

Merton G. Kekiwi
Oral History Interviews
Ulupalakua Ranch, Maui, November 28, 2021
Ulupalakua Ranch, Maui, March 17, 2022

LW: Today is November 28th, and I am staying at the guest house on Ulupalakua ranch. And I'm speaking today with Merton G. Kekiwi. We are sitting at the dining room table in this guest house. Well, I'm so glad you're here. So, tell me about your family.

MK: Okay. I got married in 1962, in February of 1962. I have four kids. I have three boys and a daughter.

LW: And what are their names?

MK: The names are ... My oldest one is my son Merton junior. My second boy is Charlie. And then the third boy is Ricky. And my daughter is Doreen. I got three boys and a daughter. And they all live here on Maui. Yeah. One is a mechanic. The oldest one is a mechanic in a shop, and the second one is a foreman down at Mahi Pono, working for them. Mahi Pono, the new plantation that they have here. And he's been there. He's kind of a boss there. And my third son, Ricky, is working for Hawaiian Airlines. So, he works on it at the airport. His wife is Bambi. She's the number one or the number two lady in TSA down at the airport. Yeah. And my daughter is on Maui. She's not married. She's living on her own.

LW: And what's your wife's name?

MK: My wife's name is Jan.

LW: Jan.

MK: Yeah. J-A-N. Actually, to tell you the truth, I had a first wife. My kids came from my first wife.

LW: Oh.

MK: And she passed when she was 32 years old.

LW: Oh, wow.

MK: She had the bronchial pneumonia. So she died within four days. And then I was by myself, raising my kids for three and a half years, and then I remarried again. And my second wife, her name was Faith. Faith, she was a bus driver for down country here. And she also passed. After 10 or 11 years after we got married, she died too of a stroke. She had a stroke and she died at age of 54. And then I'm married to my third wife, Jan. She was a salesperson at Sears Roebuck, and we got married 31 years ago. And. I'm still with her yet.

LW: That's wonderful. And your parents?

MK: My parents was really ... I really was adopted into the family. My real mom, my mom was from here on the ranch. Her name was Caroline Swift. Her dad is George Swift. He used to work on the ranch here. He was a slaughterhouse man, used to work in the slaughterhouse way back. And my mom went with a service man, and got me. My brother was first. In June of '42, he was born. I was born July of '43. And my grandpa, my mom was staying with my grandpa at that time. She was real young. My grandpa told her, "I'm going to give away your child," me, "when you give birth, because you cannot take care of him, because you have one more." My brother was one year older than me. So they adopted me out when I was two weeks old to a family in Kula. My adopted dad worked for Rice ranch up there. You know, Harold Rice? Henry Rice, Freddy Rice, all them, my dad used to work for that ranch.

LW: What's his name?

MK: My grandpa from here, George Swift, knew my dad Hua Kekiwi, from Rice Ranch. They were good friends. So he said, "You want to adopt a child? My daughter going to give birth and you can adopt a child." He said, "Oh yeah, sure. I wish it'll be a boy." So I was born in July. August 14th, they adopted me to him. So they changed my name from Merton Gabriel Swift to Merton Gabriel Kekiwi. So I got my adopted father's name and I went under the Kekiwi family, and I was raised up on that ranch, Kaonoulu Ranch, where Henry and Freddy was. My dad used to work for Harold Rice, their grandpa. Then came down to Oscar Rice, that's Freddy and Henry's dad. And then, I was raised up over there. I went to high school over there. After high school ... Just before high school, my dad was sick in the hospital and he told us, he told me and my two brothers, "It's best bet for you three not to work on the same ranch. If you guys want to work on the ranch, you guys should go. One should go Hana Ranch. One should stay here on Kaonoulu Ranch for Rice Ranch, and one should go Ulupalakua Ranch. So you folks won't fight. So, we all agreed, but I was young at that time.

LW: How old were you?

MK: Only 14 years old. So I didn't know where I was going, so I thought I might as well join the service. But I went to high school and then I stayed with my brother. My dad died. I forget what year it was. Then I met my first wife and then we got married. I was young at the time, just made 18 years old. And then I was working at Rice Ranch for a short while, maybe one year or so, and then they had an opening down in Ulupalakua Ranch. I have a lot of family here on this ranch. At that time. I had uncles and cousins and all that who used to work on the ranch here because my background is from here. I belonged to the Swift family. So they told me at the rodeo ... At a young age, I used to go rodeo. When I was growing up with my dad, I used to ride horses with him on that ranch. Really young age, I was to ride bucking horses and all kinds of stuff. When you're young, you do all kind crazy stuff. When I had one interview to come down here to work at a ranch. So I came down and I got hired July 8th, 1964. I started to work here. That time, the manager was James Armitage. And he told me, "I heard you are good cowboy. You came from Rice Ranch.

Your dad was from Rice Ranch." I said, "Yeah, but my background is from here." So I started to work on the ranch here, July 8th, 1964. And from that time on, I stayed here and worked on the ranch. My brother, my older brother, went to Hana ranch. I think the family get two boys in Waimea. My brother, my adopted brother, went to Hana Ranch. His name was William Kalaniopio. In Waimea, get two boys. One was working for Parker ranch. Mickey boy, Mickey Kalaniopio and his brother. Oh my, I cannot remember the names. But they're still up there in Waimea. I think Mickey boy retired.

LW: So they weren't Kekiwis?

MK: No, My dad adopted William Kalaniopio, Mickey, and he adopted Henry Kekiwi, my brother. But Henry came from his brother, so he carried the name Kekiwi anyways. So, he never need to change his name. Mickey came from a childrens home, and he was supposed to change his name but he didn't want to change his name. He wanted to keep his name. But when he went in the service, when he came back, he wanted to change his name to Kekiwi. When he found out he had to pay about \$3,000 to change his name. He said, "Oh, forget it. That's too much money." So, he kept his same name. That's why he went under the name of William Mickey Kalaniopio. And I came here, Mickey went to Hana, and my brother Henry stayed at Rice Ranch. So actually, I was raised up all the time in a ranching area, Rice Ranch and Ulupalakua Ranch. And from 1964 on, I stayed here, until now. In 1964, when I got hired, they had a cowboy gang. They had fence gang to fix fence. At that time, the ranch was about 44,000 acres, now it's only 29,800. The Hawaiian Homelands took some land back. So the ranch became smaller, and then Mr. Erdman sold some land down at the sea coast to the Japanese firm named Seibu. And then, it's a kind of a long story, but what he paid for the ranch, he sold some part to Seibu, he got all his money back. The ranch paid for itself. And I started that year, 1964, July of '64. He bought the ranch June of '63. Mr. Erdman bought the ranch a year before I got here. And when I came here, I was a number 17 cowboy. Had 17 guys before me. And as years went by, a year or two after that, each time a guy passed away or he retired, so each time it came down, down, down. And then ended up, had only about six of us left. Each time they hired, but one older guy passed or they retired, and came down to about six guys. And then we hired two more guys, came eight guys. But I was here all the time from '64. Michael Purdy came in one year after me. He started in '65, I think. I started in '64, July. I think he started in October or November of '65. And he was working with me side by side for 39 or 40 years. And all these years, everybody went except he and I, and he and I was one of the oldest guys here now.

LW: So when there were 17 in the cowboy gang, did you really use all 17 cowboys?

MK: I knew every one of them.

LW: Who were some of those guys?

MK: Oh, Willie Malia senior, Willie Malia junior, Louis Hapakuka, Jim Hapakuka. That's two brothers. The Malia family was father and son, Willie was the father, Willie junior was the son, and had one more brother named Sammy, that all one family. And then had George

Campbell, he was a shop mechanic. And had Big Bill Uweko‘olani. Bill was a cowboy. Bill Jr. Worked in shop with George Campbell. And then had Dan Purdy. Had Connie Purdy, that's Dan cousin, and had Kauhi Purdy, that's Dan's brother, Kauhi Purdy. And had a son named Kauhi Jr. The Purdy over here had about four or five of them. Dan, Kauhi, Connie. Michael came afterwards with me, and that's nine. And had Aki Ishikawa 00:14:22. He used to take care of the stables. Because over here, they had horse racing too. So Aki Ishikawa used to take care of Mr. Baldwin's horse racing stuff. But when the ranch came to Mr. Erdman, they stopped the horse racing and Aki used to work on the stables, take care of the horses at the stables. So we had plenty of guys over here at the ranch at that time. They all were from here.

LW: So were they all living here too, or?

MK: They were all living here. All the cowboys that I worked with, they were staying around here. Nobody came work from outside. They were all ranch houses and all that. They had two Japanese brothers, Mitoshi Terada. Mitoshi used to work in the store. That's all he did. Since he worked there until he passed, he was the storekeeper. Mitsuji was our accountant, bookkeeper, for the ranch. He used to work in the ranch office, and he was accountant for the ranch, and he'd make our payroll. And he does all the book work in the office. And then had a Japanese lady, single lady, her name was Bertha Isobe. She used to work with him inside the ranch office too.

LW: So describe for me, when you had that big group of cowboys working, describe for me a day where everybody would be out working. Do you see what I'm saying?

MK: Okay. When everybody goes out and do a big job?

LW: Yeah.

MK: Every three or four months, we used to get big drives, like certain areas of the ranch, out in an area called Kahikinui. That's where the Hawaiian homes now are building. They get all the homes out there. That's kind of far from here, it's about a half an hour drive out.

LW: Out towards Kaupō?

MK: Yeah. It's between Ulupalakua and ō. Maybe not quite halfway, but almost halfway out.

LW: Oh, wow. It takes about 20 minutes to half an hour drive out there now.

MK: And that area, we used to ride horse from here, from the stables, up the mountain and across. We leave here around five o'clock in the morning, all the cowboys, and we ride up and go across. And then we used to start to drive the cattle all down to that pen in Kahikinui. The ranch used to send two guys, the two guys who work in the shop, mechanics. They go out with the small trucks, they take all the food and they go cook out there. They have a big ranch house, something like a pavilion, it was like an old shack. And they go out there, and then they cook salt meat and cabbage, and they make salt park and

poi and all ... Cowboy kine luncheon. So the two mechanics go out there and they cook. We drive the cattle all down in a pen, big pen, all stone wall pen. They build the pens all by stone wall. Get some few wire and gates made out of wood, but that pen has been there a long time ago. I don't know who built that pen. It was way before my time. But we drive the cattle all in that pen, and then we work the cattle. Takes about a week to work all that cattle.

LW: What did you do? Branding, or?

MK: Branding.

LW: Vaccinate?

MK: Wean out the bigger ones. We bring them home. The trucks go out. That afternoon, all the trucks go over there. We had five trucks, three international and two army trucks, go out there and haul houses back home. And next day, we go back out there again, put the horses on the trucks from here and go back out there, and we work the cattle until it's all done. And then we come back home. Sometimes it takes about four days to work all that cattle. Sometimes, takes about five days. Within a week time, all that cattle has to be done, and then they go back out and then we bring them all the wean outs.

LW: Yeah. And you're culling, too, at the same time? Were you culling?

MK: Yeah. We cull all the cows who's over six to seven years old. We cull all the older ones and the ones that get bad eyes or bad legs, we cull them and we bring them home. And then we kind of fat 'em up, make them fat so we can send them to the slaughterhouse to make hot dogs, hamburgers and hot dogs with the old cows. And at that time, Ulupalakua ranch used to own the cold storage down at the pier. And it's called Akahi hot dogs. And we used to slaughter our own over here. Every week, we used the slaughterhouse, slaughter some cattle, maybe 15 or 20 head every week, right down the road here.

LW: And that was a Ulupalakua slaughterhouse?

MK: Yeah. They had their own slaughterhouse. And then we used to slaughter our own cows and then they take them down to the cold storage, down at the pier, and they process whatever they're going to do, make hot dogs, make hamburgers. And some of the meat goes to schools, goes to some supermarkets. But we used to kill between maybe 15 to 20 head a week. Every Tuesday, we used to kill at the slaughterhouse. And Mondays, we go out in one certain area and we select the cows that we going to send to kill, and we slaughter them right down here.

LW: And that meat ... That meat that you slaughtered here, what happened to that?

MK: Most of the meat stays on the island, for it goes to some schools. Some supermarkets. At that time, I got no idea which markets it does go, but goes down to the cold storage plant. Guys can go over there and go buy the meat and all that. But it wasn't that much, only

about, let's say, 15 head a week. So, some goes hot dogs, some goes hamburger, and some goes for steak.

LW: Yeah. So, the wean offs, where did they go?

MK: Okay. When we first got started, they didn't have our own feed yard. Years after that, we got our own feed yard. But before that, when I first got started, we had certain areas, good grass and good feeding. We used to put all the wean outs in there and make them grow out and get them fat. And then we send them to slaughterhouse here. Some goes here. Mostly used to ship to Honolulu, Hawai'i Meat Company, that's all grass-fed kine steers and heifers. We kinda save most of the heifers for our replacement culls here. But we sent some to 'ahu, Hawai'i Meat Company. Then a few years after that, as years went by, we had opened up our own feed yard here. And we had eight big pens, eight of them. And we tried to put between 75 to 100 head in each pen. Every month we put so much. Between three and four months time, this pen is ready to slaughter. They all fat. Then we send them to our slaughterhouse to be slaughtered. Some of that goes to O'ahu. And then, this month, went out the next month when it gets ready to slaughter. So every month, get so much and so much. By then, we had our own feed yard. We used to import all the feed from the mainland. But as years went down the road, everything got so expensive. The feed got so expensive. And I really don't know how long we had the feed yard, but it was quite some time. I would say maybe 10, 15 years, we had our own feed yard here. And then Mr. Erdman thought, well, it cost too much money to import the feed. Cheaper to send them up to mainland. Somehow along the line, he bought a ranch in Lodi, California. Not a ranch, but in Lodi, it was a feeding area where they raise ... Not a feeding area, a farming place. They plant alfalfa, wheat, corn, and something else. But anyway, he raised his own grain up there, and he sell them up there. And then he thought, well, much easier to send the wean outs up there and go raise them there and sell them up there. So he bought a place in Prineville, Oregon, and we still have that ranch up there. It's in Prineville, Oregon. And he got a guy up there who takes care of that ranch. It's not too big of an area, I think 2,000 or 3,000 acre ranch down in Prineville. Prineville is in one area where you got two sides of a mountain, it's down in one valley. And there's a real river that's going through there, they call it the Crooked River. So he bought a ranch there. All our wean outs, we used to send them up there, and the boy, raised them on that wheat and alfalfa farm. And when he get fat, they send them across to Wyoming, I think it was. Next to Oregon, into a bigger feed yard. And then they slaughter them and all that, then he sell him up there. Better, he don't have to import the feed and all that. So we got rid of our feed yard and that is what we used to do: send out all the wean outs there, and then the boy feed them and fat them up and sent them to the slaughterhouse up there.

LW: Was the feed lot up country or was it down, lower down? The feed lot.

MK: Oh, it was here? Right down the road here.

LW: Yeah. Wow.

MK: It's right on the ranch. It's just up the hill, right there on the side of the road.

LW: Okay. So you're actually pointing down towards Kula when you ... We won't know what that is unless I say that.

MK: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

LW: What was I going to say? How did they get the grain up this side? Just some big trucks?

MK: Yeah. They get the Valley Isle Express downtown, which they do all the big truck hauling, the semi-tractor trucks. The containers come from the mainland with the feed. And they hook up the trailers to the trucks and the Express Trucks bring them up here. And right here at the ranch here, next to the shop, we have a big warehouse where they unload the feed in bins. They got about four bins: one for corn, one for wheat, one for alfalfa, and one for almond hull. Then we have our own big truck to mix up all the feed. And we put the feed into the truck, get scale on the truck, so how much of this and how much of that? And then dump in with the scoop loader, and then the truck mix it up. Then we drive right along the feed yard and the feed trucks ride around. The truck just unload the feed as they go, and the cattle just eat the feed, right around.

LW: Oh, I see. Wow. What an operation, huh?

MK: Yeah. I used to do that for a few years too, because we rotate. Actually, Mr. Erdman had a good idea. He wants everybody to learn everything on the ranch. So if I'm not around, you can do the job, next guy can do the job. Even the water man on the ranch, we had two water mans, one take care on the bottom half of the ranch, one take care on the top half of the ranch. If you drive with the Jeep all around, it's kind of hard to cover the whole ranch in one day time.

LW: Mm-hmm (affirmative). You mean to check the water line?

MK: Check the water troughs and the water tanks. So they had two watermen, one take care of mauka side of the Ulupalakua Road, the upper half of the ranch, one take care of the makai side of the road, and that's all what they do. Every week, we rotate. This week, I check down here and then next week somebody else go, I go back on a cowboy string and work. Somebody else go up there. We all rotate and take chance, so if in case a guy gets sick the other guy know what to do.

LW: Wow. So you rotate through the fence gang and...

MK: At first... When I first got started, a few years within the first, maybe six to eight years, when I got started here, they had their own fence gang. The fence gang only takes care of all the fences on the ranch. Now, if we drive cattle and we see a fence broke, we write them down, we come back and we hand them in to the foreman. That time we had two foremans, one takes care of the fence gang, one takes care of the cowboy gang. Willie Malia senior used to take care of the cowboy gang. Had this guy named Oliver White. You know Ferny White from the Big Island in Waimea, married to Alvin Kawamoto? Okay, Ferny was raised here on this ranch. Her dad was the fence gang foreman over here on the ranch. Her

dad's name was Oliver White, he was the foreman for the fence gang. He used to take care of everything else besides cowboy, but he used to go work with us too. When we needed everybody, he goes with us to go ride horse. And he really was a good cowboy too. He was a good rodeo man, but he could do everything, jack-of-all-trades. He used to take care of the fence gang and the shop. He used to be the overhead foreman, but he does all around too. One guy take care of the fence gang, one guy take care the cowboy gang. Oliver White used to take care of the fence gang. His job is to be sure to check with the water man, whatever it is, broken pipe or broken water trough, or a tank went empty or something. Because, as you know, the most important two things on the ranch is the grass and the water. You got to get that. So his job is to stay on it, be sure the watermen does all the job and there's no big broke or something. And then... But anyway, we all work with each other and then he let everybody know what's the big job, where's somebody got to go help and go fix broken lines, all that. But we had two foremans that does that, one take care of cowboy side and Oliver White takes care of the fence gang side.

LW: And who was the foreman for the cowboys?

MK: Willie Malia senior. Well, his last name is cut short, Malia, but his last name is supposed to be Kaikamalia, but Hawaiians they cut their name short. Yeah, so his last name is Willie Kaikamalia. And he was senior and had his son, Willie Kaikamalia junior. And he had a brother named Sammy. All of them used to work with us on the ranch. Yeah.

LW: Yeah. Okay, So, you described for me the driving down from pasture that was above this area, that's now the Hawaiian homelands. So, these other pastures that are closer to here, are any of those special or what about those?

MK: As years went] by, that Kahikinui area is divided into three areas, one is called Kahikinui, one is called Pu'upani, but it's all in the same section, Hawaiian Homeland. But it's divided in three places.

LW: From mauka to makai?

MK: Yeah. So we cannot drive all at once, so we drive one section, Kahikinui next section is Pu'upani and the last section... No. Pu'upani is the last one, Kahikinui is in the center, that's where we have the old pens. And then the first part is called Ka'ulaula. So we have three different sections. We drive into one area, but not all at once, one section at a time, because it takes long to drive that path. It's a really big path. And...

LW: Is it shrubby, is it hard to drive them through? Are the cattle hidden and...

MK: You got to go find the cattle and make big noise and chase them out and all that. Really brushy lantana and all kine of brushy-kine grass, and weeds, and the really tall trees. We drive them down. At that time, most of the cowboys had their own dogs. They take their dogs with them. So the dogs is big, big help. They chase out the cattle and all that. As years went by, I'm not sure, maybe in the early seventies... Also seventies and eighties, I would think, maybe up to nineties, Mr. Erdman bought one helicopter. He bought his own

helicopter... At the makai side of our ranch, down Kihei side, above Maui Meadows, we had a helicopter pad where we keep the helicopter, and we had a guy named Chuck Whitman. Chuck used to fly the helicopter for us. That was a big, big help. He used to go up in Kahikinui area. He used to fly the helicopter back and forth, and he can see where the cows hiding, and then we drive down, much easier for us. He chase them all out of the weeds and go down the pen. And we surround the pen, all the cattle go in the pen. That became way much easier than we got to go in, because when you ride one horse and go through the pasture it takes time to get down. Helicopter is much easier. And then he can check on that far side and he can come back, and he says, "No more on that side." So, we only go down here. So when we had that, cowboy life on the ranch became much easier, because he do all the work for us. Sometimes we get to the pens, he got the cattle already all the way down, so we just put them all in the pens. Those days, all the old timers, the Hawaiians, when I got started, they all talk in Hawaiian. So you got to understand what they're saying. When they work the cattle, they only speak in Hawaiian, what and what. I was raised up with my dad, my adopted dad, his name is Hua Kekiwi. He talked to me at home when I was a small boy till big, mostly in Hawaiian, Hawaiian English. So when I came here, I knew what they was talking about, everything. I cannot speak back that good, but I can speak back some of it, but not all. What they were talking, I can understand. All Hawaiians in every island is the same except Kaua'i and Ni'iau. Big Island is a little different from us here. When we drive the cattle into a pen, like this is the pen, we say, "*Huli ka pipi i loko ka pā'eke.*" Okay? "Drive the cattle into the pen." Big Island guys, when they say that, they tell, "*Huli ka pipi i loko ka pā'ipipi.*" So, one is talking about the bag, bring the cattle into the bag, that's the pen, one is talking about the cattle going to the pen, but it's the same thing. But it is only the last part they pronounce different. But if you listen to them, you know what they're saying. Maui, they say, mauka, up, makai, down. Big island, they say, manai, right, and the other one is... I forget already, but it's the same thing, only they speak one other way, mauka and makai, form us. Big Island is manai and something else, I forget already how they say it, but you can tell where they're from by the way how they speak. But it's all the same. On Kaua'i, I get plenty of friends up there who work ranch. I go up there with them and help them work on the ranch too. Kaua'i, Ni'iau, they all work the same. Every two or three words when they speak, they use the letter T. They use the letter T before the word [instead of K]. But when they speak, if they speak slowly, I can understand. But if they don't want you to know what they're talking about, they talk fast. They go real fast, then you're not going to understand what they say. And then they cut the word shortcut, so it's... But getting back to the ranch, when Mr. Erdman got the helicopters, everything became easier, really easier. Then after they got rid of the helicopters, after 15 years or 20 years, after that, the helicopter became... Slowing down, started get all kinds of problems, so he thought of buying a new one or overhauling the engine. It's going to cost too much money, so he said, "We don't need that." Then they got into four-wheelers. So everybody ride four-wheelers.

LW: When do you think that happened when they started...

MK: Not too long ago. Yeah. So when that became, by then, all the old timers were gone. We had younger boys who started with us. To me, it's when the ranching started to slow down and it's not really cowboy kind of life. You will go drive cattle with the four-wheelers, so

you don't use your horse too much. You saddle your horse and you leave it at the stable here, and then you go drive the cattle with the four-wheelers. You take it into the pen, then you come back and park your four-wheeler and you jump on your horse and you go with the cattle in the pen with the horse. It's all right and it's much more faster with the four-wheelers to get the cattle in. Job go more fast. And you can get to where you want to go more faster with the four-wheeler, but it's not really cowboy and ranching job, it's modern style. And the old timers, they don't like that too much. But by then we don't have that much old guys already. It started not too long ago, so by then all old guys were gone.

LW: So did the ranch supply a horse string, a string of horses? Or did you have your own? Or...

MK: Okay. When you started... When I started, each cowboy... Well, when I started way back then in 64, everything is with horses, the whole ranch. You got to go check water with the horse. Some places, the Jeep, that old army Jeep, you cannot get to where you want to go. The trough water was way in the boonies, the tank was way in the boonies. So you got to go with the horse and go check all the water. Then they made tractor roads go all around, then you can go with the Jeep or the truck. After a while, after a few years, after I got here, most of the places they had open up with a tractor. So you can go check the water and the tank, but before then everything was with horse. So, when I got started, every cowboy here had about five or six horses. When you come here, when I came here, I don't have no horse, so they gave me horses. And then they tell you, "If you're going to be a cowboy, you've got to train your own horse." So the old guys show you how to train horse. They teach you and all that from ground up. So every cowboy know how to train one horse and learn to ride one bucking horse, until the horse is good for work. So each guy had about five or six horse and you take care of your own horse. When they drive... Every week, one guy comes earlier, maybe 40 minutes or half an hour before working time, if you start work at six, you come in at 5:30 and go drive the horses in.

LW: They're up here in a pasture?

MK: Yeah. They are in one pasture close by.

LW: Okay.

MK: And then you drive all the horses in a pen or maybe get 40 horses or 50 horses, all in a pen. Then when the cowboys come to work, the foremans come out of the office and they say, "Okay, today we're going to drive this area. Okay, you know what kind of horse you need? One good horse or one slow horse." Everybody know their horses, so they go grab their horses and put saddle and then everybody go out and go drive. But each cowboy had about five or six horses. Like I said, if you don't have one, they give you. And then as you work, maybe you see a friend outside who have a good horse, you want to buy one horse for yourself, you can buy one horse and bring them here. That's your own. But you got to use them on the ranch to work them, because they are on the ranch area, they're eating all the ranch grass. So you've got to use them to work on the ranch. Then you use your good horse to go rodeo and all that. So each cowboy had about five or six horses.

LW: So what was your preferred method for getting a horse to be a good working horse?

MK: Yeah. As a young boy growing up, before I came here, I was about 17, 18 years old when I got started here, I was just about entering rodeos. In fact, James Armitage seen me at the rodeo, at a 4th of July rodeo in 1964. And he asked me by then, "Hey, I heard you get family and friends in Ulupalakua ranch?" I said, "Yeah, I know, I get my grandpa, them down there. My real grandpa and uncles and family down there." He said, "You want to come work for us?" I said, "Yeah, I can." So I came down to work here, but I started off young, riding bucking horses and all that, going to rodeos. So, when I came here, that was right up my alley, that's what I wanted to be. As I was working on the ranch, I met all the young boys over here too, and we all used to go rodeo. And from there, I worked my way up and every rodeo I used to go to. Working on the ranch, I used to go Big Island, Pu'uwa'awa'a, in Hilo, Honoka'a, Honolulu, Waianae, Big Island. Not everyone, but those days it was cheap to go. Yeah? Now...

LW: You take horses? Did you take horses with you when you went?

MK: Yeah, we make our own box stalls. And then we put one horse inside and we ship them. We ship the horse over. And we get friends over there who pick up the horses and take care for you until the rodeo is over, and he ship them back. In a box stalls before, one horse, you send him, maybe for example, Molokai, cost only 40 something bucks to ship him over and back, a round trip.

LW: Wow.

MK: Today it's in the hundreds. Five, 600 bucks to ship a horse. So nowadays, get guys they're still shipping horses over to rodeos but much easier if you come over here and use my horse, and when I go over there to your rodeo, I go use your horse, because it's so expensive. Yeah. And in those days, we no used to go to every show but which... The ones that we can afford, we go. Yeah.

LW: Mm-hmm (affirmative). So you feel like you learned to how to deal with horses and train them, by learning how to do rodeo stuff?

MK: Yeah. Not only for rodeos, but it's good for you to learn all about that too, because it helps you a lot on the ranch. And another most important thing a cowboy should know, which I did, working with leather work. Who's going to repair your saddle? Who's going to repair your chaps. Who's going to repair your... Anything to do with saddle work stuff. Because you cannot send them away, it's too expensive. And there's not too much saddle makers those days on this island. So, in every ranch, we used to get a few guys that know how to fix all kinds of saddles, so you could learn from them. Over here, we had this old man named Jim Hapakuka that I used to go learn a lot from him. He used to live just across me and he's my grandpa. My mom, my grandma and him, his brother and sister. My real mom, her mom and Jim Hapakuka is brother and sister. So, I used to go learn from him, how to fix saddles. And in those days, no more sewing machine to fix a saddle. You get all hand sew and how to get the leather, but the ranch ordered the leather for you, and then you can

go fix your own saddle. Or if you cannot, they send them to a guy outside downtown. There's a Portuguese man and a Puerto Rican man who used to fix saddles for all the ranchers, but most ranchers had guys who know how to fix their own. And I learned that and learned plenty, plenty, plenty, and I bought my own sewing machine and I still do leather work here. Make belts, make head stalls, fix saddles, make Hawaiian saddles. Yeah. But it's hard work, but I get a... I had... I gave them away to my grandson guys, all of my saddles stuff for them to learn. And my two boys used to work ranch, when they first got started before they got married, they used to work on the ranch. Then they went out and they're working all outside now and they get their own family, but they know how to fix saddles too. They get their own saddles. All of my kids used to go rodeo, every one of them, my three boys.

LW: So, who'd you get your first saddle from?

MK: Oh, my dad. My dad used to work for Rice ranch for Harold. And my dad had an old Hawaiian tree. If you know, different areas get different style of trees, the saddle trees. Big island style, the saddle horn comes high up, comes really high, steep. Ulupalakua ranch trees is not too steep with milo, and in the back of the horn, they cut square. And it's called the Ulupalakua tree. The old folks used to... I don't know if you know this plant down at the beach, they call hau tree, hau, light wood. They carve out the tree from that wood and they make the saddle tree because it's light. Once you add on all the skin work, the leather work, then it becomes heavy, about 20 something pounds. But if you get a heavy tree, heavy stick with the leather and all that goin to be too heavy. So they go cut the tree from that hau wood and they shape the style that they like. So Ulupalakua had their own style tree and they still do have it all around now. And even in the factories, up in the mainland, they make these kind tree and they sell. So now it's spread all over, they got all kinds, different style of trees and different style how to put on the leather and all that. If you look at a saddle, you can tell where they're from, Big Island, Maui or away, they make it real fancier.

LW: So on Ulupalakua, it was your... Let's see, your mom's-

MK: Brother, who did most of the saddle work here. Right here. And then we had... I forgot to mention, we had one Japanese lady to work in the office, Bertha Isobe. Her father, they call him Monta Isobe, he's a Japanese, full Japanese man. He used to work on this ranch too. And he was smart to fix saddles too. He and Jim Hapakuka used to work side by side to repair saddles and to make anything. Leggings, I don't know if you know what's that, leggings to put on your knees, to go to the lantana, your pants now would get ripped. Bulldog stirrups as the stirrups where you put your feet inside is all covered. That man, Monta Isobe and Jim Hapakuka used to do all that kind of work. They used to work with each other. So, I learned from all of them. In fact, I get some bulldog stirrups made by them. And I still do have it yet, I use it for example, for make... But it really takes time to do all that kind of a work, so you got to really take your time and do a good job. Saddle work, saddle making is not an easy stuff, but if you learn, there's not too much guys on the island that do that.

LW: And does the Ulupalakua tree, do you cover it with the 'awe'awe braiding?

MK: Yeah. Some is braided by three strands, one, two, three, some is by five. Five go down to the D-ring, five is more stronger, but you got to braid that five strand really small, so it can fit. The Big Island style, they make only by three, some they go by five, some they go by four, but the Big island, really old style, they only go by three strands, but the rawhide is very thick, so it's more stronger. So it get all the different style and guys make their own way. And when you look at them, you can tell more where it came from. Even your rawhide ropes, your skin rope, some is braided by four, some is braided by six, some is braided by eight, more thicker, more stronger. So it all depends how they like it.

LW: When are you using rawhide ropes?

MK: I still get all mine, I get about three rawhide ropes. My son took some, but I get about two or three in my room hanging up in my stable. Rawhide ropes, they hardly use them nowadays, only the old timers use them. The young guys, I guess they use them sometime but they really treasure their ropes. They don't want them to get scratched up and broke, and the rats get to them and they eat them, because the rats, they like the rawhide. So, you got to watch it when you hang them in your stable, be sure rats not going to get to your saddle, they will eat all the leather work. Yeah. I'll be honest with you, I don't know how to make rawhide rope, but my grandpa, that Hapakuka, he was good with that. Oh, my God, make whip. Every cowboy had their own whip too. The whip, because instead of make them big and high, so just crack the whip.

LW: Wow.

MK: So almost every cowboy here had their own whip too. They had their own skin rope. When they get big drives, they use skin rope. And when they brand, they use skin rope. And they're really good how to handle the cattle, watch how they work with them, so the skin rope don't rub against something and it broke.

LW: Mm-hmm (affirmative). When you work the cattle, are you roping the hind legs of the calf or are you... How are you-

MK: Oh, when you brand? Okay. Before, the first time when we used to brand, the old-style way, they put them in one pen, maybe 10 or 15 calves, they put them in a pen. A not too big pen. Then you rope the head, and the cowboy go rope the leg. Then they stretch them out, lay them flat, then they brand, and they castrate, and they give them shots, and all that. As years went by, they got smarter. They put the cattle in one smaller pen. One guy stand up, and he worked the gate, he open the gate. You go in with the horse. You shut the gate. One guy go in at a time. He goes in, and he find which one he want, and he just... Because they all bunch in one small pen. He scoop the leg, and he take a turn, and he drag them out. The guy open the gate. He drag that out. So you don't have to rope and chase them all around. They drag them out by the back leg. Then guys on the ground hold them, and then they brand them. They do all the work. That is the second way how we did the branding. The third way is we... Nowadays, they put them in a chute. Comes down a chute, and

there's a calf turntable. Go squeeze them and turn them on the side. You can brand them, you can castrate, you can inject them, you can do everything. So nowadays, not too much roping. Only in a calf chute and a calf turntable. Then you don't need that much guys, too. But not too long ago, a few years back now, they went back to the old style now. They work with all the ranchers like Ulupalakua Ranch, when they get big branding here, maybe they get four or 500 head to brand, we call Rice Ranch. We call Kaupō Ranch, and we call Hana Ranch, "Hey, we're going to have a big branding here. Come and help us," at a certain day. Everybody comes out, bring all their horses, and they come up the pen right up here. They get two big pens. They put about 40 or 50 calves in this pen, 40 or 50 calves in there. Then they go back to the old style. They go in the pen. They rope the head. They drag them out. They guy rope the leg. Then they help each other brand. You get about 40 cowboys or 50 guys. So they brand, maybe at 1 o'clock, it's all done.

LW: Wow. 500 calves are branded.

MK: Four to 500 calves. 1:00 or 2 o'clock, they all done, but they get plenty ropers, so things will go more fast. After it's all done, the sponsoring ranch make the luncheon. They come down here, and they put away all their horses, and they go at the pavilion over here. Then they all have lunch.

LW: Oh, nice.

MK: The ranch cooks all the lunch. Everybody eat lunch, and then they all go home. Maybe next month is going to be at Rice Ranch, so we go help them. Then one in Kaupō and Hana, Haleakala Ranch. They all get together and go help each other when they get big branding. Because some ranches don't have that much guys, so to brand two or 300 head, even with five or six guys is hard work. So now, they help each other and brand much easier. Then they do the luncheon, and then you get to know all the guys, too. Everybody, all the ranchers over here, they all know all each other and become friends. When they get rodeos and all that, everybody know each other.

LW: I was thinking about branding. Okay. So the young guys now are learning to rope by doing this kind of community branding. Yeah. Because if you can use a squeeze chute, a chute to squeeze, you don't need to learn how to rope. You just drive them into the squeeze.

MK: Sometimes, if they get... I would think, but I'm not working a ranch now almost 18 years I've been retired now. I guess if you have an area where they have only about 30 or 40 calves, you don't need to call everybody. So still, they might use the calf turntable, because they only get five or six guys now. So they might can use a calf turntable. They still have it yet, so they can use a calf turntable and brand that much.

LW: How big was your herd in the '60s? Do you remember how big your herd was?

MK: You see, Ulupalakua Ranch, it's something like...

LW: Uh-oh. We're going to draw. You want a bigger piece of paper?

MK: No.

LW: Okay.

MK: Let's say [drawing] this is the Ulupalakua Road. We're over here now at the ranch. [Merton draws another map in the second interview. The places he describes here can be found on that map. It appears at the very end of the oral history.]

LW: Yes, right above the road.

MK: Yeah. Then it goes way on. Mauka off the road. Makai off the road. Winter herd and summer herd.

LW: Oh. Winter herd is Mauka, and summer herd is Makai.

MK: Yeah. Maybe it's divided something like this.

LW: Into four pastures that go Mauka, Makai.

MK: Over here, get about two or 300 head. It's Waihou. It's just for an example. Then the cows are branded with an E brand on the stomach here.

LW: Oh, I see. So Waihou is the top.

MK: Next to Kula San hospital. You know where the store up the road, store and all that?

LW: ... Yeah.

MK: Just past that. Oprah is over here, and then us. And then come down here, one place they call Keonenelu.

LW: These are all divisions that are above the road.

MK: Yeah.

LW: What is this one called again?

MK: Keonenelu. K-E-O-N-E, nelu. This is a lay down E brand of cows.

LW: Oh, I see. And how many is-

MK: Maybe this herd is about 300. Yeah. And then this herd... Well, that was my time. Maybe this herd is 400. Came over here, get one more herd. T herd.

LW: T herd is the next pasture.

MK: All the herds. Get their own brand on top, I'm saying. Okay. Each cowboy, when I first started, it was all one. You no more brands. You just put cattle in here, put cattle in here. And they only count the cattle. Then when I worked about 10, 15 years, then they wen go by herd brand.

LW: Okay. So, each of these divisions had a different brand?

MK: Right.

LW: So the third one south is which one though?

MK: T herd.

LW: Just T herd?

MK: Yeah.

LW: And does this division have a name?

MK: Yeah. This one is Cornland one. Cornland. Okay. Before the ranch, way back before me, they no used to get cattle in every area because they had a kind of weeds they called pamakani. They used to let the Japanese go farm up there. And then to use the land, you got to go clean the land. Then you can farm. Maybe they get a contract to work up there for two years. So you build your house over here. Japanese used to build their house. Yeah. We had areas, something like this. Corn 1, Cornland 2, and Cornland 3. That's where the farmers used to go farm. And then when they clean the place all out, they go someplace else and they go lease the place again. And then the ranch take over. By then the area is all clean and then this area came more big. And then this area came little bit more big. But anyway.

LW: This one was called, the whole division was called Cornland?

MK: Yeah. Cornland. And then past this over here, past those tall trees going over the other side, it was number one and number two. And then go way over, we had Skyline because way on top is to get a road going over to Hawaiian homelands. It's called Skyline.

LW: The road is called Skyline?

MK: Yeah. The road is called...

LW: So it's going a north, south that road. And it's above the headquarters where we're sitting now.

MK: Yeah. It's going towards Kahikinui. And then way down here, there's a stone wall and fence line goes from the top of the forest reserve all the way down to the beach. This side is all

Hawaiian homelands now. This side is called Auwahi. Auwahi Mauka and Auwahi Makai below the road. You know where the windmill?

LW: Oh yeah. The big windmills.

MK: Right. They get all the windmills now. It's called Auwahi Makai.

LW: Oh, I see. And that's below the highway.

MK: Yeah, where the windmill is. If you drive out there, you can see the windmills. And above of that, over here, right alongside of the highway right below, you can see a big flat get all the water tanks. That's the guys that who takes care of the windmill. And above the highway is called Auwahi Mauka. It goes halfway up, up 'till here. This the road. And then halfway up is Auwahi Mauka. This is Auwahi Makai. Upside here is called one place they call Kulalii, K-U-L-A-L-I-I, Kulalii. Okay. We are here now. This is the ranch headquarters, the ranch store office. You go about two miles or one mile down the road. So right about outside here, it's called Kanaio, K-A-N-A-I-O, Kanaio. That's one small Hawaiian community like. Get small guys get shares in there. All the old guys used to get land in there. The Uweko'olani family, the Campbell family, they all had family lots. So get plenty family lots inside here. And then it's surrounded by the ranch though.

LW: Oh, I see. I see. So, but it's an independent piece of land. It's not owned by the ranch?

MK: No. Plenty is small areas like two or three acres owned by the Campbell. Two or three acres owned by the Uweko'olani family. One or two acres owned by the Goodness family. All the old guys who used to work here and used to live here, they had, I don't know how they got the land from the King been give to their family or something. And it's right in this Kanaio area. And that's where now they get plenty outsiders staying there.

MK: Something like hippies like when they came over here, they squat on the land. And they get plenty guys out there.

LW: Not rich people buying the land, squatting on the land?

MK: No. Yeah. And they get plenty junkies over there. Junk cars and rubbish and all that. If you drive along the road, you can see them.

LW: You see it. Oh.

MK: Yeah.

LW: So wait, now this was the hospital up here was what?

MK: Yeah, Kula hospital. And then... when you come down from the store, there are two stores and you come down that Ulupalakua road, over here you can turn up to the hospital. Right?

But you come down this Ulupalakua road, right down here someplace there's a Chinese Sun Yat-Sen park. Right?

LW: Right.

MK: Right above of that park is where Oprah. Okay? Then you come down further. There's a big turn over there, big turn on that road. Right in here, they selling that place as Haleakala ranch. That's where Wendy Rice is trying to sell that place. And then if you come a little bit more down, you can see a fence going all the way down. And the fence going straight up. From then on is all Ulupalakua from there on. Both sides of the road from there down.

LW: Okay. And the first division is this Waihou. And the next one is...

MK: Keonenelu.

LW: And this is the next one down, next one south.

MK: Below that is Cornlan. Past the headquarters is called Auwahi. But below the road, is Auwahi Makai. The windmill is Auwahi Makai, Auwahi Mauka. On the main road, you go over past windmills, you're going come to a cattle guard. Right there, you're going to see a big sign, says Kahikinui. From that fence line on, that's all Hawaiian homeland now.

LW: Oh, I see. I see.

MK: Yeah, but there's a big sign.

LW: But when you first were here, it was being-

MK: That's all ranch.

LW: ... was being ranched?

MK: Yeah. That all was ranched. Once you cross that cattle guard, keep on going towards Kaupō on that road. Kahikinui on was to all owned by the ranch. Well, not owned, they used to lease from Hawaiian Homeland. All the way over until one big gulch over here, they call it Gulch Manawainui. All this is Hawaiian homelands. 'Till today they get all homes up here. All the way 'till that big gulch, from the big gulch over to one more other gulch is Haleakala ranch. From this second gulch over is Kaupō ranch. And then not too far over, there's a store, Kaupō store. My house is over here. Right?

LW: Yeah.

MK: Every morning I drive the bus to Kaupō store. I leave my house at 4:30 in the morning. And I go over there and I pick up school kids at Kaupō store. It takes me from here to there, one way, one hour. On a school bus. I get there at 5:30, pick up the kids and I come to Kahikinui and I pick up four more kids there. And then I come back Kanaio. I pick up a

few kids. When I reach in the front store here, I get about 10 or 14 kids. And by the time I get here is 6:30 in the morning. I leave home at 4:30 and I get here at 6:30. And when I go to Kula, I unload all the kids at the school. Three schools: Kula school, King High school and Kalama school. And by then it's 7:30. Then I get home here at my house with the bus and park the bus at 8 o'clock, 8:15. That's my route every morning. Then I stay for about five hours and about 1 o'clock, I take the bus and I go back, and I reverse the route and go back. Pick up the kids and go take all them home.

LW: Well, I'm sure the parents love you.

MK: Oh yeah. And I retired here on this ranch December of 2003. January, I stayed home only two days for my retirement. And then Robert's bus called me and said, "Hey, we want you to go drive bus for us." So I went drive bus for them. Since then, until now I drove for about a week to Kalama school in Makawao, King K. High school. And the high school said, "Hey, we want you to come work security for us at the school." So in between, when I park the bus, when I dumped the kids off at 7:30, I work at the school. I leave the bus there and I work security at the school. I just retired security last year in June. So now I don't work at the school anymore. I just only drive bus. So, because of this virus thing was going on, I thought I not supposed to be around crowd. So, I retired the school. I only drive bus. But in between then Mr. Erdman wanted, when they get big humbug on the ranch and all that, sometimes they ask me, "Hey, you can come and help and go show these guys what and what." So I used to come and help the guys on the ranch just to show them what and what, why the water's not here, what when go wrong and broken pipe or something. Or you cannot do this or you cannot do that. So, I used to help them once in a while.

LW: Yeah.

MK: Once in a great while.

LW: Okay. So, I'm going to take this little piece with me, but what about in this Cornland? [See Figure 1. Most of the locations on this scrap of paper were transposed to Merton's bigger map drawn during his second interview] You told me about how many head in the '60s where in these two. What about Cornland in this number one?

MK: Yeah, this is a smaller...

LW: Smaller?

MK: Smaller area. It's maybe 100 something or 200, but this Waihou is about... It's about three or 400 head in there. And then when they put the bulls in to breed, they would mean the same time in these three or four areas, for example. So when they get calves, when they going wean off the calve or when they going brand the calves, you take 200 head here, 100 head here, or 50 head here. It adds up to about four or 500 head. That's why I said when they brand, they get four, 500. It's not only from one area. It's from two different area.

LW: The above the road was the spring, and the below the road was the winter or what?

MK: Yeah. When it's dry. Summertime. Okay. We move mostly if we can move all the cattle from below to the Mauka side of the road.

LW: Oh, that makes sense.

MK: And then when it's green...

LW: Yeah, can move now.

MK: We move mostly, not all now, some goes down here because get grass. Right now below, if you drive up the road, you look way down, dry. So they don't put too much cattle in there. Get some, but when it's green, we put cattle down. So wintertime, we can put cattle inside here because supposedly be green.

LW: Below the road. Yeah?

MK: Yeah. And when it's dry, we not put cattle in there. We put some, the daddy's close to the road. Not too bad. Mostly it gets dries way down here. Yeah. They put them up here or they take the cattle way behind here.

LW: Oh, the Auwahi part.

MK: Yeah. Way outside here. So they get green grass. So it all depends on the weather.

LW: Right. Right. Do you breed them both seasons or just only in the...

MK: We breed all year round. Depending on the weather and depending on the grass. So, when we brand, they can brand almost two or three areas at one time, not 50 head here, then two, three months, 100 head there. It's kind of humbug, yeah? So they breed them Mauka and Makai at a certain time. Now, I don't know how they breed because I'm retired now going 17, 18 years. I don't know how they do that anymore. Because I heard that they changed plenty things. I'm not sure how they're going do it. Because they had Jimmy Gomes here, and now they get the other guy here. Jimmy's retired now. They get this other guy named Damian, I think.

LW: Damian? Oh, Damon. That family was called Damon? Oh, but his name is Damian?

MK: Yeah. His name is Damian. He's from New Zealand, I think. He has a fancy accent. And he used to work as a business consulting, something like that down in Kihei area. But he's good for sales. He's a really smart guy for sales. So, they wanted him to work here for try to sell all the cattle for them and all that stuff. So, he just got started, I don't know how long now, maybe almost one year now. So he's brand new, yeah. And then they made Jimmy to retire. So Jimmy Gomes is retired now.

LW: Well Jimmy got health issues. Yeah?

MK: Yeah.

LW: So now did the bulls, were they your own bulls?

MK: We got our own bulls. When I retired, we had about 25 to 2,600 cows. 2,500 or 2,400 cows when I retired. And we had about little over 200 breeding bulls. And then we had about 1,600 or 1,700 wean outs from those cows. Now, I'm not sure how much they get cows and bulls, I'm not sure. But we had all our own bulls and our own cows. We no rent nobody's one.

LW: Or buy. But do you buy bulls?

MK: We used to go over to the big island, you know Greenwell? When they had the bulls there? You know Dicky, Marcie's first husband?

LW: Yeah. Dicky Greenwell.

MK: Yeah. He used to take me with him because, well, to make a long story short, towards my last 10 or 12 years over here, I was a foreman working on this ranch with Dicky. Dicky used to take me with him. We go up to his dad's place up there. They had that Greenwell bull's hill. And we used to go buy bulls for the ranch. Before that, we had our own bulls, but we never get good bloodline bulls. So we wanted to buy new bloodline, but change the bloodline. So I used to go away with him. But before that, they sent me to ABS school, Artificial Breeding Service, ABS school. We used to inseminate our own cows here. We had one pen up there, and we used to go out early in the morning and late in the evening to check the cows, which one come in heat. We put them in a pen and I used to go inseminate the cows. But it takes time and men away from all the job. We did that only for a few years, then we thought much easier to buy new bloodline. So Dickie said, "We go buy new bulls." So, I went with him and buy new bulls, Big Island or O'ahu sometime when they get bull sale and we bought new bloodline bulls. Bring home and we bred all our cows with the new bloodline kind bulls. Then we kept our own males. We keep track of all of... It's not easy, it was real hard. We put the ear tags on the cows, then it became harder because 300 head cows, you got to keep track of 300 head ear tags. Some ear tags got lost. Some cows, you cannot find them, they drop dead or something that is not too easy for keep track of all that. So, they thought much easier if we brand the cows. So, we put E Brand cows, T brand cows, O brand cows, U Brand cows. So, we know these cows belong that area and how many we had. So it's easier for keep track, yeah.

LW: Which one of these was the U Brand?

MK: Okay, the U Brand was below the highway.

LW: Okay. All right. So then you were able to better track the cows by branding them?

MK: Right, if we see one U Brand cow in here, "Oh, this cow is in the wrong area, this cow is supposed to be there."

LW: But does that cow also have an ear tag too?

MK: At first it had, then after that we thought it's too much humbug. So we never put no ear tags back. We only go by the herd brand and we put them down. Then we brand the cows, the calves, the horseshoe brand upside down brand. Okay? It's on the lower left leg right here. On the top of the cow, this is the tail. And the cow here, this is the back leg. Right on top here, if it came from the U Brand, is going to be the U3.

LW: So you do this one down lower on the leg, the upside down U, and then you do another one up here?

MK: Yeah. The upside down is the horse shoe brand, that's the Ulupalakua Brand. That's the Ranch Brand. On top here is the Herd Brand.

LW: Oh, I see. I see.

MK: Came from U Cows.

LW: That are below the road cows?

MK: Yeah.

LW: And what's the three from?

MK: The three is the year. What year they were born. Maybe 2003 or 2004. You know?

LW: Right.

MK: And then some going to be T Brand. T6 and then the horse shoe shows this is the Ulupalakua Ranch cow. This calf came from the T Brand and then the year. Then they change it again. They still get the horseshoe brand and then they get the One Six T. But this branch is kind of smaller. T Brand come from the T herd. One six, the first of the year is one. The first six months of the year is one. The six is the year.

LW: Oh, I see. I see.

MK: This was either born from January to June of 2006.

LW: Oh, I see.

MK: And then if you see two, the last ending part of the year from July to December. This calf was born maybe July, August, September, or what? The last ending part of 2006. The first one is going either be a one or two, the first half of the year is a one. The second half of the year is a two. So that's what they do now.

LW: Yeah. Yeah.

MK: Then, let's say these herd get 400 cows, for example. You had brand from these herd 300 calves. Okay? When you brand the calves, you're supposed to get T 300, right?

LW: Yeah.

MK: So this cow's breed, not bad. This other herd, maybe had 250 cows inside this maybe one U Brand herd. Inside here, you had only about maybe 85 calves that you wen Brand U on top.

LW: That's not a very good percentage.

MK: Never do too good. So you can keep track which is the better ones and which is not. So you can tell which one gave more good percentage compared to the other one.

LW: Right, so when you brand, you're counting how many calves you have?

MK: Couple ladies that work here get to do that. I don't know if you met Kristen?

LW: Oh, no.

MK: Okay. She's one of the ladies who work on the ranch but now she goes take care of the cattle with the cowboys and all that. That's her job. When they brand it, she keep track, how many T's, how many U's, how many O brands? So whichever herd get 300 cows and then they only get 95 calves, this herd not doing too good. Then they got to work on the herd. They got to either worm them more or give them more vitamins or the pasture not doing too good. They not, they're not conceiving that much good. And then if something like this, or if get 300 cows and 280 get calves, "Oh, this herd is good." So you can keep track by doing this. So that's how they do it now over here. Before, they just bred them and they brand the cows, they don't care. The more calves they get, better. They didn't even keep track. They do keep track of the cows and the calves, but how good they are doing. But back then-

LW: You didn't do that.

MK: They don't care. But now, they want to do, "Why should you keep feeding 300 cows if they only going to give 95 calves?" So you got to go through the cows and preg-check them to see what's wrong inside. Nowadays, I don't know if they still do it, but my last 10 years on the ranch, I used to go preg-check every herd. All the cows come in the pen, we used to see like all the cows, we look at the cows who never give birth, put them all to one side. I preg-check, I go in the cow and I check if something is wrong or why they're not... If no more calves, we cut the tail short and then we send them, put them on a good place to eat grass, make them fat and we sell them or we send them to the slaughter house. Why keep one cow if they cannot get calves? So I used to preg-check all the cows. I don't know if they still do that now, though. But that was my job, it was a dirty job, but it was my job to check.

LW: Who taught you how to do that?

MK: I went school in Kansas, Missouri for that. And I also went school in O‘ahu. See, Mr. Erdman used to... Yeah. He used to send me to schools to learn Honolulu ABS School. I used to go learn how to inseminate and I also had to go learn, he wanted me to go learn up in Kansas, Missouri too, it's called for barren cows to check to see if it's open or not. The ones that is not open, did not catch with calves and then we slaughter them. We can separate out the good cows-

LW: So how long was that school, was it-

MK: Two weeks. In Kansas, Missouri. It's called Graham School. They still do have that school and I went to ABS School in O‘ahu about two or three times. And I went one time up in Big Island, Waimea when they had, da kine, seven hours there. I went up a few times up there in O‘ahu a few times, Mainland about two times. So I used to do all this kind insemination and preg-check the cows.

LW: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So that was when you were a foreman?

MK: Yeah. And even before that. When Willie Malia was, I used to go to this kind, small kind, to learn more about cows. Then after I became a foreman, then I used to do all this other kind, I went to all this other kind of schools.

LW: Yeah. So now who was the foreman when you started?

MK: Willie Malia, and then the fence gang foreman was Oliver White.

LW: Right, and how long did Willie Malia stay foreman?

MK: I don't know. Maybe 15 years, maybe? And then-

LW: Then who was after him?

MK: Dicky Greenwell.

LW: Oh yeah, that's when Dicky Greenwell... In the seventies, maybe?

MK: Yeah. Yeah, they came here in '71, I think. And then after Greenwell, a short while after that... Dicky never stayed that long, I think 10 or 11 years over here. Then after that came Eddy Rice. Eddy Rice was here, but not too long too, then he retired. But way before that was James Armitage was the manager when I got started. But he was a manager, the foreman was Willie Malia.

LW: Yeah. So, was Dicky Greenwell a foreman or a manager?

MK: Manager.

LW: So yeah, okay. And then Mr. Rice, Eddy Rice was a-

MK: Manager. He took Dicky's place.

LW: Okay. And Mr. Malia was still the foreman?

MK: No, no. He was gone by the then.

LW: Oh, okay.

MK: He was here only when James Armitage was here.

LW: Oh, okay. So who was the foreman after Malia?

MK: After Willie Malia was this guy named Andrew Kauai. Yeah. Andrew Kauai was, then he retired early age. He retired at age 55. When he retired and then I became the foreman.

LW: So you were foreman from pretty early on?

MK: Yeah. I don't know how many years, but 12 or 15 years, maybe? I'm not sure, I forget already how long it was, but after Andrew.

LW: Yeah, yeah, but there were more managers?

MK: Yeah.

LW: And after Eddy Rice is-

MK: Sumner. Yeah. When he came back from school, eh?

LW: Oh, Sumner. Oh, okay. Sumner Erdman? Right, okay, cause Pard is his father. So when you say Erdman, you're mostly talking about Sumner or are you talking about Pard?

MK: Depending on who, but when I got started until now, ranching changed a lot. It works the same way, but different style. Because back then always horseback, now it's all with four-wheelers. They do it faster. We put out mineral blocks and salt blocks. My time, we deliver it out on a truck each pasture. When I started, when I became foreman over here, get division, the ranch was divided into kind of four ways or six ways. Had six cowboys, you take care of this area, the next man take care of this area and that area. So you go out and you check this area by yourself all day. We meet morning time, and then you tell me what's wrong, or if everything go good, or if you need more help to go help you, you place or something.

LW: Okay. So what time period are we talking about now? When you became foreman?

MK: Foreman, and I even-

LW: So this division of land here, is for the sixties? That you wrote on the paper?

MK: As I was here, it became like that slowly. Before it was all open, one big area. Then they divided them all up.

LW: Oh, I see.

MK: While I was here, we divided the fence up to Waihou, divided a fence up to Keonenelu, and divided a fence up to Kulalii Skyline. So we did all that.

LW: Right, okay, in your time period.

MK: As the years went by.

LW: So when you're talking about these six areas, are these the same six areas?

MK: Well, no, it's six areas because we only had six guys at that time.

LW: Okay. I see, I see.

MK: So you take care of these two areas. One, we just, divide into six. It could be two pastures that you're going to be in charge of, but you take care this area, the other guy take care that area and then we all put together, see what you need, see what kind help you need. And see how it's going on and also the water and all that. To tell you the truth, I'm out now so long, I really kind of not familiar what they're doing right now.

LW: Well, that's okay, because we're looking for knowledge about before.

MK: Okay. I worked here 39 and a half years, almost 40 years, when I've been retire. Actually, I retired at an early age at 60 years old. And I didn't wait for 62 or 65 because I wanted to teach my grandkids rodeo.

LW: Oh, I see.

MK: I took my granddaughter and go teach them how to rodeo and then took them up to the finals up in the Mainland, to Gallup, New Mexico and Springfield, Illinois and all over. From Chicago, I had to drive down about three and a half hours or so.

LW: Yeah. They have that huge county fairgrounds where it must been the rodeo there. In that county, it's a state fair there.

MK: Right. And then I wanted to teach the kids on Maui a little bit about rodeo. Well, whatever I knew and they elected me to be the Maui District Director for the high school kids.

LW: Oh, cool.

MK: Then a few years after that, I became the National Director for the State of Hawaii for High School Rodeo. I went to the Big Island up there, Waimea every year they get the State

Finals there for the kids. And I went up there few years, I was in that, until my granddaughter graduated and then I let somebody else go run it. But that's why I've been retire a little bit early so I could help my grandkids.

LW: Help them do that. Wow! Right. Oh, I think I'm feeling like we've done very well. You've got a really good memory.

MK: Yeah, well.

LW: And that's important.

MK: Sometimes I can remember back and there's more to it. A lot of things more, but maybe I can fill in more the next time around.

LW: Okay. Yeah. I think that's good because I usually ask things like what was... I ask about the personality of those old cowboys, the ones from... Because some of the guys you worked with were probably born here.

MK: Yeah. I'm sure. Oh yeah.

LW: And which means they were born before World War II.

MK: You know, if you were going a winery, in that back room, got all that old pictures and the story about the ranch.

LW: Yes.

MK: Get some pictures in there, that's my grandpa, that's my uncles. They all used to work here. Joe Swift, Harvey Swift, George swift is my grandpa. That's my real grandpa. They all were born here and raised here. And it's amazing how they got started here, they were working here with very small pay and they survived. Because they had all it... To me, they had everything free here, housing and all that. They really took care of the men here. Even Mr. Erdman, when he started, when he bought the ranch in 1963, I started in '64, he really took care of the men and the men who worked here, and he was a real good boss.

LW: That's Pard you're speaking of, Pard Erdman.

MK: Yeah, Pard Erdman, he's a really good boss. He took care of everybody. Every year we have a ranch Christmas party. Oh man, he gave everybody presents, the kids and all that. And he let everybody have one Hawaiian party, whatever you want, kalua pig and all Hawaiian party. He is a good, good boss. I really respect him.

LW: Yeah, Jimmy says the same thing.

MK: Yeah, He is still the same thing. They still have the same parties and all that too. But the old guys are not around anymore. Michael and I was one of oldest who was still here yet.

And now he passed and I'm one of the oldest here. There's another guy older than me here. He's still working part-time but he was a helicopter mechanic not on the ranch. He used to be, but he's still here, he lived just across you over there.

LW: Oh, over there?

MK: Yeah. And he goes and he rides the Jeep and just check the fence along the highway. And he just work a few hours a day, but he's retired long time, but he just want to do something. And he's still here, yet. But he came way after me. But Michael and I worked side-by-side for about 40 years, but he stayed longer than me. When I retired, he was still here, yet. I think he worked two or three years after me and then he retired. I think he's got 42 or 43 years. I get only pretty close to 40 years.

LW: Okay. Well, I'm going to go ahead and stop these now, but yeah-

INTERVIEW ONE ENDS

LW: I am at Ulupalakua Ranch with Merton Kekiwi. We are sitting in the conference room, in the office building for the ranch. This is interview number two. Today is March 17th, 2022, St. Patrick's Day.

MK: Yep. Oh, I should have worn green.

LW: I wanted to talk a little bit more about your family. So, your adopted dad, he worked for Haleakala?

MK: No, he worked for Kaonoulu Ranch, Rice family ranch.

LW: He worked there a long time?

MK: Yes. He worked there for 43 years. He started when he was a young boy, about 18 or 19 years old. He worked there until he retired. Well, he got sick, so he retired early, and he's been working for Rice Ranch as a working foreman.

LW: What was his full name again?

MK: His real name is Hua Kekiwi. H-U-A. Hua Kekiwi. His English name is supposed to be Henry Hua Kekiwi, but he go by Hua Kekiwi. Well, he was a full-blooded Hawaiian. He loved to work cowboy, riding horse, chasing cattle, do everything on a ranch what a range man's supposed to be doing and ended up... He became the foreman there under the supervision of Harold Rice, the owner, the old man, Harold Rice. Then came Oskie Rice. After a while, I forget what year, but he retired. I was a young boy when he retired, so I cannot... I think I was about 11 or 12 years old when he retired.

LW: So you were born... When were you born?

MK: '43.

LW: '43, so it was about maybe '53 that he retired? So he was really working that ranch in the early days.

MK: Yeah, really early days. He went from Kaupō Ranch... Not Kaupō Ranch, but he was born in Kaupō, and he rode his horse and he came to Ulupalakua. He worked for Ulupalakua Ranch for two years, then he rode his horse again and he went up to Rice Ranch. Those days, everything was with horseback, so he rode up there... He had a friend up there working on that ranch.

LW: Who was that friend?

MK: I only know his last name. He used to work in the slaughter house. His last name was Asim. He worked with Asim up there a few years and then Asim went to Hana Ranch. He used to go slaughter cattle, so they hired him to go to Hana Ranch. So, Asim went to Hana Ranch, and my dad stayed at Rice Ranch.

LW: Do you remember... What kind of person was your dad? Was he a funny character or stern or was What was he like as a person?

MK: Oh yeah. He was a real good guy, easy to get along with. Nice, softhearted guy. He had his animals at home. He used to feed chickens, feed pigs. We raised our own animals at home. A few goats, a few chickens, a few pigs. I remember that he used to go down and feed the pigs and chickens. When he retired, about a year after that or so he, he got sick and he was in hospital then. I don't know how long after that, he passed, and I had to live with my stepbrother, Henry.

LW: He was older than you?

MK: Oh yeah. He was way older than me. He was about 20 something. When my dad died, I was only 13 years old and I had to live with him until I went high school. Well, I continued school, and after school, I left my brother and I came to Ulupalakua. I came to Ulupalakua when I was a young age, about 19 or 20, I think.

LW: Yeah. You talked about a few of the... You said you were the 17th cowboy. So the other 16, you mentioned some of them, Willie Malia was the...

MK: No, he was the cowboy foreman and Oliver White was the overall something like the fence gang and water man foreman. Had two foremans, Willie Malia and Oliver White, but we all worked with each other. Some days we got to go do fencing, help Oliver White and his gang, and then when we get big drive, everybody go with Willie Malia on the horse back and go drive cattle.

LW: Who were some of those guys?

MK: Oh, it's Jim Hapakuka, Louis Hapakuka, William Uweko'olani, Bill Uweko'olani, Sr. and Bill Uweko'olani, Jr. Willie Malia was the foreman. Willie, Jr. was his son and Sammy Malia was Willie's brother. We had Archie Campbell who is working a shop. We had Dan Purdy, Andrew Kauai, Willie Kauai. Aki Ishikawa. Then we had James Armitage. He was the manager. He was my first manager, Jimmy, James Armitage. We had two Japanese brothers. One who used to work in office. Mitsuji Terada and Mitoshi Terada was working in the store. We had a other Japanese guy who used to take care of the... Not the main run, but do all the errands going downtown and back and forth, get in store stuff and all that. His name was Takio Terasako. We had my uncle, Joe Swift. He used to take care of the slaughter house.

LW: Where was the slaughter house?

MK: Right below the feed lot.

LW: Below the feed lot. The feed lot's just below the road here.

MK: Yeah. You go down a shop and it's right behind the shop. That slaughter house is still there now, but it's converted into a saw mill. The guys... Skip, he goes and cut eucalyptus trees and he make lumber. They don't have the slaughter house anymore. They stopped that long time ago.

LW: Yeah. Yeah, you talked about that. Okay, so what were the Hapakuka brothers like?

MK: Oh, they were good, very good, old-time cowboys. They started when they were really young. Two brothers. They married two sisters, the Purdy girls. Ikua Purdy, his two daughters married the two Hapakuka boys. Those two boys started off really young from the ranch here. I heard they were real good cowboys. There was Purdy boys, Dan Purdy and Kauhi Purdy. We called him George Purdy. We had Kauhi Purdy, Sr., and Kauhi Purdy, Jr. They were brother-in-laws and they were all good cowboys. All those old guys would... I worked with all of them. They were all my teachers. They showed me all the tricks about cowboy and chasing wild cattle, branding, working fence and doing everything. I didn't have to go to school. They were all my teachers. They taught me how to shoe horse, train horse, ride young horse. They were a jack-of-all-trades. They knew everything all around. Overhaul a tractor. They took the tractor all apart, put him back together with a guy Archie Campbell. He was a mechanic. The hardest thing for the ranch used to be way back used to be to get the parts, but after they get the parts, they can fix it. One of the Hapakuka brothers was a truck driver too. We had five trucks, big kine cattle trucks. We used to go up to Kahikinui. It's about 45 minutes drive. Yeah. We used to go out there and drive cattle. When we do, it's a one-week job. Drive cattle one or two days, corral them all in a pen and then we work the cattle. Separate them. Wean them out, all the weans.

LW: So is that all horse work?

MK: All horse work. All horse work.

LW: Yeah, so you have to have a cutting horse. That's your cutting horse.

MK: Well, our horses is not for cutting. Our horses used to do all kind job. Cutting, roping, branding, working cattle and all that. Each cowboy used to take two horses out on our trucks. We used to get about four or five trucks to go out and we leave one horse down at the pen and we use one horse to go drive the cattle half day. Then we change horse and go the next half of the day, we use the other horse, give one horse chance to rest and drive the cattle in. It's an all day job driving cattle on. Working cattle.

LW: Yeah. In those days... So that would've been in the 1960s.

MK: Yeah, because I started in '64.

LW: Yeah. Okay, let's say the '60s. You drove all the cattle, the mamas and the babies into the big stone corral at Kahikinui?

MK: Yeah. First, we take off the weans, the older ones. Some cows get two babies. One is already big and they have the second one. Some of them, but the bigger babies, the wean outs, we put them all in one pen. We separate them, wean outs, mamas and babies. Wean outs, we bring them home on a truck. We ship them home. Then we got to put them in the feed lot, but we got to doctor them. So we leave them home in pasture a few days, a week or two, let them to settle down. The pens are right down here. We let them settle down for a while, because they still crying for their mamas. Then we let them settle down while we branding the calves back the other side with the mama.

LW: Oh I see.

MK: We brand the calves and we turn the calves back out with the mamas and we let them go. You're talking about 300 or 400 heads, so it'll take all day and sometime take about two days to do all that.

LW: Yeah, totally. Now the ones that come down here, they were branded last year?

MK: Yeah.

LW: They're already branded. But do you do some doctoring on them still?

MK: Yeah. When we bring them back here, we got to inject them for black leg and vitamins. We give them all the shots. Worming shorts and all that, then they can go. We let them go out in a range for a short while. After a few months, depending how big they are, around 500 pound or so, we weigh them all. We choose what we want, we put them in the feed yard.

LW: And the ones you choose for replace. What happens to the ones you choose out?

MK: The steers, the boy cattle goes into the feed lot. The heifers, the women, we select them for replacement heifers. We choose them and we pick which one we want, because we keep

them on the side in a big area for replacement heifers after they grow up. The ones that we don't like, the heifers, we can put them in the feed lot too. Every month we put about a hundred head in each pen. We had about seven or eight pens. So each month we put a hundred, a hundred, a hundred. By the time come to the fourth month, the first pens are ready to slaughter. It takes between 104 and 120 days for they be ready to be slaughtered, more or less about. Not all going to be the same, but then every week we choose so much.

LW: Hi Marcy (Marcy Greenwell Purdy (MP) enters office at Ulupalakua. Widow of Michael Purdy who was also inducted into the Paniolo Hall of Fame in 2019. Michael Purdy passed away in 2021.).

MP: So cowboy, what are you talking about?

MK: She's asking me all kind of questions that I kind of forget. It's been so long.

LW: Once he gets going... We're just talking about how they process cattle in the '60s. We were talking about the exact process, but we're also trying to talk about... We didn't get a chance to talk about the cowboys from that time period. We don't get a chance to talk to those folks, because he was what, 16 or 17 at the time. Those older men who were full on working in the '60s. We were just talking about the Hapakuka brothers.

MK: Had a lot of brothers. Had the Hapakuka brothers. Had the Uweko'olani father and son. Had Malia father and son, Willie Malia and Willie, Jr., and had the Purdy father and son and the Purdy brothers.

LW: So there were four Purdys?

MK: More than four. Had Kimo, Michael...

LW: Working on the ranch? There were...

MK: Yeah. More than four. Michael, Kimo, Dan, Kauhi, Jr., Kauhi, Sr. Had about five.

LW: Wow. Wait, so Kauhi, Sr...

MK: His name George. George Purdy, Sr.

LW: That was a brother to who? How was he...

MK: Dan Purdy and George Purdy is two brothers. Their dad was Ikua. That was his two sons.

LW: And then one of their sons.

MK: Their son's son. Makuli Kauhi son was George Purdy, Jr.

LW: Okay. Okay. Okay. I get it. Michael was...

MK: Michael comes under Dan Purdy. Dan and Michael.

MP: Michael's the only one that worked on the ranch of his siblings.

LW: Of **his** siblings?

MP: Right.

LW: Right. So, but his cousin was there. Is that what we're saying?

MP: Kimo was what? A second cousin or first cousin?

MK: First cousin. Michael and Kimo. Michael's dad, Dan. Kimo's dad, Luma Purdy. Luma and Dan is two brothers, so Kimo and Michael was first cousins. Had a lot of Purdy guys over here. They came and went. Even had Connie Purdy. Yeah, Connie Purdy was in the service. Navy. He came back and he worked Honolulu, he worked for the tug boat. After a while he came back on the ranch. He worked on the ranch, I don't know how long, about 12 or 14 years or so and then he retired. He got sick and he had to retire. So, he was one of the brothers too. His dad is Kauhi, Sr. George Purdy senior. Connie and Kauhi, Jr. is two... It's hard to explain. There's two brothers, small Kauhi and Connie Purdy is two brothers. Their dad was George Purdy, Sr. George Purdy, Sr., Dan Purdy and Luma Purdy are all three brothers. They were the sons of Ikua. This was the grandsons. All this others is the grandsons.

MP: Then Ricky Purdy worked here too. Kauhi's son.

MK: Yeah. They had a lot of Purdys and then Connie Purdy had his kids. One of his kids was working on the ranch here, Byron Purdy. So it's a great grandson from Ikua

MP: Myron never worked on the ranch.

MK: No.

MP: They were twins.

MK: Myron worked on the winery.

MP: Oh, that's right.

MK: Yeah. He worked at the winery and then from the winery, he went outside and worked.

MP: Now they all work for the Department of Water.

MK: Yeah. Now they all working for the water department, which there's no water now. No rain.

LW: Yeah. It's been really dry on the big island too. Super dry. So, who is the other family who was working in the '60s with you?

MK: Yeah. Bill Uweko'olani, Sr. and Bill Uweko'olani, Jr. They used to call them big Bill and small Bill. Father and son. That family was raised up in Kanaio, they're full-blooded Hawaiian, the Uweko'olani family. Also, there was a guy named George Campbell. They call him Archieball. He used to be a shop mechanic. That Uweko'olani family is a big family too, but only two of them work on the ranch. Big Bill and the son, small Bill too. When I came here in '64, they were already here. I don't know how long they were working then, but they were already... All those guys, the Hapakukas, the Purdys, most of the Purdys was here. Some came after me. The young ones. The cousins came after me. Kimo came after me. Byron came after me. Michael came one year after me. I started in '64. He started in '65. I think he started in October of '65.

LW: So what were the Malias like?

MK: Willie Malia, Sr. was the foreman. He's from here too. He's an old timer too when I came. He was about 60 when I... No, he was maybe early fifties when I came. Then he had two sons, Willie, Jr. and Sammy Malia. Sammy was Willie Jr.'s brother. He had two boys.

LW: So how come he ends up to be the foreman?

MK: The father? I really don't know. When I got here, he was already here, so I got no idea, but they were here from long time ago.

MP: That was all from the Baldwins.

MK: Yeah. He did work for Edward Baldwin and I think they were born and raised here, because they have an old house up the road, up on a hill. The family was from there. His mom and dad was from here, but I never know them. But I know that was his family's house. Willie Malia, Sr. used to go up there and take care of the yard and take care of avocado trees and that was one old house. I guess he was born and raised from here. Michael would know. He knows everything and he doesn't forget like me. Anything that I want to know, I go ask him. He said, "Oh, this, this..." He knows.

MP: You should hear him and Hatsui go at it. Old time stories. Way back.

MK: Michael had a brain that he can remember. Wow.

LW: So Mr. Malia, was he a stern guy or was he a happy guy or...

MK: Yeah, he was a good guy, friendly guy. He no was a mean guy and he was a cowboy foreman too, for us, until he retired. His daughter is still here. His daughter's in hospital.

MP: Dolly's up at Kula San Hospital.

MK: Yeah. His daughter is still here. His daughter's in the hospital up in Kula San. She's the oldest one. She must be over a 100 years old.

MP: They still have her house here.

MK: Her house is right down the road.

MP: On the other side of the winery. The big white house. She took care of Sumner. She was Sumner's nanny.

LW: But she had a married name?

MK: No, she wasn't married.

MP: She never married.

LW: Oh. But she's in the care home up here is what you're saying? Oh, I see. Okay.

MP: Kula hospital is a care home. I would say pretty close to 90 maybe, 80 something, guaranteed.

MK: Late eighties, I guess. She used to take of Sumner from day one.

LW: Yeah, because you said that Erdman bought the ranch a year before you came.

MK: '63 in June. June of '63. I think it was final... I forget what year it was final. Michael would know, like I say. I think the final count of the cattle was in July of '64. After I came here, we had the last count, I think. They had to go to every area and count all the cattle. They had part of Kipahulu too. The lady who was shareholder with Mr. Erdman, took over Kipahulu. She took that part and Erdman took the ranch part over here.

LW: So, of that group... I'm still trying to envision that group of cowboys here in the '60s, because they were working the ranch at a time when it was still old-timey. So I'm trying to get a vision of those guys.

MK: So some areas of the ranch, we used to go check water on a horseback. The Jeep... We used to get military Jeep. Willie Kauai was one of the water man. He used to get a military Jeep and he goes around and check all the water trough and the water tank every day. We used to get a water man. That's all what he do. Just go around and check all the water troughs. In some areas we used to go check water on a horse back.

LW: Too far away.

MK: Yeah. Way up in the mountain. Certain areas, we had a pump. We had to pump the water over to the cattle.

LW: Yeah. I'd like to hear where that area is. There were some things I still wanted to go over first about the cowboys. Part of this group, I would be asking about Michael Purdy.

MK: Michael, like I say, he started one year after me. We work side by side all the years that we've been here. I work here 39 and a half years. With my vacation, I work 40 years and I've been retired and he still was on yet. He stayed on for about three or four years more.

MP: 42 and a half his belt buckle says.

MK: Michael stayed on two and a half years more after me. After I retired, he stayed on two and a half years more. So, he knows a lot too. He is one guy that never forget a lot of things. He talked story about olden days. I said, "Oh yeah, I remember," but if he didn't talk to me, I forget all about it. He had a good memory.

LW: What was Michael like? I've been asking you about that with all these guys.

MK: Nice guy, friendly guy, jokey guy. You talk to him, he's always laughing and smiling. Actually, he had no enemies. I guess his wife was his enemy, but other than that, he's a nice guy. He got friends like me all over the place. Every time you see somebody, he waving at somebody. He's a really soft-hearted guy, a nice guy. Nobody talks bad about him that I know of. Never.

LW: Did he have a specialty on the ranch?

MK: Jack of all trades. He could do anything. He used to drive tractor, cowboy. He used to help me work with the sheep, which we don't have sheep... Oh, well, we do have sheep now, but we had plenty before and he used to help me work with the sheep.

MP: He worked the pumps too.

MK: Yeah.

MP: He took care of the pumps.

MK: Like I said, we had a few pumps around the ranch and he had to go pump water way over to Kahikinui side, Hawai'i side. So we got to run the pump to make the water reach over the tank. That was one of his jobs too. We worked all kind of jobs on the ranch. Water man, truck driver, fencing, all kinds jobs. He was one of the guys, that Jack of all trades. The boss can depend on him for do all kind stuff too.

LW: Well, I guess he started so young. You start that young. You learn it all.

MK: We started young age.

LW: So you had sheep on the ranch?

MK: Yeah. They still have some sheep here.

LW: Do you remember when that was that you had lots?

MK: I would think maybe the early '90s. Early '80s? Maybe the late '70s we started with sheep. We bought the sheep from the island of Ni'ihau. Dickie went over and go get some sheep. I think they bought 200 head or something like that at first. They brought them here and then they increase, increase more. At one time I remember we had about 1500 sheep.

MP: Then you get the guy from New Zealand to come up and teach the cowboys how to...

MK: Shear.

LW: How to shear them. No kidding. Wow.

MK: We had sheep and cattle. We went a few years with sheep and I don't know how, after that it went downhill slowly, slowly. But they still have sheep here. They use the sheep to eat all the grub grass that the cattle don't eat. The sheep come behind and eat all that rubbish grass.

LW: Then they sell them for meat or what? How do they...

MK: They sell them to the hotels.

LW: Oh, for...

MK: I guess for eat or market. They only ask for a little bit a week. I don't know if they still do yet, but I've not been on the ranch for 18 years, so I don't know what they're doing with the sheep now.

LW: Yeah. We don't have to worry about now. We're talking about before.

MK: Yeah. Before, we used to send sheep to the slaughter house.

LW: Oh yeah, yeah. That's that... The other door there. Was there particular... Michael liked to work with the mechanical stuff, like the pumps, the water pump and the... That was something he really was good at.

MK: Yeah.

MP: But he was a cowboy first.

MK: Yeah. He got to go with us first cowboy. See, every week when we had the feed lot... Every week, Mondays, we used to go in the feed lot and we choose cattle, which one we're going to send to slaughter and we pull them out and we load them up on the truck, we take them down to slaughter. Every week we used to kill over here at our slaughter house. After they

shut down our slaughter house, we used to kill cattle at the Decoite slaughter house up in Makawao. We used to slaughter that at our slaughter house at first, then we close our slaughter house down, after I don't know how many years. Then it went to Decoite slaughter house. Kill the house meat and kill for the market, schools. We used to pick from the feed lot. Every week we used to pick out so many head. Sometime they killed 20 a week, 80 one month altogether. Then it goes out to schools and hotels. Then we used to send some cattle to Honolulu at Hawaii Meat Company too, for slaughtering and some for... They feed them down there sometimes and then they slaughter them down there.

LW: Now how much of that came back to the ranch families? Do you know what I mean? Did some of that meat come back and feed the ranch families?

MK: Yeah. Back in those days, every week we used to get house meat. Every Wednesday, we used to get house meat. They used to kill one cow for all the ranch employees every week and we pay only cheap price. It was 25 cents a pound. Then we get all kind cuts, depending on the size of the family. Sometime you get 15 pounds. The smaller family get eight or 10 pounds a week, but we used to get meat every week. Then after that came every two weeks. Then after that came every month. Sometimes they kill two cows, so you get enough for last you for about a month.

LW: So, do you have a fun memory of Michael?

MK: Oh yeah. We used to do things that we are not supposed to tell nobody. We just was good friends and always with each other. We played sports together. We go rodeo together. We played basketball together. We played volleyball together.

MP: The Jacks.

MK: Yeah, The Jacks.

LW: That's the name... What's that? The name of the volleyball team?

MP: Basketball.

MK: Baseball not too much, but volleyball and basketball we used to play a lot. Rodeo, we used to...

LW: How do you do that? You go down to... Where do you play those?

MK: Makawao. Yeah. They had a Makawao CYO league. So, every company has a team to go play softball or basketball or volleyball. We used to enter every year. Mr. Erdman used to play with us too. Basketball and volleyball. Ranch had one team. The county had one team and some other business had some teams too. So, we used to have sports in between too.

LW: How do you fit that in? On the weekend?

MK: Weeknights. We used to play volleyball and basketball weeknights. Weekends is only for rodeo.

LW: Yeah. So what were you guys' rodeo events?

MK: All kinds. Almost all of them, yeah. I used to go five events. Calf roping, team roping, steer wrestling, bareback bronc and saddle bronc. Not bull riding. I didn't care for bulls, because bull is not easy to ride. Bull, the skin rolls from left to right and it's hard to hang on because the skin it rolls and the horn... You've got to watch out for the horn. Nowadays you've got to use the helmet. Before days we don't use it, but I didn't care for ride bulls, but everything else I used to do. Michael used to haze for me when I go steer wrestling and he used to... He used to head for me. I used to heel for him. We used to do that. He was my header and I was a heeler. We used to go all over the island to go rodeo, Makawao, Hana, Kaupō and the ranch kine shows. When I go steer wrestling, he used to haze for me. They call it bulldog. Yeah. You jump from the horse and you grab the steer and then you...

LW: And pull it down.

MK: Yeah. So, we used to go... And he used to go calf roping too, team roping, double mugging. All our ranch hand used to go. Some used to go only a few events. Some used to go all. Andrew and I used to go all the events. Kimo used to go...

LW: Which Andrew? Andrew...

MK: Andrew Kauai. Was one more family dat had father and son. Andrew... I mean, Willie is his dad. Willie Kauai, and Andrew was his son. Then Andrew had one son named Andrew Boy. He used to work here too. So, father, son, and grandson. Then Andrew Boy went to Big Island. He wen work to Parker Ranch.

LW: Yeah. The name sounds familiar.

MK: He died a few years ago.

MP: Andrew's in the hall of fame.

LW: Yeah. I'm thinking that... That's what's running through my brain. Could you tell?

MP: He went in several years before these guys.

MK: Yeah, I think he went in same time with Chunga dem, and Frank, from Kaupō. Charlie Kahaleauki, Jr. and Francis Poouahi. I seen them all on the wall. All the pictures.

LW: Yeah. So, the three of you, Andrew and you and Michael did the rodeo scenes together?

MK: Yeah. With some other boys. Had a few of them. Byron started off late because he's a younger boy. He used to go rodeo too. Byron Purdy and Ricky Purdy. Oh yeah, one more for the Purdys used to work here, Ricky Purdy, and he used to go rodeo with us too.

LW: It was that set of rodeos that went from one ranch to the next?

MK: Yeah. We had a tri-ranch, the three ranches, Ulupalakua, Kaupō and Hana. So we go maybe in... I'm not sure, but I think it was in July, we had a rodeo here and then we had one in October or November in Hana. Kaupō I'm not sure. Maybe around August we had one more, but one in Ulupalakua, one in Kaupō and one in Hana. Only ranch man could enter. Only the ranch guys could enter.

MP: And working horses.

MK: And working horses. You cannot buy a top dog horse from outside.

LW: Oh yeah. That makes it more fair.

MK: Yeah. You train your own horse, your own working horses on the ranch. That's what we used to rodeo and the whole family's involved. Everybody can enter. If the wives want to go ribbon roping or roping with us, we can... We have a family here now. Wendell Wong and his wife, Bonnie Wong. Bonnie used to rope too. She still does, but they're semi-retired now. Wendell started off young boy over here. In fact, had the Wong brothers, two brothers, Henry Wong and Wendell Wong. They started off let's say maybe 20 years ago or so. He's still here yet. But the tri-ranch shows, the whole family is involved. The small kids can enter small kids event. Doreen, Timmy and Michael Boy were like five years old and they were doing barrels in those rodeos. Our three kids. We had four kids born the same year. One of them is my daughter Doreen, Michael Boy, Michael Purdy, Jr. Her son, Timmy and one more other boy, Purdy boy, Georgie boy. Four kids in the same year and they all entered the small kids' event. Barrel racing and...

LW: Stuff like that. Okay, so let's get a context for that. That would've been when you are here with your husband Greenwell and what year would've that been?

MK: Ask her. I'm not sure.

MP: What year was what?

LW: One of the things I wanted to establish for Merton, is what years were the managers in place here?

MK: From James Armitage went to Eddy Rice then to Dickie.

MP: We came in '71.

LW: Okay. So what's his full name though?

MP: Richard Henry Greenwell.

MK: Yeah. Then Sumner took over. By then Sumner was back from school. From college.

LW: So if Sumner was a little kid in the '60s, so you add 20 years, he's back from college.

MP: Sumner was born in March of '65, because Sumner and my two kids are all a year apart. Sumner's the oldest. My daughter's almost a year to the day, a year younger and then my son and the three of them grew up together and my kids were born in '66 and '67.

MK: I started in '64. My oldest boy born '64. Charlie born '65, one year after. So about same like yours?

MP: Yeah. We had a lot of kids on the ranch at that time. Now there's...

MK: Oh, we had plenty of kids at that time. Christmas time was the best. Oh my God. We had plenty young kids on the ranch.

MP: Even Halloween.

MK: Oh yeah. Halloween.

LW: Tell me what they were like, those holidays.

MK: Good kids. Rascal kids. Don't pay attention. Run away from home. Go to the next house and playing and playing. They had a great time.

MP: His wife would call up and say, "I'm missing Ricky." "Oh, he's down here having a peanut butter sandwich. He's sitting up here at the counter."

MK: Every house had kids. Some had four. Michael had five. I had four. You had...

MP: Three.

MK: Three. Alex had two.

LW: Who's that?

MK: Alex Santiago. Yeah. He used to work here too. He used to... After George Campbell left the ranch, Bill Uweko'olani, Jr. used to work in the shop. After he left, then Alec Santiago worked in the shop with Henry Kepani. There's one more guy to...

MP: Yeah, forgot to mention Henry.

MK: Henry Kepani, I forget, had lot of them. Like I say, when I started here, I was the number 17 cowboy. Michael was the number 18 cowboy. Then every year after that, guys retire one

by one, got sick and passed away. His time came down, down and down. But we had plenty of kids on the ranch. Thanksgiving we had games and Christmas we had Christmas parties. Everyone had gift.

MP: Then Betsy's brother would be Santa Claus. He'd come up from Honolulu and he'd be Santa Claus and we'd have a big thing at the pavilion and he'd come and he'd hand out the gifts to all the kids.

LW: Wait, so Betsy is Pard's wife and what's her family name?

MP: Sumner.

LW: Oh, she was a Sumner?

MK: Yeah.

LW: Oh, okay. No wonder that name... I kept thinking it can't just be his first name, it was from... She was a Sumner and her brother would come from O'ahu and be the Santa Claus. Okay. Wow.

MK: After so many years, I don't know what happened and Michael was our Santa Claus. Santa Claus used to come on a horseback. To the parties. I still...

LW: Did he have a big bag full of stuff?

MK: Oh yeah. Some kids used to look at him and say, "I know you." Then they used to look at his boots. "Oh, you uncle Michael." Because he wear... Everybody wear boots, but I guess some kids knows his boots.

LW: Oh, sure. I mean they're closer to his boots probably than anything. So you did rodeo yourself and then you also took care of the high school rodeo as a...

MK: That was after I retired though, yeah.

LW: Oh, I see. I see.

MK: I took the junior division on this island after I retired. Then after that they elected me to take care of the high school rodeo kids as two different division. The Wranglers is the juniors. The high school is the high school kids.

LW: The Wranglers are out of high school already?

MK: No, they're six, seven and eight grade. Then high school is from nine, 10, 11 and 12.

LW: I see.

MK: You know Richard Kaniho from the Big Island? Yeah, I used to be director for Maui when he was a director for the Big Island.

LW: I see. I see. So is that a national organization or...

MK: Yeah, and then they pick the top three kids from each event to go to the nationals up in the mainland.

LW: Oh, that's fun.

MK: Yeah. We get one state rodeo from all the islands. From each event they take the top three kids and then they can go to the nationals up in the mainland.

LW: Wow. Where are the nationals?

MK: One time it was in Gallup, New Mexico. Then there was in Springfield, Illinois. There was in... I forget where, up Montana someplace. I kind of forget where. I went to all of them, the three of them, but it was long time ago in 2005, 2006 to about 2009 or 10. I went to all of those years, but every year they change areas. I was involved in that and then when my granddaughter graduated, I let somebody else run the rodeo.

LW: Well, Dr. Bergin talks highly of high school rodeo and that it's formative for kids. It's something that really makes a difference in their lives.

MK: To me, kids starting off small here in Hawai'i, they work their way, go rodeo. Keiki rodeos, junior rodeos, high school rodeos. After high school, if they want to continue, Hawai'i, there's no place for them. They got to go to college or move to the mainland. Then they can advance themselves, because after they graduate, the only rodeos they get here on Maui is only one. It's only the 4th of July show. That's not enough. You're going to raise a horse only for one rodeo and practice only for once a year? Maybe you can go outside island, like Waimea, Hawai'i, Lehua, Kaua'i. Before you can, nowadays it's cost so much money that you got to have a friend on each island so you can borrow the horse. It costs too much money nowadays, but if the kids want to continue and be really good, they should leave the island and go up college. You can learn more and advance yourself. When you get out of college, if you want to go pro, the rodeos is all up there. Hawai'i is no place, after high school, for rodeos.

LW: Right. Yeah and it's not like the ranches hire a lot of people. There isn't just...

MK: But to bring up the kids, over here is good. Every island is good, because they get small kids rodeo. Keike's and juniors, you get events that they can always enter. You can go Makawao rodeo. You can go Hana. You can go O'ahu. You can go Big Island to raise the kids. After they get out of high school, if you want to continue on, you might as well go up the main land.

LW: Yeah.

MK: Some kids do go. You get plenty kids go. I know plenty kids go. Some even then go pro. Myron Duarte go pro. That boy from the Big Island. I know the mom and dad. I forget their name. One of them came on TV the other night, they had interviewed him. He was a cast roper from Kona. I forget his name. A few of them went. Some tried, they would do good. They came back, but the only way to find out if you want to go.

LW: Yeah. So, what do you think? Let's just round out that... As long as Marcy's here, if you don't mind. So Dickie Greenwell was in a phase of his career where he was managing in those years from '71 to '84 or something like that. So how old would he have been there in those years then?

MP: He was born in '42.

LW: Okay, so he's in his thirties. Wait, is that right? 42 and 30 is 72, so he is in his thirties. Yeah. Wow. So he just had enough experience by that time to be a...

MK: He was a good guy though. Smart man. Very smart.

MP: He had been manager of the feed lot at Campbell Industrial Park before. That's where Pard hired him from.

LW: Yeah. I was going to ask, how did you guys, you and Michael escape, the draft? You and Michael weren't drafted for Vietnam?

MK: No, we never get drafted. I don't know why, because I think they don't pick guys if they married early.

LW: Oh, I see. I see.

MK: If he was single, yeah, they guarantee you go. They would draft you. See, when I got married, they sent me a card. They rated you. They rated me 4F and I went down to the office and asked them why, because we wanted to go. A bunch of us wanted to go, and they said, "Because you got married and you had a child." I don't think they would like to pay you and a child. So we got out of it. Michael was the same thing too. But if he was single, oh yeah, I guarantee you would go. I had plenty friends through high school, they all went.

LW: Yeah. Yeah.

MK: I might go now to Ukraine. Ukraine is fighting now, so I might go now.

LW: I know. My friends are making quilts and things like that. I still want to look at the map drawing that you did before. Is that okay? I think we're ready to do that. See, because we made this one, you and I. So, I'm trying to think now how I want to do this.

MK: You want me to draw one more?

LW: Yeah. Let's draw one more. Let's draw a bigger one. And, we'll go through it as you... Has that got good ink? You want a pencil? Here's a... Okay.

MK: This is the road. [Merton is drawing. Map 1 is this drawing. It appears at the back of the text.]*

LW: Okay. That's the road.

MK: For example. And, maybe the ranch is some place around here.

LW: Okay. I'm going to just reach over you and... Ranch. And we're going to write, road. Okay, there. All right.

MK: Okay. The boundary is over here, okay?

LW: That's the boundary of the ranch.

MK: I think so. Yeah. It's supposed to be... The boundary don't pass Makahiku or something. The pasture of Makahiku is the boundary line.

LW: Okay.

MK: Above the road over here is called Kuhulu 4.

LW: Okay. Above being Mauka.

MK: I don't know how big, but anyway, and then below here is Makahiku. Okay?

LW: Okay.

MK: And then, below here is Keawekapu.

LW: Okay.

MK: Then you come some place over here, which is Pu'uloa 1.

LW: Okay.

MK: And Pu'uloa 2.

LW: Okay.

MK: Then you come more down here, over here is Jim Brown. No. Keanapuni and Jim Brown. Family used to live in there. That's why they call it Jim Brown.

LW: Oh, okay.

MK: This is Lapaquaia. And then, you come more down, and you get Keanapuni 1. And then it gets Keanapuni 2. And below here, big area, is Keanapuni 3.

LW: Okay. Okay, good.

MK: Then Keanapuni 1, then come more over here, and you get number five, number six, and then down through here is number six cane. And over here is the old feed lot. I get the ranch office too far off. Old feed lot.

LW: We'll just move it up.

MK: And then, the ranch office is supposed to be right over here.

LW: Okay. Well, we'll move it. No problem. Go ahead. There's-

MK: ... the old slaughterhouse. And then, the shop. And over here is Kane's house. Now it's one of the boy's house. And then...

LW: Okay, wait. Let's do this, though. You want to move this, right? We better move it while we can. I just didn't have an eraser. Okay, so you put it where it's supposed to be. So, here's Kane's, so where do you want the ranch headquarters and such? Right about there. Okay. Okay. Yeah. All right. That's good.

MK: This is the road going to the shop. From the office. After you pass the store, and then you get a couple houses. You get one house here, one house here, one house here, and Hapakuka's house, and then right over here, you have the arena. And this is the road. And then, right here is my house. And then, you get a house here. You get one house here. One house here. One house here. Although, actually, it's three houses, and then right after, you just get one road going down.

LW: Okay. Let's make a road here.

MK: Right after the road on the other side, right over here is the church, and-

LW: Across from there.

MK: ... Michael's house is over here. Michael's house is over here. Okay?

LW: Okay.

MK: And then, over here, there's the Y in the road. You can go below and you can go upside.

LW: Okay.

MK: Then, over here, few houses, the old houses. Over here is the old pen. The old pens. And then, going up behind Michael's house, over here is number one.

LW: These are roads, right?

MK: Yeah. Going up, up, up. And over here is number one, and way up here is... Well, above of number one is number two.

LW: Right, right. Okay, so what about this side, though?

MK: Yep. Okay. Kuhulu 4. And then, over here is Kuhulu 2. And a small area is called Kuhulu 3, is right next to the road. And then over here is the old pens. Yeah, it's right next to the road. Have you ever been out here? In fact, right down here is the strawberry fields. You know the dip in the road, on that turn, we get the cement out there.

LW: Yeah. There are strawberries in there?

MK: Below the road is the strawberry fields. Or, not strawberry, but the Winery, I was going to say.

LW: Grapes.

MK: The winery, with the grapes. Oh my god. No, no, no. But it's the grapes. I got mixed up, my fruits, all... But the old pens...Over here is the old pens. You've seen the old pens, yes, going out, right around that dip, and then you go up, get one big tree on the side of the road, and right there is the old pens.

LW: Oh, okay. I'll look on the way back.

MK: Yeah. And over here is a big hill.

LW: Okay, so that should be on a topo map. What's that one called?

MK: I don't know what that hill is called, but it's...That's the hill where the helicopters, they land every time. They do weddings and stuff up there.

LW: Let's call this a hill. I'm going to put hill on your sketch. We don't know the name of it. You don't think it's this Pu'uloa, do you?

MK: No. Kahulu 1, and then right over here is Foster, all the way up. And then, the ranch office is over here. Number one, number two, this is number three. Four, five. Number four. Oh, here's number four. Number five. And this is number four. And then, above of this is Cornland.

LW: Yeah, you got that on this one (the sketch MK did for interview #1).

MK: No, above here is Cornland. Cornland 1, Cornland 2. Cornland 3. Yep, this is number four, number five. That's the number three. Okay. Over here is to get on old airstrip. There's to land small airplane over there. Airstrip.

LW: Okay, cool. Okay. So, let's talk a little bit about the people now. You've got this all drawn out better so we can read it and you've got the names. So-

MK: Above here you get a little bit more areas, and more in the back here, you get more areas, but that's kind of...

LW: Yeah. But I want to talk about the people while we still got that... because you said you were responsible for what herd where?

MK: My herd was up in Kuhulu 4. Kuhulu 1, 2, 3, and 4. Three is only one small area. After we bring in the cattle all to Kahulu 3, then it goes into the old pens and then we work the cattle. So, my herd was over here, one, two, and three.

LW: And what was the brand on your herd, then?

MK: Mine was O brand. When up here get dry... Actually, wintertime, we put this down here. Summertime down here is dry, so we put them above the road. Should be a little more grass above the road, because if down here is dry during the summer, up here must get a little bit more grass. But we see which area get more grass. So, I go back and forth.

LW: Okay. So, below the road is...

MK: It's Makahiku, Keawekapu, Pu'uloa 1 and 2. They're all side by side. Once we would work them in the old pens, it goes across the road to Pu'uloa 1, stay over there a few days or a week or two, then goes in Pu'uloa 2. Stay there a few days or a week or two, goes to the next pasture. When the grass gets short, we change them to the next area. And then when it's all down, it goes back up here again. Depending on the weather and how much grass it is.

LW: Right.

MK: Up here is the Waihou, is the Cornland 3 and Waihou area.

LW: Oh. Above it was... Let's put an arrow and put... because that was on the other one (sketch from interview #1), Waihou.

MK: Yeah. It's above of Cornland 3 and Cornland 2. Waihou area is a big area. The top of Waiho is boundary with Forest Reserve line.

LW: Oh, okay, which is maybe up here. That's way high up.

MK: Yeah. That's way up. This herd is the T herd. And it's taken care by this other boy named Alec Santiago, but he died, so I don't know who now is in charge of that herd. Michael's herd, like I said, was up here, number one...

LW: Above his house.

MK: ... number two... Above his house, yeah. And that was a stand-up E.

LW: Oh, that was the stand-up E. Okay. Because I see the lay down E here. I see it, but...

MK: Yeah. And then below the road down here, Keanapuni is the lay down E.

MK: Yeah. But now, to tell you the truth, it's all changed now. I don't know.

LW: That's okay. We're not talking about the people now. We're talking about when you were active and doing this.

MK: Okay.

LW: Yeah. Great. Because this was too small (speaking of the sketch form interview #1). Okay. So, you also talked about the area that was the homesteads... Is that this area over here?

MK: Yeah. Around that church area, Kanaio Church, there's a lot of homesteads over there. A lot of guys get shareholders all around there.

LW: You talked about Hawaiian Homelands Lands.

MK: Okay. Right below the road is that DLNR area. That's where right now they get it restricted. You cannot go over there hunting. Only with bow and arrow, I think. But it's not fenced off, that's the part, you don't know where is the area.

LW: But you also talked about a hippie encampment over here or something.

MK: Up in Kanaio area.

LW: It's up by that church.

MK: Yeah. And get some below the road, too. You can tell there's all junk all over there.

LW: I've driven... Soot took me once down to Kaupō to talk to... He passed now. I've forgotten his name. But took me down to do his oral history. But that's the only time I've gone down.

MK: Charlie Aki?

LW: No.

MP: [Marcie Purdy speaking] Chunga?

LW: No, I talked to-

MK: Francis?

LW: It was Francis.

MK: Oh, okay. Us, two brother-in-laws. Chunga's sister is married to Francis.

LW: Yeah. But Francis passed, yeah?

MK: Yeah, he passed. My first wife is Chunga's sister. And Francis' wife and my wife is two sisters. Yeah. We never need to go far to find somebody. Yeah, but from here to where they stay, it takes almost one hour.

LW: Oh, wow.

MK: You went to the store? The Kaupō store?

LW: Yeah, I think we stopped.

MK: Okay. From my house, every morning, I drive my bus, go to the store. One hour.

LW: Yeah. That's pretty incredible. Yeah, you talked about that last time. There must be plenty families out here that love that you do that.

MK: They told me they get about 11 families out there now.

LW: Yeah.

MK: On the road, right to the store. I pick up four kids at the store.

LW: Wow. Unbelievable.

MK: I leave my house at 4:30 in the morning, and I reach there at 5:30, and I come back and I reach the store 6:30.

LW: And what school do they go to? Did I ask that?

MK: Kula.

LW: Kula School.

MK: Elementary.

LW: Wow.

MK: King K. and Kalama. Three schools.

LW: Yeah. What would those families do without you? They probably would not be sending their kids to school.

MK: I don't know. Almost they're going to lose me because I might retire in May.

LW: I usually ask this question of most people. Tell me your legacy in ranching.

MK: Nowadays, ranching is more modified. They hardly ride horse anymore. They go by four wheelers, quads. They do ride horse when the cattle get in the pen, but it's more modified. Not too much old-fashioned cowboy riding around the ranch. But, still, it's a ranch. They still work cattle. But, it's different. Not like how it used to be. Before, it was more fun, more riding horses and really cowboy work. Nowadays, they do everything much easier. I don't know if I told you at one time we used to have a helicopter. The helicopter used to do a big job for us. We never need to go driving the cattle. He'd drive them in, and we'd only hang around the pen when the cattle come near the pen. We go with the horse and we put them in the pen.

LW: Yeah. So, what are you most proud of from your time as foreman?

MK: Oh. Working cows with horseback instead of riding the quads. The young boys, they like the ride the quads, but the old guys like us, we would rather ride horse. But, the horses, they take too long, time-consuming. To get to one area, it takes you about an hour to ride a horse. Nowadays... But I enjoyed doing what we did, though. We learned a lot working cattle, doing things with cattle. We learned from the old-timers. They showed us all kind of things about cattle, how to work the cattle, how to do this or that. I'm surprised those old folks... They didn't go to school, but they knew how to do everything. They just knew what to do. Doctored their own horses. Doctored the cattle. They just knew what to do.

MP: Did you talk to her about the wild cattle and how you *po 'owaiu*, tie them up?

MK: We didn't talk about wild cattle yet. In certain areas of the ranch, like past Kaniao, below Kaniao area, we used to raise cattle all down there. But the cattle get down into the 'a'ā way down below by Make'e. And they don't want to come back out. They only come out nighttime to drink water and go back down there and hide. So, when we drive the cattle, plan is short, so we've got to go find them. And, we get wild cattle, so we've got to rope them, bring them out in open and rope them and tie them up, and get a boom truck and lift them up, and put them on the cattle truck, and bring them home. They're wild cattle. Once we get them in the trucks, take off the rope, they can stand up in the truck and run around, we take them straight to the slaughterhouse. We kill them. Because if you let them out again... Because they're going to out and they're going to wreck your fences and all that. They're all wild cattle. So, once we catch them, put them on the truck, take them straight to the slaughterhouse.

LW: Wow. You get a boom truck and put them in the cattle truck with...

MK: Yeah, a long boom truck with hoists, and then lift them up, stick them in the cattle truck, untie them and shut the gate and take them to the slaughterhouse.

MP: Because wild cattle were a large part of the '70s.

MK: Yeah. I'm not sure what years on all that, but had a few years that we had a lot of wild cattle. We had to rope them at a certain time and take them to the slaughter plants. Some of them, when you rope them, they're so hot, they drop dead, so you've got to bleed them and divide the meat among the ranch men. The meat is still good, but you've got to slaughter them.

LW: Do you smoke that meat or what do you do with them?

MK: You can do whatever you want. You can make smoked meat. You can make salt meat. You can make jerky. You can make hamburger, or whatever you want. The ones that die out in open.

MP: Did you usually use a tranquilizer gun from the helicopter? I remember something about a tranquilizer gun.

MK: Yeah. We used to shoot them with that gun. Dickie Greenwell used to shoot them with the gun. He used to come with his truck, and he followed the helicopter. The helicopter used to talk to him. They're going to drive the cattle out in open. Once get out in open, he chooses the biggest bull, and the wildest one, and he shoot him with the tranquilizer gun. When we get there with the horseback, we tie him up quick before he wakes up. Sometime we help to tie him, he's still sleeping yet. We pick him up with the boom truck and stick him in the truck, and untie him. When they wake up, they're in the truck already, some of the time. Sometime, the helicopter pick him up and take him to the pens. Some areas where you not can go with the truck, so the helicopter go bring him from here to here for us. So, it's kind of a really rough job, hard work and...The gun used to be good, too, more easier for us. But not all the time. Sometime we still got to rope some. Every cowboy on this ranch had a good taste of that because everybody used to go chase wild cattle too.

MP: That's the kind of stuff you don't hear much about anymore. From back, the good days.

MK: No. Problem is, nowadays, they clean the pasture with the tractor. They clean all the rough areas out, so the cattle got no place to hide now. They stay out in the open. When they drive the cattle, you can go and get all of them and bring them in the pen. Before, was so thick area that when you drive, some go hide, and then they stay back, they stay back. Months went by, years went by, and they get wilder and wilder. They see man, they run away. But now, they landscape the land, so all clean.

MP: Were you there when Michael got run over?

MK: Almost everybody got run over, so...

LW: Run over by what?

MK: The horse. The cattle spooked the horse and knocked the horse down with the man.

LW: And then the bull runs over the man?

MK: Sometimes. No need be one bull, as long as a cow, or wild cattle. Can be a steer. It can be a bull. Every so often, some guys get banded. She got banded, I got banded, plenty guys got banded a few times. Sometimes you get a little hurt, sometimes not.

LW: The horse get hurt?

MK: The horse and the man. Sometimes. It all depends...

MP: I remember Dickie was yelling at Michael, "Lie down, lie down." Michael says, "No, I don't want to lay down. I've got to sit up. I want to stay awake."

MK: Yeah. If you stand up, the cattle see you, he might charge you. If you lay down... they don't bother you too much. Make believe you're dead. Don't move, and the cattle might run away. But if you stand up, the cattle might come for you. So, it kind of all depends where you are and how bad is the cattle.

LW: Yeah. Wow.

MK: A spot of cowboy life. Ranching life.

LW: Well, are there many wild cattle yet now, or no?

MK: I'm not too sure now, but when I retired, had a few. I don't know what happened. Maybe they went out with a helicopter or something and shoot them, or the men went out and shoot them and all that. If you cannot get them with the horseback, you might as well shoot them. But you've got to shoot them on aerial where you can get them.

LW: Pick them up. Pick up the carcass.

MK: So, it all depends where you see them.

LW: Yeah.

MK: Everybody think ranching cowboy life is easy. Well, maybe nowadays it's easy because they've got all modern things, how they do things, but before days, no way it was easy.

LW: No, no. That's something... Oh, what was her name? Sweetie Lindsey. She was one of the Lindsey daughters, about my age. She used to tell me that her father who worked on one of the North Hawai'i ranches, I don't remember which one, used to say, "I won't spank you. My hands are too hard."

MK: I just was going to say that. I just was going to say that. Cowboy is hard working, cowboys. You can tell that they used to work hard, when you shake hand with them, their hands are hard. Really hard and strong. And, when they squeeze something or they tighten up something, they don't even know how much strength they get. They tighten up a bolt, broke

the bolt, and...They're so strong, their hands. They work with their hands all the time, so their hands are really strong.

LW: Even if you're driving a four-wheeler, you still have a lot of physical work. So, what direction do you think ranching is going in? What's the future of ranching?

MK: I don't know. I think modernizing cows nowadays, they don't need too much cowboys anymore. They do it the easy way. So, I don't know. But you still need cows on the ranch. I think. Ulupalakua ranch is going to get smaller and they're only going to keep a herd, so continue on with cows, but not a big herd like how it used to be, I think. I'm not guaranteed, but...

MP: When you worked for the ranch, how many cowboys were there?

MK: All together.

MP: Yeah. There was 20-something, no?

MK: Yeah, because we had about 17, 18 cowboys.

MP: And now there's five?

MK: I think now it's more about eight, counting the office, so about a dozen all together. But workmen, they get six cowboys, six men... Yeah, about eight. About eight or 10. Wendall, Andrew, the other boy over there, this... Yeah, about six guys.

LW: And they do everything. They do the equipment and the water and the cattle?

MK: Yeah. But now, they cannot use all that six men to do everything, so they subcontract the fencing job to outsiders. A fencing contractor comes in to do the big fencing job for them. A big water job, they subcontract, a guy come in and install a big tank or something like that. And den, in the shop, if they need to overhaul a truck or something, they send a truck down to a garage and somebody else do the work. We don't have a steady mechanic in the shop anymore. We don't have no steady... Repair work on the fence, yeah, the ranch boys can go do the repair work, but to build a brand-new fence, they subcontract them out to some other, not too much.

LW: And what about this community of Ulupalakua? It's quite a community. Has it gotten smaller? Do you think it's going to keep going even though the ranch gets smaller? What do you think about this community?

MK: Ulupalakua ranch hands, the ranch employees and the hands are real small now, but they get more outsiders who get subdivided areas outside of the ranch, like out in Kaniao, they get a few people.

LW: Yeah, I think the Hapakuka sisters live over there. No?

MK: No. The Uweko‘olanis used to live out there. The Uweko‘olanis and the Campbells used to live up there. Hapakukas used to stay in the ranch area. They get the ranch houses and all the... There's no Hapakuka on the ranch now. There's no Purdys on the ranch now

LW: So, those homes that they lived in...

MK: Get somebody else are living in there now, the young boys.

LW: Oh. But they're working here.

MK: Yep.

LW: Okay. So, those homes that were built by the ranch, most of them are still owned and maintained by the ranch?

MK: Yep. Most of the ranch... They're still the ranch homes. Some of them is old and broken down, but the ones that they repair, they still use them, yeah.

LW: Wow. Yeah, Parker ranch does that too. So, the ranch is still really crucial to the community that's here.

MK: Yeah. The community actually itself got smaller, really smaller. Halloween, there's no kids go to your house. I never get kids come to my house for about... I don't know how many years now. Hardly no kids playing in the park. No more kids. Only get Dan and the two kids, I think. And that's about all.

MP: Andrew's got a baby. Christian's got a baby. There's three babies.

MK: There's two babies, I guess.

LW: And those folks work at the ranch.

MK: Yeah.

MP: Yeah, Halloween, he used to go get all the big refrigerator boxes, and he'd make a whole maze in the garage, and set up the vacuum cleaner-

MK: Halloween, oh, man.

MP: ... and everything, and Sandy, Michael's first wife, would freak out, "Juice, Juice, I don't want to go in there."

MK: We used to have fun with all the kids, Christmas-time, Halloween time. Easter time, down at the park, we used to go hide eggs with the kids. We used to get plenty kids, but now, hardly. It got really small now.

MP: And we were a community.

MK: Yeah. Before, if you're going to have a birthday party, we all would help you. We'll make maybe put pig in the *imu* or help you make the party, set up a tent or something. Maybe two weeks from now, the other guy is going to have a party, we all go help. You bring something. We always used to get together.

MP: And nobody needed invitations. It was automatic.

MK: Now, you don't even know there's a party down the road. Everybody's to themselves now. But it's still okay. We still here. Not too much of us are still here, though. I think Wendall and I is the oldest guy over here now, with some guys like her [referring to Marcie Purdy]. The older folks, the retirees, no more, yeah? On the ranch. No more. Only me and you and Dolly. Oh, well, Dolly's in hospital. Me and you and Sumner. That's about all. The other ones are all brand new guys. Yeah, no more, nobody.

LW: That's a little scary, right?

MK: But still it's all right.

LW: Well, my friends. So, do you want to add anything?

MK: No. There's no Michael around to back me up, so I'm not sure if... I'm not sure if I'm going to tell the right thing.

MP: They could've given you great stories.

LW: Oh, I will always be sad that I wasn't able to talk to Michael before he passed. It's a real loss to the Paniolo Hall of Fame.

** Map 1 was traced and relettered by Gordon Motta, Designer/Builder & Ceramic Artist.