BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Arthur Harris

Arthur Harris was born in 1916. His father was Harry Noble Harris from Honolulu; his mother, Louisa Cathcart, was originally from Hana, Maui. Harris grew up on his mother's family's property in Kalihi, O'ahu.

Harris attended Kalihi-Waena Elementary, Kalākaua Intermediate, and Kamehameha schools. While a junior at Kamehameha, he served as a "spare" for the second Panalā'au expedition during June of 1935. Three months later, he returned to the Line Islands as part of a scientific expedition led by Dr. Dana Coman of the Johns Hopkins University. Aboard the two-masted vessel *Kinkajou*, Harris sailed throughout the Pacific, and eventually became a colonist on Baker Island.

After leaving Kamehameha in 1937, Harris attended the University of Hawai'i. A year later, he began a twenty-five-year career with the Honolulu Police Department, which was interrupted during World War II by a stint with the U.S. Merchant Marines.

At the time of the interviews, Harris was still operating his own successful business, manufacturing rugs and ceramics.

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: George H. Kahanu, Sr.

George Hawae Kahanu, Sr. was born in 1917 in Kalihi, O'ahu. The family lived on Gulick Avenue. His father, George Kealoha Kahanu, was a pure Hawaiian from Kipahulu, Maui; his mother, Florence Akona Goo, was Hawaiian-Chinese from Kohala, Hawai'i.

Kahanu attended Kalihi-Waena Elementary and Kalākaua Intermediate schools before entering the Kamehameha Schools for grades nine through twelve.

During his junior year at Kamehameha, Kahanu was recruited to participate in the Panalā'au project as a "spare" (or alternate) for the fourth expedition. The following year, during the summer of 1936, he again was a part of the colonization project, spending two months on Jarvis along with Henry Ahia, Hartwell Blake, and Frederick Lee.

After graduating from Kamehameha in 1937, Kahanu worked for Inter-Island Steam Navigation Company, the Kamehameha Schools' maintenance department, E. E. Black, Ltd., and Pacific Bridge Company. In 1940, he began his career with Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard, a career that was interrupted for two years by military service. After retiring from Pearl Harbor in 1974, Kahanu worked for six years as a supervisor at Pacific Marine Company.

Kahanu moved to Maui in 1980 with his second wife, Beatrice Cockett, a Maui native. Previously, Kahanu, since 1938, was married to Ellen Stewart, a descendant of the Poepoe family of Honolulu. They raised three children: George Jr., Ellen, and Kehaulani.

Tape Nos. 38-4-1-02 and 38-5-1-02

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

George Kahanu, Sr. (GK) and Arthur Harris (AH)

March 27, 2002

Kuliʻouʻou, Oʻahu

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN), Noelle Kahanu (NK), and Ty Tengan (TT)

WN: We're at the home of Mr. Arthur Harris, and we're interviewing Arthur Harris and George Kahanu for the Panalāʻau oral history project. So good morning both of you.

AH: Good morning.

GK: Hi.

WN: We want to just jump into your Panalāʻau experiences, and I want to ask you folks, how did you folks first learn about this whole expedition? Who came up to you folks to talk to you folks about it?

AH: In my case, I was requested to appear at the [Kamehameha Schools] trustee Albert Francis Judd's home on Judd Street. And when I got there that evening, there was a man there from the East Coast. I think New York. His name was Dana Coman. C-O-M-A-N. Coman. And he was in charge of an expedition to the [Line] Islands. I was very happy I was chosen as one of the boys, and they asked me to recommend two other boys. So I recommended Elmer Williamson and Louis Suares. And then the following day we reported to the ship which is a sailing ship, two-masted sailing ship. And from there we went on down to the South Pacific, and carried on with the things they wanted us to do. I don't know about George, you were recruited by whom?

GK: Well I was still a student at Kamehameha Schools, in fact I was a junior, so I got a notice from the principal of the school, Dr. Homer Barnes, that I should report to his office when I didn't have any idea what it was all about. But when I did report, he told me that they were on a project with the government of colonizing these islands, so would I be interested in making a trip? I couldn't believe it because out of all the students in school, I was being selected to be involved in this project. He asked me, "Are you interested?"

I says, "By all means, I'm ready to go right now." (Chuckles) That meant that I'd be out of school for a while. Actually, it turned out I was out of school maybe a month and a half because I did not get involved being on the island. Being a replacement, I continued all the way down to Samoa and then ultimately came back again. So that was my first trip and my first involvement with the colonization of the Line Islands.

WN: Arthur, you were eager to go too?

AH: Very eager. Being a young fella, it was a big adventure. Dr. Coman had a illustrious background, he was a professor at the Johns Hopkins University. He was with Byrd's first and second expeditions to Antarctica. He was a personal doctor of Admiral [Richard E.] Byrd. And then he was with Roy Chapman Andrews in the Gobi Desert where they discovered dinosaur eggs. And he was the leader of the expedition. And they selected the navigator by the name of Harold Gatty who was from New Zealand, and he was a foremost navigator at that time. And then the captain of the sailing ship was Captain Constantine Flink. Very interesting man, sea-going man. He was a major in the Russian army and then later on when the Bolsheviks took over most of Europe, he escaped and came to the United States and started a new trade which was being a sea captain. Unusual man for a sea-going man. He never swore, he never drank, and never smoked, and he was strictly a, it wasn't a health fanatic, but he believed in taking care of his health and his body. It was an inspiration. And Gatty being a navigator, he showed us all the constellations, important stars in that constellation, and so forth and so on. To this day, I can recognize a lot of the constellations. A very interesting man. He was a navigator for Wiley Post when he flew around the world. And I don't know whatever happened to him after this trip to the South Seas. He probably disappeared. That's all I can say.

WN: You said that you folks were really eager to go. What did they tell you folks about this project?

AH: Not very much. It was more or less a secret. Prior to the Coman expedition, I was on the Department of Interior expedition, the second group of boys to go to the South Seas. And it was a hush-hush deal, and they let the cat out of the bag. When we came back, I think the [*Honolulu*] *Advertiser* wrote an article about this expedition, and there was a photograph in the *Honolulu Advertiser* showing myself, Louis Suares, and Albert Francis Judd all wearing elephant hats. But it was supposed to have been a hush-hush deal. Later on we found out there was to colonize the islands. But prior to that, we didn't know where we were going or what the purpose of our expedition was.

WN: George, what about you? Was it a secret to you? Or did you know what you were doing?

GK: No, it was a secret because the only comment made was that it was to colonize these islands in the Pacific. So actually, at that time, I think what it involved was ownership of these islands. So as far as I was concerned, it was an adventure. So no matter what it was, I would have gone anyway because curiosity and being young and adventuresome. I figured this is an opportunity of my lifetime.

WN: Did you understand the word "colonize" at that time?

GK: Well, to me it meant living on an island and doing whatever was necessary. So that was my. . . . However, the way it was put to me, the chances for my being on the islands wasn't very—because I was still a student, and I couldn't afford to be away from school that long. So they said it's a "trip." You'll probably be making a trip to the islands and all the way down to Samoa and then coming back so it probably could take anywhere from a month to two months of being away from school. So that meant I had to take books along with me to study. So that when I came back, I wouldn't be too far behind in my studies. So that was the extent of my knowledge of what was involved really.

WN: So you folks looked at it like an adventure?

AH: Adventure. Exactly.

WN: Did you folks ever worry about getting homesick or dangers or anything like that?

AH: It never occurred to us. We, like you say, were kind of excited about going down. And we were all friends. In Kamehameha School, it was very clannish. The boys stuck together. We had common interests. School, I think, was the most important. We was all together. So we weren't lonesome at all.

NK: Was there something in common about the boys that were chosen? Were you guys all the top of your class?

AH: I think it was. Take Abe Pi'ianai'a for instance, he was a brilliant student, and Bill Kaina, they set records, scholastically and other ways. I think they chose us because of our scholastic record, and our ability to get along, I suppose.

NK: So the principal recruited you guys? Or your teacher?

AH: In my case, I was never called in by Dr. [Homer] Barnes who was the principal at that time. I think George said that he was called in by Dr. Barnes. I wasn't called in. They told me if I wanted to go, I said yes. In the meantime, Abe Pi'ianai'a, and Bill Kaina, and [James] Kamakaiwi and the rest of them, the original ones, went down. I like to think, like I said, they chose us because scholastically. They knew we were going to be gone for

so many months, we'd fall back on all our lessons, but they suspected that we could catch up, which we did.

WN: You folks were both good students?

GK: We like to think so. I was involved in sports. Kamehameha School had this honor system where if you were top of the class, they gave you a silver pin.

AH: Yeah.

GK: And I was a silver pin student. And I played football. So I like to think that my selection was based not only on my good looks (laughs) but my physical and mental ability, really. Kamehameha Schools, the way they operated, teachers and the principal met and evaluated different students because a lot of it is attitude and all the goodies. I never got in trouble, at least never caught me in doing anything off. But I was honored to be selected. I felt whatever it took, I would do the right thing.

WN: You folks were probably in good shape, too, physically.

AH: Yeah.

GK: That was a requirement of Kamehameha Schools. You had to be in good shape. We had a hospital on the grounds and we had a qualified nurse and an assistant. And they fed you good. You had all the qualities to be physically fit. And live a good social life. We all got along. It was a military school so you respected the chain of command. And that was one of the requirements of being on the island. Recognizing who the leader was, and whatever decisions made, you follow because that's the way it was. That's the way we were taught to do in school.

WN: Did you folks have girlfriends that you were going to leave behind for a while?

AH: What's that again?

WN: Girlfriend? Did you have a girlfriend?

AH: No. I tease George about it, but we never had girlfriends. Like I said, the boys were separated from the girls in those days. There wasn't co-education at all. And we didn't think very much of the girls because we thought they were snobbish (chuckles). So the affinity was more to the boys. Like it was part of the family.

WN: What did you folks tell your parents about this adventure?

GK: Now that is interesting because when you reported to Kamehameha School at that time, it was like, okay, my son or my daughter, applied at Kamehameha, you were accepted.

That was the extent of the parents' involvement. While I was there, I don't think the school ever contacted my parents for anything. So in other words, we were put in the hands of the administration. The school, whatever happened, it was their responsibility to take care of us. And that's the way it was, I think, because I was never in a position to invite my parents to school or do whatever. It was like, okay, we got your son now and he's ours so we'll take care of him. To me, it was that kind of attitude. So I felt comfortable with it, I felt safe. So whatever decisions they made, I felt was a good decision, especially selecting me going down. I thought it was something that was unbelievable, really. I'd get the opportunity to work with the government, United States government. That's something. And [representing] Kamehameha School, Bishop [Estate] Trustees, so that was simply fantastic.

WN: Arthur, what about you? What about your parents?

AH: My mother was a widow, and she had three children or four children actually, that she would have to take care of. So she, like George said, left us in the hands of the school. And I can't even remember any incident where she was invited back to the school to attend the song contest or whatever things we had. She was never invited, that I know of. So it was strictly in the hands of the school.

WN: What about any kind of training or preparation that you folks had to go through when you went?

AH: Yeah, in my case, we went up to the Bishop Museum. I think Mr. Bryan was there. Ed Bryan. And he told us all about how to skin the birds—taxidermist, you know. And how to preserve the birds with the arsenic. I think at that time we had some arsenic we rubbed on the fresher part of the bird. Collect some of the plants, grass, and weeds on the island. And some specimens we put in formaldehyde. Stuff like that. At the Bishop Museum, we did go up there one or two days and it would take up the whole period.

WN: George? Any kind of preparation or training?

GK: No, I did not receive any kind of special training. Actually, the men who were selected, initially, were all Kam[ehameha School] graduates. So me being a student there, I actually relied upon those people more senior than me, and I'm recognizing the fact that whoever was making the selection would probably consider that okay, I'm a young man, and I'll be following the senior people. So I don't think there was a need for me to receive any kind of special preparation.

WN: What did you folks bring with you? What did you pack to go on this trip?

AH: Nothing.

GK: Just what we had on.

AH: We were practically naked on the islands most of the time because we were all boys.

WN: You didn't have like any kind of bag or duffel bag with you?

AH: Nothing.

WN: Really?

GK: I had my sneakers, pair of shorts. Well, one of the things that limited whatever we did was water. We took down only three fifty-five gallons of water. And there was three quarters full water because when we off loaded the drums in the water, they had to float and then we had to be dragged into shore. And after the ship left the area, then we had to roll the drums up to high ground. So, if you had clothes to wear, then you had to wash the clothes. And water was limited. So like Arthur said, it's reasonable that we became a nudist colony. And on the ship [that picked the colonists up] when we took a shower, they would look at us and say, "Wow you guys don't have a dividing mark where it's black down here and white," you know. We say, "Well, you know, when we're out there, we're a bunch of nudists." We couldn't afford to wash clothes so we don't wear clothes, except when we went to bed at night. We wore a military woolen shirt. To me, it came down all the way to my knees. And other than that we didn't wear anything. And there was no need for it anyway.

WN: How come you had to wear that woolen shirt to go sleep?

GK: Well, at nighttime we got a little bit chilly. In my case, I didn't want to catch a cold, so I kept it to be comfortable sleeping. And we didn't sleep with any blankets. You slept on the cot without any blanket. And just roll on the cot and that was it. Then you got up in the morning, after breakfast, and then shed our clothing, and go about our business.

WN: So George, you went [i.e., arrived] on the *Itasca?*

GK: Yeah.

WN: So tell us what you remember being on the *Itasca* and seeing Jarvis for the first time.

GK: Jarvis is the tallest of the three islands. The others were more or less flat. I think Jarvis had maybe an elevation of twenty-five, thirty feet, the highest point. So we were able to see, as we came up, see the island in the distance. We were now approaching Jarvis Island or whatever island. But the *Itasca* was no problem. We made a second excursion down below. And at that time, the second expedition, they split it up into two groups. The feeling was the British were in the process of colonizing, taking over these islands. So time was of essence. So they split one group, the Jarvis group, on the *Tiger*. The *Tiger*

was a smaller ship, and then the other two groups were going on the *Itasca*. When we got down there and looking for the Jarvis Island on the (*Tiger*) which was a lower ship. We couldn't have had a very good navigator because we spent half the morning looking for Jarvis. We were going all over the ocean back and forth trying to find Jarvis. So it gives you an idea that these islands were so small in the Pacific that it was very easy not to find it. You had to be a pretty good navigator to really find the island. So when you see it, "Eh, we seeing land." You looking forward to getting on land right? And getting involved in whatever business you were involved in.

WN: What was your impression when you first saw Jarvis? Is it what you expected?

GK: Well, in a way, it was what I expected because you know there is not too much rain there. On the way down from O'ahu, we first stopped at Palmyra Islands. And Palmyra is a group of about fifty to fifty-five islands in a semicircle. And at that time it was land, shore, reef all around the group of islands. In the middle was this lagoon. And when we got on the island, it was paradise. Beautiful, green, coconut trees, brush, the birds came up to you and right above your head it would tweet, tweet, tweet, tweet looking at you as to say, "Hey, you're invading my sanctuary." It was something that unbelievable how beautiful it was. And when they gave us food to go on the island, they gave us sandwiches. So after a while you see the mullet coming around your feet, and they swimming around. And you'd feed them with bread crumbs and they would eat it. And then we figured, okay, we're going to have some fish tonight for dinner right? So how do we catch it? Just scoop it up or get a piece of stick and hit 'em on the head and they would flop over and then we put it in the bag.

What we were doing was collecting young coconut trees to take and plant on the islands. But Palmyra Island was something that was really paradise. And then you go down on Jarvis Island and you see this barren island. Soak in the contrast. But did I expect that? In a way, considering in the middle of the ocean and from what they say this place is going to be a barren island and nothing on there but a lot of birds. So in my mind I say okay, this is what I was told was going to be happening, and it was as I was advised that it would be. Just a barren island. Nothing on there but birds and whatever. Little bit of fish and, you know.

WN: Arthur, you went to Baker. What was Baker like?

AH: Baker is an island about one mile long, a half a mile wide, and about fifteen, twenty feet above sea level. The reef, just on the other side of the reef, the deep end of the reef, the coast guard took a sounding. And I remember they saying that [it was] eight hundred and something fathoms right off the reef there. A fathom was six feet. So it was very steep, infested with sharks, and plenty of fish. But you could smell the island before you could see it because of all the guano from the birds there. And in the evening the birds

would come in from fishing. They would fly low, they were heavily laden with fish. And the frigate birds would go and hijack the food from the gannets. We call them booby birds.

GK: Booby birds.

AH: But actually it was not the booby. The booby is a much larger bird, and these were all fishing birds. And they had some sooty terns. The sooty terns would come out and there were hundreds of them. Interesting part was the fact that these sooty terns would come back to the place they would hatch, the eggs hatch, and go to the same hole. It had holes in the sand on the high portions. They navigated perfectly, and they laid their eggs there and hatched their eggs. The next generation would go out, come back later, months later, and go right back in the place they were born. Like I said, you could smell the island before you could see it.

WN: Did Jarvis have the same guano smell?

GK: Not really. Well, you know, nature is really something because after a while you get accustomed to the smell and you don't smell it anymore. I guess it was the way the wind was blowing, too, you know. The wind direction was where the colony was. I think the wind blew in the opposite direction so we didn't get the smell like they probably did on Howland or Baker.

AH: But on Jarvis, they had a shipwreck they call the *Amaranth*. And the boys would go down and take planks off the ship and make surfboards. And when the authorities found out about it, they went bananas. They confiscated it because it was a heck of a dangerous thing to do in shark-infested waters. But on Baker, there was one sand beach. When the storms came, the waves were huge. The island was fifteen feet or twenty feet over sea level. The waves were higher than that. Fortunately, it would break outside of the reef, and by the time they got in, they were half the size they originally were. But they'd come right to where the tent was, we slept on these cots. And the waves would go right into them, and of course it would seep right through the sand and wash out again. But Baker was a very dangerous landing there, even with the coast guard boats and stuff like that. Very dangerous.

WN: Can you tell me what a typical day was for you folks on Jarvis and Baker? How did you folks spend your time?

AH: Most of the time we, one boy take the weather reports. I think we took one every hour or so. It was so routine, and the same thing over and over every day, that some of the boys they fill the sheets up. "Cumulus clouds. High cumulus clouds. No rain clouds, nimbus." No rain clouds along the equator. And there was very little movement of air. As I understand it later, when the winds come down, they pick up heat close to the

equator and then it rises and goes back into a big circle to the poles on both sides. So along the equator it was very calm. On the ships, we look on the side, we threw an empty can of milk cream, the next morning it's right alongside the ship. Very little movement of water. I know at night, I was on a sailing ship, the water was full of phosphorus. You'd see all the shiny particles. And we were warned not to eat the fish unless at night you cut it open and expose it. As it shined, it was full of phosphorus or whatever it was, so we wouldn't eat it. Certain fishes we wouldn't eat because of that concentration of . . .

WN: Phosphorus.

AH: Phosphorus. Yeah.

WN: George, what about you? What was a typical day for you?

GK: Well, it depended on what your assignment was. When we got on the island, our senior man, Henry Ahia, he had been there originally. And we had to decide who was going to do what. And this contributed to what you did during the day because we had one person who was a cook, one assistant cook, and one who took the weather reports. And then one person had nothing to do but whatever he wanted to do, enjoy himself. So cooking was a big job because you're feeding three other people, and you want to be sure they're all happy with what they're eating. So the cook would spend, looking for recipes and what he had to do. And the cook assistant was getting the whatevers ready. And the weather report man is tied up. That was a full time job, all day long. Weather reports every hour et cetera. And the last man by himself. So we set up projects. One thing, there was so much fish, we thought, well, good idea we make dried fish and be able to take dried fish home when we came back. So we spent the day going out and getting fish. And the fish was so plentiful. Like *āholehole.* You'll see a school and you chase it in a little spot in the cove, like. And then with gunny sack. Two people, one on each side, and you just go and you scoop the fish up. And you get about a quarter or half a bag. So okay, we got a quarter, so we need now four bags. So you go down, each one of us would go back to where our house was, and on the spot, we go down and scale the fish and then gut it. And then put it aside and be ready to dry it the next day. But while you're doing that, you're forgetting about, you know, you so busy doing your work and you feel this thing hitting you. Turned out to be sharks swimming along eating the innards of the stuff we throw away. So okay, we stop now and we catch shark for a little while. So we bait the hook and pull the shark up. Like Arthur said, at that time we were cutting the fins off to make shark fin soup. And after we get about a dozen or so, it's enough. Throw the sharks back in the water and the rest of the sharks would attack the sharks that you had thrown back in. So we cleaned the fish and dried it.

After a couple of days, the project would change. Now, one other project was getting the seashells. The beautiful seashells. And after a big storm, waves would carry in the shells, and we collect the shells. And then there was no more on the beach, so what we started to do was turn the rocks, the coral rocks over, and look underneath for the shells because they would be underneath in between the bottom of the ocean and the rocks. And that was one project.

And then we decided, well, we got the *Amaranth,* so let's go make a surfboard. So we went down, we had to salvage the planks, heavy planks now, about two inches thick and about sixteen inches wide. And that was a project. We didn't have the latest tools. It was like hatchet, and hammer, trying to shape the board. Well, I tell you, on Jarvis, we finally got the surfboards completed because we all worked together in our accomplishments. And when we finally got it made, what happened? Here comes the *Itasca*. We never even got a chance to use the board. So when they came on the land, the first thing they saw, "What are you people doing?" Man, did we get raked over the coals for doing that. "You realize what could happen if you be out there? You could be carried away. And we're responsible for your well-being here." And it just about put us before captain's mast. And captain's mast is where you get really reprimanded. But anyway, they took the boards away from us. So that was the end of that project.

The other thing I did, my classmate Freddie Lee had brought down a guitar. So I thought, okay, that's a good project. I'm gonna start learning how to play the guitar. So a lot of the times I was playing guitar, trying to anyway. And then when I went down I had taken a football down and my pair of football shoes. So Freddie Lee and I would play football. He threw to me, and I throw to him. Finally we had a bright idea. Hey, why don't we get Kamehameha to challenge the University of Hawai'i? Because Henry Ahia had attended university and Hartwell Blake was university student. So Freddie and I were Kamehameha. So in the evenings we would play football for exercise, and that was one relief from regular routines. But for some reason, it seemed like time went by like, you know, we were always busy doing something. But I never found it boring. I just thought it was. . . . I was busy all day long. Like I say, every week we rotated assignments. So that broke the routine. You doing this, then you doing that. So it was really great life.

WN: You said cooking. What kind of . . . Oh, we going change videotape.

(Visitors arrive. Taping interrupted, then resumes.)

Okay, we were talking about food.

AH: Well, you know, we improvised a lot of things when we were there. I think Abe Pi'ianai'a made an oven, and we got kerosene oil cans—five-gallon cans, and put sand

on the bottom so the heat would be even, and we made wicked biscuits. They were darn good biscuits. The military supplied us with food, usually in gallon-sized containers. So if we wanted corned-beef—it was a gallon of corned beef, it was an awful lot of corned beef. Corn—creamed corn. A lot of [canned] fruits—peaches and stuff like that. In great quantity. We had good food, and plenty of it. Plenty fish, plenty lobsters, even the sea urchins—the Hawaiians called *wana*—there was an awful lot of it there. A whole lot of things. So we ate very well.

WN: So the corned beef was all supplied . . .

AH: By the military, yeah. I suppose they got it from a supply sergeant, who drew it from the commissary, or whatever. But big, big quantities. So we made sweet-sour corned beef, we made all kinds of corned beef, you know. Just to use it up.

WN: George, what about you folks?

GK: Well, you know, if you think about it, food would be a primary concern. So what we did, we inventoried our food supply. So many cases of this, so many cases of that, so many cases of that. And then, okay, how many days are we gonna be here? How many weeks? So we divided up with the number of cases by the number of weeks and we find, okay, we supposed to be using maybe half a case, one week, you know. So, by doing that, you did not use one particular food one time. You broke it down so that you were evenly divided in terms of the weeks that you were able to eat whatever. So what you did, you left it up to the cook. Now, this is his ration for this week. With that ration he does what he wants with it. So it doesn't mean you're gong to use everything in your allotment. You're going to use maybe part of it.

And then the other part—you know you got a lot of fish, so we had lobster, eggs—lot of eggs. And even birds. So when it came to Saturday—Saturday was our day of celebration, the cook would use his ingenious talent and would make maybe lobster egg—he'd get eggs out, he'd tell the assistant, "Ey, I need so many eggs." So the assistant would go out and get so many eggs. Or, "I need a bird, for fresh meat to make *hekka*." The assistant would go out and get the bird. And we would help get fish. And so he would cook it. It usually ended up in a fabulous meal. But if the meal wasn't all that great, and you didn't like what the cook was doing, you'd cook your own. That was the rule. "You don't like my cooking, cook your own." And so it got to be a real challenge as to who was the best cook, you know. So the competition was there. "I can cook better than you can." And the food we had was outstanding because here you have all the fresh—we didn't have fresh vegetables, or fresh fruit, but we had lot of canned fruit, lot of canned vegetables. And if you [took] all these together, we had fabulous meals. So food was not a problem with us. We had what we enjoyed to do. And being from

Hawai'i, we loved fish, so we leaned more towards the fish, and lobster, and that kind of stuff. So was fantastic.

AH: We had canned *poi*. There was a cannery down in Kalihi, near Libby, McNeill [& Libby] cannery there. The canned *poi* was very good. And whoever provisioned us, made sure that we had a lot of *poi*. Very unusual for military people to go out of their way and buy us *poi*. Was very good.

WN: So when you say, "the birds," was it the [booby] birds you folks ate?

AH: Yeah.

GK: Yeah.

WN: How did that taste?

GK: Oh, it tasted like chicken. The frigate bird we tried was kind of tough and kind of a strong smell. But the booby bird, tasted like chicken, tasted real good. And if you had *shōyu* and sugar, and stir-fried, taste real *'ono*.

AH: I know we never cared for the gannets, which they called booby. We went after the terns, they were more like the size of a pigeon. They didn't have fishy smell or taste. And we also went after the eggs because of that, it wasn't fishy, or smelly. They were small, like pigeon eggs, but very good. The yolk was outstanding. We'd make some Chinese dishes: salted fish. We'd let it stay outside for a day or two, beginning to get smelly. Then we'd bury it in a bag of salt—they'd give us a bag of rock salt, Hawaiian salt—for about a week and take it out and steam it [and eat it] with rice. Man, it was darned good. With the corned beef, make sweet-sour corned beef. And we'd make a wicked chowder. Ho! You catch an *ulua* and open a can of corn, and mix it up . . .

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

NK: Do you want to talk about the water?

AH: The water was brought in from the islands, from Hawai'i, in fifty-five-gallon drums. And being fresh water, it's lighter than salt water. These drums were buoyant, more or less. And we dumped it over the side of the ships and dragged it to shore and roll it up the beach. The fifty-five-gallon drums were usually [used to] store oil or gasoline. The water tasted awful. We had no choice because these islands are desert islands. There was no water on it. And the drums were made out of steel and they were rusted. And the

water was all rusty. We would place them on a rack and let the rust settle on the bottom and then we skinned the top. We had to conserve the water. We never used it for bathing or anything else. We used salt water to wash the dishes and things like that. But the water was strictly for drinking. And for making tea or coffee. That's another thing, the guys who drank coffee, they had to deal with the big military five-gallon cans of roasted coffee. When they opened the darned thing, it smelled beautiful. But then there was so darn much of it in the five-gallon containers we had a problem storing it. On Baker Island they had a lot of big rats. Huge rats. And they would come out at night, nocturnal ones, and feed on anything there. It was a problem. Actually, the only problem we had was the rats.

WN: How big were the rats?

AH: Well, I would say about six to eight inches long. They were big rats. And how they got there, I don't know. I know on Howland they had field mice because we, among the boys, says, "You don't have any rats, you're fortunate. Your food, you can leave it out, wrapped up and suspended from the tent. You don't have that problem." But the rats [on Baker] would climb up the ropes and get at the food that you had wrapped up and hauled to the top of the tent. Big, big problem.

WN: What about Jarvis? Was there rats?

GK: Yeah, but they were about so big. Not too bad. But there were quite a bit, quite a number. We learned how to deal with it. One of the experiences we had with rats, before we went down, we had trustee Albert Judd speak to us. And he said one of the experiences that they had on islands with rats was that they would take a string of about six feet long, and they'd catch a rat. And the way to catch them, we dug a hole in the ground and install a five gallon can. Like empty coffee can flush with the top of the soil. And then at night the rats would be running around and they fall in. So the next day you had maybe four or five in a can. We take it out alive and you tie it. Tie them around the belly and you tie [another rat to] the other end and then you get two boys out there and you get out in the field where the birds are. Each one of them say, "Okay, one, two, three." We toss it. So we throw it up in the air as high as we could. And these frigate birds, they would see this thing flying up in the air and they would dive down. And amazingly, in the air they would catch the rat and they would swallow it. And then now you got this string, with this other one down there wiggling around, and another frigate bird would come diving and scoop it up. So here you have two birds up there pulling this string across. And it worked. We did that until we got tired of that, but it was some fun watching these birds.

Because I never cared for the (frigates) because I'm talking about a bunch of thieves. They would hover over above the island and see these other birds coming back in. And

they would swoop down and pick up these birds' tail and in the air they would shake it like that. And that bird would regurgitate the fish. And they would let the bird go and then dive down and catch the fish. And you wonder how they could do that. But that was the way to survive, these frigate birds. They would live off the other birds. And these birds would be going out there. They bring back the food to feed the young. The young birds and stuff, but that was one form of recreation. Something to do. Just shows you how these birds, how clever they were in flying around and being able to see and being able to dive and catch this thing flying in the air. Amazing.

WN: How did you folks catch the birds to eat?

AH: Nest.

GK: Nest on the ground. So if you came near them they would just yell at you with their beak. So if we had a pick handle, all we did was catch it around their neck and they would go flying and you pick 'em up and take 'em. All you need was one bird, one or two. You take the choice spots of the bird, you know. What we did, we didn't remove the feathers. We just skinned the whole thing. We just skin it down, peel it, pull out the skin and the feathers together, and then you have the carcass. And two birds is usually more than enough. You take the legs and then the breast part. The other bony parts you just discard. But so if you got two birds you got the choice meat. You can de-bone it, use only the meat part. It's good. Good *hekka.* So that was our meat, once a week we did that. Because it took a lot of time, so Saturday was the day that everybody relax. And for some reason Saturday, Sunday, was special days. Sunday we had our church day. Saturday we had our recreation. Talk story and whatever.

WN: So I guess you folks were aware of what the days of the week and things like that?

AH: No. One day was just like the next because we were on the equator. The weather was stable. No rain, no rain clouds, or anything else. It was very little difference from day to day.

GK: The person who reminded you of what day it was, was the guy who was keeping track of the weather report because he had to record Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday. And so when it came Saturday, say, "Hey, you guys don't forget now, today is Saturday," or "Today is Sunday." One Sunday we forgot about it. And for some reason, like I said, Sunday was our religious day, and this Sunday we were doing our regular things, and finally this guy said, "There's something wrong."

"What do you mean?"

You know, the feeling is not the same. "Okay, what day is this? Wow, this is Sunday." We supposed to be having—in the evening we have church service. So we'd sit down

and sing songs that we knew and recite certain psalms and talk about some religious experience. And we'd talk into the night. There was times like where you talk about different Hawaiian stories, Hawaiian experiences. And then you often thought about, I know I did, you thought about your family at home. What if I come back home on a ship coming in and I'd have somebody saying, "You know, brother so-and-so passed away. Or you know, so-and-so good friend passed away." How would you feel about it? So that was, to me, my concern about not being able to communicate with people back home, and how would you feel. So when the ship came in [from] Honolulu and everybody says everything is okay, you have to say a little prayer about thanking the Lord for taking care of everyone while you were away. So I guess that's part of our Kamehameha [School] background because every Sunday we went to church on campus. And the girls came down, too, from upper school. So boys and girls had church service on the campus. And I guess this carried on into our *'ohana* type of relationship while we were far away from home.

WN: Arthur, what about you?

AH: We weren't that holy at all. We would recall incidences of pranks we had at [Kamehameha] School. For instance, the girls attended the services at Pauahi Chapel. A beautiful chapel. And when they stood up to sing this certain songs, they would stand up. The boys would get a handful of thumbtacks and flip 'em right down on the benches, and the girls would sit down after the song. They'd get stung by the thumbtacks, you know. We thought it was a big deal. We weren't holy at all. We're troublemakers, that's what we were. We thought it was good fun. I would recall all these incidences. Now when I think, we didn't care that much for the girls. We considered the girls very snobbish. And even when they got out of the school, most of the boys married outside of the Kamehameha School family. Yet, the girls were good girls. Dr. [Isabella] Abbott was one of the girls in our class. Very good. She'd buy candy, and like George said, she'd give him a pack of gum before he played football so he could chew it while he's playing football. And few of the girls were that way. Even till today, Leilani Chun, Mike Chun's cousin, very nice woman. Their children are too. It's an honor that—I think it's two or three doctors in that family alone. Brilliant family. But we had respect for those girls. The other girls were snobs. We thought of different ways to get even with them. And one way was the thumbtacks.

GK: Gee, Arthur, you never told me about that.

(Laughter)

I was missing out what was going on.

AH: When I went to Baker, there were several graves there on Baker. One time I dug up one of the graves up on the sand dune. It was only about three feet down, and the skull of the man was interred in a sand dune there, had a big fracture on his skill so must have had some troubles there when they were digging up the guano because those island were, I think, part of the guano treaty. [Between 1858 and 1890, American and British companies worked guano deposits on Baker and Howland islands.] I buried the remains back on the sand dune there. But there was a cross there. A crude wooden cross. And he was buried probably about three feet at the very most below the surface. And I was curious as to what the heck happened. I look back now, I think it's a foolish thing, but at that time it didn't appear to be. I have more respect now for life like that.

NK: Did you have a Bible?

GK: I'm surprised the military did not provide us with any Bible, you know . . .

AH: Bibles?

GK: Yeah, Bible. Because even hotels today, every room there's a Bible. You'd think somebody would have thought about that as being something that you should consider, anyway.

AH: Another thing. Somebody brought along an old gramophone. And the spring was broken. We'd turn the thing with our finger. And those songs were going over and over. I think that's three or four records. Even today, when I hear that songs it brings back memories.

WN: Do you remember what songs?

AH: Yeah. One was "Twelfth Street Rag" or something like that. There was one song they played was, "Ah Marie, ah Marie." Forgot the words already, but it went over and over and over. And we thought it was a real cat's meow. We'd sit down, turning that turntable around, and try to keep the momentum going. And the same old tune went over and over. I think it went, "Ah Marie, ah Marie." Every time I hear this song, it reminds me of the islands again.

WN: Did you folks have music at all besides your guitar?

AH: No, not on my bunch. He said Freddie Lee had one guitar.

WN: Did you do a lot of singing?

GK: Yeah, usually Sunday nights, Freddie would strum his guitar and we'd sing songs, whatever. See, like I said, our leader was Henry Ahia. The other person was Hartwell Blake. University[-educated], and he came from a very religious family in Kaua'i. And

Freddie Lee, his family too, [from] Hau'ula, was on the religious side. And my family in Kalihi attended church regularly every Sunday. So I guess it was natural that we would think about, you know, having church service on Sunday. I mean after all, you need to have someone look after, you know what I mean. Arthur's group was the tough guys. They didn't have to depend on anybody.

AH: We were a bunch of troublemakers.

WN: Who was in your group?

AH: The first time I went down there, it was Abe Pi'ianai'a, and Bill Kaina, and Archie Ching. That Archie was a very, very smart boy. And then on other trips, Archie Kauahikaua, Herbert Hooper. Let's see now, there was one more. And then, on the Coman expedition we had radio operators. Kenny Lum King. And we caught a lot of sharks and made dried shark fin for his father. We had a deal going that if we could supply him with so many boxes of shark fin, and he would make a nine-course dinner for us. And boy, we drooled about the day we get back and have this nine-course dinner. And he really made a good dinner. And Kenny was a radio operator on Howland Island with Elmer Williamson. And then finally, there was a guy by the name of Chadwick, he had a hunchback, and he was on Jarvis Island, radio operator. But we had nobody on Baker Island. We had one fellow Jules Rodman. I think he had connection with the Bishop Museum for a while. And he wrote articles about the islands down there. Some of them were not true, exaggerated. But he sent me copies of it. They're in the maritime museum in San Francisco, his experiences on the *Kinkajou,* the ship I was talking about. But a lot of it was exaggerated in his favor. And his fable. I think Jules Rodman is no longer alive. The last time I was in contact with him, he was living in Olympia, Washington. And I haven't heard from him in three, four years now.

NK: Can you talk a little bit about the role of prayer when you had medical emergencies?

GK: Oh yeah. You know, the military provided enough material, equipment in case of emergency. It went so far, I think if you had [a procedure] you had to perform, you had the tools there, all these instruments. We had one occasion to use something that happened. Our classmate Freddie Lee, and I'm surprised that this ever happened because he was amongst all of us the best swimmer and diver. And this day, he dove off the shelf where we were, the reef, and when he emerged from the water, he had blood running down his forehead. "Ey, Freddie, what happened to you?"

He said, "What do you mean?"

I said, "Look. Look, blood."

He said, "I don't know." Just below the hairline, he had a gash. Must have been about an inch and a half long. And so immediately, we gotta do something about it, we got an emergency. So Henry Ahia said, "Freddie, come up. We go up to the hut." We did, and what we had to do was shave the hair around the cut, and clean it pretty good about half an inch back. And then we had to make sure that no sand was embedded in there. We had antiseptic, iodine, and we cleaned around it. And then we taped it as good as we can to close the wound up. And every day we changed the bandage. We had it bandaged. So about two weeks, we kind of restricted Freddie. He wasn't going in the water anymore.

But the other things that happened, I guess because of our diet, several of us got boils. So what we did, we came to the conclusion that, "Okay, we not eating the right thing, so we gotta take a physical." So we had a lot of castor oil. And castor oil, you know how bad that tastes when you swallow it, so we had everybody, regardless whether you had boils or not, you had to take your share of cleaning process. So that took care of it. But the worse incident was Freddie and his laceration on the head. And strangely, I don't know how it happened because there must have been another rock in there, in the water, that he didn't see. And when he [dove] he must have hit his head on it. Because where it was located, if you going this way, the cut was up in here, this area. So it meant there must have been another boulder or rock in there that he dived into and cut himself. But it turned out okay because for a while we were concerned whether it was going to get infected. So we had to make sure it was properly cleaned, make sure no sand was embedded in there, and every day we changed the dressing. And we did a pretty good job because he survived. It was one time when we were little bit concerned about one of our colonists being injured. Fortunately after that we didn't have any more incidents, no more problems.

WN: Did you folks pray at all? Have any prayers because of this incident?

GK: Yeah, that night we did. Because we asked for blessing and that Freddie be okay. I mean, it was things you had to rely on beyond. We did what we could as humans. And we felt we needed a little bit more help in keeping Freddie alive until we were able to get back home.

AH: In our case, we weren't religious at all, I don't think, looking back. The only thing that concerned us, the return back to the islands here, we would pick up the cold bug and get a whopper of a cold. Being on the islands we weren't exposed to the common cold, and so we lost all our resistance on these islands. When we got back to Honolulu, a day or two after we get back, my god, you get a whopper. Headache, and runny nose, and all that stuff. A bad cold. But religiously, no, we never conducted any services. We sit down and discuss things, but it was more of a discussion. It didn't mean we weren't religious

at all, but we didn't practice it, religion. But we were religious from our background. But not practitioners of the religion.

WN: You had teams, groups. Tell us how you folks got along. Was it good all the time? Were there sometimes you had disagreements, arguments, or anything like that?

AH: I can't remember of any incidents where one boy was angry with the other. I think that's one of the good things of Kamehameha. We were like a big family. And like George said earlier, that there was a chain of command. Being sent to a military school, we respected the man's rank and his authority, and there was no need to question at all because it was the best possible thing for the community which was the four boys on the island. So there was very little that I know. But later on, when they brought outsiders [i.e., non-Kamehameha students and graduates] into the program, yes, there was some friction. Not very much, but there was some friction. Some of the boys later on, as I was told, I wasn't there.

WN: So when you say you folks respected rank and stuff, was there a rank among the ROTC boys or anything like that?

AH: The elder class ranks. Like he mentioned Hartwell Blake. Blake later became the mayor of Kaua'i. And he served in the Philippines with the 33rd division there as an officer. But we respected. He was a major in ROTC, in Kamehameha because of his rank, he was given the respect that was due to him. Very little *pilikia,* as the Hawaiians would say, very little.

WN: George, was that in your case, too, with Hartwell Blake? Because he was a higher ranking ROTC, was that a factor?

GK: Yeah, it was. It was something that, in fact, even me today, I run into—you know, at a different function, and this guy says, "Oh, you remember the days when you were the officer, and you were pushing us kids around?" But, you see, so it carries on. Henry Ahia was the senior when we were in school. In fact, he was major too, Henry was?

AH: No, I don't think so.

GK: Anyway, the next one was Hartwell Blake, and he was senior before us. So it was just a natural thing that we should respect them for what they were when we were in school.

AH: That rubbed off even until today. The guys that I worked with, they weren't superiors, it shouldn't be the word used. They were senior to us in rank in school that we showed respect to. So if Joe Blow was my sergeant or Joe Blow was my captain or so forth, even till today, we have lots of *aloha* for the way they acted and for the way they treated you in our case. In my case, we ran out of food on the Coman expedition, and Abe Pi'ianai'a

was in charge of Baker Island at that time. He gave their rations, food for our expedition, unknowingly to the people in the military. They freely gave the food. And it helped Jules Rodman and the other guys to make it. That was, I don't say love, but it was a lot of respect.

WN: So the seniors were more of like the leaders, organizing things?

GK: I think if you were in a situation like that, you would probably look and say, "Okay, who's the most qualified? Who's the most senior?" Because he should be the leader. And the least senior would follow along. And usually, there was no reason to dispute whatever decision was made. You went along with what they doing. Is that the way you feel it? Yes, that's the way we feel about it. So okay, we'll all go along with it. There was no so-called any argument at anytime as to whether we should do this or whether we should do that.

NK: Did you vote on anything?

GK: Vote? No, it was something that you know, "What do you think?"

"Well, this is the way I feel."

"Okay. So what do you think?"

And they say, "Well, okay this is what we think we should do."

"Okay, fine, no problem."

On the whole island, we were trying to get along with the least possible friction, and if we had come to the point where we figured, well, you know, it's getting kind of monotonous, they say, "Freddie, tomorrow, we challenge these university guys to play football." And that's how we got rid of our frustration. Hey, big deal right? (Laughs) But that's about the closest we came to any confrontation. And being Hawaiians and all of the same culture—in fact when you look at Kamehameha in those days, it was a family. Family, *'ohana,* in a true sense. Today, we hear a lot of that, but you wonder, is it true, are we really living that kind of philosophy? In the old days, we did, we practiced it. That's the way it was. In fact, in those days, if you had a fight, and you had two people disagreeing, the senior officer says, "You guys want to fight?"

"Yeah."

"You don't get along?"

"No."

"Okay, then get a pair of boxing gloves. We go down the gym and you guys fight it out."

Okay, so we take them down the gym, put on a pair of gloves and tell them, "Okay, you two guys, you want to fight? Go ahead, fight." And so they would fight. And when they said, "You got enough? Okay. Shake hands. How you feel now?"

"Okay." Everything is okay. And that's the way we got rid of it. So those who were not aware of what can happen, they going to figure, if I get into an argument, I could end up down the gym and fighting it out.

So the years that I was there, that's the way it happened. There's no fighting on [Kamehameha School's] campus, no disagreement. If there was, it wasn't brought to our attention. And at that time, I was on the what they call the big six. And this is a group of senior officers who met with, if they had any disciplinary problem, who met with the school administration and to be like a judiciary committee to discuss pros and cons, and we were supposed to defend the student's side. But all the time that I was there, we never had any meeting. We had this group but never in the position to make any decisions. And that in fact, if you went to Kamehameha Schools at Bishop Hall that time, we had this great big clock and on there was all the names of the big six committee for all the years. And it was an imposing clock. As soon as you entered Bishop Hall, you would see this clock. The first thing you would see was this clock. So that was one disciplinary group that was set up, but hardly ever utilized because we never had any problem. In fact, we resolved the problem before we even got to the administration. And that was, we felt, our responsibility to take care of the problems before the, you know.

AH: On the islands, yes. But I remember in school there was friction. And there was Ben Eleneki and Alex Kahapea. And both of them were evenly matched and had a fist fight. And they were fighting, and stopped, then go to school. And then after school continue the fight. And they fought for days like that. And then finally they realized it must have been stupid or foolish and they quit. And they became the fastest of friends. Best friends. And both were fearless. Alex Kahapea was the most decorated [Hawaiian] soldier in World War II Hawai'i produced. He passed away. And then Ben Eleneki was a police sergeant that gave his life to a burglar that entered Star Market at Mō'ili'ili and held somebody hostage. And Eleneki went out and in the presence of this guy that was up in there, told him that he was unarmed. So he went up to this market and the burglar shot him and killed him. But he was fearless. And the policemen had respect for him because he wouldn't expect you to do things that he couldn't do himself. And he was a good leader and he was part of Kamehameha. But so both of them, I believe, instilled with the good characteristics that the school wanted.

GK: Ben Eleneki was at the University [of Hawai'i] and he was quarterback on the football team. So he was a credit to the Kamehameha Schools.

AH: Oh yeah, he was fearless.

NK: Arthur, yesterday you were talking about the alma mater.

AH: Yesterday I think, I forgot the lady's name, Zisk.

NK: Janet Zisk.

AH: She asked me, I forgot what the question was, but my views on the—I say the Kamehameha School alma mater is the only alma mater in the whole educational system, I think, that deals with the good qualities. "Be strong and ally ye." It tells the Hawaiians to "be strong and ally ye." Stick together and be strong. "Oh sons of Hawai'i, nobly stand together hand in hand." Help each other and be noble about it. "Be true and rely ye, oh sons of Hawai'i, on God, the prop and pillar of your land [realm]." I say no school that I know of has an alma mater like that instilling the students to be quality people in the community. It says Mrs. [Bernice Pauahi] Bishop and her husband [Charles Reed Bishop] are outstanding people. Even by today's standards. He drew up the will, I'm pretty sure. And he could have included his nephews in the will. And he didn't. He drew up the will that is part of the Kamehameha School legacy today. It was a marriage of love because he built this chapel, he built the Bishop Museum in honor of his wife, he took her throughout Europe. He was a man of character. And in fact, he's the only *Haole* that is buried among the Hawaiian kings and chiefs up in Mauna'ala. And his request was upon his death that he be cremated and buried alongside his wife. Even in death he loved his wife. I think it's an example of the song, asking the kids that go to Kam School now and before us to be good citizens. Stick together, be honest, be truthful, and so forth. No other school that I know of is asking this beautiful thing Mrs. Bishop wanted. And she was loved by all the Hawaiians at that time. And I suppose in generations to come, people will realize what a wonderful woman she was. And he also was a wonderful man. We're fortunate to have people like that. I wouldn't have had the education if it weren't for them.

NK: So do you think the alma mater represented what you guys lived on these islands?

AH: I think so. I'm pretty sure it was the basis of all of us. They told us to stand together, be true and rely in God, "the prop and pillar of your land [realm]," believe in God, and I still believe in God. Everything else that song depicts or what the song represents is there, and all we have to do is try to live up to these things that they wanted us to do. A very simple thing to do, be honest, and be a good citizen, and be a good Hawaiian, and be proud of your ancestry. Be proud about it. Now, the Hawaiians have a word, several words. *Ho'okano* means proud. This vain way, loosely interpreted means someone who

has vanity. But the other word is *ha'aheo* which means you have great pride in what you do. In fact, the first word in *Aloha 'oe* is *ha'aheo*. And when Queen Lili'uokalani standing up looking toward Kāne'ohe side in the rain, say *"Ha'aheo i ka ua i nā pali."* She was at the Pali looking down at the rain. What a beautiful place. You have pride, and it still is a beautiful place, view. So the school song, Mrs. Bishop, Mr. Bishop, we and other Hawaiians to follow, I consider myself a Hawaiian. Keep up with her, be honest, all these good characteristics. Kamehameha School, and the Bishop Museum is a legacy that he decided to build to store all these artifacts of her generation and before her generation. And today, and tomorrow, and next year, and the year after, it will always be there. Terrific. Terrific people.

WN: Do you have any questions before we start asking about going home and things like that?

TT: Mr. Harris, you were actually with the [Dana] Coman expedition right?

AH: Yes.

TT: Did you sleep with the boys who were on the island? Did you have the same camp?

AH: All Kam School boys. It didn't matter. Like I said, we ran out of food when we were down there. And Abe Pi'ianai'a who was in charge of Baker at that time, he was a senior man in charge, took from his stores and gave food without being asked so we would have enough food on that expedition. They had food. They had canned codfish. Codfish balls, potatoes. It was horrible tasting. But Abe Pi'ianai'a freely went into his stores and took out cases of pork and beans and other things. They felt like we were the same people. The same *aloha*.

TT: Were the camps located next to one another? The Coman and . . .

AH: Yeah. And the Coman expedition actually, looking back now after all these years, was a commercial venture in a way. Pan American [World Airways], they had this navigator I was telling you about, Harold Gatty. And he set the routes to South Pacific. So the plane stopped on Canton Island, and it stopped New Guinea, and went on to Australia. But this was the extent of that expedition. And then also, to look into the feasibility of the guano trade again. So it was tied in together. Coman was one of the men that organized this expedition. But they were camped side by side and shared food, shared the water. We didn't have very much water. And they gave us all the water we needed. I remember Abe after all those years; I realized he's quite a guy.

TT: And then you referred to some of the articles that Jules Rodman wrote and in one of the articles he relates this big event where they're trying to land the ship and then went over. And he went out and saved somebody. Is that the way you remember?

AH: What was that again?

TT: When the ship came to pick you up.

AH: Yeah.

TT: There was a lot of waves, and there was a boat that flipped over . . .

AH: Yeah. I think the article was written by Jules Rodman. But then he glorified it by saying that he ran down and he saved the guys from drowning. He had "I" trouble. "I did this" and "I did that." The Hawaiian boys were better swimmers than he ever would have been in my view. So he didn't save nobody's skin. But he was a good author, and he wrote wonderful stories about Hawai'i. Some of them I think became classics. He's the first fellow that I know of that wrote articles on *kahuna*s and all these other things. The original doctors that came here practiced with the leprosy epidemics that we had in the early days, he wrote about it. He bound these books or these pamphlets with *koa* wood. *Koa* wood, and then the paper was printed with *lauhala* mat design. And it was all Hawaiian stories. And I think some of it was true. Especially on Kaua'i. He spent a lot of time on the island of Kaua'i. But he was what today we call a hippie type. But he was a talented guy.

TT: Mr. Kahanu, you also mentioned that you guys did a lot of things in the spare time at Jarvis. There are also some pictures of a weight set that was made from the *Amaranth.* They had a number of weights, and did you guys use that? Was that at Jarvis at the time that you were there? The workout, the dumbbells, and all that?

GK: We did, in fact, when we went down there we even set up a punching bag for exercising plus body toning. And that was something to do to keep in shape instead of laying around and doing nothing. In fact, I used to walk around the island ever other day for leg exercise. Walking on the beach. It's not like walking on solid ground. But the guys used the weights, we did.

AH: Looking back, some of the men that were on this expedition were really, later on in life, they weren't famous, but they were respected. There was Archie Ching who later became superintendent on a lot of construction companies, and he taught me how to . . .

END OF SIDE TWO

TAPE NO. 38-5-1-02; SIDE ONE

GK: . . . life became an asset to the community, who were real good men.

TT: And you think that experience was the reason you became a good man?

AH: Not only that. They were free and they taught people not to show them up, but to teach them how to do certain things. And Archie, for instance, was, before the high rises, Archie was a construction superintendent on roads and buildings. You name them. He was really a smart boy. He wasn't a bragger. And there was a whole bunch of them. I can go on. Hartwell Blake became the mayor of Kaua'i. And other boys, my friend Louis Suares was a brilliant guy but booze killed him. He drank so much, the booze killed him. And George [Kahanu] is a good example. George became a big-time man in the Pearl Harbor navy [ship]yard. When they sank the ships [on December 7,1941] they helped run the ships up, pump them up and patch them and towed some of the ships back. I think the *Nevada.* One of the battleships. George was instrumental. He was there when they bombed Pearl Harbor. And we had Kaupena Wong's father was a police dispatcher when the war broke out. And he was a heck of a good radio man.

WN: How did you folks feel when it was time to go home? To end the whole thing?

AH: We were happy.

WN: You were happy.

AH: We were thinking of the good food. Chop suey dinners, we missed. We were happy. But like I said, the only drawback was we caught these colds when we got back here. I did. I don't know about the rest of them, but I did.

WN: George, what about you? How did you feel when it was time to end it?

GK: Well, you know, that one phase of my life ended there, but the project continued. There are other people who took over. A lot of times you don't think you, I know I do it a lot of times, I says, "You not that important when nobody else can step in and take over. Maybe somebody else can step in and do a better job than you did." So I felt that it was great. I did my share. And time to move on.

WN: Did you have any opportunity or choice to re-up or anything like that?

GK: No, even though I had the opportunity, and Arthur probably did, but I was into doing my own thing now. I mean going on in life, ultimately getting married and finding a good job and support a family. So like I said, we just have to continue on. Like I say again, I never did feel that I was in a position where nobody could replace me. There's always somebody out there who can move in and take your place. And as I say again, maybe do a better job than you did. So thank the Lord for that.

AH: Earlier today I was thinking of King Kamehameha I battle cry. When they landed on the island and defeated Kalanikapuli who was the reigning chief, king of this island. And *i mua* at Kamehameha School is that *i mua a inu ka wai ʻawaʻawa Kamehameha i mua.* In other words, even the after taste of bitter water, go forward. Don't give up. *I mua a inu i ka wai.* It means to drink the water. *ʻAwaʻawa* is bitter. *I mua* Kamehameha. *I mua,* go forward, strive ahead, even if you have to drink the bitter water. Go get 'em. And that's part of Kamehameha's legacy.

WN: Was this experience, where would you put it in in the context of your whole lives? Was it an important part of your life?

AH: No, it wasn't. Not in my case. It was a chapter in this book that is my life. Just one chapter. It wasn't a prime thing in my life.

GK: For me, I thought it was an important part. It made me realize that certain things happened and helped me grow into the next stage. I felt that what we did there had a bearing on how this war went in the Pacific for the U.S. forces because aircraft made an important part. And being able to anticipate and plan future battles in the Pacific, you can say according to the records this time of the year, the weather should be this situation. And so the military, I think, were able to plan on the basis of what we prepared in terms of weather reports. And then ultimately, I would think Pan Am used these weather reports in their routes to Australia, New Zealand.

Like I said, we made a contribution in that we did. I feel in my own heart, whether anybody disputes it or not, that's the way I feel, that we did contribute. And I'm saying contribute in the sense that Bishop Museum did their part in what they did. Kamehameha Schools did their part, and the army, coast guard, they're all part of the team. It had to be something really scheduled and coordinated in such a way that I don't think anything bad came out of it. I think everything positive came out of this association in doing this project. And for me, I learned from it. I was able to make decisions in my future endeavors. In life you try to make the right decisions. We had choices, you can either go negative, positive. And we tried to stay on the positive side most of the time. And from this experience I think I was better able to prepare myself to make positive decisions.

WN: Did you feel more patriotic, closer to America because of this experience?

GK: Yes, I do. And then ultimately working in the shipyard. I worked for the navy department. And there's some things we did maybe, but everything that happened was part of the plan. In the shipyard we did a lot of improvements to the shipyard facilities. And when the war happened we were prepared. Except for moving more personal in, the physical plant was ready. And we were prepared for it. If it hadn't been for some of

our experiences, because even as a student, you read a lot of history, and you find out that Japanese forces were immobilizing on these islands. And what are they doing that for? The only thing is there is going to be war sometime. And so it did happen. Fortunately we had people in the government who were anticipating because we had ships that were under construction. But shortly after the war started, we had like the *North Carolina*, and the *South Dakota* that came down here, came to Pearl Harbor. And these were fabulous ships. If they hadn't been ready when the war started, we could have been in really dire straits. So the whole thing, the whole picture is something you just thank the lord that we had people who could see into the future and see what was necessary.

AH: In my case, I was in the police department before the war broke out, and I got assigned to Pearl City district. And war broke out and we were all called back to duty and our jobs were frozen. We couldn't go from the police department to the navy. You're frozen at the job which was very important at the time because the police department was the only civilian organization prepared for the war. They used to have test blackouts prior to the war. The whole city of Honolulu would turn off the lights and we would have a blackout. And they prepared. They knew something was coming.

We stayed in the police department until the latter part of the war, when the war moved up into Okinawa and that area. There was no need then, they released us and so I got into the merchant marines. I got in I think February of '45. And I think the war ended in August of '45. And my father said, "You have to go to war. You ride to war, don't walk. So don't get into the infantry." So I served time in the merchant marine, but only six or seven months or whatever it was, not very much.

But how did it affect me? Very little. Like I said, another chapter of my life. I wasn't the only guy. There were thousands of Americans. My neighbor across the street was in the 100th Infantry [Battalion], he lost his brother in the battle of Monte Cassino. Shot in the head, and he himself was badly injured. And very nice family. His father took care of Saint Andrew's Cathedral as a yardman, and educated his sons. The sons turned out to be wonderful boys. So it was only a chapter in our lives. We move on. Keep moving on.

NK: This came up yesterday, but if there's one thing you want people to take away from your experiences, there's one thing you want to leave people with, about this project, about Panalāʻau, about your stay there. If there was one thing that people take away or having learned about your experience.

WN: What do you want your grandchildren to learn about what you folks did?

AH: I don't have any children, don't have any grandchildren. But the average kid today, I think the most important thing that they should glean from our experiences is the ability

to get along, to respect the other guy and other guys' views. And I think that's the trouble we're having throughout the world. And most of the wars that have been going on now are all religious wars. The Muslims killing the Christians, Irish Catholics are killing the Irish Protestants, and they don't know how to get along. I think what they need is a bunch of Hawaiians up there, the *'ukulele* and guitar, and forget it, let's be friends than foes. And the old saying is, you can catch more ants with honey than you can with vinegar. And that's the truth. I think we were able to get along with these boys being on an isolated island with no recreation or anything else and you'd have to respect the guy's views. Maybe you don't like his views, but then you gotta respect his views. I think that's the prime thing. I don't have any children but I hope my nephews and nieces would be able to differentiate the—we were brought into this earth for a purpose. Really, I believe we were brought here for a purpose. One of those purposes, I hope, one of those things is to learn how to get along with the other person, respect the other person's view and feelings. You can't hurt the guy's feelings. You can tease him and everything, but there's a limit to teasing, too. So get along, get along. Aloha.

WN: George, what about you?

GK: That's a tough question. I like to think that our efforts had a lot to do with air transportation in the Pacific, and ultimately worldwide in the fact that our weather reports helped Pan Am in deciding that, yes, it was feasible to fly from the United States all the way down to Australia, New Zealand. And it continued on in the rest of the world. But at this portion of the Pacific, I like to think that when they think about flying, the idea that a bunch of Kamehameha Hawaiians or whatever, gave a little bit or did contribute to this ability to fly, and by flying I think we bring the countries together. Now days, when you think about the thousands of people traveling, imagine if it wasn't for the airplanes. I know I worked at Inter-island [Steam] Navigation Company in the early days, in my young days, and they were having ships go between the islands. People traveling back and forth. And then we had [Stanley C.] Kennedy come in and started the airlines. But when they did that, the people started to move around a lot more. And so this is what happened in the world of ours. By flying around, we're able to move people around the world. I think should get people to realize that people made sacrifices in being able to do this. So I would like to think that, well I don't think we expect any credit, but from our point of view, I feel that we did contribute.

AH: Just final thoughts, you say respecting the other guy's feelings and everything else. The Hawaiians also were very sensitive about hurting somebody else's feelings. They were very religious in their own way. We're talking about the original Hawaiians before the white man came. They believed everything had a soul. Everything had a soul. So the storm had a soul. The *koa* tree they were going to cut down to make into a canoe had a soul. And they offered a prayer to the tree that said they're gonna make you into a beautiful canoe. "Forgive me for cutting you down." They believed everything had a

soul. In a way, I think they're right. The Hawaiians had a love for nature. They were very smart people in their own ways. Imagine taking a stone adze, they didn't have metal, go up in the forest and cut these beautiful *koa* trees, cut the limbs off, and then drag that logs down to the ocean, and shape the canoes. And they had hundreds of canoes. And they were very hardworking people. They weren't lazy as many people try to say. No, they weren't lazy. It takes a lot of energy to build a canoe or whatever they were undertaking. So they had respect. As I was trying to say, you can respect my view and I respect your view, they had respect even for the trees or storms or whatever. They were happy to share their love.

WN: Thank you. Okay, we'd like to thank you very much, it was really interesting. Thank you.

GK: Thank you, too. Thank you, Warren. Again, I hope that we have something that . . .

AH: This is a picture of my family.

END OF INTERVIEW

HUI PANALĀʻAU:
Hawaiian Colonists in the Pacific, 1935–1942

Center for Oral History
Social Science Research Institute
University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa

July 2006