

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Isaac Brandt

"She [mother] went to her church over here, what we call the Hawaiian church, it's a Christian church where the [Kōloa] School is, right above the school. That all-white church [The Church at Kōloa]. And we had to go every Sunday when we were younger, it was a necessity, sun, rain, or no rain, we still had to go to Sunday school every Sunday. We were brought up strictly and nicely."

The sixth of eight children, Isaac Brandt was born August 24, 1905 in Kōloa. His grandfather, Gerhardt Brandt, immigrated from Germany to Kaua'i in the latter part of the nineteenth century. One of Gerhardt's sons was Herman Brandt, Sr., Isaac's father who was assistant manager of Kōloa Plantation between 1913 and 1922. Isaac's mother was Lily Hart Brandt from Waimea, Kaua'i.

Issac, who grew up on the Brandt property commonly known to Kōloa residents as "Banana Camp," attended Kōloa School, Kaua'i High School, and the University of Hawai'i. After receiving his bachelor's degree in agriculture, he returned to Kōloa and worked as timekeeper for the plantation. He later left Kōloa for Honolulu, where he worked as a purser on Inter-Island Steam Navigation Co. ships.

In 1929, Isaac married Gladys Ainoa. The wedding is an event well-remembered by Kōloa residents. The couple had two daughters.

Isaac today lives on the original Brandt lands in Kōloa.

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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Isaac Brandt (IB)

June 10, 1987

Kōloa, Kaua'i

BY: 'Iwalani Hodges (IH)

IH: This is an interview with Isaac Brandt at his home in Kōloa, Kaua'i on June 10, 1987. The interviewer is 'Iwalani Hodges.

Okay, maybe we can start out by talking about your grandparents, since your grandfather was the first one to come here.

IB: Yeah, did I show you the family picture the last time you were here?

IH: Yes, uh huh. Can you tell me what your grandparents' names were? I think you mentioned a Gerhardt, who was that?

IB: Did I? Oh, that's it, Gerhardt.

IH: That was your grandfather?

IB: Yeah.

IH: Gerhardt Brandt.

IB: Brandt, yeah.

IH: And he came here from Germany?

IB: From Germany, they landed at Kōloa Landing there with a bunch of Germans and [worked] that first sugar plantation in the islands here.

IH: Oh, and that was Kōloa Plantation?

IB: Kōloa Plantation.

IH: Oh. So they were one of the first ones here, then?

IB: [Kōloa Plantation was] the first one that started sugar in the Hawaiian Islands. And they had a camp at Kaluahonu, that's the Hawaiian name of the camp where the Germans all stayed, and from there they [worked on] the sugar plantation.

- IH: And what was your grandfather's job at the plantation when he first came here?
- IB: He was sort of a luna they called it, foreman, when they started the plantation.
- IH: Oh, he started as a foreman?
- IB: Yeah, evidently. That's what I gathered from her.
- IH: Oh, I see. But he still lived in German Camp [Kaluahonu]?
- IB: They still lived---when they came here, naturally they all lived here together.
- IH: I see. Do you remember your grandfather?
- IB: Oh, yes, definitely. He would---Grandfather used to live here [at IB's present residence] and after years, my father [Herman Brandt, Sr.] became assistant manager on Koloa Plantation [in 1913 until 1922] and we lived in plantation houses. The plantation, those days, furnished houses for all the employees, when I was young.
- IH: But when you knew your grandfather he was living here in this house?
- IB: He was living here in this houses, here, and he had bought all this property in here. They had about seven, eight houses in here, tenants all Chinese family.
- IH: Oh, and he bought all of that?
- IB: Yeah.
- IH: I see. Do you know who he bought that from?
- IB: No, I have no---oh, Rego. Used to own where Big Save Store is down here now, there was a Rego that used to own that, it was called Rego Store. Portuguese . . .
- IH: Oh, was that a general store, too?
- IB: It was a general store. And that's how Grandfather bought this property, from when Rego quit his store.
- IH: And was your grandmother from Germany, also?
- IB: Yes, Grandmother was from Germany. They came out as a family to the islands, here, and whether my father was a child then or was born over here, but I think he was a---they came as a family. Because Father had four other brothers and three sisters. All about that period when I was a youngster at about the Brandt family.
- IH: Oh, and they all came here?

IB: They all came here.

IH: Did they all work at the plantation?

IB: Whether they all came here or some of them were born after they arrived here, I can't say.

IH: I see. So you're not sure then, if your father was born here or if he came here from Germany, then?

IB: I think he was a youngster when they came from Germany because there were other brothers and sisters, and Father seemed to be, my father seemed to be the youngest of the group, here. But it's possible that he may have been born over here after they arrived here. After his father and mother, and who---how many children they had, I don't know. It was a ship that came from, directly from Germany to [work on] the plantation.

I know Father tells me, tells a story that as he grew older, those days there was no automobiles, just horses and horseback riding, and whatnot. He took a ride over to Waimea, this is just a story, don't quote me. And as he got to Waimea River, you know where Waimea is? It's up high, then you go down across the river, and that long bridge into town? He saw a bunch of girls washing clothes on the bank of the river. This is his story, it was a joke, more I think, than anything else. He said he made his horse jump down the cliff, swam across the river, picked up this pretty girl, put 'em on the back of his saddle, and brought her back to Kaua'i, and started the Brandt family.

(Laughter)

IB: Kōloa. That's Father's story.

IH: Oh, that's the story of how he met your mother?

IB: That's how he met my mother and started eight of us, started a family of eight.

IH: Oh. And what was your mother's name?

IB: She was Lily Hart [Brandt]. Her family was Hart, H-A-R-T, from Waimea. There's some of her family still living in there, the Robinsons and---not the Robinsons that own Ni'ihau, no, another Robinson family been in Waimea for years, now. Cousins of mine.

IH: So your mother was Hawaiian?

IB: Part-Hawaiian, part-White.

IH: I see. And what year . . .

IB: I showed you pictures of them, didn't I?

IH: And so what year were you born?

IB: August 24, 1905.

IH: And you were born here in Kōloa?

IB: Born in Kōloa. We were all born, eight of us children were born in Kōloa, five boys and three girls.

IH: Oh, and what number are you in the family?

IB: I'm the third from the end. I had two brothers and three sisters, Tillie, Elizabeth, Rebecca, Herman, and George, five on top of me, then I'm the sixth, then there were two more brothers below me, eight of us in the family.

IH: Uh huh. And all born here in Kōloa?

IB: All born in Kōloa.

IH: What house were you living at when you were born?

IB: I have---those days, the plantation furnished houses for all of the employees. And I can't say exactly what house I was born in, there were houses, probably no longer in existence, or whatnot.

IH: But what area were you living in at that time?

IB: Kōloa, here.

IH: Was it in any particular camp, plantation camp?

IB: No, no, German Camp. They call this area the German Camp. Or Kaluahonu, that's where the Germans originally settled when they came from Germany. As it [i.e., the plantation] expanded they built new houses. Those days, plantation furnished all the homes for the employees. And we were living up on top on the next road. There's another row of houses up on the top end there, that's the earliest I can remember.

IH: Uh huh. And what was your father doing for the plantation?

IB: When he finally retired, he was assistant manager.

IH: What job was he doing when he first started for the plantation?

IB: He probably started as a common laborer on the plantation until he finally worked his way up.

IH: Uh huh. And I think you mentioned to me that he used to ride around on horseback?

IB: Oh, we all did. I started on plantation when I---my second year at

the University of Hawai'i, I was offered the job on the plantation. And we all had horses, those days, to cover the plantation. I started as a timekeeper, I think it was ninety dollars a month. Covered the whole plantation every day. Three horses, took three horses to go over to the other---you had to go like everything, pick up the [work hours of the] gangs wherever the gangs were situated on the plantation. So that when the horse got too tired, you stopped at one stable, the stable man took the saddle off, put it on a fresh horse and you continued again like that. Three horses a day. The timekeeper did more traveling than anyone else, because they had to cover every gang, they were all scattered over the plantation.

IH: So you went out to each gang to . . .

IB: To each gang to get their numbers. Each luna, foreman, had a gang maybe thirty, twenty, thirty men all working on the job. And they mostly were Filipinos and Japanese, those days, and they all were---the minute they started at the plantation, they were given a number [i.e., employee identification number, or bango]. The office kept track of which name had what number. And timekeeper, the luna, the foreman of each gang, as he gives you the time that they working today or not working. And you put it in your time book. Then at the end of the [day]---you cover the whole plantation, you come back to the office, and distribute the working force where their jobs were on what area of the plantation, what doing and whatnot, and turn the report in to the manager. Got through about three, four [o'clock] in the afternoon, got paid ninety dollars a month.

IH: Wow.

(Laughter)

IH: So how long did you do that job?

IB: I did it for about three years, then I got promoted to another office job. Then from then on to agriculturalist job, experimental work on the plantation. And that was the last job I had, I was about fifteen years on the plantation. Then I wanted to go to sea. Well I saw the inter-island ships going by whenever I went near the ocean and I wanted to work on a ship. So I left the plantation, went to Honolulu, to Inter-Island Steam Navigation Company, that was the name of the only shipping between the islands. Got a job as purser on the ship, first as freight clerk, assistant purser, and then we covered all the islands, of course, Ni'ihau and all of them.

IH: Did you enjoy that job?

IB: Oh, yeah. I liked it very much, yeah.

IH: Uh huh. So you must have met a lot of people doing that.

IB: You get to know practically everybody.

IH: Okay, if we can kind of go back a little, I wanted to ask you a little more about your mother, what your mother was like.

IB: She was a very pretty woman. She had eight of us, five boys and three girls. And evidently she had some schooling in Waimea as a girl, young girl, before she got married to my father. And evidently came from a fairly good family, the Robinson family. She was very intelligent, and very strict with us kids, the eight of us. And she ruled us with an iron hand, we had our jobs to do and whatnot at home. Planted our own vegetables and things like that. So Mother was quite a woman.

IH: Did she go out to work at all?

IB: No, no, no. She had enough taking care of eight of us.

(Laughter)

IH: That's for sure. Was she active in like social groups or anything like that?

IB: No, no. She went to her church over here, what we call the Hawaiian church, it's a Christian church where the [Kōloa] School is, right above the school [The Church at Kōloa]. That all-white church. And we had to go every Sunday when we were younger, it was a necessity, sun, rain, or no rain, we still had to go to Sunday school every Sunday. We were brought up strictly and nicely.

IH: Do you remember any of her friends, maybe some ladies that might have come to visit at the house?

IB: Well, there were quite a few. The neighborhood, those days, were not too many people. And they were all closely knit together, they all were friends.

IH: Well, who were some of your neighbors?

IB: A couple doors out, the line, the first house, there was a Mueller, another German family, Hackbarth, another German family, Kuhlman, another German family, Cropp, another German family, Steljes, another German family. Then of course, then there were other nationalities, Portuguese, Japanese, Filipinos, hardly, just a few, they hadn't been brought in at that time by any amount. So Japanese were the big labor force on the plantation, those days.

IH: So the people around you, all the Germans, they were mostly the lunas?

IB: Yes, they eventually became the lunas, foremen, engineers, and things like that there. Then of course there was a steady inflow of Japanese from Japan as labor. Then after the Japanese, came the Filipinos.

IH: Uh huh. Were there very many Hawaiians on this plantation?

IB: There were quite a few those days, when I was younger, many Hawaiians.

IH: But as you grew older?

IB: After you grew older they gradually died off, or drifted away to some other plantations and whatnot. Those days, plantation furnished everything, firewood for their cooking, even afterwards when kerosene came around, kerosene stoves, well each family had ten gallons a month free a year. And doctor was free, and water was free. Kerosene, each family had ten gallons of kerosene, there was no electricity, that's why you use kerosene lamps and whatnot. That was all came with the job.

IH: Maybe we can talk a little bit more about your father, also. Maybe what---you mentioned that he used to go hunting a lot in . . .

IB: My father was a hunter. He liked to go out for pheasant hunting. The birds were plentiful then, and he had a shotgun. And he'd go out Sundays when there was no work on the plantation, and during the weekday, he'd spot the pheasants and what location they were, where they were at, and he'd go out, and get, always come home with pheasants. And Mother would pluck the feathers, the beautiful feathers, and eventually make feather leis for our hats.

IH: Oh, how nice. So he did the hunting right there on the plantation?

IB: Oh, yeah, oh, yeah, while he was still working, up until his retirement and died, finally.

IH: Okay, what school did you attend, what elementary school?

IB: Kōloa Elementary School, then when I finished that, Kaua'i High School for four years in high school. Then the University of Hawai'i where I majored in agriculture, it was the intention of coming back to the plantation.

IH: Uh huh. And what do you remember about Kōloa Elementary School?

IB: Oh, it was from first grade to eighth grade, eight years. It was a typical school where we were taught by Haole teachers, most of the teachers were all Haoles.

IH: Do you remember any of their names?

IB: Well, there was Mrs. [Margaret Miller] Blake, Mrs. [Minnie] Aka, part-Hawaiian, she married the Aka family. Some Japanese were teachers, also, [Tsui] Tashima [Yamagata].

IH: And did you walk to school?

IB: All walked to school from about half a mile only. The school was where the present school is today, you know where, going down the beach, there. Walked every morning to school and back then after school. No trouble. When it rained we had an umbrella, Mother made us [use it]---we were shamed, boys shouldn't be with an umbrella, that was for wahines only, and whatnot. So we'd hide the umbrella as soon as we were gone out of the sight of home. Stick it in the brush on the side of the road and get all wet going to Sunday school or school. And hope we'd get dry when we'd come home, and pick up the umbrella and come home. We thought only sissies carried umbrella.

IH: And who were some of your classmates that you remember?

IB: Well, there was the Cockett family also living on the top row there where all the plantation houses. Mr. [John] Cockett used to own the only saloon in the town, village, here. And there was Maude, Bernice, Irving, they were some of the [Cockett] children, three that I can remember. Maude was my first girlfriend. And many of the---Romanes, and the Kaupikos, and whatnot, all along the shoreline. See, the plantation furnished every employee with a home, with a house. Of course, the higher you were---the job you held, the bigger the house you had there.

IH: And as a child, did you folks go down to Po'ipū Beach very much?

IB: Every Fourth of July, we went in the---there was a locomotive that the plantation furnished with a long string of empty cars. And it would start early in the morning on Fourth of July and go all the way around and finally down to Po'ipū. Get there after about an hour and a half, two hours. Then spend about five hours down the beach at Fourth of July, then come back home. That was our Fourth of July celebration.

IH: Oh. And you folks had a picnic down there or something?

IB: Yeah, yeah, each one took their own food and whatnot.

IH: That's nice. But did you folks---other than that, did you spend much time down at Po'ipū?

IB: No, otherwise you would have to walk, there was no transportation. You would have to walk. You know how long it is from here down to Po'ipū?

IH: Oh, yeah, it's too far.

IB: So we never walked, we swam in the river. There's a river right below here, a good-sized river those days. We'd do all our swimming in the river.

IH: Oh, what river is that?

IB: Wailana is the Hawaiian name of the river, Wailana. [This stream is also known as Waikomo Stream.]

IH: There must have been a lot more water then, than there is now.

IB: Oh, plenty water, it was a great, wide river. We'd dive off the bridge that goes across where the fire department is, there's a bridge across the river now. Small bridge, but it was a big bridge because the river was wide. From the railing of the bridge, we'd dive down into the river there. And there was a great big reservoir way in the back, there. The name of it is Waitā. That's where all the rain that fell all collected in the reservoir, and then from there it went all out over the plantation for irrigation to raise the sugarcane. It was the biggest reservoir in Hawai'i at that time, on Kaua'i. The reservoir is still there yet. They're still using it as a reservoir to furnish water for the present cane that's grown on Kōloa, here yet. But it's not anywhere around here, most of the cane is scattered around. There's some across the road, of course, some of the sugarcane is still growing around here. The Kōloa Plantation is still in existence.

IH: Did it [Kōloa Plantation] used to be bigger than it is now?

IB: No, much smaller.

IH: Oh, it used to be smaller.

IB: Yeah, yeah, much smaller [prior to Kōloa Plantation's 1948 merger with Grove Farm].

IH: And where the mill is now, is that the mill you always remember?

IB: No, the mill when I was young used to be right here [across the street] where Sueoka Store [is], in the middle of the town, here. There's a big cement pillar over there, rock pillar, that was the sugar mill there.

IH: Oh, when you were young that was still the sugar mill?

IB: When I was young, yeah, yeah. Then they moved it out where, on the outside there [i.e., outside of Kōloa town], that is where it is now [since 1913].

IH: Okay, so when you attended Kaua'i High School . . .

IB: Kaua'i High School. After Kōloa School, Kaua'i High, then the University of Hawai'i.

IH: Yeah, and then how did you get out there to Kaua'i High School?

IB: Dr. [A. H.] Waterhouse, who was the plantation doctor, had a car and there were five of us students. My mother paid for transportation every day from here to Līhu'e and back.

IH: Oh. There wasn't a bus service or anything to the high school?

IB: No, no, no buses.

IH: What about your brothers and sisters? Maybe we can talk a little bit about them.

IB: Well, my oldest brother, well, I'll go get the picture so I can show it to you.

IH: Okay.

(Taping stops. IB gets family photo. Taping resumes.)

IB: The second house, coming in.

IH: Oh. That's where this picture was taken?

IB: Yeah, that's where the picture was taken, here's the house. The house is here.

IH: Is it still standing?

IB: The house is still standing there. The second house.

IH: Oh, when I drive out, then I'll have to take a look at it.

IB: You can look at it, yeah.

IH: Oh, I see. You said that's the family . . .

IB: But that's a new house that is. It wasn't the old house that we first lived in. The first we lived in was plantation houses. This was Father's own house, he had it built after he bought all this land in here.

IH: Oh, I see, I see. So you folks didn't really grow up over here.

IB: No, no, we grew up in the plantation houses, strung up all, depending where the job was.

IH: Right, oh, I see. Okay, so you said your oldest brother is . . .

IB: The oldest one is Herman [i.e., Herman Brandt, Jr.].

IH: Herman?

IB: Yeah.

IH: And what did he do?

IB: He was chief engineer at the sugar mill afterwards, when he finished Kamehameha School.

IH: Oh, he went to Kamehameha School?

IB: Yeah. Herman, then the next one was George. George went back on the plantation and became a foreman on the plantation.

IH: Did he also go to Kamehameha School?

IB: Yeah, George also went there. Then after the two boys, then my sister Tillie, she finished Punahou School and then taught at Punahou School. Then Lizzie came next. She was a schoolteacher. She finished Normal School and became schoolteacher Kōloa School.

IH: Did she go to Punahou School, also?

IB: No, no. University---I mean Normal School. She was a schoolteacher. Then Rebecca. She was a schoolteacher, also. Graduated Normal School, then came back Kōloa School and taught. Then I came next. I finished Kōloa School, Kaua'i High School, University of Hawai'i, then worked on the plantation. Then my brother Bill. We were all about two years in between. Bill is on Maui now, he has his own home up there, retired from a plantation on Maui.

IH: What school did he attend?

IB: Kamehameha School, then the University after that. I finished Kaua'i High School, then the University.

IH: And then you have one last brother?

IB: Jimmy, he was the youngest of the family. Finished Kōloa School, then Kamehameha School, he didn't go to the University. He started, I don't know, I can't remember where he started working at first.

IH: Did he also work plantation, though?

IB: Yeah, he also, we all worked on the plantation. All the boys used to work on the plantation.

IH: So all of your brothers and sisters went to Honolulu to attend high school.

IB: The only, the ones that went to Punahou went to Honolulu to Punahou.

IH: Punahou and Kamehameha.

IB: And Kamehameha. Then the rest of us went to---each island had their own high schools. Same as this, I went to finish Kaua'i High School then to the University, took up agriculture.

IH: So if all your brothers went to Kamehameha School, why didn't you follow them and go to Kamehameha School, also?

IB: Well, there were too many at school at one time, I think that's why. Mother couldn't afford it.

IH: Oh. So you had several other . . .

IB: So I went to Kaua'i High School instead. Then University.

IH: Was Kaua'i High School a very big school at that time?

IB: Oh, yes, yes. It was the only high school on the island. No more Waimea [High School]---you have Waimea now also besides Kaua'i High. Kaua'i High was the only high school. The rest were all grammar school. Each village had their own school, grammar school.

IH: So then people from all over the island went to Kaua'i High School.

IB: Kaua'i High. Then where Waimea, from grammar school they went into high school, and there's two, three [high schools] now. One high school at Kapa'a, from grammar to high school, Waimea and Kaua'i High. There are three on this island now. But only one university, the University of Hawai'i.

IH: You used to be a soccer player. Did that start from high school?

IB: Oh, soccer was a big game, those days, just like baseball is today, or like football is today. Soccer was more important---we didn't play football, we didn't know football. Soccer was a game that the Germans introduced when they came over evidently.

IH: Oh yeah?

IB: Yeah.

IH: So you started playing that in high school?

IB: In high school, and even after, when I started working on the plantation, I started a soccer team in Kōloa, here.

IH: Oh yeah? Was it mostly plantation workers on the team?

IB: Yeah. Most of them were plantation workers.

IH: Did you take off-island trips and stuff like that with the team?

IB: No, we had no money to go around. We just played with each other, the different towns.

IH: When you were growing up, were all the different nationalities on the plantation, were they all pretty friendly?

IB: Oh, definitely. We all got along fine. The last group that came in were the Filipinos. Prior to that, you had other nationalities drifting here. Mostly Haoles, then Hawaiians who were born here already. So the Hawaiians intermarried with the Haoles about that time. Portuguese also came in, they intermarried. Spanish came in, and they worked in the plantation, they intermarried with the

Hawaiians, and whatnot.

IH: Oh so everybody was pretty friendly then?

IB: Oh, definitely. Yeah, yeah.

IH: Oh, that makes it nice.

IB: People got along well, there was no trouble there.

IH: What about Kōloa town, what was that like?

IB: Kōloa town, it was just a little more village than a town. There wasn't no more all these new buildings that have all. . . . There were stores, old Japanese stores, Pake stores, and whatnot around the place here. And have been renewed, of course, now. And not too many stores. Each family did their own cooking and whatnot, no more restaurants. Barbershop, there was barber around, Japanese man cutting hair.

IH: What about a meat store? I've heard from other . . .

IB: The plantation had their own cattle, also, and they had the butcher shop. They'd slaughter their own cattle and sold it to the labor, and there was enough beef for the whole plantation. Plantation was making money out of their cattle. They had pastures scattered all over.

IH: And they had stables all over, too? Did you say? In different locations?

IB: Stables, yeah. They had one in Kōloa, one in Puhi, and one in Mahā'ulepū. They had three stables scattered over the plantation. Horses, mules. Then at the mill they had the repair, automobile, tractor repair shops, and all that, all that came into the picture as time went along. There were about eight hundred men on Kōloa Plantation when I was timekeeper.

IH: Wow. That was quite a few.

IB: Oh, yeah.

IH: That's a lot of [employee] numbers [i.e., bangō] to write down.

(Laughter)

IB: Of course, the lunas, the foremen, and all, now after you pass a certain grade, you didn't go by number anymore, [you went] your name only.

IH: I know that the plantation had its own horses that you used when you were working . . .

IB: Yeah, yeah, the plantations raised their own horses for plowing the land, and carrying the sugarcane, pulling it on cane cars, locomotives with it too. They had their own stables.

IH: Uh huh. And then did you also have your own personal horses?

IB: Oh yeah. They bred their own horses. They got the female horses and the male horses and kept on raising horses and cattle and what-not, they had to do that. They bought it at the beginning, but afterward they raised their own.

IH: So who took care of the stables?

IB: They had groups of men, different men, Japanese or whoever, had a job and worked at the stable, so there was no, nothing extra to it.

IH: Uh huh. Did you also have your own personal horse that you kept at your house?

IB: No, no, no. Plantation furnished all of that.

IH: What about your father?

IB: Unless you wanted your own, then you went and bought one from somebody.

IH: Right. So did your family have any?

IB: Yeah, Father had one, a stallion. People used to bring their horses up to breed it with my father's horse. He had a beautiful white horse with dark blotches on it. The name of the horse was Kōloa.

IH: Did he keep it right there at his house?

IB: Kept it there because we had a big house. Father was head luna, assistant manager, so we had a big yard, and he kept his horse there, that stallion.

IH: Okay, so you said that you had a big house, and how many bedrooms was the house, did you say?

IB: Oh, there were one, two, three, four, five, five bedrooms. You figure there were eight of us children, plus Father and Mother, ten, yeah. There were five bedrooms, dining room, kitchen, pantry, and all that, great big house. Father was the assistant manager then.

IH: Uh huh. And then outside you had the pasture . . .

IB: Yard, a great big yard.

IH: Uh huh. And you mentioned that you grew vegetables, your mother grew her own vegetables?

IB: Yeah, after Father became assistant manager [in 1913], the plantation furnished a yard boy, and we grew all our own vegetables.

IH: Oh, so you had someone to help with the yard, then.

IB: Oh, yeah. Yeah, we had a yard boy paid for by the plantation. Taking care of the yard, growing the vegetable garden, and what-not.

IH: Oh, did you have the same one for a long time?

IB: No, yeah, most of the time. It was old-timers, been here long time.

IH: Oh yeah? Do you remember his name?

IB: We had one, Nomura, he was the last one we had, Japanese yardman.

IH: That's nice that she had help.

IB: Oh, yeah, otherwise we couldn't have done it. Mother had maids also. Japanese maids. Did the laundry and all that. Those days hand iron, charcoal iron.

IH: Oh, yeah, just the laundry alone must have been a big chore.

IB: Yeah, no more electricity, it was all kerosene. Before electricity came in, was all kerosene lamps and everything like that.

IH: And did you folks raise any other animals besides just the horse?

IB: No, just the horse, Father's horse. There was no need for it, for animals. Then afterwards, when automobiles became popular, then Father bought a car. We had an old Studebaker car. So people started owning their own automobiles, you know.

IH: Did you folks do much traveling on the island . . .

IB: From here to Waimea to visit my cousins over at Waimea, there. Because Mother's family came from Waimea. So we'd go over there, spend the day and then come back. At first, before the automobiles came into the picture, we used to go over with a wagon with a top on, and three rows of seats, two horses. Old Japanese guy by the name of Sakamoto used to charge ten dollars starting in the morning. Get to Waimea about almost noon time, have lunch over there. Then about two o'clock, leave there, then get back Kōloa about almost dark. Ten dollars.

(Laughter)

IH: That ten dollars would take the whole family?

IB: The whole family, oh, yeah.

IH: Okay, so you were working timekeeper---maybe I should turn this over before I ask you this question.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

IB: . . . hours a day.

IH: Ten hours a day as timekeeper?

IB: Yeah, as timekeeper. Covered the whole plantation. We had three horses, changed horses, three horses a day, because you're going like everything from gang to gang. All depends where the gangs were.

IH: So you knew most of the people, then, on the plantation?

IB: Oh, you get to know most of them by their first names, anyway. You didn't care about the last name.

IH: Did they have mostly---you said they were mostly Japanese and Filipinos.

IB: Japanese first and then the Filipinos came into the picture, yeah.

IH: When you were timekeeper?

IB: When I was timekeeper I had both, but by then there were Filipinos here, also. But you didn't know about their name, they had a number. The minute that they were given a job, they were given a number. So they all went by numbers, yeah.

IH: Did they work, the people kind of segregated, like they had mostly Filipinos working together?

IB: All different gangs did different jobs.

IH: But would each gang, like would one gang be all Filipinos, and another gang be all Japanese, (inaudible) . . .

IB: No, they say mostly it was more or less segregated, but there was no ill feeling between one race or another. The Japanese were the first, all right, and then Filipinos came into the picture. Puerto Ricans, Spanish came in some to mix up with the rest of the labor. So the race didn't mean a thing. They all lived together well. So there was no ill feeling between the different jobs. All depends who came in first, yeah.

IH: Okay, and then you were purser for a couple years after that?

IB: After I left the plantation, then I went to sea.

IH: Yeah. And then when did you get married?

IB: When I was twenty-four years old.

IH: So that would be 1929?

IB: Yeah, about that. I was working on the plantation and there was a group of us got together, we played music, dance orchestra, Brandt's Dance Orchestra.

IH: Oh, you were playing music?

IB: And people, yeah. And Normal School group came down to give concerts to the different places, and they had concert and dance afterwards, and they wanted Brandt's Orchestra. Kōloa---our orchestra was the, myself, and my brother Herman, his wife was the piano player, Herman was guitar, I was tenor banjo, and my brother Bill was trap drums, yeah. And we got hired for, to play the music for this Normal School Glee Club concerts around Kaua'i. That's how I met my wife. [She was a member of the Normal School Glee Club.]

IH: Oh. And what was her name?

IB: Gladys Ainoa, the last name, Ainoa, which is a Hawaiian name, yeah.

IH: Oh, so she was from Honolulu?

IB: She was from Honolulu. Today she is the chairman of the Board of Regents at the University of Hawai'i.

IH: Oh, that's your wife?

IB: Yeah.

IH: Oh, I see. So you married her in 1929, then?

IB: Yeah, about then.

IH: So she moved here?

IB: Yeah, and she was schoolteacher at 'Ele'ele School. I met her and we got married. I was on the plantation then.

IH: And then you had two children from that marriage?

IB: Ester and Lorita, two girls.

IH: So you have two daughters?

IB: Two daughters, no boys. Because my wife Gladys, who was teaching school, well then she couldn't have children. One daughter is still

living, and one passed away. Ester died. She was Conant, she married Conant from Hanalei. C-O-N-A-N-T. Ester passed away. Gladys is with the Board of Regents, my former wife.

IH: Right. And then Lorita?

IB: Lorita is still living in Boston right now, she comes down, she has about---one of her sons, my grandson is living with me now.

IH: Were your daughters raised here in Kōloa?

IB: In Kōloa, oh yeah, most of the time. We were in Honolulu when I was Inter-Island, [a purser] on the ships, we were living at Gladys' mother's house. I was married to Gladys then.

IH: So when you folks lived here, you lived in a plantation home?

IB: Plantation home, yeah, yeah.

IH: When did you move to this property?

IB: After retirement. When we divided after my father died, and we divided it all up, I moved here. Only about, I've been here only about five years now. This is Grandfather's house.

IH: Uh huh. So your grandfather had it, then he gave the property to your father?

IB: He left it to my father, then my father divided among the eight of us, there's eight of us, the children. And this was my lot here. My brother Herman had across the road, there, but beyond the banana trees. Sister Tillie had the next lot over here. My brother Bill had the next one there where the big house is on. Then the family house, my brother Jimmy had it. He passed away, left it to his wife, and they are renting it through somebody. Then the first house was always a plantation house, it wasn't our house at all. Then the county condemned three lots in the back, here, my brother George, Rebecca, my sister Becky, to enlarge the baseball field.

IH: So out of all your brothers and sisters, is anyone else living here besides you?

IB: Yeah, my grandson, he's the son of my daughter, Lorita, who married Whitman, Tony Whitman. He, his wife is a---what does she do, Lorraine, she works in some of the hotels over here. A Hawaiian, part-Hawaiian girl, from Honolulu. And they have two children. They live here with me. I'm---because I'm willing my property to them when I go.

IH: But none of your other brothers and sisters live here?

IB: No, no, I'm the only one. Some of them sold their lots already, and some of them. . . . I'm the only one of the family that is still

living up here. See, the county condemned three lots, that's Becky's, George, and another brother, so they are out of the picture. . . . So I'm the only one of the family that is living on the lot here.

IH: But when you were working as a purser, you said that you lived in Honolulu?

IB: In Honolulu when I was a purser. Part time, Honolulu sometimes, and sometimes on Kaua'i, here. Because the ship was owned by Honolulu company, Inter-Island Steam Navigation Company. We'd cover the whole, all the Hawaiian Islands.

IH: Uh huh. So how long were you a purser?

IB: I was a purser for about fourteen years.

IH: Oh. Quite a long time.

IB: Yeah.

IH: And then after that, then what did you do?

IB: Then the Inter-Island went out of the picture then.

IH: Uh huh, right. So then what did you do after that?

IB: After that I retired.

IH: That's when you came back here?

IB: Yeah, yeah.

IH: And where were you living at that time?

IB: Huh?

IH: Where were you living at that time?

IB: In Honolulu, the wife's home at Honolulu.

IH: But when you moved back to Kaua'i?

IB: When I came back to Kaua'i, I came here. . . . No, we lived for a while at Mother and Father's house up there, that second house as you came in, there. For a while. Then when we divided the property, I came here. . . . Acre, a little over acre and a quarter, property, my lot in here. I'm leaving it to my grandson, Tony. He has a auto repair shop in Līhu'e, there.

IH: Oh, your grandson does?

IB: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

IH: What is the name of the shop?

IB: Yeah. I think it's Whitman Repair Shop, Auto Repair Shop.

IH: I think that's about it for now.

IB: I'm taking up lot of your time, yeah?

IH: No. (Laughs)

END OF INTERVIEW

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VOLUME I

**Center for Oral History
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