

Interview #3 with Yutaka Kimura 7/23/96 Side A

CL: So you know what I think I'd like to do first, I just have a couple of small questions to ask you and then we'll go talk about this last one. When I called you on the phone we talked about the house at Keamoku and you said that you knew about it being moved.

YK: All of Keamoku cottage there I don't know what they're built but it's a very good lumber, old side lumber and the paint was very good and the roof not rust so, you see I had, we needed cottage for the Buddhist church which that land was given by Richard Smart and I talked to Richard's mother like to have any old building on Parker Ranch that they doesn't use, if you can let us have our make a cottage for our reverend. We'd like to have our reverends live here. Oh he says, you can have that Keamoku house providing you do all the work. We not going broke it down or haul it for you. You can get your helpers to tear down or haul it down. Can do whatever you like he say cause just go up there and do what you like. So I had a gang Buddhist people went help. They were all (?) trucks and all. We haul em and well first they got tear em down, second day we load em all down. And we built a cottage is up there in Buddhist church.

CL: So you took it all apart and you put it back together.

YK: Yeah. But not the same way, little different. And that was, you asked me what time. Now I was looking. The time we had a dedication opening of that cottage, I was in Australia at that time. And that date was, I cannot give you the date, month. The year was 1972 I think. And then there was a, I think maybe you like know the children's (?) there. That was taken (?) a little after. Another man who took charge of Keamoku, he was a foreman, Kanihu...

CL: Same as Sonny Kaniho or different?

YK: Willie Kaniho eh, the father. He teared down, I don't know where they took that, that was not wrothwhile already. You know was who old shed, 1 X 12 yeah, it's not made very nicely. He took it down. I don't know where he took that building. Not used for any place on the ranch, I don't know, some where.

CL: Oh was Sonny's father who did that.

YK: Um hum.

CL: And I heard there was a third building down there. I heard there was a bigger house and a smaller cottage.

YK: Yeah, a working man was there. That was a real original Keamoku house. That I don't know, I was already retired. I don't where that building went. That's a real old building. One single

man used to stay there. I'm not sure who was. You know all those places had foreman you know. Some place changed the managers, no but this all foremans.

CL: Should say foreman instead of manager.

YK: There's too many. Only one manager.

CL: The other thing I wanted to ask you was a little bit of stuff about Waiki'i. In terms of the job that Alex Bell had up there. He was a foreman.

YK: That's right.

CL: What did you call him. What kind of foreman did you call him.

YK: Foreman of Waiki'i station. He took care of all the men in the job in the morning. He's the boss over there.

CL: Cause you were a foreman of Waiki'i area too right?

YK: I'm on the cattle, only the cattle.

CL: So you called him foreman of Waiki'i but you were the cattle foreman.

YK: Yeah. Only I needed help I ask him for help. He let me have one or two men too when I have to do something. And he helped me too cause he likes that cowboy work.

CL: That's a Hawaiian family yeah? Bell.

YK: Bell is has little Hawaiian but not all. I think one fourth Hawaiian, not pure Hawaiian.

CL: So do you know when he became foreman up there?

YK: Well he went go work there from young days, not foreman, he's was working under the other foremans. But then before he came foreman, let's see, before him was a Russian boy. His parents was working Waiki'i. The son was very good fella. I think the manager of the ranch put him as a foreman of Waiki'i. He married one local girl, Hawaiian girl.

CL: That'd be Elarionoff.

YK: Elarionoff. And his son is here now. His son's running for councilman I think. Then after him was Vrendenberg, Elarionoff. I wonder if Tom Bell was there for a while. That's what forgot about.

CL: I think I heard that.

YK: Tom Bell eh?

CL: I think I heard that. Not from somebody on this side but

YK: He moved

CL: Moved over to Puu 'o'o after that.

YK: He moved way over Ka'u. But he died over there. And after that, Alex Bell.

CL: So they must be related, Tom Bell and Alex Bell I guess.

YK: Yeah. They're related. Alex Bell's father is Tom Bell but not, this (Tom Bell) is a son of that old Tom Bell. Alex Bell was, I don't know. He was one of, Bell girl went give birth to Alex so Alex Bell was more like adopted from the old Tom. And this new Tom Bell is another one, Tom Bell's daughter or something got pregnant with some other people. That's her son. They no take the real father, took Bell's name, something like that.

CL: I think Tom Bell was over at Puu 'o'o by 1930, I heard.

YK: 1830?

CL: 1930.

YK: 1930. I know he moved from Parker Ranch, not direct to Kahuku Ranch though. I think maybe yeah Puu 'o'o and then move over.

CL: So how early do you think Alex Bell might have been foreman at Waiki'i?

YK: You mean how many years?

CL: Yeah when do you think he might have started?

YK: He was working in Waiki'i so before he was foreman he was a laborer there. He was a tractor driver. He married one of the Waiki'i, Kodara's daughter. Yeah that was quite some time. He worked there for long, long time. Let's see, I know Alex Bell's father, old Tom Bell had blacksmith in Waimea. And we were neighbors. So I know them well but he worked Parker Ranch for quite long time. I cannot recall how many years, from young days he got there with one Waiki'i's Portuguese family has daughter. He married the oldest daughter and then he was working under Wilmot, under Tom Bell or under Elarionoff. Then he became foreman of Waiki'i. So gee, I cannot recall, when Tom Bell left

Waimea, he went, I know Wilmot, I work under Wilmot just one year for picking corn so that was in 1919, Alex was there already working, driving tractor. Waiki'i had a lot of tractors you know from that big, almost 4,000 acres. And Alex Bell was there already in 1919 so he was not foreman yet but he came later foreman. I just no can get the year, what year.

CL: That's all right. And then was it 1950 that he finished up there?

YK: He retired eh. Yeah he retired not because his age. I think he retired already, he got kinda sick eh. 1950, just around there or little after I think he retired.

CL: So then let me bring you back to when you first went up there to pick corn. Who was it that was the foreman up there then?

YK: The whole Waiki'i foreman was Wilmot, Vredenberg at that time.

CL: That was the son right? Cause there was a father, he had a father that died.

YK: With a bullet eh, accident, Vredenberg. We used to call him Manuwai. Manuwai in Hawaiian mean, manu is bird, water man, he good engineer. He took water from this mountain to Mauna Kea, haul way up high land eh, gravity flow, then pump up. He got the machine. They buy that gas engine, Moses Fairbank, mainland company. And they put those pumps. One is 15 horsepower, one is 10 horsepower. The largest one was 25 I think. They pump up.

CL: To Waiki'i.

YK: Waiki'i and up by that papa, two side of the ranch. Later they had diesel engine but

CL: So did you see that guy, did you see him?

YK: Old man Manuwai?

CL: Yeah.

YK: I was a boy those days yet. When I was born Pu'u Wa'awa'a, he used to come Pu'u Wa'awa'a run the engine. He's good engineer. And I seen him and he's the first guy had automobile in Waimea. He's the only one had. And his, I don't know what made the brake outside, the hand brake, and shifting, only one or two shifting eh. Pierce Arrow or something like that. And I didn't see him die but he died at the mountain hunting.

CL: Yeah I read about that.

YK: Oh you read that. And his son, Peter Vredenberg, was with him right above Waiki'i, Puu Anuanu. I plowed that place further down. Right now by Pu'u La'au and Kona Ranch side. I think, I don't know what, the gun fired accidentally, going through his body I think. Then Peter rushed down Waiki'i and got the Waiki'i people to help. That's what I heard, I never see. I was a school boy yet.

CL: So then the son was the foreman.

YK: Yeah. All his sons, Wilmot was the first son, then the second son was, I know one son went up to the Mainland. He was kind of educated. But he died I think. And then Theodore.

CL: So then right after Vredenberg was Elarionoff?

YK: After Vredenberg, Wilmot is that Vredenberg. Then right after him was, I think Elarionoff, yeah Elarionoff.

CL: Yeah, okay, good. So let's go ahead and talk about this (?)

YK: I know Waiki'i had ah Parker Ranch, today Waiki'i hasn't got anything to produce from, but Waiki'i was once a big place. They had a lot of tractors, lot of people worked there, taking care the corn eh. There was quite a bunch of fellas. The Russians was there too.

CL: I guess the corn was the biggest thing there.

YK: Yeah because

CL: And then, let's see what else you told me. You told me about a pig operation too and a small chicken operation and then I guess part of the corn was the wagon drivers those eight horse wagons but that was mostly for the corn. Was there three drivers at Waiki'i, was that three eight horse wagon drivers?

YK: No, only one. Only one Hulihiia. Then there, let's see, when we didn't have not trucks, all wagon transportation was Waimea had Puna, named Puna, he's one eye fella but good driver, Hawaiian name, one of the Purdys, Eric Purdy was eight horse driver. Kaikapu, that Hawaiian name I cannot come out with already. Another Hawaiian I forget. And Kailiana, there's four eight horse drivers in Waimea. Each guy get one wagon eh. And then he has his horses, eight horses. It's interesting when you see that driving. I seen them.

CL: So here in Waimea, what were they hauling?

YK: Waimea they haul, you see one thing that they have to haul if they haven't got anything to haul, they going up the mountain pick up wood, dry woods for firewood because there's not no gas stove or no such thing, all wood. And all hand saw to cut the wood. No more that

CL: No more chain saw.

YK: No more chain saw. So the wood was hauled and they haul up, see early in 1900 already 1910 they had a place up Makahalau, above Mana, they raise, well they had donkey up there, good for raising mule, haul feed for em. Haul feed for the bulls that they import from Mainland, Herefords, Herefords bull come every year. They have men up there, Scotchman who take care the bulls, they haul feed for them. And the dairies for that used to haul down the wagon but not much. When they have to dairy pick up and if you have room to firewood they would put firewood coming home. They never go come home empty eh. And there from Waimea wagon driver, they have to go Kawaihae for haul corn down there. And Waimea of course one wagon that goes up Makahalau way, sometimes one of em go work, one wagon goes up Waiki'i and the other, the one that used to go Kawaihae, so was all, not only eight horse wagon, they had six horse wagon, four horse wagon. So these drivers sometimes use the smaller one eh. So they had quite a bit four eight horse wagon, Waiki'i had one, and Waiki'i had six horse wagon and down here had two six horse wagon besides the... Then the warehouse was all built, one of the main warehouse Parker Ranch, on this main highway right now at Bank of Hawaii, on the main highway, on the boundary they had platform and then the warehouse so they can drive the wagon right to platform, unload, then they push. That's, they had that thing all made convenient but now there's no, I don't think they permit to put because you have to get allowance for the wagons this over here.

CL: Yeah they won't let you go that close to the road now. So I've got these two pictures from Waiki'i that I took when we went up with Johnny Linsey.

YK: This was taken when, how long ago?

CL: Oh just about a month ago. Yeah we came up this little road here and we parked right about here.

YK: This corn crib is one of the largest one of Waiki'i but there's no garages over there.

CL: Oh because of the way it's taken, yeah. But this building

YK: This building has a big engine over here and the engine runs their corn sheller and corn grinder in this building. They crack corn and they shell corn and they bag em up and they pile em up

in the, they put the wagon right here at the road though. This pretty high though.

CL: Okay. So it's not hooked on to the corn crib. It's a separate building? It's not attached to the corn crib.

YK: Attached.

CL: It is attached.

YK: Just attached together and they walk right in the corn crib. You know the corn crib there in the center has a alley there. And all by hand carry. No more cars carry bushel

CL: Bushel baskets. Oh I remember those. People don't see those anymore I don't think.

YK: Yeah I don't think so. Because I think it's 25 bushel wagon, eh the farm wagons.

CL: I don't know.

YK: Yeah so we went measure to find out how many bushels. And that corn supposed to be 100 pounds in every sack. And they pile up over here and then there's quite big warehouse here you know.

CL: Yeah it was big. I went, I looked inside.

YK: And this stable is not the

CL: I'm not sure. I think that was, I took that from the back side I think. No I think that was this one up there.

YK: I think this is not the front stable.

CL: Yeah, it's the back stable I think. This one here.

YK: Hitching post, but the front stable had almost same type like this. I think this larger and there's a room over here where the blacksmith.

CL: Yeah. I'm not sure whether that one was still there. That one maybe is gone. There was some building but I don't think it was this stable. I think this might be gone.

YK: Yeah, this is the, one exactly like this from here and this stable I think is this but then now they have one Quonset hut in here you know. I don't know if it's still there yet or not. And the big garage where they, the tractor that comes right in the building and they dug the ground and they, I think concrete though, and you can go down the step go down there and work on your tractor underneath. That one's way on this side.

CL: And then these two pictures you can have cause I have extra ones.

YK: Oh this is me.

CL: Yeah that's you.

Do you remember any bees up there. I heard something about a bee up there.

YK: Honey bees. Oh they have a place, Gulchfence. I think very few people remember that. They had bee up there, in the gulch. There were gulch coming down Waiki'i, that's two side fence. In there's trees there had honey. That never run a business, can't make money out of honey. But they tried but not successful. They gave up.

CL: So that was that gulch that was over here, on this side yeah. I don't have it one this map cause I guess we didn't have room. (end of side A)

Interview with Yutaka Kimara Interview #3 Side B

YK: Way up in here.

CL: Oh way up in here, in the Mauna Kea side of the road.

YK: Yeah Mauna Kea side. It's above that, fella living there now, I forget what the man living there now. Had a cottage here, way up in the trees up here. But that never last.

CL: Yeah I think there was some kind of disease that came into the bees.

YK: And the orchard too, didn't have no fruit flies those days. And then the fruit flies come.

CL: But that orchard, they didn't ever sell that fruit did they? Just for people.

YK: No, just they used the walnut. Walnut was used for Christmas give all within the package and the Christmas trees they put out, give the children. But they had good apple there, they had apricot, they had grapes, they had chestnut. The chestnut and walnut still there yet.

CL: And one other question I had was this man, Kuinipule, that you told me. What was his job.

YK: Kuinipule. New people. They never go, they not old timer. I think nobody there living now. Only one daughter is married to one fella in Waimea and she's not healthy. She's under dialysis.



CL: When you first went out to pick corn, was he living there?

YK: No, no. He's way after, after the war I think.

CL: So I should take him off of this then.

YK: Their family live one of the Russians, his house I think was way up, the upper house, I think this house. But them, they stayed only short while though. He work under Alex Bell. They moved to Hilo I think. I don't know if they still living there. They originally came from Kona I think, Kulikuli. Macomber, all those people, they stayed short while.

CL: Yeah I think that name Macomber. Okay let's look at this transcript then and I don't know maybe I'll turn this off for now. Was there a time when they mechanized more at Waiki'i, the corn operation? And so they didn't need as many people.

YK: The mechanizing is mostly, they sure need lot of people up there on the corn. You know cultivating the corn, they planting the rows and they run the cultivator. Later on they improved that by pulling, one horse pull one cultivator, one line instead of that they get four cultivator pull by smaller tractor. And that cut down some labor too. And beside, what else they cut down. Of course real problem was when good year when have rain the corn grow very well. And of course the weeds going come out but the weeds is mostly is legume grass that they grow, the grass will come up in Spring and they die off in Autumn they die off already. So it doesn't affect the corn too much. So but then the rain will come again in Autumn and then feed come up again. By then we picked the corn already so that we use for cattle. That be very good pastures for cattle. We don't use twelve months a year but when corn is growing for five months it's nothing, no animals graze but then after that, after the corn is picked even is some part in the pasture is poor crop we don't pick. Put the cattle inside.

CL: Oh and they just eat up the corn.

YK: That used to be very helpful for cattle too you know.

CL: Okay, I can add a little bit in here.

YK: And beside I think I don't have anything to correct though. Only the way I stay talk, the English not good. This pig business that's when was the best time, but not every year. I don't think the pig business was not very successful. Although it does lose money because they feeding the corn.

CL: You were saying something that I couldn't understand on the tape about the pigs having maybe ponds or water holes inside.

YK: Oh yeah, they build a cement slab with slant to walking. Not deep but then I guess seven to ten inches deep the water was high. And the pigs go hot day go. They used to have that almost every pig pen they had build that.

CL: So there was several pig pens was there?

YK: There's one down the side road down, I don't think you, right now if you Waiki'i there's a hill below Waiki'i where polo field, beyond down. There's two silos there. You cannot see from the road, main road. Right there had the corn crib, they had two corn cribs there on the corn would be down there was and hogs was kept down there. And lot a hog pen was right that where the corn crib.

CL: Yeah, the one here. So the other one is down here somewhere.

YK: Yeah. And then there's another silo below here, way down here, two silo, in the pipe.

CL: On the Mauna Kea side of the road. Yeah, okay. So two silos there and two down below.

YK: Um hum. And way back they had pasture all grow by number, number 10, number 7, number 8, number 6, all that pasture, corn field number. And then they had a place then Big Pakila. They had corn crib in the Big Pakila, two or three, and down Pu'u Mahelua had two corn crib there and one up number 8 and one up number 11. So they had a lot of corn cribs.

CL: These were all around Waiki'i?

YK: Yeah all around, way outside of Waiki'i.

CL: But in that area.

YK: Um hum.

CL: And the silos, were they using those all the way up?

YK: I don't know if they been using Waiki'i silo. I never heard about it. But up Paliho'ou Kapapa that's the same time they build the silo. They build one up Makahalau and one at Paliho'ou Kapapa. The one up Paliho'ou Kapapa, they had em fill up when I went up there this year. Filling em up was not bad. They have a chopper with a pump up, push, pump up and that goes in so many feet they put salt and you know, tamp em down. But then when that thing gets ready to deed the cattle was a mess. They didn't like that job. Nobody liked that job.

CL: I used to do that. I used to shovel out silage.

YK: The corn silage get kind of slimy eh.

CL: Yeah but it's better than the hay silage.

YK: Better I guess, good for the cattle.

CL: Smells better. Hay silage smells bad.

YK: Oh boy they go for em you know the cattle. I know when I was first went up there I want to help to climbing up the silo, the step ladder go up, go in the door, open the door go in there and then we have to get shovel that sticky stuff and then (just drop) slide em down. And then from there they carry, take em to the pig troughs. It's a hard job though. Today they would modernize it, do something else but those days. The ones went use they're down in Paliho'ou Kapapa.

CL: The Waiki'i ones you never saw.

YK: I never see, heard about em. They never used it.

CL: I did read that it wasn't successful. I don't know, I read that in somebody's book.

YK: Then later, way later, in somewheres in, after the war, they made the plant corn Waiki'i. They haul that corn down, chop em up, haul em down and ground saw silo eh. They dig trenches in the ground and pile em up in there and then they feed. They were not so successful. They don't know how to feed that cattle. Corn silage was not, not look like a real silage too dry. I don't know, they need, some farmers from Mainland where they had silo.

CL: Yeah probably. We used to put

YK: The silage is dry and they put rocks in the feed trough because they said birds come eat the corn in the feed troughs but the cattle don't get to eat the corn. They eat all the other stuff. And I went up there one day look where the rocks there helping the birds more because the corn goes in-between the rocks. Cattle cannot collect the corn. So they preserving the corn for the birds. I cannot understand. But this feeding stuff and all I never talk to anybody about through my experience. I'm a dairy, I was work on the dairy 20 years so I know how to feed cattle and when we first started 1958 we start feed lot somehow that University of Hawaii was backing up for start feed lot. To me those years, around 1955, I think that the farmers in the Mainland had too much crops. They get no place to sell the grade. So they encouraged people to eat pen fed animal. We had men from University of Hawaii come around get Women's Club to prepare pen fed beefs. Oh pen fed was real good. And all of a sudden that

thing came popular and University of Hawaii in Honolulu was the one started pen feed lot. And they want me to let them have 80 head of feeders, good feeders. So I gave em steers, 80. We weigh em up here before we ship em. Went down there three months later they want me to come down see them.

CL: In Honolulu?

YK: Honolulu. There was a stone wall there somewhere, I don't know what place was it. And then they don't look like the cattle been fed. I think funny. If you feed even little bit you feed them they pick up. But this one the ground was just bare, (?) land. And the cattle don't look good. I went in there look. I look, first thing I went look for the cow dung eh. The dung looks not normal. So I ask them what you feed. They told me they feed bagasse with something like 60% molasses. And I told em you never finish animal with 60% molasses with chop feed. They had some elephant grass I think was rapier grass. You have to feed grain I told them, and cut down your molasses. And they cannot cut down molasses. Molasses get more weight. Bagasse is cheap. I say you no can raise animal with just cheap stuff. So anyway I was disappointed with that good steer I send them. Here I was feeding up here, down Puako, of course we overfeed em but I never like that overfeeding stuff but the foreman of Puako was, he like to show off, Hawaiian fella. Oh he feed lot of it, but they didn't think of the cost of the grain. But anyway I was our pen fed was going pretty good and then they started, this man Carter was, I think he's pretty good on doing those kind thing, rent the place down somewhere, below to the State or Navy, I don't know. And then sell feed. And they call me down to again. So I told them to cut down the molasses. I tell molasses is good feed but you feeding 60% molasses, I say that's too much. No animal, no human being can take that much and eat that every day.

CL: Well didn't they ever, where did they get their information from?

YK: They say because cheap and more weight. So I told em you like weight feed gravel, crush the rock. The guys they never raise cattle before. So they went cutting down, the Hawaiian Meat, they cut down the molasses to 10%. I told em cut down to 8, 9% I think just to get them get a taste of it and small amount of molasses will help em. They cut that down and they started give barley and soy beans and things. Well they came up to pretty good.

CL: Let me ask you about this place down here. I think I've got something wrong here. This is about Ogawa. What I thought I heard was he was taking care of all the truck. But I wonder if it wasn't tractor.

YK: Yeah, he was a mechanic on the ranch. The older brother and the younger brother, the older brother came to work on Parker Ranch ahead of time and he was up Waiki'i on all the tractors came Waiki'i. They needed him so he was...

CL: So I think I just heard that wrong. It should be tractor. I didn't have that marked cause, oh you marked it, yeah you saw it.

YK: Oh you like know the man who died.

CL: Yeah, I think was

YK: David, David Puna.

CL: David. It was on there but I couldn't hear it. And then I did have a question too about the guy that, the eight horse driver. It's this question here.

YK: That question is what?

CL: Well you were talking about how if he doesn't like the swamper

YK: Yeah, sometimes they argue you know. And this fellow, very good driver, at one time they had a test you know, they argued and there was a pen up here where they trained the horses, a gate. I know he said a thing that was very interesting for us those days. He said there was a, and they had big barn there keeping mule, stable here and this gate here and there's one fence right here, and the eight horse wagon, when the wagon me come here, come in here and turn and come through this gate, where some people they don't do that. They, whenever they like to unload on to this stable feed they go in and when they come out they come out and this one is a more, this warehouse is lumber stuff here. When haul lumber this fella Puna he goes, he comes with this wagon, goes in here empties his feed or something. When he comes out he gets some lumber he goes from this place he go right here. Where some others they make big turn, loop and he's the only one can make this short turn here. And he knows how to handle the two pull horses. He know how to make one side pull, steer the wagon. And he knows how to, the leader have to, when the leader come over here when going in here the leader come make why out here and he turn back to here. And he make this pull, pull the wagon to control the pull of the wagon. And he knows all those kind of things so they had argument and then one day they went out try this other one he do that every time and others cannot do. So that thing going on for many years and still they never catch on how this fella do that. He know how to handle his horse. That was kind of interesting. Everybody thinking how he did and others cannot. But you can see how he do it. He make the swamper work too, he has swamper on the side. He carry small

rocks in the car. And he throw this rock on the pull horse you know.

CL: The pull horse is the one closest?

YK: Close to the wagon. That's the one turn but the driver turns the leader way outside and he bring these back.

CL: So what does he throw rocks at the pole horse for?

YK: For make the pole horse to pull go one time.

CL: Oh so that's what you were talking about maybe that he that nobody can do what he does.

YK: Well he didn't do all the time. I know up Waiki'i, coming down from Waiki'i I think he and the swamper arguing and he turned the wagon right down he jump on the side. The swamper get hard time, he fly off the car, wagon.

CL: The wagon went over?

YK: Yeah, it tip over. He know how to do it. He make the swamper take off all the hitching chain put em on the side of wagon with a rope and put em back again. Ah that fellow was a character. But they he became, later on he age and he cannot do much on the wagon so he stayed home on making saddle. He made those Spanish saddles. He used to make nice saddles.

(End of interview)