

ROBERT "Bobby" MILNE NAPIER

Kahua Ranch, O`ahu



Bobby grew up riding the rolling hills and gulches of Kahua Ranch in Waialua, O`ahu, with Percy Sanborn, George A`i, Jack Robello, Peter Kama, brothers Able, Adam and Effrim Ha`i, and his dad, Alex Napier – all top paniolo of their day. These mentors filled Bobby with a good deal of cow sense, tricks of the trade and, according to his wife Marilyn, a respectable amount of B.S. Maybe that's why Bobby became something of a prankster himself, and has more than a few good stories to tell.

Bobby started on his cowboy life working for Kahua Ranch both on O`ahu and in Kohala on the Big Island. He then went on to work for Kahua Beef Sales and was Operations Manager for Kahua Meat Company.

Bobby is descended from a Scotsman – James Alex Napier, who worked for Parker Ranch and who brought cattle from Scotland. Bobby's dad, Alex Napier, worked for Kahua Ranch and Kahua Meat Company. His mother is 100% pure Portuguese, from Kohala. Bobby jokes that she came with papers. Bobby became familiar with the significance of papers when he was in the 4-H livestock program as a youngster. He raised steers while his friend Buddy Gibson raised heifers. Later, Bobby's own 4 children went through the 4-H program. He started the Golden Steers 4-H Club of O`ahu County, and gave 32 years to the State and County 4-H program as a leader, Livestock Committee member, and chair.

Bobby contributed to the perpetuation of ranching in future generations and also played an important role in the transportation of livestock. For 10 years he ran his own business hauling and caring for cattle being sent through Honolulu to the mainland from island ranches. He recalls one year when he & his son alone handled 10,000 cattle shipped by Parker Ranch. Bobby had an early introduction to transportation as a vital link in Hawai`i's cattle industry. He went with his dad on the last run of the Humu`ula, which transported cattle interisland. That, and learning leather craft from Peter Kama are among his best of many rich memories of his life as a paniolo.

Bobby has been a member of the O`ahu Cattlemen's Association since it's inception and was an originator of the Paniolo Hall of Fame.

**Robert Napier Interview
2009**

RN: So you live in Hilo?

LW: Yeah. I live in Hilo.

RN: Oh that vog must be really hefty, you know.

LW: Yes. You know they have a new web site that tells you how much sulfur is going into the air.

RN: Yes, I saw that.

LW: It's a lot.

RN: Because I saw... I think it was last night's news. That Lani Cran was on the news.

LW: Oh, was she?

RN: About how the vog, it's affecting the fence lines and everything.

LW: Oh, is that right?

RN: Yeah.

LW: She's right in the path, you know.

RN: Kapapala... that's why.

LW: Yeah, she's right down there. I wonder if their beef get it.

RN: Well, that's what I was telling my wife. I said when you look at it... the air... whatever is in the air is falling on the grass. And the cattle are eating it so is it affecting the cattle? Which nobody knows yet. Nobody has ever said anything about it but you can never tell. It probably is because it's killing off vegetation for the farmers. So it's got to be doing something to the grass. And Kapapala... Kapapala and Kona and all that area is probably the strongest hit.

LW: Oh yeah. And the dairy industry down there.

BN: Yeah, yeah. That's where Island Dairy is, too.

LW: It's not so good, you know. Well it probably affects the beef industry, too.

RN: You know I was talking to Tim...

LW: Which Tim is that?

RN: Tim Richards. Because what happened is when Kahua closed up down here, I went into transportation of livestock. So I was transporting...

LW: Down where?

RN: In Honolulu. I was picking them up from the pier and taking them and loading them in the airplane. And loading them on the boats and all that other stuff. And what happened is when Kahua closed up down here, I bought their trucks and I started. Because there was nobody to haul livestock on this island. Kahua was doing all the livestock hauling. So when they closed up I told them to sell me the trucks and trailers and I'll do it. So they said okay. So what happened was I took over and I started hauling livestock for all the ranchers on the Big Island and Maui and Kauai, and then what they used to do was ship them to here, and being that the Matson boats leave out of here and the airplanes, I used to take take them to the old feedlot, and I'd reload them back on the trailers to go out to the mainland. But when I did that, there was twelve dairies on this island. And believe it or not, today there's no dairies. Everything is closed. In ten years, twelve dairies went out of business. Just this past year the last two just closed up. It was too costly to bring in the feed and the mainland milk was coming in so to compete with the mainland milk, it just wasn't feasible. So they all closed up. So there's one lady, who was with the last dairy, she's thinking of now starting her own as a health milk. Just whole milk. And from what I heard she bought a trailer and she's going to milk a hundred cows and sell all the milk in a gallon as whole milk. Like how we used to have before with the cream on the top. That'll be interesting.

LW: Yeah. Isn't it interesting that the health industry... all the commercial industries are kind of falling apart... but the health industry keeps going.

RN: That's right. Tim was telling me that the grass fed cattle that he feeds and he keeps on the island. He makes more money than the cattle he ships out of state. Which kind of makes sense because there's no freight involved. And they're eating grass.

Order breakfast.

LW: So at Kahua they dissolved the transportation?

RN: Yeah because when Kahua started I was a small boy. I wasn't actually even around when it started, but when my dad got involved with Kahua it was in 1953. And they were down at Kapiolani Boulevard. They had a plant over there where they used to slaughter at Ewa and take the carcasses to the old Primo brewery plant. They had a cold...

LW: Primo Brewery?

RN: Right. And they had a cold storage there. Where they used to sell the meat all to the different stores and there was no meat processing at the time, they would just send out as carcasses and quarters. And my dad was over there working and this other guy, Peter Kama, who was working over there with him. And I was small and I used to go over there with my dad's boss at the time, this guy Percy Sanborne. And he took a liking to me and he used to come there and pick me up and take me out on the ranch with him. Because they had a ranch out in Wailua. And my dad kind of said well that's not right, you're taking my son. He said I'm taking him because I want to take him with me. So I used to go with him. But they used to supply all the stores like Chinatown and when Times Super Market first started and then Foodland first started. There was no Safeway. And they used to deliver to all these mom and pop stores. And Monte... Monte Richards, he was in college at the time. And during the summer months he used to come down and work along with the sales part of the company. And that was only owned by Kahua. Then in 1963, they formed what they call a beef sales. And they moved that operation to the airport industrial area. (Coughs.) Excuse me. That was owned by five ranchers. Five or six ranchers. And they made like a sales where they break down the beef and you know make like hamburger and process it to prime cuts and started to sell it out. But that was like I said owned by about five or six ranchers. And then what they used to do is come in, still slaughter in Ewa, haul the meat all the way to the airport. And they had it graded. They had it graded down at the Primo brewery because what it was, the first beef grader that graded meat in Hawai'i was this guy Ken Stevens. You know how they grade the beef by choice and prime and stuff like that? He was the first guy that came to Hawai'i from I guess federal government, and had that beef classified that way. So when they did that, I was part of the operation, when they started to learn how to check the quality of the animal by age and it's interesting how you can tell the age without looking at anything other than the meat itself. By looking at the bones you can tell the age of it.

And look at quality of the meat. So it's real interesting how things have changed in the industry, because now you hear all this stuff about Angus beef and stuff like that. You kind of wonder if it is.

LW: Might be something else, huh?

RN: Yeah. Because Angus is a breed, see. So when you look at it this way, there's a lot of people who raise Angus beef, but now how can you tell? I cannot tell by the breed when it's out of the State. Other than if the skin is off, you know. If the skin is on I can tell you what it is but if the skin is off I can't tell you what it is.

LW: But grading when you grade the beef it's based on the age or...?

RN: It's based on age and quality of the beef itself.

LW: And it's not based on the breed?

RN: No. It has nothing to do with breed. But when you look at a steak, they look at the area of the meat, they look at the marbling on the inside and they take the age into consideration and the color of the meat. All that has a factor in how it's graded. Because if the animal for some reason goes under stress before it's killed, the meat will turn real dark. And when it turns real dark, it's like downgraded. Even if it's high in quality, because of the color it can't make the grade. It's got to be a nice red. But other than that, it'll come out a real dark, dark red. And it won't get the standards.

LW: So Kahua had a lot of trucks in order to...

RN: We only had two trucks. We had a lot of trailers. But what it was in the olden days, when I first started, the shipping inter-island used to be on the Humu'ula. And when I was about five years old, I went with my dad on the last run of the Humu'ula. And when it got to Hawaii... they used to... in Honolulu... Hawai'i Meat used to unload their cattle by train. At Honolulu. And the train used to go along the waterfront and go up to Middle Street and unload.

LW: Go up where to where?

RN: To Middle Street.

LW: Middle Street?

RN: Yeah. The train used to come through the old cannery, where they say the Cannery Row is now.

LW: Oh, Cannery Row... yeah.

RN: The train used to come through there, cross over by Nimitz and then go up Middle Street and unload the cattle at Hawai'i Meat. And then they went to open barges, where the whole barge is cattle and it was like a big corral on the ocean, and they used to put the cattle in the barge like that with no roof or anything. When the whole barge used to come heavy with five, six hundred head of cattle at a time, the barge used to come in here Tuesdays and Fridays. Yeah, used to come to Honolulu. And then all the trucks... there was a company called O'ahu Transport, that had cattle trailers. And they were owned by Castle and Cook. And they used to haul cattle for Hawai'i Meat Feed Lot. And we used to haul cattle for Kahua. And the people who raised cattle had sold it through Kahua, so we used to haul their cattle. And what they did is they used to take it to Middle Street, or take it to the feedlot. And we used to take ours either to the slaughterhouse in Ewa or to the feedlot in Wailua. And then after that, the feedlot in Wailua closed and they just had the feedlot in Campbell so everything went to Campbell or one of the two slaughterhouses.

LW: Where?

RN: Campbell Industrial Park. They had a big feedlot down there where Hawai'i Meat ran that feedlot.

LW: Oh, I see. This was Parker, Hawai'i Meat?

RN: Yeah. Yeah. Well actually Hawai'i Meat was the sales representative for Parker Ranch. They sold all Parker Ranch cattle.

LW: Were they selling other people, too?

RN: Yeah. They had several... they had Kahuku Ranch, they had Robinson's from Makawele Ranch, Ni'ihau Ranch, they had Haleakala Ranch. They had several ranchers that shipped their cattle. Some ranchers didn't put their cattle through the feedlot. What they did is they sold it through Hawai'i Meat. So in other words, the cattle belonged to Hawai'i Meat when it got to the feedlot.

LW: Right out of...

RN: Right out of the corral, they sold it. Yeah. Some people would follow the cattle through the feedlot. And some people, I guess, couldn't afford to feed them so they sold the cattle and then they took it through the feedlot. It's just like today, a lot of the people cannot afford to ship it, so they'll sell it on the island and whoever buys it will take it to feedlot.

LW: So you picked up all those trailers?

RN: Yeah, I picked up all the trailers that they had.

LW: So now what do you do?

RN: Now, well I don't do any ranch work now. Because just before the... well actually when 911 hit, it hit us real hard. And it was because of security. My truck insurance went from seven thousand dollars to sixteen thousand dollars without any accident. No claims, anything. And it was because I go on the pier and I go on the airport. And you have to put a real high insurance on it, which doesn't make any sense. And then after that the fuel costs started to skyrocket. So I started to figure it out. And I said you know what? If I keep raising my costs, passing it on to the ranchers, their costs are going out of sight. And it went from the mainland. We were getting paid to haul cattle from here, from the pier to the feedlot and back to the airport, we were getting paid two cents a pound. From the mainland, it went from three cents a pound all the way up to six cents a pound. You know, for their transportation. So after that I told my wife, I said, we might just shut down. And I'll go work for somebody else. Because it's costing too much money to run. To fill up a tank of fuel cost us eight hundred dollars. And eight hundred dollars would last me only a couple of days. So when you look at it, it gets too costly to operate. So I just said forget it, you know. I'm not going to run any more. So now what I'm doing is I'm working in NAHO... is guaranteed. Even when you die, I get business. Because I'm in a green waste recycling. So I tease everybody and say when you die, and then they put flowers on your grave, then when the flowers die they bring it to us so that we can recycle it. So even if you're dead you're going to be contributing to my raises. (Laughs.)

LW: So now tell me, who was the guy who took you up to the ranch. You said your dad didn't like your going...

RN: Percy Sanborne.

LW: Percy Sanborne. So now what...

RN: He was one of the head guys at Kahua at that time. He was my dad's boss. And he used to run the O'ahu operation. And what they did, they took... I can remember till today what happened. My dad and I were coming to work one morning and Jimmy Pfleuger pulled up on the side of us at the traffic light in Koko Head. And told my dad, he said, hey, your boss died. My dad said what? He said your boss died last night. And I was thinking, who's his boss? It was Percy who died. So he died of a heart attack. And he wasn't very old. But when he died, my dad took his position. And you know we went on to do the same type of thing that he was doing, while working on running the ranch in Wailua, and then they had to run the slaughterhouse and run the sales department, too. So they were doing marketing of the cattle. So when we were brought up had this other guy was my dad's right hand man. This Peter Kama. He said the Wild West days were over. Because we used to always say we're going to go chase cattle. And he said no, we're not chasing cattle. He said we're gathering cattle. And we're putting the cattle in the pen. We don't run pounds off of them. We put it on. We don't take it off. .

LW: That's cause you don't want to scare them right? That makes the meat bad.

RN: Mm hmm. Makes the meat bad and like they said we run the pounds off of them. We put the pounds on, we don't take it off. Then when I went to driving we used to do everything. Deliver the meat. And when I was working up on the ranch on the Big Island, they had a little slaughterhouse on Kahua. And what they used to do is once a week they used to kill cattle for the stores in Kohala.

LW: For the stores in Kohala?

RN: Yeah. And what they used to call it was house meat. All the employees had meat every week. So we used to have to take one cow and cut it up for all the working guys. And deliver meat. After we kill them, we go down to Kohala and deliver to the stores and then come back and cut up the meat for the working guys. And there was no such thing as a band saw or anything else. It was a cleaver. It was primitive.

LW: What year would that be about?

RN: That would be about 1958... 59.

LW: That's hard work.

RN: Oh yeah, it is hard work. So Monte, when he was in school, his uncle... Atherton Richards owned the ranch. And Pono... Pono Von Holt... his dad owned Kahua. So it was Monte's uncle and Pono's dad who owned Kahua. Then when Pono's dad died, Pono's mom was the one who took over. And then I forgot what year it was... Monte and Pono took the ranch and divided it in half. Pono took one half and Monte took the other half. And what they did with the employees is they put all the old timers in one half, and the new guys in

another half and they just pulled names of who's going to work for who. And no employee lost anything. You know it's just who you're going to work for. And nobody... and both of them so nice... nobody lost any. When I was working for Kahua, I had four kids and I didn't pay one doctor bill. All four kids in the hospital, birth, all the way to when they graduated, I was under Kahua. And we had a hundred percent medical. So when you look at it today, that's a big help.

LW: Yeah. Yeah. Plus that beef. Did you still get a beef ration?

RN: Yeah. They had the beef ration until the IRS stepped in. And then, believe it or not, they had a beef ration, and the guys were living in the house and their house was only a hundred and twenty-five dollars a month. But what happened with that is, the IRS stepped in again, and that's considered pay, with the beef and the house. So they had to adjust the house to make it feasible. And they had to take away the meat and make it where... turn that into pay. They didn't have to turn it into pay, but they couldn't give the meat to us any more so in other words, just like what we did.

LW: Yeah.

RN: But we could buy meat from the company at a wholesale price, you know. But they teach you, You know we learned a lot working for the ranch.

LW: So when you were on the Big Island, what were you a part of? What crew were you on?

RN: We were everything. We had to do everything. From branding to AI (artificial insemination) breeding to driving trucks to fixing fence. You know everything because it's not like a union but this is what you're doing. You start fixing fence, fixing waterlines, moving cattle, branding and everything so, it's not that you have a special, specific job. You got to do what you got to do.

LW: How many of there were you?

RN: When I was working on Kahua, we had about... I think there was about fifteen of us cowboys. And...

LW: Fifteen men?

RN: Yeah.

LW: And then each of them had family?

RN: Each of them had family, yeah. Some of the boys who are in there, in the Hall of Fame, I worked with them there when I was young.

LW: Like which one?

RN: Johnny Kainoa... Kimo Ho'opai... Kimo Ho'opai is still working for Pono Holo Ranch. Johnny Kainoa, his son Godfrey is now what his dad used to do for Kahua. Godfrey was working for Kahua when he was a kid. In fact, he wasn't working for Kahua, he used to... what we used to do was you go with your dad and you do what he does. And then when he got out of school, he went to the military, and when he went to the military, when he came back, there was no opening at Kahua. So he went to work for Parker Ranch. And then when he was at Parker Ranch, and Parker Ranch decided they were going to close up... well not close up... they offered a package to the employees to retire. They gave them a fantastic retirement package, so I think about either eight or ten of the boys left. They took the retirement package and just walked away from it. Because it was something that you couldn't turn down. And then Godfrey went to Kahua. Kahua at the time was looking for somebody to run the ranch because Monte was kind of retiring. And Tim has his veterinarian business, so they need somebody on the ranch to run it. So Godfrey... what Godfrey is doing now, is what Godfrey's dad was doing. So in other words, it was like a family affair. He knew the ranch from when he was a small kid. And now he's back in there running the ranch where his father used to run it and his grandfather used to work there, too. So it was like a family run ranch, like my grandfather came here with my grandmother from Aberdeen, Scotland. And they tell us that they got in the first pure bred bulls for Parker Ranch. My grandfather used to work for Parker Ranch. And my dad...

LW: What kind of pure breed?

RN: Hereford breed.

LW: Hereford?

RN: Yeah.

LW: So who's your grandfather then? Oh, I've never heard of him. Which one is he then?

RN: My grandfather is... they used to call him Sandy. If you look at Dr. Bergen's first book that he wrote, there's a picture of a bull up in Makahalau. And there's a guy with a pipe. And I used to call it a stevedore cap, but it's a cap... like a baseball cap but it's not. And he used to smoke that pipe and wear that hat all the

time. But they came to Hawai'i on the Queen Mary. My grandma... my grandfather and grandmother. And when they left, my grandmother used to tell us stories about how they used to live up at Makahalau, and she used to cook homemade bread. And the Parker people... I forgot... one was John Parker... and Thelma Parker. And there was a manager there, his name was Hartwell Carter and he used to pass my grandmother's house where they were living, when they were moving cattle. And used to smell them cooking bread, so she used to invite them over to eat bread.

LW: So you were one of the early Scot families that came over...

RN: And they came from the Big Island to Honolulu on the boat. And my dad wanted to take them back to the Big Island to visit. They wouldn't go on the plane. Once they came to Honolulu, that was it. They never went back to the Big Island. So then my dad, before he went to Kahua, he came down here in Aina Haina and he worked for Hindcloth (phonetic) Dairy... it's now Meadow Gold. That was the Hindcloth (phonetic) Dairy. That dairy used to be owned by Robbie Hinds' family. They used to own the whole valley and all that land. And the last thing they just sold on this island, I think they don't own anything else... was the shopping center. The shopping center I think was just sold about a year ago. But where Robbie's working now is his family's operation.

LW: Where is he now?

RN: Robbie is at Deleco Ranch. That is owned by their family.

LW; Oh, no kidding.

RN: And Robbie was working for Parker Ranch and somebody else was running Deleco Ranch, but it was owned by his family. So now, he left Parker Ranch when the retirement came. He took the retirement, too. And he went to Parker Ranch... I mean to...

LW: Deleco.

RN: Deleco.

LW: That's here on O'ahu?

RN: No, no. Deleco is in Kahuku.

LW: Oh yeah?

RN: South Point.

LW: It sounds familiar.

RN: Yeah, it's in South Point.

LW: Yeah, yeah.

RN: It's right next to Kahuku Ranch.

LW: Okay so when do you leave the Big Island and come here?

RN: I left the Big Island. I was working for Kahua here, then I wanted to go work up there. So I went up there and I worked on the ranch. I left there about 19... 65 or 66. Then I came here, and for a little while I went to work for a construction company when the construction was booming. Then there was this guy who taught me how to drive heavy equipment and heavy trucks. He was this old man who used to work for Kahua for many, many... he worked for Kahua, I think it was about fifty years. And when I was a small boy I used to ride with him on the truck.

LW: What's his name?

RN: Steve Mokulehua.

LW: Moku... le...

RN: Mokulehua. My dad, when we used to go run the cattle from Wailua, from the pier to Wailua on the truck, he used to tell me go with him, so I helped him with the truck. So I used to ride with him all the time. And then what he did, he worked for them like I said about fifty years, I think. And what happened was one day he got into an accident. And he got very scared. And he was going up Kipapa Gulch and he got run off the road by another truck. And he was hanging over the side of the hill with a load of cattle and I came by with

the construction company that I was working for, and I saw the wreck. So I stopped and I knew who it was, So I asked my boss if we can go and help because we were working right up the hill. And the boss said oh, what's the matter. And I told him one of my dad's company trucks got into a wreck. I said can we go over there and help? He said oh yeah, we'll go help. So he brought a crane down to pick the truck up. Now the truck was loaded with cattle. Picked the truck up, put it back on the highway and he told me... he said you go hook up to the truck there. You know what to do so take it. So I took the truck down to the feedlot, dropped it off, dropped the trailer off. The truck was a total wreck. And then I took it back, parked the trailer and then I was working for the company. So my dad asked, he told me... we need a driver. Come back and handle the cattle because we have nobody to drive. So I said well okay, I got a job but I'll do it. So I went back to Kahua and worked for them. When I went back to work for them...

LW: So what's different about hauling cattle than hauling other things?

RN: Well cattle, when you haul cattle, it's like hauling a bus with everybody standing up.

LW: Oh... oh... (Laughs.)

RN: You know nobody's sitting down. Everybody's standing up. So the load moves a lot. It's like hauling a load of water. You know like you take the water and shake it. Take a load of cattle, they move around like that, so the truck is constantly on the move. If you slam on your brakes, everything going to fall down. They can get hurt. That's why I used to get a lot of... you know when you're young you drive, you drive kind of differently, yuh? And you learn how to apply your brakes so that the animals don't get hurt. Because what we were taught is if one falls down, and the other steps on him, he either dies, or he's going to get badly bruised. And when he gets badly bruised, when you see it in the slaughterhouse, where I ended up working for Kahua, you're going to see where the whole carcass is bruised. And that's a big loss for the rancher because they got to really trim into it and all the prime cuts get damaged and stuff like that. So you got to be careful, you know what I mean? We've had cattle die because it was actually the driver's fault. You know, they're not driving carefully and they slam on the brakes and take a rough turn or something like that and the cattle go down. And they die. So Peter Kama, who was my dad's number two man, when I was hauling cattle from the feedlot to the slaughterhouse and then after they kill them I have to haul the carcasses from the slaughterhouse to the plant. What he did was every time an animal would get hung up, where they're stuck in the gate or something like that, I used to make sure that I know the identification of the animal so that I can tell him that I wasn't the cause of it. Because it got stuck in the gate. And I always used to remember what side they got stuck on so that I can tell them that I know what animal it is and who it belongs to and stuff like that, so I don't get the blame because other than that...

LW: So what did they do if they died? Did they dock you for it? Did they take it out of your pay?

RN: No, no. They didn't take it out of your pay but you got scolded. Because what happens is the rancher is the one that takes the beating now after all the money he put into the cattle and you roughed it up. And

when it comes to the slaughterhouse, that's nobody's fault but yours so you used to get scolding for causing the problem.

LW: It's a serious business.

RN: Yeah. It's serious enough that you don't want that to happen. So that makes you better, more conscious of how you handle the cattle, you know.

LW: So you got to kind of learn how to drive a truck with a lot of cattle?

RN: Yeah, yeah.

LW: What about when they put them on Matson and stuff?

RN: It's the same way. We used to put them on a plane. You see Matson takes five days from here to the mainland. Now I don't know if they're still doing it but they went from Hilo, and it takes now four days. But I don't know if they're still doing that. I don't know if they're still doing that because sometimes the boat didn't go to Hilo, it went straight out of here. So the plane takes five hours. So in other words, the cattle would leave the Big Island on Monday, get here on Tuesday, on Wednesday we'd fly them out.

LW: But can you... how many can you get on a plane?

RN: We used to put about a hundred and fifty head. What it was, they shipped them, Well actually it depended on the weight. Because the plane would carry fifty thousand pounds of cattle. I would take two trailers to the plane and being Hawai'i law is fifty... eighty thousand pounds overall. So you got fifty thousand pounds of cattle. So it would take me two trucks to take the cattle to the plane. When it gets to the mainland, one truck can haul a fifty thousand pound across the mainland.

LW: No kidding.

RN: And the cattle used to go from... anywhere from Texas, to Oklahoma, to where ever they wanted to put the cattle. To California. The cattle would leave the Big Island the same day. The cattle would go on the plane and would be on the mainland before the cattle that goes on the boat leaves Hawai'i. So it's high. It costs a lot more, but the cattle don't get as stressed. Because on that plane, I rode the plane with the cattle, the plane in the cabin where the cattle are at, temperature is about sixty-five degrees so it's nice and cool. And

they're in there only for five hours. So we used to load them in the morning. Here the plane leaves at noon. And the plane would be in there about midnight. So by the next morning, the cattle are already on the ranch. So it was real... I mean when you look at them. Coming on the boat and coming on the plane is like day and night. And losing weight, it's a very small percentage on the plane. Compared to the boat.

LW: Who all was sending on the plane? Kahua sent on the plane?

RN: Kahua sent on the plane. Ulupalakua sent on the plane. Parker Ranch sent on the plane. One year I flew ten thousand head of cattle for Parker Ranch on the plane in one year.

LW: That's a lot. That's every day, just about.

RN: We were doing it three times a week. We were doing it Tuesday... no... we were doing it Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. The boat gets in here Tuesday. They rest overnight. And we go Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. So a hundred, about a hundred and fifty head every day.

LW: That's how many head go on the boat?

RN: Oh on the boat what they usually do is they bring a double deck cattle trailer. And then the cattle weigh about maybe four hundred pounds. They usually put about eighty, eighty-five head. So it takes about...

LW: One trailer.

RN: One trailer, yeah. Two stories. So when they get here, I take them to the feedlot, they feed them over there. Just a rest station. From there the next morning I bring them out and I take out fifty thousand pounds, so it might be a hundred and fifty head. To take enough to the plane. So long I got fifty thousand pounds. So it'll take maybe... when they bring in the cattle trailer sometimes they bring in three. So I'll take out one and a half loads. You know to make the fifty thousand pounds. It just depends on what size the cattle are. Sometimes the cattle used to be about five hundred pounds. Some were four fifty. Some were a lot heavier.

LW: So they come on Young Brothers over here and then...

RN: Yeah. They used to come on young Brothers, yeah.

LW: And then you took out some and put them on the plane and the others go onto Matson?

RN: Yeah.

LW: Oh, I see.

RN: Then on to Matson on the boat. But the people on the mainland, you know what they did one time as a test, they brought the cattle here. On the Big Island they just what they call gate cut them. They had five hundred head and two hundred and fifty... that's it. That goes on the plane. Not selecting anything. Two hundred and fifty go on the boat. When it got to the mainland, the guy on the mainland said the comparison was day and night. You know, comparing the two hundred fifty came on the plane, versus the two hundred fifty came on the boat. He said it was like day and night. But they did a lot of research on the boat and they claim now it's a lot better. But like I said, since 911, everything has skyrocketed. Both boat and plane. They don't ship any cattle by plane any more. They do, but it costs, Sonot as much as they used to. Very little. When they closed Haleakala Dairy on Maui, they contracted me to haul all the dairy cattle from the pier... I mean from the plane to Meadow Gold Dairy. And what they did is they had a plane like Aloha Airlines they brought in from the mainland, and that plane would fly some from Maui to here and I'd pick them up. They would milk the cows, fly them from Maui to here and I'd pick them up, take them to Moanalalo Dairy, and they would milk the cows again. Because that's the period of time the cows have to be milked again. If they were to be put on the boat, and they couldn't milk, they'd ruin the cows.

LW: Yeah, they'd be sick by the time they'd come...

RN: Yeah, they'd have milk fever. And that's how it was. And now I still play around a little bit. To help some of the smaller people that are on this island.

LW: Haul their cattle around?

RN: Yeah. I sold all my big rigs. I have twenty-four foot horse trailer that I use, and I help some of the small people.

LW: What... haul freezer beef around in?

RN: Yeah.

LW: Or did you have to feed and water at all when you haul them around or...?

RN: Yeah. You see when you... well, Hawai'i has what you call a Railroad Act. Which the Railroad Act says the cattle have to be rested every twenty-four hours... each shipment. That's why when they went to shipping by boat, to the mainland, the animal rights people kind of went down hard on them. But they don't understand that there's a stock tender in the trailer. The cattle don't get out and walk around, but there's a stock tender on the boat. His job is to feed and water and clean the pen. Clean the trailers up. And the law is... see those trailers that go on the ocean... once they get ten miles out at sea... they're allowed to wash the trailers down and all the manure goes into the ocean. They can't do it in the harbor. So all that has to be contained in the trailer until they get out to sea. So when they get out to sea, they wash it out with salt water, and they wash all the trailers out so that the ammonia doesn't burn their eyes. There's a lot of ammonia in the trailer. So once they wash it out they have pipes that they hook to the trailer and it goes overboard, and it has to be secured on the side of the boat, and once they get to California, they have to pull in the hoses within so many miles of that port. They got to disconnect everything. And they got to disconnect the water and all that. So that on the plane, they have a pen that is ten by ten, and it's only about five feet high but there's a wire net that we put over the top, and it goes into the plane with about... sometimes you know... depending on the size of the cattle, sometimes eight, sometimes ten, sometimes fifteen. If they're smaller you can put more. Sometimes if they're big you got to put less. And they put sawdust on the ground so it absorbs the moisture. And those cattle they never had the problem where the eye gets burned from the ammonia. They never did have that problem. But on the boat they did. The ammonia burns at five days. So the cattle. they kind of get it. And they get like anybody else, they get seasick. If they're in a rough trip they get seasick, they won't eat, they won't drink water so the stock tender has to be like a doctor. He's got to be able to either get in there and give them a shot or something. Otherwise they'll get there dead, huh. And they've had some mean wrecks. Where something happened. The stock tender didn't take care of the cattle and the cattle died. They go blind and stuff like that. The rancher's the one takes it because the stock tender didn't do his job right.

LW: Who gets it?

RN: The rancher. Yeah, because...

LW: Because he hired the stock tender?

RN: No. The stock tender is... there used to be Kennedy and Peter Cray. Pacific Livestock. And there was another guy they used to call Elmer Rabin. He started it. So now there's several. Some of the ranchers do their own. They have their own trailers and they pay their own stock tender. Or they put their own cowboys on the boat and let them go. That way they know they're doing the job right. Sometimes on the boat, it just depends who the stock tender is. And if they get rough water, the stock tender takes a beating. I mean I've seen them come off of that boat green. Go see... go see. There was one guy, he was so sick, he had tapes all around him. You know that... what is that... motion sickness tapes. He had tapes all over him. When I looked at him I said wow, what's the matter with you? He said hoo man, we had a rough trip. So no kidding. Yeah, we have swells twenty-five, thirty feet swells. He said one day we couldn't even go out on deck. So you know, they do have rough things. I know once when we were flying the cattle, I was on the plane and... the

747... the whole belly is where the where the cargo is. So it's not only cattle. It's cargo and cattle. And we were up there. We went by the captain. You can see where the captain is and we were all sitting down. You don't have to buckle up. The chair can recline. You don't have to worry about bumping somebody. So we were all up there sitting down. And this plane hit a hole. While in... it hit an air pocket, yuh. I swear, we dropped fifteen feet. And I jumped and I looked and the captain was over there. I looked at him, he was sleeping. And I said, hey... we're going to crash. There was a red light started flashing. I think what's going on? We're going to die. So he just reaches up and he didn't get up. He just reaches up, push the button and the light went off. So I'm over there thinking oh, my God, you know we're not going to make it, wherever we're headed for. So he gets up. After a little while he gets up and he comes in the back. So he looks at me and he... I must have been white. He looks at me and he says you scared? So I said yeah. He said don't worry, He said we just hit an air pocket. He said go down there and check how the cattle are. So I went. I never tell the guy. So I went down to check how the cattle were. I said they were fine. But he didn't tell me what the temperature was down there. He had the temperature down cold. And I went down and I walked the whole airplane. Because you got to walk down, come around, come back. It was about thirty-four degrees. I went down there and I walked around, I said the cattle are fine. Next time tell me how cold it is down there. He said why? Is it too cold? I said it's no, it's perfect for the cattle but man, I was freezing.

LW: They don't mind the bad cold?

RN: No, because you know they're all bunched up like that. It actually helps them because, you know their body heat. It keeps them a lot cooler. So he was over there and he says, they all right? Yeah, they're fine. But next time tell me about it. So he told me, he said that's not bad. So I said why isn't it bad? He said watch. So we were flying into LA and when you look at LA you can see all the lights. So he said you see all these lights? Yeah. He said that's why I can find LA. He said now when we go back, I got to look for that little island in the middle of the water and that's hard to find. So I said oh, thanks. He said not as much lights as here. You know that was real interesting how it was. (Mr. Napier sighs deeply.) Good old days!

LW: So when were you (inaudible)...?

RN: I worked. When I went back to work for Kahua, I worked there for twenty-five years. And it's when they sold the company, is when I went into my own business, my own hauling business. Because they just sold the slaughterhouse. Now Kahua has knocked it down. Well they don't even own it but it's under their name. One of the other workers took over the sales office and what he does is he brings in mainland meat and whoever has local meat that wants him to sell it. He sells it for them. So there's still a Kahua name here, but no, it's not owned by Kahua. It's just the name is so popular. That the name will help you sell whatever you got to sell.

LW: So what do you think a good cattleman is?

RN: What do I think a good cattleman is? Well you know like a lot of the people, a lot of the ranchers here today. You can take certain rancher's cattle, put them into the feed lot. Feed them the same feed, and some of those cattle will gain and grade in ninety days. You can take the other guy's cattle, put it in the feed lot, and

it'll take a hundred and fifty days for the cattle to come up to the quality or they won't come up at all. Because the genetics, the cattle just don't have it in them. They just look good, but the inside of them is what they used to call a blank. There's nothing, no marbling, no confirmation. I mean it's like no care was given to them when they were small. But some of them is it's just genetics. The cattle are just not the type of cattle for that type of... what they got to do with it.

LW: What are those the old ranchers who have really good cattle or...

RN: No. No.

LW: Is it just the person managing the cattle?

RN: Sometimes it's the manager. Sometimes it just that's what they raised. And they're not going to change. They're not going to change and well, if you look at Parker Ranch in the olden days, Parker Ranch was all Hereford cattle. There was no Angus cattle. It was all Hereford. Today they have every breed you can think of. And they were noted to have cross bred cattle. To me the cross bred cattle is just a better breed. Like Kahua has Angus cross bred Herefords. They have Charolais. Now they have this Wagyu, that is like a Japanese breed. That is supposed to do good on grass. And they grow and their quality of meat on grass does just as good as something in grade. So that is the whole ball of wax. When you look at it, it's how these cattle are raised. Sometimes it's like I said... sometimes it's the rancher... and sometimes it's they just don't want to put more money into them so that's what they're going to raise. You know, they're not going to raise anything different. Some of them will and some of them won't.

LW: So the good cattleman is the one whose beef is good in ninety days?

RN: Well that's why a lot of the cattlemen that... for the cattleman... the guy who feeds the cattle, yeah. Because it'll turn over faster. A lot of the cattle ranchers here, if you have hundred head of cattle here to be sold at five hundred pounds, and then you have another hundred head of cattle here to be sold at five hundred pounds, and a cattle rancher will look. He says well, just by looking at the cattle, this is how I get top dollar. This guy won't. And it's because the buyer knows the quality of the cattle just by looking even if they have the same weight, He'll know that well these cattle will do better than these cattle would.

LW: Really?

RN: Yeah.

LW: Well, they already look better at that size or...?

RN: Yeah. When you look at it. When I went with a friend of mine to the mainland and we went to a sale yard. And they sold five thousand head of cattle in a day. And it was like Aloha Stadium. It was a big, It was a big sale yard. They had a big video screen up there and the cattle were coming through the sale yard and they bring them in. You're looking at the video screen and the paper shows that there's three hundred head of these cattle to be sold but they bring some of them out, right out in the front of you. And the guy's over there looking. He looks at the video, he looks at the cattle that's right there and they start the bidding off. This guy turns around and he yells out. He says I'll take them all, Take out the dogs. And I'm looking at it. Why is he talking about dogs? I don't see any dogs in there but when you look up at the video, anything that's in there that he doesn't like is what they consider the dogs. Because sometimes they'll throw some of these scrubby cattle in and he's so fast, he picked it up right there. Says he'll take everything, take out the dogs. So in other words the auctioneer will know that maybe out of the whole five hundred head maybe there's fifty dogs. Take out the fifty dogs, he'll take everything. So when the sale is over, what they do is they take all these dogs they call them. Bring them back in the sale yard and usually the small... you know the ropers or somebody will come and buy them, you know. So that's how they get rid of the dogs.

LW: Oh, wow. But they're practiced enough to know that.

RN: Yeah, oh yeah. Them cattle buyers on the mainland, they're sharp. They're sharp.

LW: So the rancher is trying to produce a calf... a beef that's good enough to sell and...

RN: Bring them the highest dollar on the table. You know, in other words, when you go through the whole process of breeding them and raising them, and getting them finished, that's why a lot of the ranchers won't go to the end. They'll get rid of them when they get off of the ranch. But yet when you look at it, the guys who buys the cattle from the rancher, and follows them through to the feed lot, the next time he comes back to buy cattle, and knows his returns wasn't as great, he won't give the same price. Because he knows that those cattle don't do good. I don't care if you keep them on feed for a hundred and fifty days, versus the other guy's cattle who stays on feed for ninety days and will do good. So he'll... you'll probably get the top dollar on the first go round but on the second go round, the price might change. You know, because he'll say oh that...

LW: The only way you'll keep getting top dollar...

RN: Is top quality. It's just like when we were running the slaughterhouse. You take a cow hide that you think oh, it's a cow hide. It's leather. But when you process that hide, you cause what they call a hair slip. And you know cows have hair on them, right. So the process is before in the olden days was you put the hide hair down into salt. And then when you come to the end, you got to fold it so the hide has to stay like a mold. The whole thing. We used to put five hundred hides in one container so we used to put five hundred hides in one day. And every day you got to add to it until you come to five hundred and you stop that pile and you start another pile. But if you don't do it properly, it's what they call a hair slip. And you don't realize it till the guy

sends it back to you. What happens is when the hair slips, if you take a piece of leather and you look at it, it looks all smooth. When the hair slips, that one section won't come out smooth. Comes out like it has measles. And when you first start working on the stuff and you don't know nothing about it, you figure salt is salt, just throw it on. But it's not that way. It has to be all laid out flat, you cannot have a crease in it, So all that stuff. When you're working at it, that goes back to the slaughter house because now when he sells the hides, if there's hair slips, he gets less money for the hide. So you got to make sure you take care of it. Now, that was the olden days. Now what they do is they put it in a big... like a cement mixer. And they add solution to it. But that's the same thing. It has to run for eight hours. Then the mixer has to run for eight hours, then when you first start the process, you put it in there and it runs just with water. That's to wash the hides. And when you're all through for the day, you drain all the water out. And you add salt and you add some other... the hide curing chemical. Then it runs for two hours. Then it runs fifteen minutes every hour until the next day. Then the next day, you take it out and you put it on what they call drying horses. And it just sits there and dries overnight. When it stays there for so many days, then you have to scale it and grade it, and it's graded by weight. After you're all through with that, then it goes. They ship it off to Japan.

LW: So that's just what you do with the hide.

RN: Yeah.

LW: What do you do with the bones and...?

RN: The bones go to the rendering plant down at Campbell Industrial Park. But you see, I don't know if you're familiar with this. They used to make meat and bone meal and if an animal is condemned at the slaughterhouse, it's condemned for a reason. It has a disease. And if you don't know now, it's not legal to take a byproduct and feed it back to an animal. You can't do that any more. They used to... they used to make meat and bone meal and take it and feed it back to cattle. But now you can't do it. You can't feed it back to any animal. Because of the fact that the animal that was condemned, may have had a disease and what you're doing is cooking a disease and putting it right back in another animal so they won't let you do that any more. But they still take it to the rendering plant and they... I think what they're doing with it now is going to bio fuels. They're trying to make bio fuels out of it. Because there's a lot of oil that comes out of it.

LW: But you know, that means it's used, yuh.

RN: Yeah, it's used.

LW: Better. Like when they bury it, I know sometimes on the Big Island they used to bury it. Do they do that here?

RN: Well they used to do it but now there's no burying. You can't bury nothing here now.

LW: No, no.

RN: I mean there's no burying of any animals. I know they bury... at one time they had that outbreak of heptachlor and all the meat that was killed prior to that heptachlor, we had to haul it to the landfill. And they buried it right there with the inspector standing right there. They made sure there was a hole there and they buried it.

LW: What was it that they had?

RN: Heptachlor. It was from the pineapple. All the dairy... a whole bunch of dairies, they lost big money. Something to do with a chemical they've sprayed on the pineapple. And they were feeding the pineapple skins back to the cattle. And they found it in the fat residue. And what they did is they went back and traced it back to the pineapple, and they stopped all dairy cattle slaughtering for... I think it was almost a year. So all the dairymen had to just keep feeding the cattle. They couldn't sell it. It didn't affect the milk, but it affected the meat.

LW: So the quarters nowadays, we don't slaughter them.

RN: Well there is a slaughterhouse here on the island. But ever since I left there, when I left there we were killing about... when we were in full swing, after Hawai'i Meat closed up, we were killing almost a hundred and fifty head a day. Our normal kill was fifty head. Our (inaudible) normal kill was a hundred head. But when they closed the plant, we tried to take up the slack... take up all what they had. So we were going long shifts.

LW: That's a lot.

RN: And we did all of this and then when Kahua closed it up we were killing fifty head a day. Right now, they're killing about maybe fifty head a month. In the slaughterhouse. They're killing pigs, but still not as much as they used to. We used to kill pigs on a Friday night. Used to kill about a hundred and fifty pigs and now they're killing about eighty on a Friday. And what I look at it is we went into this thing we call Island Fresh. And Island Fresh, I would back them up a hundred percent. Because I like to back up the island industry. But with the hog industry, to me it's a different situation. Now this pig, this pig came from the mainland. Yesterday.

LW: Really?

RN: And it's...

LW: They're shipping the pig over.

RN: Yeah. They ship about four hundred pigs a week. We have a lot of pig farmers here. But they sell their pigs in the back yard for cash. They bring in the pigs from the mainland and they sell it to the slaughterhouse. And they call that Island Fresh. Now when you go to the store... no, this is funny because you go to the store... and I like pig's feet. And I went to the store one day and the lady doesn't know who I am or where I came from or whatever. So I asked her. She works for Times Super Market and I asked her, I said may I ask you something? Yeah. She's working in the meat department. So I said, that's pig's feet? Yeah. That's nine dollars. Yeah. Says Island Fresh. This pig's feet right here is three dollars. How come? That's two pig's feet, both of them. Oh that's mainland. So I turned around and I looked at her and I said well, this pig here came from the mainland last night and he died here. Yesterday. And I hauled him, so that's why I know where he came from. So I'm not going to pay you six dollars more for the same rate. Just because this pig died on the mainland and this pig died locally. I cannot see that. That's right, huh? Now with the cattle industry it's different. There's a lot of cattle that's raised here, like on the Big Island, Tim sells a lot of cattle locally. That's worth it. You know what I mean? But not when the pork industry does that.

PAUSE TO CHECK RECORDER

RN: Cost of living and some... cost me more money but yeah, we gave the boys a raise. So now it's going to cost us more money so we pass it on to the consumers. You know. So if we were to go back and say okay, let's start all over again. I think we might survive. Because I was telling Tim, I said I think some of the ranchers aren't going to make it here. I saw in the paper the other day two ranches on the Big Island up for sale.

LW: Which two ranches?

NR: One was Kealakekua and I can't remember... the other ranch is a new ranch. I don't know who it was but Kealakekua used to be owned by Sherwood Greenwell, and I think he passed away. I'm not sure. But Kealakekua Ranch was one of the partners of Kahua in that sales office. And Sherwood... if Sherwood passed away, I don't know who's running the ranch. Or if anybody is running the ranch now. But I told Tim one day, I said Tim, I hope I don't see Kahua turn into a golf course. He said, not in my day, it won't. I said well, I hope not. I said because that is a... you ever been up there?

LW: Yeah.

RN: That is a beautiful ranch. And to me that's...

LW: Well we went to the restaurant.

RN: Oh, behind the houses?

LW: Yeah, it's way high, high. Big one. New one.

RN: Yeah. There behind the houses. Before you get to the camp you go up on the top. Yeah, right there. Right by the line of trees.

LW: Well here's the question I've been asking everybody. You know what do you want the cattlemen of the future to know from your experience.

RN: What do they want the cattlemen of the future...

LW: What do you want your young kids...

RN: Oh, my kids?

LW: Yeah.

RN: Three of them are in agriculture. My fourth one is a school teacher. My... not my fourth one. My second one is a school teacher, but all three of the oldest and the two youngest are in agriculture but not livestock. They're raising corn. They work for Pioneer. And...

LW: Let's say they were raising cattle. What would you want them to know?

RN: Well they... my oldest boy is working for Pioneer. And he wants his kids to go into what he did, which was raising 4-H cattle. You see they were all in 4-H. All of my kids was in 4-H. And what my dad did with them was believe it or not they got four, five dollars a pound for the animal when they sold it. Which is a real good price. And what happened was my dad, They used to say hoo, the ranchers making good money. You know... four, five thousand dollars for one animal, they making good money. I want to be a rancher. So my father used to turn around and say, when that check comes for those kids, you give it to me. So I said huh? He said yeah, you give it to me. I'm going to show them what the rancher really gets. So when the cattle get

slaughtered and they get graded, if they grade out to choice, if choice was a dollar a pound, that goes back to the rancher. That's what they got. So in other words, they get paid on the dress weight. Not the live weight. See, the rancher gets paid on the dress weight when they take it through the slaughterhouse. And the 4-Her gets paid on the live weight. But they don't care what it grades out. See because if it grades out to be standard or commercial, or utility, a real junk grade, the price drops down. But he still got his five dollars a pound. So my dad turned around and he said okay, when they're all through grading it and we'll look at the grade and we'll look at the cattle price, that's what they're going to get. But he used to take the money and says, here let's put this in a savings account. So they buy their other steer, they buy their other feed, and they were self-sufficient after that. After that they self-support themselves. And my two oldest kids, through 4-H put themselves through private school. And they paid their own schooling. And then when they were through with that, when they were through with the auction, if they made a good price, they used to go and buy another animal from another child, which was maybe a pig or something like that, to help the other kid out. That's what my oldest boy wants his kids to learn. To raise their own animals.

LW: Oh, sure, sure. You mean they really put themselves through private high school...

RN: Yeah, my two oldest.

LW: ...by raising cattle. Wasn't that a great lesson.

RN: What happened is, what I told them was when you get the animal you always write a letter to the buyer. Introduce yourself. I mean the buyers that we had was a lot of my friends own companies and they know my kids. They come over there and visit the kids and the kids talk. So this trucking company, Richard Lee Trucking, used to call my son and say, oh, what kind of cow you raising this year? It's not a cow, it's a steer but... so the boy used to show him a picture and send him cards and say here, I'm raising this, and he used to come to the sale and said where's my cow? I'm going buy my cow. So he'd buy it every year. And then he'd buy my daughter's every year. And he'd just keep on. You know the relationship between them just kept going until today. He's still around and my kids are all working. And he called me the other day and said how's all your kids? They all good? He said any one of them need a job I'd hire them. He said, because they all work hard. You know what I mean. So in other words they know what hard work is all about. And working on a ranch, like they know, because when I was working if something happened... broken waterline, broken fence or whatever... I don't care if you're going to a wedding, you go to go fix that first. Because they not going have water. It's not like a vegetable farmer. Well that's all right. They don't have water. It'll rain tonight. You know, cattle don't have water, they got nothing to drink.

LW: Yeah. They could die.

RN: You got to make sure they have water. Tim was telling me when that earthquake hit the Big Island. They broke a lot of waterlines.

LW: They what?

RN: They broke a lot of waterlines.

LW: Oh yeah, during the earthquake.

RN: Right. So a lot of the major waterlines broke. They had to go fix it because... and you know that was major repairs. And he said at one time the cattle were out of water for a day and a half. And when they're out of water like that you got to get them water or else you're in trouble. And Kahua has been like that because they get their water supplies from the Kohala Ditch. You know and if the water runs down and not enough rain, you're in trouble. Everybody on the Big Island in trouble. It's not where when you can turn on the faucet and it comes back. Doesn't come back.

LW: Yeah. Yeah, so that 4-H, their history with 4-H was kind of...

RN: I was a 4-H leader for thirty-five years.

LW: Yeah. Now I can see why you did that. It's really valuable, huh?

RN: When I was in 4-H myself, my dad and Peter Kama was the first livestock committee on O'ahu. And 4-H is actually run by the University of Hawai'i. Was run by the University of Hawai'i, and what they do was like set up the groundwork. Okay. And then you come in and the bank used to lend money, like a little business. Lend you money to buy your steer. When you get your steer sold, you go back to the bank, the bank has the check from the buyer. You pay for your steer and then you get your money back. And next year you do the same thing. If you need the bank loan. If you don't need the bank loan, well you can buy your steer outright. But the Bank of Hawai'i used to like sponsor the kid. The kid goes in there as a child and borrows the money and when the check comes for the animal, it goes to the bank. And then you get paid. That's how it was when I was in 4-H. Yeah.

LW: Yeah. It's kind of like a business transaction, though, right?

RN: Yeah. And then like I said, when it was sold in auction, that money goes to the bank. You go to the bank and say okay, I sold my steer. They know how much you sold it for, they know how much you owe them, they take it out and you get the change.

LW: So you learned words cattlemanship, you learned banking, you learned business, you learned to work hard.

RN: Yeah, I was working for Kahua when I was twelve years old. Believe it or not when I first started I wasn't getting paid. I just had to go to work. My dad said you got to go to work. And I was thinking, I'm going to work? But I don't have a paper like everybody else does, a paycheck. But I don't get a paycheck. But I had to go to work. It was good, but you know even now...

LW: Yeah, keep you out of trouble, right?

RN: Right. Keep us out of trouble, that's for darn sure. We didn't get in trouble.

LW: So you would want the future cattlemen to be involved in 4-H and learn...

RN: Well it's the whole industry as a whole, right, when you look at it? The 4-H. And you know they talk about this environment. I mean if we keep taking good ag land and turning it into houses, whatever's going to happen? We no care what we had before here. We had tourism, wasn't our number one industry. We had pineapple, we had sugar. We had cattle ranching. If you think of the number of the dairy industry... we have no dairy industry now. We have no chickens. We have a hog industry. Our tourism is in trouble. What are we going to have pretty soon? They're going to come here and look at houses. That's all. I mean the politicians have to wake up. You know they're taking ag land that's on this island and rezoning it to be residential and pretty soon, where's our food going to come from? We're going to pay for everything to come in here. Right now we're paying for milk. As soon as the milk... last dairy closed up the milk came almost a dollar a gallon on the stores here. Compared to on the mainland. My niece tells me in the mainland is three dollars a gallon of milk. I said over here it's five. The milk comes from the mainland. Kind of it doesn't make sense to me.

LW: I know, really. It's kind of crazy.

RN: Right. I remember when my dad... this was back in... hoo, I think it was 1963... '63 or before that. Safeway wasn't a local store. And my dad and this Peter Kama... you know they were trying to sell beef to all the different stores and if Hawai'i was to keep all their beef here, every animal that's raised, they still cannot supply everybody. But the price is too high. You know what I'm saying. So they got to ship it out. Now it comes back here in a box. But if every piece of meat that was raised here was consumed here, we wouldn't have to worry about it. But now it goes out to the mainland, comes back in a box. So when you look at it, all the industry, if we were to keep it here, I think it'd be a lot better for everybody. When Safeway started here, my dad and Peter Kama went to ask for some of their business. And the guy says no. We bring our own meat in from the mainland. So they went back and they said that's all right. Wait for the shipping strike. We'll fix them. So about a year later there was a shipping strike. And they ran out of meat. So they went over to my dad and Peter Kama and says hey, we need some meat. My dad and them says well, we have some but it's not available because we have to take care of our customers. We asked you folks for a percentage of your

sales and you guys said no. So right now we cannot supply you with anything. Oh, we'll make a contract with you guys. We'll take a percentage of it. He said no. He said when the strike is over we'll talk about it. So they went back to the office and kind of laughed it out. They said good, now they don't have meat. Now they know where we live. We live on an island. They say they want to bring in the meat, they can fly it in. But we're not giving them no meat. Nobody would give them. Hawai'i Meat wouldn't give them and Kahua wouldn't give them, because they knew they'd take care of the local stores that were taking care of them, you know. That's what happened. But people... you know... take care of me and I'll take care of you.

LW: You got to do that, though, in the islands, yuh?

RN: Yeah. Yeah. Well I can see buying... you know there's so many companies now that's closing up. And it's unreal. It's not only in Hawai'i. It's all over the place that's closing. And I saw in Japan. There was one time when we had cattle in the feedlot that were raised to go to Japan. And believe it or not they came in here with a boat that was all white, the whole inside of the boat was white. Them cattle had to be transported from the pier... I mean from the feedlot... to the quarantine station. Kept on the concrete floor for so many hours. Trucks had to be disinfected. Then hauled from the quarantine station to the boat. And those trucks could not be used for anything else other than that until the thing was over. So in other words they didn't want no disease. So the trucks had to be disinfected, the cattle be loaded and off to Japan. And that's what happened one time. That one time only. That was the end of it. But inside that boat, when we went and saw that boat, the inside was white. Walls, everything white. Looked like a hospital. When I looked at it, wow. I mean I can never... I've never seen a boat that looked like a hospital inside. (Laughs.) You know how they are in Japan. They said beef is very expensive in Japan. A friend of my dad's went to Japan for something. When he came back he told my dad, and he says hoo, man... we went for a steak dinner and he says lucky I didn't grab the bill. My dad says why, he says the bill was twenty-one hundred dollars. He said was only four of us. He said, Holy Mackerel, what you guys ate? He said we had steak. Yeah, it's expensive... very expensive.

END OF TAPE.