . .

ET: Yeah. Now days with the radio, I can talk to you here and you can be right out the door, twenty, thirty feet away from me, and you not at the place where you're supposed to be. When you scream and yell. . . . I think that's one kind of advantage that the old-timers had: they could locate each other from great distances.

With my dad, we used to be maybe a mile and a half away when he came home from work. And he used to scream, you could hear him—even if you was way gone, gone, you could hear him. And you had to come running, man. The work was on schedule. After school you used to go home and horse around, do this, do that. When he gets home and he gives one scream, man, I don't care how far you are, you come running.

AL: Sounds like he developed some powerful lungs.

ET: Oh, yes. The old folks, they had good lungs.

AL: Did they do anything special so that they could be heard farther away?

ET: I don't know. (Laughing) That's a secret they took with them. But all the old-timers used to scream and yell.

AL: The other day you told me that you did some shipping at Kokee—cattle shipping. That you loaded the cattle onto boats.

ET: Oh . . . from Kalalau? Yeah. We used to go in there and bring out the weaners. They had cattle in there. From the olden days they had cattle in Kalalau that we used to bring out. So go in there and take out the weaners and bulls, young bulls.

AL: When was this that you loaded cattle at Kalalau?

ET: In the summer months. That's when the oceans cooperated.

AL: But what years were you doing it?

ET: Well, when I started—but they started ahead of that. But when they started, they had that sampan we used to put them on.

AL: The what?

ET: The sampan boat. Yeah. But just before I started with them, they went in with the landing barge.

AL: So how many cattle could you put on there at once?

ET: Mm, about twenty. Twenty, twenty-five. Then they used to come in, used to drop us off Monday mornings, then Wednesday used to come in and pick up one shipment.

AL: How did they drop you off?

ET: Hit the beach. Like the soldiers. Hit the beach.

AL: With your horses.

ET: Oh, when we go in there it's all mules. Only with mules.

AL: And you brought the mules with you.

ET: Yeah, on the barge.

AL: So they drop you off, and you take the mules to shore.

ET: Yeah. Then we camp there, till Friday. Friday they come in and pick us up. Wednesday they take cows.

AL: So, could you tell about what you did between Monday and Wednesday, to get the cattle?

ET: Oh, we had to climb all that hills over there, and try to catch them. My dad was the dog.

AL: He was . . . ?

ET: He was the dog. And we had two young guys, me and this other friend, Leialoha Kuapahi. We was the puppies. The puppies, had to follow the old dog. In the morning maybe I would be the one go with my dad. And then one o'clock, the other boy would go. But we had hard time keeping up with him. Just like he was super-human when he get in there. Because he would be **running** after cattle. Up and down that hills. And was hard to track, but he used to **run** tracking them.

AL: How did he track them?

ET: Ground. On the ground.

AL: By looking at the ground.

ET: The tracks.

AL: He would look for their hoof-prints?

ET: Someplaces **don't have**. The leaves is so **thick**. Some places don't have [footprints]. And he would run—leaves would be turned over. He was like an Indian tracking. And if he'd go so far, and he never pick them up that good, stop right there, back up, check again. "Oh, oh! That's the one that we're following. Keep a-going."

And people used to set what we called *kipukas*. You know, traps. Guys used to be there, waiting. When he gets there, they say, "no, the cow never pass!" But they [had been] fast asleep. "Cow never pass!" He go backs up, check again, comes back. "Never pass!" He goes a little bit further down, the track went through there. Go further down and there's a bull stuck in one of the ropes, and he passed them and they didn't even—I think they was fast asleep. If he didn't track it there, then they wouldn't know.

Tape ends and is turned over.

AL: So, you were talking about your dad tracking the bulls and the cattle up in the mountains.

ET: In Kalalau Valley.

AL: In Kalalau Valley. So you spend the day tracking the cattle—and catching them? Or would you drive them?

ET: Catching them.

AL: One by one?

ET: One by one, two by two—like you said, one by one, or two by two, or whatever. They got to be caught.

AL: You said you'd use *kipuka* to trap them.

ET: Yeah.

AL: Was that the only way you used to catch them?

ET: Yeah—in the thick brushy areas.

AL: Did you rope them—did you rope them one by one?

ET: If we could get them out in the open. Otherwise, they'd be ducking in the thing over there.

AL: Could you tell me how you set up a *kipuka*?

ET: Well, the thing is that you put it right on a trail that they normally use, and you set it, like a lariat, set it up. You spin it around a branch, spin it around the next branch; use it as a spring-trap, and then you tied it at the end.

AL: So it's a rope.

ET: It's a rope.

AL: And then when the trap is sprung . . .

ET: No. It's hung. It's not sprung. It's just hang right on their trail. So when they go past it, it get around their neck.

AL: It catches them on the neck.

ET: Either the neck, or the horn, or the leg, or the someplace. So you can't make it too big; you got to put it in a thick area, where you know that they're going to go through. You know, you can't put it in the open, because they can see it from far. You put it in a kind of bushy area where they think that it's just a bushy area so they just continue going. By the time they know, they're caught.

AL: So when you get the—when you go in and check the trap later on, and you caught a bullock or a cow or something, what would you do, would you take the . . .

ET: Take the next rope and put it on.

AL: Put it on the animal.

ET: Put it on the animal, so it won't choke. Then we take a neck rope and tie it to the tree and leave it there, let it fight the rope. Then late in the evening we go up there and take it out.

AL: Lead the animal . . .

ET: Lead it.

AL: And, you were camped by the ocean?

ET: Uh, right near a stream.

AL: So you had your calf, and you were leading it out; where would you keep the animals?

ET: Oh, we had an old corral over there, where we had the heifers in one pen, and the bulls in the next pen.

AL: So, the first day you were there you spent tracking the animals, catching them, leading them out.

ET: Second day is the same thing. Then come Wednesday morning, by four o'clock we had to be ready, cause the boat come in maybe about five. Five it reached there.

AL: It what?

ET: Five it reached at Kalalau. They start maybe two o'clock in the morning from here, goes.

AL: How come they would come so early?

ET: I guess the water . . .

AL: For the tide or whatever?

ET: Yeah.

AL: So the boat would come in Wednesday morning, and how would your day begin?

ET: Loading up. We would be out there waiting with the cattle that we caught. And we was the youngest—I was the youngest in that group there—two of us were the young boys, so we had two [cows] to lead. My dad used to take four.

AL: Take four at a time?

ET: Four at a time.

AL: Into the ocean?

ET: Four, big ones. He would take the wildest ones, four he had. The other cowboy had four. The two old-timers now, was Kaipo Hookano, and my dad, had four.

AL: So would you tell me about how you dragged the cows into the surf?

ET: Well, if the ocean is calm, that thing would hit the beach.

AL: The boat would . . .

ET: Hit the beach. And the ramp would go down. And then they would drag them in. And unreal the animals that the old folks had. Ho. You know, when they come over there, even if they had four, the mule would practically lie down and try anything that's _____. He wanted to go home. Figure it's time to go home. _____. Some would be down and sliding. The mule would just drag at anything. Unreal that animal. Go in there then we tied it. But one time I remember, we went over there—too big the ground swells was. I had to swim out. [The boat] came as near as they could. Then I had to swim out with the long ropes.

AL: So how would you do that? Would you rope them one by one?

ET: No they had the ropes on them already. I swam out, tied it on the boat, the boat backs out, let them [the cows] hit the ocean, and it was just like fish—you know, like when you hook a fish with a long line? Just drag them in. The ramp would go underwater, would pull them right to the ramp, the ramp would lift them up and throw them in.

AL: So you'd drag the cow into the ocean, and swim? Would you swim with the cow?

ET: Pull them. Hand pull them.

AL: But the horse would be swimming?

ET: No. Horse would stay out there, on land.

AL: Oh (laughs).

ET: We would just tie them, and when we got them tied, the cowboys would let them go and we would drag them out. And they don't want to come, but can't fight the boat. Pull them up. Once it gets out, it's really easy for pull. Cause that thing floats.

AL: The . . .

ET: The cattle. It floats. Their stomach so big—they float. Put the ramp down. The ramp go underwater. Soon as it comes out they lift up the ramp—right in. Tie them. By that time they're all groggy, yeah? So easier to handle, eh?

AL: In the morning?

ET: No, when they hit the water. They still a little bit groggy when it gets out. Easier to tie that.

AL: So once a year you went out to do this.

ET: Yeah, once a year we went out to Kalalau. But then they gave up. I think the State took back—change with Robinson for some land they had over here, because Robinson had maybe half of that Kalalau Valley that they had *kuleana* in, when they changed. I don't know what happened. So they gave up Kalalau. But that was the—that was the days where you gets up four o'clock in the morning, saddle-up. My dad was the cook, so he had to cook. Saddle the animals, get back there, eat breakfast. By five-thirty we'd be leaving. Didn't get back there till nine-thirty, ten o'clock in the night, back to camp. Whole day out working.

AL: Full day of work, eh.

ET: And during the summer months, that's when they had mangoes. So that was your lunch, mangoes (laughter).

AL: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

ET: That's it! Them mangoes, that's it. That was your lunch. Cause you don't see the camp till nine-thirty, ten o'clock in the night. Then you have to unsaddle, then they go cook, and then you take care the animals and come back, eat dinner.

AL: What was the camp like? Was it a structure?

ET: No.

AL: You were just in the open?

ET: Well, we had roof in case rain, but if it didn't rain, just a tent overhead and that's it. Sleep on the ground! Was, you know, was the thrills of being there, just being there, Kalalau. . . . I miss that.

AL: You miss that?

ET: I miss that. . . . It separates the men from the boys.

AL: The rough—the rough life, you mean.

ET: Yeah. Where everybody got to take they own—you know what I mean. We got some bulls that we had to lead there, maybe three, four years old—big ones. You handle that yourself, and like I said, it separates the men from the boys.

AL: Do you remember any—any particular times when you had to deal with a real dangerous bull or real big one?

ET: I seen some. Seen one pick up my uncle.

AL: What happened?

ET: He was leading it. And it picked up his mule from the back.

AL: With the horns?

ET: Well, we cut the horns. . . . Picked him up like a wheelbarrow. And it was a real narrow trail. **You** would be so afraid of even riding that animal there. About three feet wide, the road. You look over—about a hundred-fifty feet down, there's the ocean, **banging** against the wall. The bull didn't want to come across the river, so they told him [my uncle] make it [the rope] short. He made it short. When he dragged that bull across, that bull came up after him, and he had it so short, maybe about five feet away from his mule, from the time he got started, the mule was going on the two front legs—the bull had the mule lift up in the back. That was a real scary thing; the ocean there, the bull was coming. Like I said, those old folks . . . fear was nothing to them. Normal people would get one heart attack.

AL: So how did it end?

ET: It went—the bull had that thing going maybe about twenty-five, thirty yards, only on the two front. After that the mule kind of gained its balance and the mule took off, and the bull was after that mule and the mule was gone.

And the rider didn't bail off. Stayed on. Didn't lose his hat, no nothing. That night we talked about it and he was laughing about it, he thought was funny—I mean, was tip-toeing. Well, like I said, he was a normal guy. But I guess these old folks, they been through that.

AL: Yeah, I imagine so.

ET: (Pause) They said that that old man, the thing ran over—was over the cliff, hanging. His mule was practically laying down. Told him cut his rope. He said, no way. Turned his mule sideways and he pulled that big bull back up on the hill. You know, hard to believe, but . . .

AL: Unbelievable, yeah.

ET: And they showed me where he went off. They **showed** me. "Right here." **Wow**. Hundred-fifty, hundred-seventy-five feet to the ocean. They said that thing was hanging—don't even cut his rope.

AL: The bull was hanging?

ET: Was hanging! It went over the cliff.

AL: And this was—you didn't see this, though.

ET: No, I didn't see it. They told me about that. It's like the old man I was talking to you about, Paul Kamai, one of the old-timers, was him. And if you look at the mule—I've seen that mule—he's a **small** little fellow! And this bull out-weighed the mule by three times. Said he wasn't going to cut his rope. He'd just made a new skin-rope. And if you're talking about skin-rope, I've got one in there *bumbye* I show you.

AL: Oh yeah? Is that what you usually use, the skin-rope?

ET: The old-timers used to. Now days it's all nylon. I got a skin-rope in there, I'll show you afterwards what they're talking about.

AL: What about saddle—do you prefer the Hawaiian saddle to the stock saddle?

ET: Yep. Well, to me, I'd rather have the Hawaiian saddle. Comfortable. I've got one in there that, you know, I just redressed. That saddle is unreal, because . . . I can rope **anything** with it. So. . . .

AL: One thing I wanted to ask you about, before we finish up—I wanted to ask you more about what it was like to live on—in this area—it sounds like you guys were working so hard, but what did you do when you had a holiday, or when you had free time? What did you like to do, you know, for fun?

ET: Well, the thing we had fun doing . . . I like take vacation, but no can! You know, work is work, we got to work! But right now, I think I did my share of work. So time I'm thinking of taking a vacation. But . . . we never had **time**, you know. Only thing we had was rodeos. We had rodeos in Kekaha.

AL: You did rodeos?

ET: Yeah. Roped in rodeos. I was with my dad, father and son team, *pili* team roping. (Long pause) That was all the thing we looked forward to, was rodeos. Cause we had that West Kauai Saddle Club, in Kekaha, and we had rodeos there.

AL: Was it mostly the cowboys who competed in the rodeos?

ET: Well, majority was. Majority was cowboys. Majority was cowboys. But they said during the old days, they used to get that Fourth of July, they used to get all kind of happenings—Kekaha was a big thing.

AL: What would go on for the Fourth of July?

ET: They would get race—race horses, used to get what they call horse pulling.

AL: What was that?

ET: Put a rope on my saddle, put a rope on your saddle, we would be facing each other, we'd turn around. When the flag goes down, we turn around, you go your way, I go my way. Tug-o-war. Yeah. Horse on horse. They said they had this old *pake* man. Nobody could win him. He had a horse that could pull. Oh, he had rice pastures that he used his horse in. Said nobody could out-win him. What he would do is turn around—when he turn around his horse, once he get his horse in the direction he wanted to go, he'd take off the headpiece on the horse.

AL: The bridle.

ET: Take off the bridle.

AL: Why would he do that?

ET: Cause he would be dragging the next—his opponent—all over the place. Horse would be down on the ground, or the saddle would fly off (chuckles) something would happen. And they're screaming and yelling at him to stop, and he would turn around and look at them, but how can he stop? Got no control over his horse. Cause he got the bridle in his hand, and he would take it off. That's what the old folks used to say, you know, that was the thing that they had. Every time they would get. So maybe somebody from Lihue, or other places, their horse would pull, they would come down there. That was a big thing, for challenge them. Like I said, that old *pake* man would be always the winner.

AL: What about socializing? You guys, you cowboys were working really hard, but all together. And I can't imagine there were any girls who you met out on the range (laughs) . . .

ET: No, no, no, nothing that kind. But nowadays we get some time out—like [retired boss] Warren Robinson, he used to bring friends. Or if we're in certain pen, somebody want to come, I can ask them, and then they would let go. Some people just want to come and look the terrain over.

AL: Come to see . . .

ET: Come to see what's happening.

AL: Could you tell me about—while you were living out here—where your supplies came from? Was there—you said there was a general store in town.

ET: Yeah. Well, I don't remember how they used to bring it in, but—the general store used to get, but how they brought it in, I'm not sure.

AL: But you could get what you needed?

ET: Yeah. Well we could get the major things, like rice, then they used to get the meat—they used to hunt that. For vegetables—when they go in the mountain [and hunt meat], take it to the Japanese neighbors and they used to bring vegetables over, so they used to trade off, eh? So we were able to live, you know. Or you give the meat to the people that do fishing, in return they bring fish—you know. You supply them with meat, they bring fish, other ones bring vegetables. So everybody was just like in a tight community, everybody share what they had. I don't want to be greedy because I got a lot of meat and going keep it all. Just go distribute it to people.

AL: What was it like after you were grown up—what was it like raising a family out here in this area?

ET: I don't know how they did it. Tell you the truth, I don't know how the old folks did it. So I had to get out of the *da kine*, get out of the ranch work into construction. I had five kids, but was real rough. So I got out of the ranch, work construction fifteen years, and I'm back in the saddle. Kids is all on their own. I'm just doing something that I **want** to do. (Long pause) Because I had plenty kids that was staying with me. Kids don't want to go home, they sleep on the beach; my children used to befriend them, used to bring them home, and they had to follow our rules. So I had about, oh, five, six different kids that living with us, so, went out, work construction, and when all my kids got out, then I decided I'm going back in the saddle.

AL: When did you decide to come back?

ET: In 1987.

AL: In '87.

ET: Yeah, construction was getting real slow, so I came back.

AL: And what was it like to come back to this kind of job after fifteen years of working something else?

ET: I just loved that job, because. . . . So when I came back, we went back and drive. And my boss told me, “there’s no road here.” So I told him, “what you mean?” “He tell me, you **cannot** go.” I tell him, “**why** not?” He tell me, “there’s no road!” I told him, “But they **had** a road there.” He said, “No. No more.” So I tell him, “follow me.” Went down, look at the stone. Told him, “this the stone that was on the side that road, where the road was.” I tell him, he goes there; we went, follow. And he **found** a road there. He tell me, “in fifteen years, you been gone and you still can find a road!” I said, “nobody can take away a road!”

Unreal. Even those old roads that they had, I can go back and find them. Told us [there was no road]. No can be—people that made the road never take them with them. It’s there. So he told me, “show them. Let’s go.” Come down, he comes down and I told them, “see that tree there?” “Yeah.” “I gotta come by that tree.” “How you know?” I tell them that’s where the road was—I come by that tree. He tell me, “oh, **now** I remember!” I tell him, “what you mean, now you remember?” I tell him all the way we was coming on the road. Then he look back and he tell me, “I don’t believe it!” But they no can take away roads. I pass through there a couple of times I can find it. A road don’t move. That’s why I’m trying to take my son up in the forest.

AL: To show him the paths?

ET: To show him. I tell him, because if I’m gone, you guys don’t know where things. I tell him right now where is the nesting place for pigs. Cause nobody been in there. I tell him I never been in there fifteen, seventeen, maybe twenty years, but I know where the road is, I can find it. The trees don’t move. Trees don’t move, stones don’t move. That’s the way I mark it. Stones, trees.

AL: So do your sons like to go up and hunt?

ET: Yep. Right now, yeah. So I trying to take them up there. Cause get one place where I used to go; Robinsons, in the old days, they planted fruit trees—the mainland plum, the big purple ones. Nobody been in there. I been in there. I can find the road. I try and bring my son, show him the road, but we never get around to get there. So I was talking to the Robinsons, they tell me, “oh, why cut one road back there. For what? You guys know where the road.” They expect **me** to keep it open.

In August I’ll be retiring. I’m trying to teach all these young boys where—how to go about it. I can go with them after I retire, but . . . I figure maybe traveling time, eh?

AL: Well, before we finish up, I just want to ask you if there’s anything you wanted to add.

ET: Nope. I think we’ve said enough.

AL: (Laughs) Covered a whole lifetime!

ET: Oh, yeah.

AL: Oh, there's one thing I wanted to ask you to tell before we finish, and that was—yesterday you told me the story of your father's horse, came to his funeral?

ET: Uh-huh.

AL: I wanted to ask if you could tell that story again.

ET: Well, I was in—I was in Honolulu when he died, and we had a phone call that his horse wasn't eating. So when we came home I told my mom, and my sister, you know, "only way we're going to get the horse out of that is, gotta bring it to the funeral." They said, "oh, how we going to do it?" Put all his things on him, his saddle, like he going to ride him. Saddle him up. Put it on the trailer, bring him to the grave.

So we went to the Catholic church, had everything. We came back—the horse was alright in the trailer, but when the hearse pass, he wanted to get out. Screamed and pound and yelled, kicked the trailer. We're in there, we had the services. Horse would be looking over, screaming. So just before the casket went down, I made the sign to bring the stallion. So he brought him.

When he came, he came tearing—luckily he had a long rope on him. Tearing—he almost got in the hole! He went right to the edge of the hole; dirt was flying on the casket. He wanted to grab the casket, grab his hat and all that. Then he started rearing and screaming, until the thing hit the ground.

Took away the horse, put him back in the trailer. While he was walking away, he would turn around, scream and yell at, you know. We put him on the trailer, he looked from there, and he starts crying. Took him home, and after that he was alright. That was—that was something that—nobody believed that, you know. Because when he got hurt—he got couple time hurt, and he was in the hospital; horses wouldn't eat. I had to load them up, take them to the hospital.

AL: You took the horses to the hospital?

ET: Yeah, Waimea Hospital—had to take the horses there—they wouldn't eat! Had to load them up on the trailer, take them up there.

AL: And you showed them your father?

ET: They used to scream and yell. They want out. Take them off, he would call them from in the hospital. They would cry—they wanted to get in the hospital! I had to take how many time, horses! People thought I was **crazy**! And he would talk to them, talk to them, and he'd tell them, "okay, go home, go eat." Then we would load them up and take them home, and like nothing happened.

AL: And they would eat?

ET: They would eat.

AL: So he was a horse trainer, your father.

ET: Talk. The majority, talk.

AL: Talk? How did he do that?

ET: (Pause) I don't know (laughter). He talked to them.

AL: But what do you mean when you say that he would talk to them?

ET: I don't know, he would go out there, and just sit down and talk story with them. Out of nothing he would just take them out of the pen, take them go, walking. And he would talk to them, "okay, I'm going to take you for one ride." Put them on the trailer, hook up, put it on the trailer, take it down round Waimea town, come back home. So. They was just like his children. He would just talk to them, and. . . . I don't know. Maybe I don't have that. I trying to get to where I can talk to animals, but. . . . Maybe before I retire I can do that. I'm not sure (chuckles). I want to give it a shot.

AL: Well, I want to thank you so much for talking with me.

ET: Okay. Thank you.