BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: PHILIP NINOMIYA, retired teacher

Philip Ninomiya, Japanese, was born in Haleiwa on December 22, 1906. His parents came from Oshimagun, Japan, to work on the plantation. There were three children in the family.

Philip's father opened a blacksmith shop in Haleiwa which he gave up when automobiles became popular.

Philip attended Waialua Elementary School, McKinley High School and the Territorial Normal School. His first teaching assignment was at Kaupo, Maui in 1929. He returned to Haleiwa in 1931 and started teaching at Haleiwa Elementary. In 1967, he retired from teaching.

Philip was married late and has no children. He and his wife live in Haleiwa.
This is an interview with Philip H. Ninomiya at his house, 66-132 Haleiwa Road, Haleiwa. Today is July 2nd, 1976. Okay, Mr. Ninomiya, can you please tell me about your origins?

PN: You mean ethnic origin?

AA: Where your family is from, where you were born...what town your father came from.

PN: My parents came from a little island off the coast of Honshu, called Oshimakun. It's in the southern part of the main island of Honshu. My father came first and later on, he sent for his wife. I was born right here in Haleiwa.

AA: Did he come because of the sugar? What was the reason for coming here?

PN: I think...I'm not too sure, but...I think he worked for a plantation originally, but I forgot about the details. Maybe he was at Waimanalo someplace. I'm not so sure.

AA: Yeah. Waimanalo was also plantation...his reason was to work in the plantation.

PN: Yeah. They all came to work in the sugar cane fields, originally. And some of them decided to change their jobs later.

AA: Can you tell me about your family, then? Which schools did your children go to?

PN: In those days Japanese parents wanted their children to be educated in Japanese. I know my sister went to a Japanese school in Kaaawa. It's a long distance away from here.

AA: Did you live in Haleiwa and she went to Kaaawa?

PN: She and I were about six years in age difference but I went to a Japanese language school near...Taisho Gakkō, beyond Haleiwa Surf.
AA: Haleiwa Surf? The Jōdō Mission? Right here?

PN: Yeah, but just beyond that, there is a place, right next to Haleiwa Surf, there is a camper---what do you call? Haven't you seen it?

AA: The beach camp?

PN: Yeah, the beach camp with so many campers.

AA: Oh, it's called the Haleiwa Beach Club now? Is that what you're talking about?

PN: No, right next to it. Haven't you seen it? Oh, my goodness, you don't know your Waialua!

AA: I know Waialua, not Haleiwa. (Laughs)

PN: ...you go from the beach, you see lots of these...it's not like a tent city, but it's individual campers, and people pay a fee and stay there. But right in front was an old Japanese school. Later it moved to Hongwanji in Waialua.

AA: You only have one sister? Only two of you in the family?

PN: No, I have only one sister now, but I have had two sisters. One went back to Japan to live, because she was...born and raised in Japan. And then, some years later, after she grew up, she became a picture bride of another man in California. After her husband passed away, she became a social security beneficiary. Then, she decided to go back to Japan to live on her home island, where she was raised. She passed away some years ago. Another sister lives in Honolulu, but she's senile, so I can't ask many of the things that I would like to ask.

AA: Were you the one that said your father was a blacksmith? Can you tell me, like, where was his...

PN: Well, his blacksmith shop was located right on the main Kam Highway, opposite Liliuokalani Church where the Assembly of God church is presently located. Many years later, the automobiles came into existence, and right next to it was Waialua Garage. The original company for Service Motors. So, pretty soon my father had to give up the shop.

AA: Where did he go to work after? What kind of job...

PN: Well, he did odd jobs, here and there.

AA: Do you remember who were the people that came to use his services?

PN: Well, in those days, practically everybody had to have horses, except some who preferred walking. Shoeing horses and repairing carriages
were important trades.

AA: Was your father the only blacksmith in Waialua? Did the plantation people come with their horses to him?

PN: He did have the only shop but I think plantation had it's own.... But, when the automobiles became popular, he had to give up his business.

AA: And how did that affect your family when he had to give up something that was bringing in regular income?

PN: Well.... in those days, at least, the cost of living was cheap, so even if my dad had odd jobs, like carpenter or something, at least, he was able to maintain his family household expenses. Besides my sister, who's living in Honolulu at present, had to quit work after eighth grade, to support the family. Japanese believed that girls didn't need too much education.

AA: What about your education, then? Can you tell me all the schools that you went to?

PN: Well, in those days, we had no intermediate schools or high schools in Waialua. I attended Haleiwa Elementary School, formerly known as Waialua Elementary School. That was the only elementary school, at that time. Later on, we had the Kawailoa Elementary School, but, those were the only two schools in Waialua district. After I graduated from Waialua Elementary School, eighth grade, most of us who wanted high school education had to go to McKinley High School. That was the only public high school on Oahu.

AA: About what year was this when...

PN: That was 1921. I graduated from McKinley in 1925. Leilehua High School and other high schools in the rural districts came into existence long after that.

AA: How did you get back and forth to McKinley? Did you live in town?

PN: Yes. I had to live in town. We used to have the so-called Waialua taxi. The taxis would take passengers to Honolulu, say about two times a day. Once in the morning, once in the afternoon. We used to use those facilities.

AA: The Waialua taxi? Was it just one person, one car, or....

PN: There were several people, I know Mrs. Aoki's father used to be one of the taxi drivers. Mr. Fujita, who passed away last year was a taxi driver who commuted from Haleiwa or Waialua. They picked up passengers here and there in the camps, and then they would go to Honolulu.
AA: Okay. Did you have to pay?
PN: Oh, yes. I think it was rather reasonable. About dollar and a half, or something.
AA: For one way?
PN: Yeah.
AA: That was reasonable at that time?
PN: Yes, because that's a long distance, you know.
AA: When you were at McKinley, then, how was your typical day? What time did you have to get up?
PN: Since many of us didn't have relatives who would be able to accommodate us, so---people like Mr. Edward Matsumoto...And Mitsuki Matsumoto and I stayed at a Japanese High School dormitory. In the afternoon, after McKinley High School classes were over, we attended the classes at the Japanese High School. Otherwise we wouldn't be able to stay at the dormitory.
AA: You stayed at a Japanese dormitory?
PN: High school dormitory.
AA: So, that means you went to Japanese school after the day?
PN: Yeah. That's the one affiliated with Hongwanji.
AA: The kids over there were mostly Japanese, at McKinley?
PN: Yes. That's right. Right.
AA: Uh huh. Was Punahou around at that time?
PN: Oh, yes. People who could afford to send their children to Punahou sent their children, but I think very few Japanese students went to Punahou. Now, it's mixed....
AA: Okay, so the students at McKinley were mostly Japanese. What would you consider was the second largest group there?
PN: Oh, I suppose, we had lots of Chinese students, too. But very few Filipinos, you know, in those days.
(AA laughs)
AA: Yeah. What kind of discipline, you know, that the teachers put to you at McKinley?
PN: I don't think there was any discipline because we all were very conscientious. I don't think the teachers had any problems. Not like today.

AA: So, can you tell me, like, how do you feel about the value about the education then? How...as compared to now, you know, where teachers have to put some sort of discipline into their teaching. They have to send them to the vice principal once in a while. Can you sort of tell me just how you feel?

PN: In the old days, you know, we maintained discipline because the children knew that discipline was necessary in school. Some of the Japanese parents used to say, "If my child misbehaves, you can do anything with him." Wow! Such a broad privilege! But, you can't do that now. If you try to discipline a child, the next day you see the parents storming into the principal's office.

AA: So you would say that...with freer laws now, if the children are less disciplined. That we have more...

PN: Oh, yes. Definitely so. I have two nieces who are school teachers. They say that I retired at the right time.

(Laughter)

AA: 'Cause you do stuff like that.

PN: Yeah.

AA: What about your jobs done? All the jobs that you have held? Could you go over them?

PN: What do you mean?

AA: Like, all your teaching jobs or other odd jobs that you have done.

PN: What about my job, you said?

AA: Can you just sort of go down the list of all the jobs that you had?

PN: Well, in the '20s, you know, when I graduated from Normal School, we all had to be farmed out on the outside island. You just have to serve your term on the neighbor islands. It's a good thing it was a one semester job in an isolated school called Kaupo on the tail end of Maui. In order to go there--in those days, there were no airplanes. So, I had to ride on a boat to go to Kahului. There the supervising principal picked up another teacher and me and took us to the schools where we were assigned. The other woman was the teacher-principal at Keanae School. After that, my supervising principal took me to Hana where I had to pick up some pots and pans, and clothing that I had shipped previously on a boat. They were kept at Hana School. I packed them in two gunnysacks, threw them over the
saddle at Kipahulu where he got two mules for us. I mean, one mule for himself, and one mule for me. We went up and down the gulches for three and a half hours ride to Kaupo, Maui. I was the only occupant of the teachers' cottage. It was a very primitive town.

AA: How many teachers were there in all?

PN: Only two teachers. The principal and I. And since the principal taught the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade, I had to teach the first, second, and third, where I had no experience whatsoever.

AA: Was Kaupo, Maui a plantation town?

PN: No, it's still ranch country. Now there is a road to Kaupo. I haven't been back there since the road was built. During the Depression they built a road good enough for one car. One hour, traffic will go in one direction. Another hour, the traffic will reverse. Once a month Mauna Kea used to come out to Kaupo and since there was no harbor, the boat would stay outside, away from the shore. They brought the things to this Kaupo landing by small boats.

AA: Mauna Kea is the name of a boat?

PN: Yes. Steamer Day was very exciting for the kids. Once a month. Hawaiians made up the population in that community. Boy! The children stripped off to swim on Steamer day. And swim, you know. (Laughs) I wasn't quite used to seeing children swimming naked. But then, nobody would laugh, so I didn't laugh either.

AA: After Kaupo, where did you go to teach?

PN: For the next three years, I taught at a school called Halehaku School in Peahi, Maui. That school is gone now because some years later, we had the Depression. The pineapple industry was in the dumps. So...the school became smaller and smaller. And eventually disappeared from the map. An interesting thing about that school was, another male teacher and I were assigned to that school, but we had no living accommodations. There was the principal's cottage plus one other teachers' cottage. Two men couldn't very well stay there, so we were told to live in a pineapple camp house some distance away. No paved road. Only, muddy road. Before the school year began we went there to clean up the place. Both of us didn't have a car, so we had to walk to school on the muddy road. But the principal got special dispensation from the Department of Education to let us occupy one of the rooms in her cottage. That meant four unmarried people lived in the same cottage. The principal was a nice part-Hawaiian woman. She told us that since we lived there, we'd have to clean the bathroom one week and the next week, the parlor. And that's what we did. We used to get rating, at the end of the school year.

AA: Rating?
PN: Rating...whether you were teaching properly, the use of correct English, behavior in the teachers' cottage, and so on. Both of us got superior for cottage behavior.

(Laughter)

AA: You mean they did stuff like that for teachers? You were rated?

PN: The principal had to rate us at the end of each year. One of them was cottage behavior. We lived with the principal----and another woman. There were two bedrooms. Two men occupied one room, while the principal and her cottage mate occupied another room. Both of us got rated superior in cottage behavior. Of course, we had to behave, you know. It was so different from now-a-days.

AA: Okay. Your next job?

PN: In the meantime, my mother became paralyzed. She was staying with my married sister. So I asked the department whether I could be placed on Oahu so that I can be near home. I was assigned to Waianae School. I didn't apply for Waialua, because I didn't want to teach in my hometown school. Since I didn't have a car in those days, I was thinking of taking the 3 o'clock Sunday train from Haleiwa to Waianae. Every Sunday, the train would come to Haleiwa Hotel about noontime. At 3 o'clock, it would leave for Honolulu. So, I was thinking of going to Waianae, Sunday before Labor Day. Day after Labor Day, school would start. But I didn't have to do that. In the meantime, the department wanted some teachers who didn't have to occupy the teacher cottages. In those days, the teachers had to live in the cottages. You couldn't commute from Honolulu. The rules were rather strict. Mr. Sam Haga and I were placed at Haleiwa---Waialua Elementary School. There I taught until I retired. That was in 1931.

AA: You started in 1931?

PN: Yeah, in Waialua.

AA: Okay. Can I ask you a question about the train? How much did you have to pay to ride a train to Honolulu?

PN: Oh, let me see. I can't remember. Because I never did use the train.

AA: Yeah. You didn't go that trip, right. Okay. What about the hours? 1931? The hours at Waialua Elementary? Was it eight to two? The regular hours?

PN: Yes, that's right. Some of us stayed after 2 o'clock to prepare for lessons for the next day.

AA: The grades--did you teach just one grade in one class or did you have to mix your children?
PN: Well, at Haleiwa, being a larger school, I taught one grade. But in 1941, the year the War started, Kawaiola became a part of Waialua Elementary School. So, I was asked to teach at Kawaiola Elementary. I taught there one year. But I didn't like it, because it was so isolated. Nobody seems to come and visit us. Nobody bother you. At the same time, we had no contact with other teachers.

AA: They only needed one teacher at Kawaiola?

PN: No. We had Mrs. Kawashima who was a permanent fixture there until she transferred to another school. Then there was another teacher. So three of us were there.

AA: Were you living in this house, then, when you were...

PN: Yeah.

AA: And how did you get back and forth to Kawaiola?

PN: Back in those days, I already had a car.

AA: Oh. 1941?

PN: Yeah. So I commuted from here.

AA: And that's all your teaching jobs that you have had? So, what things did you have to buy around this area? Say, 1920? That's when you started? 1925 is when you graduated...

PN: From high school. Then I went to Normal School for actually about two and half years. Actually it was two years, but I extended my stay and I got out in 1928 after the first semester. As soon as I finished Normal School courses I went out to teach.

AA: Why was it called a Normal School?

PN: Well, it was the only teacher-training school. Normal School required two years of training. That's all. But, later on, most of us, except some oldtimers, went back to the University to get two more years of schooling so that we could get a degree in education.

AA: Okay. So when you graduated, then, did you live alone or did you still live with your family?

PN: Well, I was sent out to Maui.

AA: Okay. Excuse me. 1931, that's when you began at Haleiwa?

PN: Yeah. The year I came back, my father passed away. So, my mother and I lived together for a long time.
AA: Okay. So, what were the major things that you had to pay for? Electricity, water, and....

PN: Yes, food.

AA: Were there any kind of free things around because you were a teacher?

PN: No, no.

AA: I was thinking of the plantation, excuse me.

PN: But the pay was very, very cheap in those days, because cost of living was so cheap.

AA: So, it was enough for you to live on?

PN: Yes.

AA: And could you still use the bank?

PN: Yeah. I think we only got about $110.

AA: A month?

PN: Yes.

AA: And about how much would you say it would cost you and your mother to live for a month?

PN: Oh, that I wouldn't know, but, I was able to save, too.

AA: So....what about the banks and the savings and loans? Did you get to use them?

PN: Well, we didn't have credit union in the beginning. The only bank was this....

AA: First Hawaiian?

PN: Yeah, but we used to call it Bishop Bank. The bank is still there.

AA: So this was the first bank in this area?

PN: Yes. And then there was the Bank of Hawaii where the kakui nut factory is located right now.

AA: Did you participate in something called tanomoshi?

PN: No, not for me. Because I was....a school teacher, very few people asked me to join. But, I know many of the local people had tanomoshi.
AA: So as a school teacher, you were sort of respected?

PN: Yes. I don't think they wanted to ask me to join.

AA: Were there any organizations that existed to help the people around the area? I know the community group, Waialua Community Association.

PN: Yes, and we used to have this so-called Seinen Kai, Young People's Association that used to meet back of the Haleiwa Post Office. There used to be a Japanese language school there. Later on the school closed because we had Waialua Hongwanji Japanese School and Taishō Gakkō. They couldn't make it a go. Finally, Haleiwa Seinen Kai, Haleiwa Young People's Association, got the building and the property. We used to meet there. Every Christmas season we used to patrol that Haleiwa area during the wee hours of the night. At least two of us would go around. The only thing that people steal would be chickens or something like that.

AA: That was the only thing you can remember? Seinen Kai.

PN: Seinen Kai? And then I used to help the Rural YMCA...boys' activities in the country. Mr. Taichi Matsuno, rural YMCA executive organized the so-called Friendly Indian Tribes throughout the rural Oahu communities. I used to help him. That's where I learned quite a number of old time songs.

AA: How come it was given this name, Indians? Were there Indians in Waialua?

PN: No, no! YMCA used to organize these boys' clubs. But girls were ignored in those days. I never heard of any girls' clubs except Girls Scouts but now that the YMCA has buildings in Wahiawa and other places, they don't have the Friendly Indian tribes.

AA: Okay. You were talking about language schools. Do you remember any other language schools other than Japanese?

PN: I don't remember any other language schools, although there were some Chinese. I think Chinese students went to Wahiawa Chinese language school.

AA: But as far as you can remember, it was only the Japanese in Waialua?

PN: Yes, that's right.

AA: You didn't hear of any Portuguese school?

PN: No, I don't think so. Some of these old time Portuguese belong to Senior Citizens Club. I ask these Portuguese, "How do you say Happy New Year?" Some of them even can't say Happy New Year in Portuguese.
(AA laughs)

PN: It's pathetic, you know. I help at the Area Wide Horizon Socialization hour every week. At New Year's time, I ask the Filipinos, "How do you say Happy New Year in Filipino?" I know how to say Happy New Year in Japanese. And I would ask some of these Portuguese oldtimers, "How do you say Happy New Year?" They can't even express it.

AA: Okay. Let's move on. Did you date? (Laughs) What kind of dating patterns did you have when you were growing up?

PN: Very strict, yes. I don't think we have any dating like the kind that we have now.

AA: But, did you go with a group of young men and then you went to a picnic and there were a group of young ladies there, and that's how you met?

PN: No. We had this Seinen Kai, young people's activities. We didn't have these parties and invite women at all.

AA: Seinen Kai was mainly boy, then. All boy.

PN: Yeah. Young men. We had New Year's parties, but we never invited women.

AA: How fun was it, then, when there weren't any girls around? (Laughs)

PN: Well, I suppose, in those days, we didn't think it was funny, because we had a strict moral upbringing.

AA: So how did you get to meet your future wives, then?

PN: You know, I got married at a very late age. I met my wife through the founder of this religion. That's how I got married.

AA: What about your friends? How did they, you know, they didn't get married as late as you were.

PN: Some of them got married through so called miai. Miai means there's a go-between. The go-between thinks there is a certain lady who would make a good wife. So he arranges a meeting. That's how some of my friends married. In those days, no dating, absolutely.

AA: What about the weddings of you and your friends? Were they big parties?

PN: Not as big as present days. In those days we had no Seaview Inn, no Dot's Drive-in. So, whenever there was a wedding reception, it was held there at home. They put up a tent or something like that. The family friends got together and prepared food. Of course, we didn't have the varieties like the kind we have now. I remember when Mr. Fujioka got married.
AA: Mr. Hiroshi (Fujioka)?
PN: Yeah. He put up a big tent in the Hongwanji Church ground.
AA: That's the one in Waialua?
PN: Yeah. Right opposite their present store. And then, we had the reception and party right under the tent. No loudspeaker in those days.
AA: Did you have a band?
PN: No!
AA: No music? (Laughs)
PN: No such thing. Those things came in later.
AA: Okay. (Laughs)
PN: Yeah.
AA: About when did you start having bands at parties? Orchestras.
PN: Well, I think, after the War the customs changed quite a bit.
AA: What about Japanese customs that you took from home and used here in Hawaii when you got married?
PN: Well, I think the Japanese custom that still remains is this banzai at the end. We give three cheers of banzai for the bride and groom, and three cheers of banzai for the guests. That seems to remain in Hawaii. Some Japanese visitors say they are surprised that we are still doing it. In Japan, they don't do that any more. Some of these customs that disappeared in Japan are still being maintained right here in Hawaii.
AA: Is that the only example that you can think of?
PN: Yes, I think so. In the old days, all of them got married in Japanese kimono. But not any more. Kimono is rather impractical. Once you use it for your wedding, you don't use it any more.
AA: Kimonos are very costly to make?
PN: Right now it is.
AA: What about the rice on the bed? My sister is Japanese and she had rice on the bed? Under the bed? Isn't that a Japanese custom?
PN: I never heard of it.
(AA laughs)
PN: That's something new to me.
AA: Yeah. Well, my sister is Japanese. My sister-in-law and her mother did that on their wedding night. She put....

PN: Really?

AA: Well, maybe that's something new.

PN: Oh! Live and learn. That's the first time I've heard of it. When my wife comes back, I'm going to ask her. I never heard of that kind of custom.

AA: Okay. This was the house that you've been in all this time? This house?

PN: Yes.

AA: This house is built around nineteen....

PN: Thirty-eight.

AA: Before that, where were you living?

PN: My brother-in-law used to operate the Haleiwa Service Station. He had the main house. And right next to it was this Queen Liliuokalani's summer cottage.

AA: You lived in it?

PN: Yeah. But nothing to boast about. That land is owned by the Liliuokalani Estate where Haleiwa Service Station is.

AA: That's the one right in front of Sea and Surf?

PN: Yes. That's right.

AA: So that house was really nice. It had indoor toilets?

PN: No. That came afterward, I'm sure.

AA: The indoor toilets came afterwards?

PN: Yeah. When Queen Liliuokalani....was using that, I think, she must have had an outhouse.

AA: Okay. This house was bought.(Referring to present house) Was it new?

PN: Yeah.

AA: You were the first occupants of this house?

PN: Well, my brother-in-law and I asked the same contractor. My brother-in-law owned those three houses right next to me. This is my own. Since we had the same contractor, people thought I own those three rental units for many, many years. Up to a few years ago, people thought I owned those houses. We only had the same contractor.
In the meantime, my brother-in-law sold it to somebody, and it has changed hands many times. And yet people thought I owned those rental units. Some people would come and ask whether I had any units to rent. And I said, "Oh, no"...

AA: They're not mine's. (Laughs)

PN: Said, "No. I never owned those three houses."

AA: So living with your mother alone, then you had to take care of mostly everything?

PN: Yes.

AA: You had to do your garden. You had to do the housework?

PN: Yeah.

AA: Okay. What kind of food did you used to eat?

PN: Well, you know, we weren't raised on milk and cheese. To this day, if I should drink milk, I have running stomach.

AA: Really?

PN: Yeah. I go for hot lunch at Haleiwa Gym sometimes and that's one thing I decline. I don't drink milk. But if it's as cheese or ice cream, it doesn't affect my stomach. As I was never raised on cheese, I don't buy cheese to put in my sandwiches. I was telling some of my friends at the Haleiwa Gym, "Oh, I won't buy cheese to eat. But since it's served here, I don't want to waste it." So I put it between the sandwiches or rolls and eat it. But we weren't raised on milk or cheese.

AA: So, mostly your diet was rice and fish?

PN: Yes. In fact, my mother said I was very weak when I was young, so she made a vow to a patron saint that she would cut out meat which she like very much. So she never touch meat after that.

AA: But then, she fed you meat?

PN: Well, when she used to cook for my brother-in-law's family, she used to prepare meat. But she never touched it herself. But that's an old-fashioned custom. If you ask a favor from a patron saint, you cut out something that you like very much.

AA: And are you healthy now?

PN: I think so.

(Laughter)

PN: I don't know if it's because of her vow, but that's what she told me.
AA: Okay. Most of the...since you live out here where the ocean is so close, did you mostly eat fish that...

PN: Yes. We used to have fish peddlers. This area used to be called ryoba, fishing village. Ryoba. The fishermen lived just beyond our house. Many fishermen lived there. Most of the diet consisted of fish, eggs and things like that.

AA: I've heard of a Mr. Molle? He used to be a fish peddler? You don't know him?

PN: No. Not Japanese?

AA: No, it's a Filipino.

PN: Oh. Oh, I've heard of that name.

AA: Fortunato Molle?

PN: Yeah, yeah. But before he came into existence, we had lots of fishermen like Mr. Minoru Aoki's father. His father and mother were occupied in catching and selling fish.

AA: Fish and seaweed then?

PN: No seaweed. Mr. Aoki's mother used to bunch up two or three aji and sell them. Is that akule?

AA: The fish?

PN: Yeah.

AA: Yeah.

PN: She would tie them together with this reed that grew along Anahulu Stream. It was called akakai (reed).

AA: Is that Hawaiian?

PN: Yes. When we were small, we used to go upstream and cut akakai, tie them up and make them into rafts. We used to go up and down on akakai rafts. Boy! We used to have lots of fun. There was a very large hau tree beyond this place.

AA: There's still a hau tree there. A little hau tree.

PN: Yeah, but then, this was a huge one, growing---right beside the river. And we used to climb the tree and build tree houses.

(AA chuckles)

PN: Really fun. Children now a days have to have store toys, you know. But we used to make all kinds of things. We used to make...this hau swords. Get a hau branch, and cut a ring at one point. You
tap the side of the hau where the sword's blade would be. You keep on tapping. When it becomes loose, out comes a round sword. The scabbard is the hau bark. We used to play with these swords; we had lots of fun. We just had to make our own toys in those days. There used to be a railroad bridge right there.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

AA: Let's talk about the kind of recreation that you had after work. Other than your job, what things did you do?

PN: Well, I was always interested in gardening, so, I did quite a bit of gardening and raising plants. I'm not too sports minded, so I didn't get involved in baseball. But baseball has been very popular since our younger days. We used to have a golf course right here (area known as Alii Beach). But in the old days, very few Japanese people played golf, because you have to be rather affluent to enjoy the game. But now, it's every man's game.

AA: You also like movies.

PN: Oh yes!

AA: I saw you one time at a Filipino movie. (Laughs)

PN: Yeah. I tell my wife that I think I'm the only Japanese who would go and see a Filipino movie. I used to go and see Fernando Poe. But this last Monday, I went to Koga Theatre to see Fernando Poe and Albano Brothers. I was disappointed. It had very little action.

AA: (Laughs) Okay. You like to see action in the....

PN: Oh, yes, I do. I go to kung fu movies all the time. Is it next week they're having this Filipino kung fu movie? Snake Women or something?

AA: Haleiwa? I don't know. I can't see the board any more. When I pass by, usually I can see the big boards. But now they use the little boards and I can't see.

PN: Yeah.

AA: Okay. Did you belong to any organizations or clubs like the---you said you belong to the---Seinen Kai. You said you belong to that. What about other clubs? Like even now.

PN: Well, I used to help with the YMCA boys activities and then....I used to be a member of the Lion's Club. I...I couldn't keep it up, because I was so involved in other activities. Besides, I had to slow down my pace.

AA: What kind of things did the Lion's Club do?
PN: Well, the main thing is to help the people who are blind. Or to prevent blindness. I notice lately they are offering scholarships.

AA: Yeah. Okay. You said your stomach doesn't agree with milk. Is it because you weren't brought up on it or because, maybe, there's something wrong with your stomach.

PN: No, I think it's because some people just can't take milk. When I go to hot lunch, some Japanese people decline their milk, too, because they cannot drink milk. But... if I eat ice cream or cheese, it doesn't affect me at all.

AA: Okay. What about illnesses? Have you had accidents or illnesses?

PN: No accidents so far, but then, I think I have a weak stomach, though.

(Laughter)

AA: Then how can you watch those movies? Those bloody movies? (Laughs)

PN: I tell my wife. She gets all excited when I take her to movies. The next day, she's pooped. So I'd say, "You take the movies too seriously. So just think that you are looking at a movie, and you won't get too excited. And that's the way."

AA: When you got sick or injured, did you go to Waialua Hospital?

PN: In the old days, we weren't supposed to go to Waialua Hospital.

AA: Because you were from here? Oh!

PN: Because we are non-plantation people.

AA: Plantation....okay. So where did you go? Dr. Miyasaki?

PN: Yeah. Of course, we didn't have Wahiawa Hospital those days. So we all have to go to Honolulu. The Kuakini Hospital was called Japanese Hospital.

AA: Okay. You said you married pretty late? So then your wife never had to bear her child?

PN: Yeah. Too late already.

(Laughter)

AA: Too late. Okay. Do you remember any children here that were retarded? How did the community react to them? Where were they take care?

PN: Well....I think most of the parents kept their retarded children at home. You know that....woman who maintains a little store next to Tanabe's? She still takes care of her retarded daughter. But I suppose, now days, since both parents work, they would prefer sending their retarded children to an institution or something
So the retarded children, then, they were kept at home and kept away from people?

Well, stay close to home. I don't think they mingled with the community. Unless the mother took the child with her whenever she went.

Were there any superstitions involved with that, like, there was...

Yes. Concerning harelip. Japanese superstition is... if a pregnant woman should fool around with the fireplace she would have a harelip baby. In our days we cooked our rice outdoors, with firewood.

Wasn't it also a bad sign, like, the parent have sinned or they are paying for something that they've done, because...

That's the Buddhist philosophy of karma. Whatever you sow, you reap later. They call it karma.

Yeah. Okay. What about people who committed suicide? Do you know of any here?

Well, there have been few cases of suicide. I notice some of them who are ill and if it was incurable, some committed suicide.

Who took care of the streets around Haleiwa? Who picked up garbage, you know?

Oh, in the old days, we never had this rubbish... I mean, refuse collection. We just burned our rubbish in the backyard.

Your first car, what kind of a model was it?

My brother-in-law used to have connection with Castner Garage.

Castner Ford?

Yeah. Later it was known as Castner Ford. Castner Garage used to be where the Datsun agency is. He worked there for some years. Later on, he opened his own service station. He got me a Ford Roadster. That was a second hand Ford Roadster. It was my first car.

Was it just your car?

Yeah.

How much did it cost you? It was second hand? Can you remember how much...

I think just a few hundred dollars.

Did you ever own a bicycle or a horse?
PN: Oh, yes. When we...went to school, some of us used bicycles. But nobody stole our bicycles in those days. It was very safe. (Laughs)

AA: Did you ever own a horse? You must have had lots of horses.

PN: Yes, my father had a horse. And I used to ride on horseback.

AA: Did you have a post office then?

PN: The only post office we had was Waialua Post Office, and we had to go and get the mail at the Waialua Post Office. You know right where the present library is.

AA: Yeah. I still remember it. How did you find about things that were happening in Honolulu? You know, you had newspapers?

PN: Oh, yes.

AA: Okay. The newspapers were published in town?

PN: The Japanese papers were delivered to your home, everyday. Because there was an agent here, right here in Haleiwa. He used to have a newsboy to deliver the paper daily.

AA: Well, what I meant more was how did you get to hear about, you know, the news? How did you get to hear it?

PN: Only through the newspapers. Because we didn't have radio in those days.

AA: There weren't people that come back with enough from Honolulu-Waialua that could tell you what was happening there?

PN: No. Mostly through the newspapers.

AA: And what was the newspapers then? What was the names of the newspapers then?

PN: Nippu Jiji. That's called Hawaii Times right now. And Hawaii Hochi. But Hawaii Hochi changed its name to Hawaii Herald during the War but went back to Hawaii Hochi again.

AA: And the English papers were the Honolulu...

PN: Star Bulletin. And Advertiser. But when we were attending Japanese school, you know, we used to celebrate Emperor's birthday. The Japanese teachers used to tell us to bow deeply in front of the Emperor's picture.

AA: This was done in your Japanese school?

PN: Yes. But after the War, all those customs just flew out of the window. It's good, too.
AA: How come?

PN: I don't see why we should bow at the Emperor's picture.

AA: (Chuckles) Okay. When did you get your first TV and your radio?

PN: Oh, I just got it two years ago when we had cable TV. My roof is made of cement and asbestos, and it's supposed to be permanent. If anybody should get on top of it, the roofing will crack. So I never did get TV until the cable TV came into existence.

AA: How come it was built like that? I don't think any other houses are built like that.

PN: This used to be called Hawaiian Roof. As it would shed water quickly. But, in this day and age, it's very expensive to have a Hawaiian Roof.

AA: So that protects against fires, then?

PN: Well, the cement asbestos....a man whom I knew said, "Why don't you have a permanent roofing instead of shingles, because every so often you'd have to change your shingles." So, he put it up for me.

AA: The cement asbestos roofing. When did you get it?

PN: Oh, let's see, sometime after the War.

AA: Was it popular then? I never heard of it.

PN: I don't think so. I know my friend has it near the beachfront. The same man who put this cement asbestos roofing for me did it for him. But, he had a TV antenna on top, and the roof cracked. To this day, he said he can't find the leak.

AA: Okay. Your radio then.

PN: Oh, radio was very popular. I can't remember when I got my first radio....

AA: When do you recall the Japanese dialect, the Japanese language was used on the radio when they had Japanese programs?

PN: Before the War. KGU had a Japanese language program, at certain hours. So many stations had a Japanese language program at certain hours.

AA: Okay. What about the telephone? About when did you get your telephone?

PN: Let's see....I didn't have telephone for a long time. I don't know when I installed my telephone actually. When I first got it, there were only two Ninomiyas on the directory.
(AA laughs)

PN: But now, the so-called clan has expanded, and I see quite a number of Ninomiyas on the listing.

AA: Okay. What about gossip? You know....

PN: Well, gossip is a pastime, you know...

AA: Oh, most times, what did you gossip about?

PN: Oh, about friends and how they got married, and so forth. That's about it. I think topics of gossip don't change at all.

AA: Okay. So that in a way that was a way of communication. It was like a newspaper in some ways.

PN: Yes. That's right. Unless you go to wedding parties, or funerals, you wouldn't pick up gossip about friends who have been so far away.

AA: Okay. What about crime in this area? Like, could you tell me about...

PN: Hardly any! I could just leave the doors open and visit Haleiwa and come back. Nothing was stolen.

AA: But, there were some people that behaved, you know, in a manner that wasn't accepted by you all. There must have been some. (Laughs)

PN: I suppose so, but....

AA: None that you know of.

PN: Before Christmas quite a number of chickens used to get stolen. So, that was about the biggest crime around here.

AA: What about drunk people and....

PN: Oh!

AA: ...gambling? Nothing like that?

PN: Oh, in the old days, it was a Japanese custom, on New Year's Day to, you know, visit friends from house to house. At each house, you're offered some sake. By the time you visit about four or five houses, you'd get drunk. I know my father used to enjoy such customs. But I didn't.

AA: I've heard of a place here that people used to go gamble, and play mahjong. Do you remember that?

PN: Oh, well, I think gambling has been going on for ages....
AA: No. There was one house around Haleiwa. And it wasn't known to all.

PN: Chee. I wonder. You know, I've been away---while I was attending high school...

AA: Maui?

PN: Yeah. I don't know many of those things.

AA: (Laughs) Okay.

PN: But I know there was a well-known gamblers.

AA: Well-known gamblers?

PN: Yeah.

AA: Okay. Do you remember the Fukunaga murder case? Fukunaga?

PN: Fukunaga. Yeah.

AA: Can you tell me about it?

PN: Well, I wasn't here at that time. Where was I? On Maui, Some local people got some reward money. Those were the days when the Big Five were very powerful. Some people were antagonized with the Big Five activities. Until the War ended, the Republican Party was the party. You hardly heard of the Democratic Party. And no labor unions.

AA: Okay. These political parties, about when did they come around? Nineteen forty...

PN: Yes. After the War.

AA: Did you belong to any of them?

PN: No. I'm always an independent voter. When election time comes, I give some of my votes to Republicans as well as Democrats. In the primary, I vote as a Democrat. But that doesn't mean that I'm going to vote for all Democrats in the General Election.

AA: Could you explain more about your religious group? The one that you are in now?

PN: Well, this is a post-War religion. It was started by a woman named Mrs. Sayo Kitamura. She preaches that we are born unto this world to polish our souls. At the present time, man has forgotten the initial objective of this life, and he seems to be thinking only of his own welfare. That's why the world is deteriorating. There are many crimes, because everybody thinks of himself only. We have
forgotten the message of God that we should polish our soul, and as we polish our soul, we'll come to a stage where we can enjoy heavenly bliss while you are living on this earth.

AA: You're very active in this?
PN: Well, in fact, I'm the branch chairman for this locality.

AA: Where is your temple?
PN: Actually, we don't have a temple, but we meet in a member's house, every week. Right now, we go to Mr. Ohama's residence on Paalaa Road. But it's interesting to note that whatever religion you belong to there are more women than men. It seems that women are more religious or more interested in religion. Maybe men have too many outside activities.

AAL Mrs. Sayo Kitamura, is she from Waialua?
PN: No, she is from Japan. That's the founder's picture right there.

AA: Oh, that's Mrs. Kitamura?
PN: Yes. We are building a new church building in Palama. It should be completed sometime at the end of this summer. That's how I got married to my present wife.

AA: Is your wife from Japan?
PN: Yes, she's from Japan.

AA: Okay. Who was your boss at Haleiwa Elementary?
PN: Well, when I first came back in 1931, we had Mr. Philip Cooley. Then later on, we had Miss Ruth Rankin. You remember her?

AA: No. I had Mr. Goldman?
PN: No, Mr. Dowson.

AA: Dawson! Right!
PN: Dowson. Not Dawson, Dowson. Miss Rankin was sent to this locality from Waikiki School to improve the situation, and she certainly did a good job. Very strict disciplinarian, and I think the people didn't appreciate her while she was here. After she left, then people said, "Oh, she was a fine principal." It's too bad that after she left the people seem to recognize her work.

AA: So you had a very good relation with all of the principals, there? Okay. Oh. Can I ask you what are your reactions to mixed marriages?
PN: I am very open minded.

AA: Okay. You might not really have an answer to this since you're not
from the plantation, but why do you think they had segregated camps at the plantation?

PN: Well, I think in the old days, the plantation haoles thought of themselves as a class above everybody else. And I think they still have that kind of notion. A little bit. You know, we have this Area Wide Horizon and Hui Ilima O Hale-Wai Senior Citizens Club. You know, we have Filipinos, Portuguese, Japanese, Koreans, every nationality groups except haoles. They still think that maybe they wouldn't enjoy themselves, mixing up with people. That's too bad, because we have such a good time. And they're missing plenty.

AA: (Chuckles) Okay. In Haleiwa, then, was it a mixed up of—mixed with each other people were living to—Filipinos, Portuguese and Japanese in Haleiwa?

PN: No. In the old days, Japanese associated with Japanese strictly. Of course, there weren't so many Filipinos in those days. Some Filipinos. They lived in camps mostly. So we hardly mixed together.

AA: You hardly mixed with the other children then?

PN: Yeah. Except at school, but we didn't have too many Filipino children in those days.

AA: Was it mostly Portuguese and Japanese?

PN: Mostly Japanese.

AA: Okay. How do you think the relationships between the different ethnic groups have changed? After the War?

PN: For the better. Because so many mixed marriages. You can't be too particular, you know.

AA: Okay. What about unionization of the mill? How do you think that has changed the relationships?

PN: Unionization of what? You mean sugar mill? The plantation working people?

AA: Mhm. Well, it must have affected some of you here.

PN: Yes, I suppose so. They get better pay, and better....working conditions and so on.

AA: What I meant was do you think that because they had to stick up for a common cause—stand up for a common cause, they were more friendly towards each other now?

PN: Yes. I suppose so.
AA: The Waialua Community Association has a yearly fair. Did you ever participate in that?

PN: Yes, during my younger days, I used to help. In fact, I used to help the Waialua Community Association activities when Mr. Midkiff was the advisor. Not Mr. John Midkiff, but Mr. Frank Midkiff was one of the founders of Waialua Community Association.

AA: What about the Sea Spree. Did you help out on that?

PN: No. I haven't helped at the Sea Spree. In fact, the Lion's Club, pulled out of the Sea Spree.

AA: Oh! But the Lion's Club used to have Memorial Day over there.

PN: Yeah. They still have it. The Lion's Club helps with the Waialua Community Association Carnival, each year. I don't know when they're having it this year...

AA: The what association?

PN: Waialua Community Association and Waialua Athletic Association have a combination carnival every year. That's when the Lion's Club helps.

AA: Mr. Midkiff formed a Cosmopolitan Club or something like that. Do you remember something like that? Where they had the... educated men from each ethnic group join, and I think that was the beginning of the Waialua Community Association.

PN: Let me see. Maybe it was before my days. When I was on the outside island, maybe, it might have happened. But...

AA: Yeah. People like Mr. Baysa, Mr. Sarmiento and some other people were on it. They had every ethnic group in there.

PN: Oh, is that so?

AA: And they had some teachers, too, I believe.

PN: Oh, is that so? I can't remember that.

AA: Okay. It was referred to as a Cosmopolitan Club. (Laughs) Could you relate to me what were the happiest parts of your life? What was the happiest part of your life? Thus far? (Laughs) And then later on you can tell me the saddest part of your life.

PN: I don't know what I would say the happiest---well, I suppose getting married and having a different environment in the home is the happiest part...

AA: The saddest?
PN: But, you know, I always am an optimist. I'm not too depressed like some people, so you have to look at the brighter side of life. That's why I like to sing this song Que Sera, Que Sera. Whatever will be will be I just taught that at the Senior Citizens Club.

AA: You teach them songs?

PN: Oh, yes, I like singing. But the trouble is I'm not a musician. I can't read notes. But I like to sing, so, I introduce many new songs. In fact, Willie Rego said the other day after we sang Love's Old Sweet Song, "That was very nice." And to find the words was most difficult. I went to Haleiwa Elementary School looking for the words of the song. They had thrown away so many old songbooks, and the new songbooks just don't have those old fashioned songs. It's really pathetic. To find the words......did I go all over!

AA: The library didn't have them?

PN: No. They have some modern songs, though.

AA: Okay, what about the saddest part of your life?

PN: Well, I used to tell my mother, "My friends got this, and my friends have that." And she used to say, "Never look up. Always look down. If you look up, there's no end to it. But if you look down, there are many more unfortunate people than you are. So, you know, you shouldn't be complaining."

(AA chuckles)

PN: "So, never look up. Always look down." To me that's a good philosophy. You'd like to be affluent and like to have all your desires answered, but then, you can't do that in your life, so, if you look down, then, you find many, many unfortunate people far more unfortunate than you are.

AA: That's right. What about the most boring part of your life?

PN: Boring part? Well, I'm a very active person, so I don't like to stay still. My doctor told me to slow down, but it's kind of hard.

AA: What about the most angering part of your life? Have you ever been really angry at something?

PN: Well, I suppose I have had my clashes with Miss Rankin, but, it turned out that she had a healthy respect for me after my arguments.

AA: Okay. What about individuals in the community that you think contributed a lot? That you think highly of? Can you name me any of them? They can be dead or alive.
PN: You know, we used to have a Mr. Kazouaki Tanaka. He's the founder of Esmond Department Store. He used to have a store at the present location of Matsumoto Store. He did lots of community activities while he was here. And Mr. Midkiff....

AA: Which one? Both of them?

PN: John Midkiff, the former manager of the Waialua Plantation, was very helpful. He stood up for all the Japanese employees in the plantation, and...not one Japanese employee was taken in by FBI during WWII.

AA: The FBI?

PN: Yeah. No other plantation has that kind of record, because he said, "I will guarantee their behavior."

AA: Okay. Any others?

PN: Well, you know, we have been very fortunate that our plantation managers in the past have been thinking about the community as a whole. Not only plantation. So Mr. Paty is a good, community minded manager. And we had Mr. John Anderson.

AA: That was the manager also?

PN: Yes...the one before Mr. Paty wasn't too community minded, but then, we've always had a good relation with the plantation.

AA: Before Mr. Paty was Mr. Midkiff. Right?

PN: No. No.

AA: Thompson?

PN: We had another one. He had a home at Papailoa Road. He had a stroke so he had to retire. I don't know where he is.

AA: You don't?

PN: No....he didn't mix in with the community too much, so I can't remember his name.

AA: (Chuckles) Yeah. Okay. Is that like about it? What about the people other than the managers? The teachers, you think there was any outstanding teachers at Haleiwa Elementary?

PN: Well, you know, Mrs. O'Donnell was well liked. Maile O'Donnell. And I used to have a friend called...Miss Fanny Howe. Hoo, she's...H-O-W-E. Actually, her name should be Fanny Wong. Her father used to be called Wong Hau. So they adopted the name, Howe. People thought she was a haole. But then, her family name is Wong.
AA: She was a teacher, too, here?

PN: Yeah. She taught at this school for a long time. Then we had Mrs. Annie Keao. Vice principal during her later years.

AA: Mhm. Okay. Are you tired? Can I ask you another question? (Laughs) Can you relate some of your experiences when you were part of the Waialua Victory Unit?

PN: Some months later, after the war started, some Japanese niseis, second generation Japanese, organized the Emergency Service Committee. They organized a branch in Haleiwa-Waialua area called Victory Unit. We used to have to assist in their activities. I remember going around collecting money from the isseis and niseis for the Bomb Tokyo program. I happened to go to one home although they were locally born, I knew they were pro-Japanese. So I just told this party, "Just because I'm going around collecting money for this, I don't want you to talk in my back and say that I'm, what do you call, doing this to defeat Japan. But I am doing my duty, and I don't want you to talk stink about me in the back." I still remember, because that was a famous pro-Japanese family. Pro-Japan family, although they were locally born. Many of them just contributed quietly to the fund.

AA: These funds were used for....

PN: To be presented to the Governor to bomb Tokyo in retaliation for the Pearl Harbor attack. We used to help with the memorial services for the boys who were killed in action.

AA: In Hawaii, or....

PN: In Haleiwa-Waialua area. Most of the Buddhist ministers were interned, so, we used to have Buddhist ministers come from Honolulu.

AA: You were saying that Mr. Midkiff....Mr. Midkiff saw to it that none of the people from this area weren't...

PN: No, he couldn't guarantee the behavior of Haleiwa people, but those Japanese who were under the plantation, I mean, those people who were working for the plantation. He said, "I'll vouch for their loyalty." And not one Japanese employee from the Waialua Plantation was interned. And the people were very appreciative. But Haleiwa people, quite a number of people were interned.

AA: Yeah. Okay. Can you think of any other stories about that?

PN: Well, I suppose some of the older Japanese must have looked at us in the Victory Unit with suspicion, but, heck! I didn't care. (Laughter)
PN: See, back in---my mother and I visited Japan in 1929. My father died in 1928, and we took his ashes back to his home village. And my mother showed me the family rice fields. "This is your own." And then she pointed to the hill and said, "That's your hill where the trees are growing." In those days in Japan, you cut your own lumber in your hillside forest, built their home. I told my mother, "I don't want any of these things. If you want go give them to your relatives, go ahead. I'm not going to come back to Japan to live. I'm not going to be a farmer." But the Chinese were wiser, China was overcrowded. They had no intention of going back. So they acquired properties and expanded right here. The Japanese were not so wise. They all thought they would be going back to live in Japan. So they were way behind the Chinese.

AA: Yeah. But you've made it up there.

(Laughter)

PN: Made it after the War.

AA: Okay, so that's about it?

END OF INTERVIEW
This is the second interview with Mr. Philip H. Ninomiya at his house 66-132 Haleiwa Beach Road, Haleiwa. Today is July 23, 1976. Mr. Ninomiya, can you tell me why you became a teacher?

Well, you know, I didn't know exactly what to do. So I went for a job orientation interview at Nuuanu YMCA. Whoever interviewed me advised that I should be a schoolteacher. My parents wanted me to be a dentist but I didn't want to be a dentist. Actually, I didn't know what career I should choose. (Laughs)

Did you know this person?

Yes, he was an old-time YMCA employee. Nuuanu YMCA.

Yeah. Did you have any kind of respect for him that you....

He worked among the young people, so that's why I knew him.

So what grades did you teach?

Well, I didn't want to teach the primary grades. That's first, second, and third. In those days, there weren't any kindergartens, and so I decided to teach the upper elementary grades. That's fourth, fifth, and sixth. But when I went out teaching for the first time, I taught the first, second, and third grade. It was a good thing it only lasted one semester.

This was in Maui?

Kaupo, Maui.

When you came to Waialua, what grades did you teach?

I think I taught the fifth grade for a while. Then later on I was given a sixth grade class, and till the day I retired I taught the sixth grade.

How many years did you teach your fifth grade class?
PN: Oh, I think about two years.

AA: Two years? How did your...

PN: You know, when the War started, I was at Kawaiola because that was part of Waialua Elementary School. The former name of Haleiwa Elementary. There weren't enough students so, Mrs. Kawashima taught first and second, and there was a Miss Doris Tanaka who taught the third and the fourth, and I taught the fifth and sixth.

AA: This was at Kawaiola?

PN: And then...let's see...I came back to Waialua Elementary after that. I taught the fifth grade for the next two years, I think, and then I got transferred to a sixth grade class.

AA: Why were you transferred to a sixth grade class?

PN: Well, I suppose there was an opening, and they wanted men to be teaching the sixth grade class. In those days, men teachers were very few.

AA: Can you explain that Section One, Section Two thing that they had at Waialua?

PN: We had a good ability group, and average group and so on. But I never actually taught a very good class.

AA: Could you explain how kids were placed into this class. Like I remember one class was, you know, number one.

PN: Yeah.

AA: And there's number two. And there were like about five or six different classes.

PN: I think it depended on the principal's policy. But I can't remember too well. I suppose the children were selected for their scholastic ability and English background and so on.

AA: So you would think English was the main thing they selected you upon. The main thing that put you in Section One or Section Two.

PN: You mean the schoolteacher?

AA: No, the...student.

PN: Yeah, I think so.

AA: English was the most important part of learning.

PN: Partly scholastic ability, too.
AA: Okay. Did teaching methods at Maui when you first graduated that was around 1929, '28 was that a set curriculum? Did they have you teach this way, or could you make your own?

PN: Well, I think we had a regular curriculum guide. I remember a little booklet, in which were listed the minimum essentials for a certain grade.

AA: Over the years, did that ever change?

PN: Well, I think it changed somewhat, but, for us old-timers, we don't change too much, you know. (Laughs)

AA: At Waialua, was it strict? Did they want you to confine your teaching to what they had set up for you?

PN: No, I don't think so. I don't think the principals were too strict about that. Of course, we always got complaints from the high school teachers that we didn't teach certain things in the elementary grades, but that kind of criticism has been going on for ages. (Laughs)

AA: Did you yourself introduce any new things to your classes?

PN: Well, I don't know exactly, but I liked to teach some things that are not in the regular curriculum. For example, I'm very poor in math. Oh, I don't like math, period. The only reason I took two years of math in high school was that I wanted to go to college, so I took up algebra and geometry, but oh, if anybody should ask me about those things now, I don't know beans about them. One of the things that was introduced some years ago was this additive method of subtraction. You give the cashier a dollar currency and your bill is only 37¢, as you give the change you add as you subtract. I used to teach that every year—the additive method of giving change. You know some of my friends who work in the stores complained that some of the high school graduates nowadays can't even give change properly but I made sure that everyone in my class learned how to give change.

AA: Were the teachers stressing additive subtraction that much?

PN: No, I don't think so, it all depended on the teachers. In my case it was the easiest way to subtract because I was poor in math. If I have to borrow and so on and so forth, in subtraction, I'll be puzzled.

AA: Let's concentrate on your days at Waialua. When you were teaching fifth grade, what was the subject that you taught first, you know, in your regular day?

PN: Well, we have to have the flag pledge in the morning—the so-called opening exercises: taking attendance, singing a patriotic song, and so on. That was the routine. And then you went to subject matter
teaching.

AA: Yeah. You don't remember whether you taught English first or music...

PN: No. That's too far back, the subject matters were in the curriculum that you'd have to teach, them.

AA: Okay. Can you compare the kids now and then?

PN: Oh yes. When I retired, the discipline was getting worse. In the old days, you can discipline your children. Some Japanese parents used to tell me, "Well, as long as my children are in your school, they are in your hands, so you do whatever you want to do." But now it's altogether different.

AA: This was '67 that you retired, right?

PN: No, long before '67.

AA: In the beginning part of your teaching career, did you feel freer to discipline the children?

PN: Oh! Yes! When I first started teaching, you can use yardstick, but not now.

AA: Did you ever use a yardstick?

PN: Oh yeah, in certain cases, you just have to use the yardstick.

AA: Did you supervise the children in the playground and during lunch hours?

PN: Yes. But we used to have so-called Yard Duty. Ever so often teachers had to go out in the yard to supervise the playground. We didn't actually have to supervise the games during the recess, but at least should go around and check on the children so that they won't be doing anything dangerous.

AA: Mhm. And what kind of games do you remember that the children played?

PN: Softball games...we didn't have any of these swings and things like that. Those playground equipment came later.

AA: What about games inside the classroom other than outside? I mean you must have had checkers.

PN: No, you know the old-time classrooms. Remember those small cottages on the side of Fresh Air Camp Road? You could play games in small classrooms. That's the kind of classroom I had in the beginning.... Those small cottages. But modern classrooms are so much larger.

AA: Yeah. What about little games that the children played on their desk, you know where two people can play? Remember any of those?
PN: I wouldn't know. We didn't have such things until later.

AA: Okay. When did tenure come to be? Do you remember?

PN: You mean teachers' tenure? Let's see. I cannot remember about that word tenure too much. We just start teaching and you're in the system...

AA: It didn't change anything as far as your teaching went?

PN: No. We talk about tenure now, but in those days, I don't know whether that word was in the vocabulary.

AA: Did you ever have any problems with the other teachers?

PN: Well, I suppose we're all human beings. There are some teachers with whom you can get along very well and some you cannot. I don't think, personally, that I've had too many personality clashes, but there were some personality clashes among other teachers. But that's human.

AA: That's human. What about the parent attitude toward the teachers?

PN: Oh! In the old days, the parents respected the schoolteachers. It's not true any more.

AA: Were there more people? Were there more parents participating in school activities than now?

PN: No. I think parents didn't participate the way they do now.

AA: Why is that?

PN: Well, I suppose time has changed. In the old days, I don't remember having a PTA in the school.

AA: When can you remember the PTA coming to be?

PN: Oh, that's quite late, I think. Maybe in the '50s but I'm not sure.

AA: What percentage of the students do you think went on to high school, and how much of those went on to college in the early part of your career?

PN: Not too many. Now everybody goes to college but not in the old days. In fact, when I grew up, there was only one man whom I know had gone to college. We used to admire him, because he was the only college graduate in our community, but...

AA: In Waialua?

PN: In Haleiwa section.
AA: Can you tell me who that was?

PN: That was Mr. Masatoshi Katagiri. We used to call him Masa Katagiri. He's deceased.

AA: What about your class in high school? How much of you went on to college?

PN: Not too many.

AA: Can you tell me, what was the racial breakdown, the ethnic breakdown of the school---of the students in Haleiwa?

PN: Well, there were so many Japanese students, and some Filipinos. Not as many as now.

AA: Today we have most Filipinos.

PN: There were some part-Hawaiians, a sprinkling of Portuguese, and sprinkling of haole students.

AA: Were there a lot of haoles? Could haoles go on to better schools do you think?

PN: Well, I think the plantation haoles considered themselves one class above, so some of them didn't want their children to be educated at the public schools. But gradually the situation has changed.

AA: What private schools were in existence around---let's see. You came to teach in Haleiwa in 1935? When did you begin to teach in Waialua?

PN: I started teaching at Waialua---it's now Haleiwa, Waialua Elementary School in 1931.

AA: How many private schools were there then at that time?

PN: Well, we had Punahou and St. Louis College. We used to call it college instead of high school. Actually it was a high school. And let's see. Iolani. Some of the well-to-do parents used to send their children to Mid-Pacific Institute. But during the elementary days they stayed in local schools. When the students reached the high school age, they transferred to some of these private schools.

AA: St. Louis, they called it a college, but it was a high school?

PN: Yes.

AA: When you graduated, did you have a college diploma or a high school diploma?

PN: Yes, a high school diploma. In the old days they used to call it St. Louis College.
AA: Do you remember what was the average per semester tuition for the private schools?

PN: No, I can't remember. I didn't attend any of those schools.

AA: What about in the beginning of your career here at Haleiwa-Waialua, did you require your kids to bring in paper napkins, things like that?

PN: No, no such things. We just brought our home lunches.

AA: Oh, these home lunches--did you have cafeteria service at that time?

PN: I think so, but very limited service, and most of the children brought their home lunches.

AA: Did these children ever share their lunches?

PN: No. Some of them were very shy about opening their lunches. You know Japanese have this pickled radish?

AA: Daikon?

PN: Daikon. Oh, I tell you, when anybody brought anything like that, the whole room used to smell. So I used to tell the student to take it outside and leave it outside.

AA: Okay. Why do you think the Japanese had the most kids in school?

PN: Well, I think Japanese parents didn't want their children to go through the kind of hard life that they'd been having, so they were very conscious about education--educating their children.

AA: So then most of the Japanese were more better-to-do than the rest of the population?

PN: Yes. I think that's the reason why there are so many public school teachers of Japanese parentage now. Gradually more Filipino school teachers are coming in, but they came in very late, especially when jobs are getting scarce.

AA: Too late. Okay. What was the general town school attitude toward country schools?

PN: Well, I don't think they looked down upon us. I don't think they had any confirmed attitude toward country people.

AA: But didn't we have less of everything? Less of those modern teaching books?

PN: Well, I suppose so, but many of the children in Honolulu schools got--especially in public schools--the older teachers who were old, because that's where the older teachers wanted to teach. After they
served their time in the country schools, whenever there was an opportunity to teach in a Honolulu school, they moved to Honolulu.

**AA:** Why did they like to teach at a Honolulu school?

**PN:** I suppose because of the conveniences, cultural activities, entertainment, and so on, sports activities.

**AA:** How did you handle the fast and the slow learners?

**PN:** For a while I had a pretty good class, a so-called "B" class. But that came later. When I first taught at Haleiwa Elementary, I had a so-called "D" class. Strictly on ability and the whole class was made of "D" or "F" children.

**AA:** You had a "B" class.

**PN:** Later. Later on, I had a better class, I had at least two or three groups in reading.

**AA:** You had a class that you had three groups in reading? How did you work that out?

**PN:** Well, you have to assign certain workbooks or work to a certain group, and then you move on to the next group and so on and so forth.

**AA:** In Maui, there were three teachers?

**PN:** No, only two teachers at Kaupo. At the first school where I taught.

**AA:** So then---they were mixed up, like you didn't really have a grade.

**PN:** Yes, but certain subject had to be taught separately, but certain other things you just put them all together and teach the same thing.

**AA:** Could you give me a description of the Waialua Elementary School in 1931? How many buildings were there?

**PN:** Well, the only so-called modern structure was the one that is not being used now. The old office and the classrooms. We had all those bungalows---right along the side of the Fresh Air Camp. The cafeteria was located---in the corner...

**AA:** That was the back room?

**PN:** Some were toward the modern tournahau'er road. But it was not made of hollow tile or concrete. Lots of small bungalows, and some of them are still standing there.

**AA:** How many classes do you think there were? Can you remember? How many classrooms?
PN: Oh, I suppose, maybe each grade had about two classes or so, and then gradually the number increased.

AA: About how much classrooms are there now?

PN: Gee, I can't recall.

AA: Can you describe the new facilities? They have a new library, I think.

PN: New library, new administration building, and new classrooms. But in the old days we didn't have them at all.

AA: And there's like about an average of five classrooms to a grade now, isn't there?

PN: Yeah.

AA: Did you hold a summer job after school ended?

PN: No, only during the War years. They corralled the schoolteachers to supervise the student pineapple field workers. I think I worked only two years.

AA: What were the students told to do? (Laughs) Pick pineapple?

PN: Well, they had to pick the pineapples by hand, put them in a bag, and take them out on the roadside, and pile them up. Somebody would cut the tops and put the fruits in boxes.

AA: Were the children paid for this?

PN: Yes. But I don't think they got a good pay like present day boys and girls.

AA: And you said this happened only in the War years?

PN: Well, in my case I just worked, let's see, 1942, 43. That's about all.

AA: You were forced into this?

PN: No, they came to school to ask schoolteachers to help. And then I remember we had so-called "Victory Gardens," and school children, especially the sixth grade children were asked to do some volunteer farm work in school. We raised beans and what not. Of course, they weren't school gardens, you know. I remember some civilian supervisor supervised the garden and we went out to help.

AA: Victory Gardens---for who were you planting vegetables?

PN: I think it was sponsored by the government.
AA: These were distributed to the citizens or to the Army?

PN: I cannot remember but I remember taking our children to work in the bean fields, string beans field.

AA: These string bean fields, were they by the school?

PN: Yeah, near the school. Sugar cane is growing there now.

AA: What did you do in the summer then?

PN: Well, you see, some of us who graduated from Normal School were encouraged to get a degree in education, so some of us went to summer school.

AA: Did you?

PN: Yeah, I went to four summer sessions, continued summer sessions, and got my degree. Besides that I took Saturday morning classes.

AA: At the University?

PN: Yes.

AA: Okay. During the War did you notice any bad feelings toward the Japanese children?

PN: No, I don't think so.

AA: There was no effect...

PN: No, no.

AA: Did you close down the school during the War at any time?

PN: Yes. After Pearl Harbor was attacked, I think we were closed about two weeks. Two weeks or one month, I'm not so sure, but, school teachers had to be paid, so we were drafted to go and interview the aliens. I remember going to Waimea pineapple camp--Dole. In those days, Hawaiian pineapple camp---and we interviewed quite a number of Filipino employees. That's why I remember so many of them said, "I came from Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Norte." So I still remember the place called Ilocos Norte and Luzon.

AA: Okay. This Hawaiian pine camp at Waimea, was it called Takeyama?

PN: No, that's the one in Opaekula. We used to call it Ashley. There's a place called Ashley Station. In the old days, pineapples were transported to Honolulu on trains, and there was a station right there. That's where the new kennel is? There's a vet who has a kennel. The doctor who used to have an office at the Waialua Shopping Center.
AA: Oh yeah, I remember.
PN: That's the place. From there we went up to Ashley Camp, Waimea.
AA: Did they have a cannery there?
PN: No, no cannery.
AA: Do you remember if Takeyama had a cannery?
PN: No, that was a pineapple camp.
AA: What can you tell me about the Takeyama pine camp?
PN: Well I was there two summers, as a common laborer.
AA: Okay, can you explain more to me about the akakai rafts? How did you make them? Seems really interesting.
PN: You know, I don't see akakai anymore, but it's a reed. It just grows straight, and it's very buoyant. So. You cut them with a sickle, and tie them with a cord, and make a raft. You made your own paddle. You'd go up and down Anahulu Stream.
AA: You don't know, by any chance, what is the scientific name for this akakai reed?
PN: Vell, that's the Hawaiian word, but I wouldn't know. I wouldn't know the technical name of akakai.
AA: And as far as you know, there isn't none any more?
PN: I'm sure it's growing somewhere, but I haven't been up that stream at all in recent years.
AA: It's Anahulu Stream where it's growing at?
PN: Yeah.
AA: Do you, by any chance, have any pictures of it?
PN: No. But that was a very useful reed. It's not exactly a reed because there wasn't this so-called puka. Fishermen's wives used to cut them, dry them, and use them to string four or five fish.
AA: To dry or just string them?
PN: No, to go around and sell to the people.
AA: Oh, so you could move it around a little, a lot.
PN: Yeah, it's pliable.
AA: Pliable. Yeah, okay. What about the activities you participated in with the Waialua Community Association? Can you tell me about that?

PN: Well, I was once a secretary or something, but you see, I cannot type. To this day I cannot type. So I declined the job of being a secretary. But I used to help out in the Community Association. Mr. Frank Midkiff was the "kingpin." That was the first community association on Oahu, and since his brother was the manager of the sugar plantation, he worked well with the brother. To this day, Waialua Plantation gives a hand in the activities of Waialua Community Association.

AA: Do you remember any names of the early members of that association?

PN: Oh, let's see. Sam Nishimura.

AA: That's the tailor?

PN: Yeah. Miss Rankin used to be a member. Ruth Rankin, principal of Waialua Elementary School in those days. Can't think of any more.

AA: Okay. Going back to the extra things that you taught the children at the elementary school, how did you become a part of the Christmas Tree Program? You know, I remember there used to be plans.

PN: We were asked to participate in the community Christmas program by the plantation. That's why we used to perform.

AA: Do you remember when you started doing this?

PN: Oh, I can't remember. I think it must have started during Mr. Midkiff's days.

AA: Do you remember---did it begin with you or did you take over someone's place?

PN: No, it didn't begin with me.

AA: Okay. Was any part of your family involved in the internment during the War?

PN: No.

AA: No. Do you know of anybody that was?

PN: Well, practically all the Buddhist ministers and so-called big shots among the Japanese community were interned.

AA: What were your feelings about this internment?

PN: Well, you just have to accept it. You can't do anything about it. Actually, I had no feelings.
AA: You have no feelings? (Laughs) Okay. When the union came to the plantation, did it result in more children coming to school?

PN: No, I don't think so. Because we had compulsive school attendance law, all parents had to send their children to school.

AA: When did this compulsory attendance come to be?

PN: Oh, we had it for a long, long time.

AA: But weren't a lot of the children involved in child labor, and so they didn't come to school?

PN: No, I don't think so.

AA: Did the children come with better clothes or better lunches now (after unions)?

PN: Oh! Yes. Definitely so.

AA: You could really see that change?

PN: Hmm.

AA: About your dorm room in McKinley, you said it was a Japanese...

PN: No, it's not McKinley. It was the Japanese high school dorm.

AA: But you went to McKinley.

PN: Yeah.

AA: Were there any kind of other dorms like Christian dorms or...

PN: Oh yes. Mr. Francis Miyake of Waialua, stayed at Okumura Home. That was a dormitory operated by the Makiki Christian Church.

AA: Did Mr. Miyake also go to McKinley?

PN: Yes, he did.

AA: Do you remember any Buddhist dorm?

PN: Well, that's the one that I used to stay. Mr. Edward Matsumoto and I stayed at the Japanese high school dorm, conducted by the Hongwanji Church.

AA: Okay. Hongwanji is the Buddhist religion?

PN: Yes.

AA: Okay. How did the strike affect the schools in Waialua? In what ways?
PN: I beg your pardon?

AA: The strike of the plantation?

PN: Which strike? We had several, you know.

AA: Well, you began teaching in 1931 so, let's begin with the 1946 strike, that was the whole Territory.

PN: We had one, long before that, and I remember the plantation workers were asked to move out of their camp houses. We had a family from Kawaiola staying in a little house beside our blacksmith shop.

AA: This is when you were going to school yet, not when you were teaching, right?

PN: Yes, that's right.

AA: So this must have been the 1920 strike?

PN: I suppose so, yes. Later on, when the sugar workers were on strike, they weren't asked to leave their camp houses. They just stayed in the camp houses.

AA: They were asked to leave?

PN: Well, in 1920. But after the unions were organized, no sugar workers were asked to leave their plantation houses during the strike.

AA: This 1920 strike, do you remember it being associated with the flu epidemic?

PN: Oh yes! You know there was a Seinen Kai building back of the courthouse.

AA: Yeah.

PN: I don't think the building is there any more. So many people died there because of the flu. Oh, it was terrible.

AA: This was the time when the people were told to get out of their houses, right?

PN: Yes.

AA: Okay. The other strike was in 1946. You were here already in Haleiwa. What can you remember about that strike?

PN: Gee, I think it went along normally, so I don't remember it at all.

AA: During strikes, did the children stay home? Or did they still come to school?

PN: No, they came to school, and the union brought their mobile kitchen and fed the plantation children.
AA: That happened for all the strikes? All of them had a mobile kitchen?

PN: Yes, I think so.

AA: Okay. Also in 1949 there was a six-month shipping strike. Do you remember that?

PN: Oh, we've had so many shipping strikes. (Laughs)

AA: I guess this one was a big one, it was six months.

PN: I know we hoarded rice, and I'd scrounge around for rice. That's about all.

AA: Do you remember an act called the Smith Seven Act?

PN: Oh yes. That's the Communist trial. And I see the Reineckes are trying to get back their good name. They were fired. I notice the former ILWU boss, Mr. Hall, was involved in it, too.

AA: What did you think about all this name-calling? You know, they calling them Communist and all that?

PN: Well, I suppose some of the government officials were a bit too anxious to convict these people, and I'm glad that everything turned out okay, except that I felt sorry for the Reineckes for losing their jobs.

AA: The Reineckes are Waialua people?

PN: No. Mr. Reinecke must be from the Mainland, but his wife is a local-born.

AA: Local Hawaii.

PN: A schoolteacher, Japanese girl.

AA: When you were going to McKinley, what other public high schools do you remember?

PN: Well, there's the Iolani and St. Louis College, which was actually a high school, and Punahou.

AA: What about Farrington, it wasn't there yet?

PN: No.

AA: Okay. What was the school rating at McKinley? Do you recall? Rating. You know like they'll say Farrington's number one as far as academics go.

PN: Well, that was the only public high school.
AA: Just McKinley?

PN: Yes! In 1925. Farrington and other high schools came into being later. (Laughs) So that was the only---whether you like it or not ---if you wanted free high school education, you just had to go to McKinley.

AA: Uh huh. Anyway, it wasn't called a run-down school or anything, right?

PN: No, that was the school. You know this man, Mr. Esposito, the Blaisdell Center administrator.

AA: Matt.

PN: Matt Esposito. He said that McKinley High School was a dump. I was very much annoyed.

AA: Was he from McKinley?

PN: No! But he happened to manage the Arena. And I don't think McKinley High School's a dump. I was very much annoyed. So I'm very happy that he has to seek another job. Calling somebody's alma mater "dump."

AA: (Laughs) So you're happy that he got kicked out?

PN: Yes! Imagine calling our high school---alma mater---a dump!

AA: Okay. What about your trip to Japan? How much was your fare on the boat?

PN: Oh, you know those things I can't remember, but it was reasonable compared to modern fare.

AA: Okay, what about the kind of facilities they have on the boat? Do you remember that?

PN: We had to travel "steerage" or third class. That's the term for the lowest class. It wasn't too comfortable at all. I'm not a good sailor and it took about nine to ten days to reach Yokohama. About two or three days before you reach Yokohama the ocean became rough. It was due to the current. Oh, it was terrible! I got seasick.

AA: You said your father died in nineteen...

PN: '28. So, my mother and I took his ashes back to the home village.

AA: I understand money was very tight then. How did you get the money to go?
PN: Well, after all I started teaching, yes, in nineteen---let's see. Was it in 1929, I think?

AA: You had your first job in 1928.

PN: Yeah, '28. My mother must have saved some money. She had savings, and so we decided that we should take my father's ashes to his home village.

AA: Also, weren't you and your sisters already grown at that time?

PN: Yes, that's right. You know, in the old days, if you're the eldest, you'd have to sacrifice higher education and work for family livelihood. Usually the younger children got the breaks. I was the youngest. So my sister, after finishing her eighth grade, started working as a housemaid.

AA: Well, you were lucky, then.

PN: Yeah.

AA: So what was Japan like at that time?

PN: Well, Japan wasn't as modern as now; there were no bullet trains and modern facilities. We travelled by train. There were hardly any buses in those days.

AA: What about food, was it scarce? Did you have a lot of it?

PN: No, but it was substantial.

AA: You know that drinking sake at New Year's Eve you said---or Christmas?

PN: New Year's Day. It was a Japanese custom. You visit your friends, and at each home, you gulp down some sake.

AA: This drinking sake, was it called "masquerading?"

PN: "Masquerading." I don't know what that means.

AA: Masquerading. You know, like you put a mask on.

PN: No.

AA: No. Do you remember any kind of celebration that was called masquerading?

PN: Isn't that an English term---masquerading? I know the word, but I can't see how it has relationship with the Japanese. You just visit your friends. The Japanese are famous for preparing lavish food. On New Year's Day.
AA: Oh, your sake, how did you prepare it?
PN: Well, you put it in some kind of ceramic bottle, and place in hot water. And when it becomes hot, you serve it.

AA: Did you make your own sake or you buy?
PN: During the days of Prohibition, my mother used to make sake for my father. But that was against the law.

AA: Your fare to Maui, your boat fare, how much was it?
PN: Oh, if you ask me those things, I won't remember.

AA: How long did it take you to go there---to Maui?
PN: Overnight.

AA: And what kind of a boat was this?
PN: Well, it was the famous Haleakala. It was supposed to be the best inter-island boat, but it was famous for rocking, too. And while I was on Haleakala I never ate, so I actually lost out.

AA: Mr. Ninomiya, was it Haleakala or Mauna Kea?
PN: Well. Haleakala was a passenger boat, Mauna Kea was, I think, partly passenger and partly freight boat.

AA: But which one did you ride on?
PN: Haleakala. That was about the most famous. When Christmas vacation started, many of us would hire a taxi and go to Lahaina landing and wait for the cattle boat Hawaii. It was a cattle boat, so we bought so-called mattress, and we slept on the deck during the night.

AA: Just for fun?
PN: No! We wanted to come home to Oahu as soon as possible, so we just had to take that boat. That was the quickest way to come back to Honolulu.

AA: Oh, so you had your space if you stayed there overnight.
PN: You can smell the cattle---oo. But then, everybody was anxious to come back to Oahu.

AA: How much teachers were there in Maui that were from Oahu?
PN: Oh, quite a number. We all had to be farmed out to outside islands before we could teach on Oahu. Nobody could actually teach on Oahu from the very beginning.
AA: Did any outside island students come to the Normal School?

PN: Oh, yes.

AA: Was there a lot?

PN: Oh! Yes. Normal School was the only teacher-training institution.

AA: What other kind of training institutions were there other than the teacher-training?

PN: Well, some people went to the University of Hawaii, and became school teachers. Mr. Naito went to the Mainland, and after four years he came back to teach.

AA: About your religion, what were you before you converted to this?

PN: Well, I was a member of Sōtō Buddhist sect at Kawaiola.

AA: If it's not too personal, can you tell me exactly why you decided to switch to another philosophy?

PN: First of all, many of these Buddhist churches were just traditional—chanting of sutras. You don't actually get anything out of it except that they were just handed down to you by your parents. When the founder of this religion came to Oahu in 1952, I listened to her sermon. It seemed the things she said were very true, and they hit my heart. So I decided I should be a member.

AA: Before 1952 were you an active Buddhist member?

PN: Yes.

AA: And how was that in relation to your collecting money for the "Bombs on Tokyo?" Wasn't that against Buddhism, against Japanese...

PN: No, no, no. You see, we had the so-called Emergency Service Committee organized by the leaders of Americans of Japanese Ancestry during the War. Many of us were asked to help with their activities in the country. That's the reason why some of us participated.

AA: Okay. I have another question regarding education. During the War, were any of these Japanese language schools closed down?

PN: Oh! Yes, they were all closed.

AA: All of them were? And when did it start resuming?

PN: After the War, maybe a year or two later. The Japanese language schools were conducted mainly by the Buddhist priests, and they were interned. They were interned on the Mainland. Some of them went to---Tule Lake. There were so many camps for the internees.
AA: So there was a decline of the Buddhist religion around here then?

PN: Oh! Yes. There was only one Buddhist minister who wasn't interned. He was a citizen. He came from Hongwanji temple and whenever one of the soldier-boys from the Japanese community died, we used to have memorial service. This particular minister had to come all the way from Honolulu to participate in the services.

AA: So there was only one Buddhist priest after the War here?

PN: Yes. He was kept very busy.

AA: Okay. The Haleiwa courthouse and jail---was it ever in use?

PN: Yes. There used to be a jail downstairs.

AA: Yeah. Who used that? I understand the plantation took care of their own people.

PN: Oh, you mean for the people who were arrested by the FBI after December 7th? No, that jail is for common, ordinary people who got arrested. Not for the people who were arrested right after the War started.

AA: The courthouse, did you actually have court hearings there?

PN: Oh yes!

AA: When did it start declining? I mean because nobody uses it any more. I don't think anybody goes there.

PN: Yeah. That's because it's too expensive to have small courthouses here and there. So now people in Waialua have to go to Wahiawa.

AA: Your marriage licenses---I know you never used one then but---where did you get them? Did the courthouse supply them?

PN: No. We used to have a Chinese woman who issued marriage licenses for the Waialua area but right now I don't know where you'd have to go. (Laughs)

AA: This Chinese woman used to live in Waialua, Haleiwa?

PN: She was a resident of Waialua. Her husband worked for the plantation, and she was the licensed agent for the Board of Health.

AA: Did she take blood tests then?

PN: No, not in the old days.

AA: You didn't take blood test?

PN: No! No such thing. Those things are new, you know.
AA: Okay. What about the stores—how did you shop in them? Did you ever go on credit in any of the stores?

PN: Oh yes. All the stores had credit. Only when the supermarket came, you'd have to pay cash.

AA: You're talking about Kit's and IGA?

PN: Well, IGA's former existence was Sakai Store. You know where the new First Hawaiian Bank is being built? Right there. There was a store there for a long time. Later on they founded the Haleiwa Supermarket on the opposite side of the road.

AA: Can you describe the credit system then?

PN: Well, you just went there and bought things and charged. At the end of the month or when you get paid, you would pay the store owner.

AA: Did you ever experience any—like you couldn't pay or, maybe you did, I'm not saying that you did—but did you know people that bought too much and they couldn't pay?

PN: Oh yes! Fujioka store had quite a number of customers who just couldn't pay, especially during the strike.

AA: How was that solved?

PN: Well, I suppose some of the debts were simply forgotten. And some of them paid little by little in monthly installments.

AA: Do you remember something called jabon?

PN: Jabon, yeah.

AA: What was that?

PN: Jabon means "borrow."

AA: "To borrow?" Was it a Japanese term?

PN: Isn't it a Filipino word?

AA: I don't know. Someone just told me it was "jaw bone," you know.

PN: Oh, that's the first time I've heard of that explanation. I thought was a Filipino word. Sounds like a Filipino word.

AA: Well, I keep telling people it's a big grapefruit. (Laughs) Okay. What about suits. How much did your suits cost?

PN: Oh, my goodness. Very reasonable. I think about fifty dollars.
AA: Fifty dollars? Mr. Nishimura, was he the only tailor at this time?

PN: No, we had Miura tailor. We had some other people, but Mr. Nishimura and Miura Tailor were the only established ones.

AA: Fifty dollars was a bit too much. How did you get to pay for your suits? You couldn't just give them fifty dollars.

PN: Well, you can *jabon* and pay by month.

AA: Do you know of anybody that shared the suits? You know, they helped pay for one, helped pay for half, you know. Two people.

PN: No, I don't think so, except that Filipinos used to own so-called-- partnership car.

AA: But not in suits?

PN: No, I don't think so. (Laughs)

AA: Where did this material come from, the material they used for the suits?

PN: Mostly from the Mainland.

AA: How long did it take them to make you a suit?

PN: Let's see. In my case, I don't remember ever going to these tailors to make a suit. I usually bought a ready-made suit.

AA: Which stores did you get your ready-made suits from?

PN: Hub men's store at the corner of Fort and Hotel streets. The store's been there ever since I went to McKinley High School.

AA: There weren't any ready-made suits in Waialua.

PN: No, no.

AA: Okay. Let's talk about the pre-Depression, 1930 and below. That's when you were going to school?

PN: No, I was already teaching.

AA: '28 you started teaching?

PN: Yeah, mhm. Depression came in about 1934. Isn't that right?


PN: That's about the worst time, I think.

AA: Were there any kind of violence during the pre-Depression?
PN: No, not in Hawaii.

AA: Not in Hawaii? Okay. The Depression---you were teaching already at that time and you still say there was no effect at all?

PN: No, our salary was cut.

AA: By how much?

PN: I don't know but we started with $110, but during the Depression I remember getting a cut. In fact, all the government employees' pay was cut.

AA: What can you tell me about the fire station at Haleiwa?

PN: I don't know. That's been there for ages.

AA: When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, where were you at that time?

PN: That morning, I was supposed to accompany Reverend Tanaka of Kawailoa Sōtō Mission to go to town for some kind of a religious ceremony. When I went to Kawailoa, I was told that the War had started. That's the first time I found out that Pearl Harbor was bombed.

AA: Were there any damages to your house?

PN: No, no.

AA: Any part of your family injured or any of them involved?

PN: No.

AA: How was the community like the first weeks after the bombing?

PN: We had the so-called "blackouts", and we couldn't put on our lights at night. So I had to make one room a "blackout room." Where I could at least read and do things. We had to build air raid shelters. That was required.

AA: You had to build air raid shelters when you were living in this house...

PN: Yes.

AA: So you built one around here?

PN: I built one right there in the corner of the lot.

AA: Did you get to use them?

PN: No. Thank goodness.

AA: What did you put in them---in your air raid shelter?
PN: Nothing. I didn't keep any food, but just in case there was an air raid, I was supposed to go in there. Just before the Midway battle we were asked, "Do you have any place or friends in Wahiawa where you can seek shelter if the Japanese should invade the Hawaiian Islands?" They expected the North Shore to be used as a landing place. So everybody in Waialua and Haleiwa were to evacuate. But no such thing happened. Thank goodness.

AA: What about the rationing of food and gas?

PN: Oh! I tell you I don't want to go through rationing again. Really! You just have to stint on your travels and your freedom is limited.

AA: How was the gas rationed? Was it according to family size?

PN: No, according to your work and travel. People who had to work at Schofield got more than we who just had our job right here in our community.

AA: What about the martial law? Were any of your activities restricted because of the martial law?

PN: Oh yes! You know we had to paint our headlights sort of bluish, and then there was a pinpoint opening where the light could go through. I accompanied Dr. Miyasaki to Waipahu once. He was asked by a doctor friend to help in a appendix operation. When we came home, we just crawled back to Haleiwa. You can hardly see the road.

AA: Did you hear of the Philippine independence? It was just something that you heard. Did it have any effect on you?

PN: No.

AA: No. Okay. Oh, what about the 1946 tsunami?

PN: Oh, my goodness! We had---not only in 1946, but I think we had about ---two tsunamis? After the War.

AA: I don't know.

PN: Oh yes!

AA: Mhm. So how was your travelling done then, when the railroads were washed out? You still could use them?

PN: By that time, we had automobile it wasn't bad. The water came---not from the front--because my neighbor's property is lower than mine. It went into her yard, but the ocean water came from the back. But luckily, we have some pukas to take care of flooding.

AA: The 1949, 1951 there were tidal waves then. Did you vote in the 1954 election?

PN: Yes, I have voted in every election.
AA: You were born here. You were an American citizen.
PN: Yes.
AA: And when was the first time you started to vote?
PN: Let's see. I must have voted since I came back to Waialua.
AA: Okay. '31. What, were you voting in '31?
PN: No, I think we vote on even years---'32, '34, '36, and so on.
PN: What was that now? Senator Eastland from Mississippi. I don't even remember what kind of hearing he had.
AA: I don't know much about it either.
PN: Senator Eastland is from Mississippi. Eastland, I just remembered his name. He was one of those narrow-minded people from the South.
AA: Did he live in Waialua?
PN: No! He came from Mississippi. He must have conducted hearings at the Capitol.
AA: Nothing to do with Waialua, Haleiwa?
PN: No.
AA: Okay. How do you feel about Hawaii becoming a state?
PN: Very good. Because after all, we were working hard for statehood, and we finally got it.
AA: What do you mean by "working hard for statehood"?
PN: You know, we were a territory, and I think we had a delegate, but not a voting delegate. So Congress could do whatever she wanted with Hawaii. But now that we have two senators and two representatives, they have to treat us fairly. But if we were a territory, we were treated as a stepson.
AA: Okay. Becoming a state. That's when you started to sing all those patriotic songs?
PN: No! We sang patriotic songs when we were a territory because for the opening exercises in school, we had to sing one patriotic song.
AA: Which are "America the Beautiful."
PN: But you know the custom is fast disappearing.
AA: Do you know now if they still sing?

PN: Oh yes. At the senior citizen club, we always sing "God Bless America" and "Hawaii Pono'i."

AA: At that school, at the elementary school, do they still sing?

PN: No, I don't think so. Some of these present-day kids, don't even know "Hawaii Pono'i." How pathetic!

AA: What can you say is the most important thing that has happened to you in the last 15 years?

PN: (Laughs) Oh, I don't know.

AA: Your retirement? Your marriage?

PN: (Laughs) Well, I suppose my marriage.

AA: Okay. Can you compare your life now with thirty or forty years ago in terms of how much you're making, how happy you are now, you know, living with a wife and not being single like before? What can you say? How can you compare....

PN: It's nice to have a wife. (Laughs) Somebody always prepares your meals.

AA: You think Waialua's a good place to live?

PN: Oh! Yes.

AA: It's a good place to raise children?

PN: Yes, I think so.

AA: Do you say that because we hardly have any crimes around this area?

PN: Well, I wouldn't say that! We have some crimes, you know. Sometimes I'm surprised because somebody on Haleiwa Road was arrested by policemen because of possession of marijuana and things like that.

AA: Hale---this road?

PN: Surely! Sometimes it appears in the papers. And I don't know who they are. In the old days, we knew everybody in the community, but not any more.

AA: Okay. So that's about it for the tape.

END OF INTERVIEW
AA: Mr. Ninomiya, can you tell me about the folk medicine which you and others practiced in the old days? What were the ingredients? How was it prepared and which ethnic group introduced it?

PN: I don't think I practiced folk medicine in the old days. But whenever I catch cold, besides the aspirin and other medications that I take, I usually boil a combination of handful of rice straw plus a root called kanro--let's say from five cups--I boil it down to about two cups, and drink it regularly. And it seems to help relieve my cold. I won't say it would cure, but then I urinate quite a bit, and that seems to bring down the fever. Besides, I learn from experience that even if you take antibiotics, sometimes it helps to have some kind of folk medicine. I'm a great believer in using earthworms. Especially earthworms that live in dirty places. My sister taught me to use earthworms long before my sister taught me, but my sister's method is better. Wash them clean. Then put them in a piece of silk cloth. Put a little bit of sugar and hang it up over a glass. And within some time, you see a clear liquid dripping down into the glass. When it begins to drip blood, then you should stop. But, it's clear liquid. You mix it with orange juice, and boy, it takes the fever away. The Japanese also use carp's blood.

AA: Fish?

PN: Yeah, you know koi that we raise? It should be from a pond, because if it's from a clean pond, I don't think it has the quality of being antibiotic. I used it for my mother's pneumonia long time ago. You sharpen a piece of chopstick and poke it....let's see....what do you call this place?

AA: The upper palate?

PN: Yeah, upper palate. And get some fresh blood, mix it with sake and you drink it. It's miraculous how it cures pneumonia, brings down the fever. When I talk about it with some oldtimers, they say they've used it, too. But for earthworms, well, you can boil it. For example, in my case, if I boil the rice straw and a piece of root called kanro, you put a few clean earthworms in it--and it seems to help.
AA: Do you know what it is that's—you know, what the clear juice is made out of?

PN: I think the clear juice is from the internal organs, if earthworms have them. But that seems to help. Once, I wrote to a doctor who developed streptomycin for TB. Let's see, Rutgers University. I forgot his name. I mentioned that the Japanese use earthworms when we have high fever. And he was most appreciative and sent me a very nice thank you note. I have it in my house somewhere, but I don't know where it is right now.

AA: (Chuckles) These are mostly Japanese, right?

PN: Yes, but I think Chinese have the same kind of idea. Both my parents have had stroke. As you approach old age, you don't want to have stroke. So, I've been very careful about my blood pressure. And I've been taking home-grown kuko tea. Kuko. I don't know the exact scientific name or the Chinese name, but Chinese markets sell them in bunches sometimes. It grows up straight and has thorns. The fresh leaves are supposed to be very rich in vitamin A. My friend, Miss Fanny Howe who used to be a school teacher at Haleiwa, told me once that when she was a child, her eyesight was very bad. In fact, I think she must have suffered from some kind of eye disease. So the mother used to get some kuko leaves every morning, and would put them in her soup. After using it continuously, her eye sickness was cured.

AA: There's no kuko leaves around here in Hawaii?

PN: Well, I have them in the backyard.

AA: You have?

PN: Some others have found the value of kuko tea. So, they ask us whether we can spare some. Since our religious group is building a church, I've been selling them to my friends for the benefit of the building fund. Of course, some people give up very easily. Some people continue for years. I have some clients who been drinking kuko tea for ages. So, I think it has some value. In fact, one middle-aged woman had high blood pressure. When I heard it—I know her well—I gave her a bag. She used it religiously. After a month, when she went back to the doctor, he said her blood pressure was normal. Because of my regular use of kuko tea, my blood pressure so far has been okay.

AA: Really?

PN: Yeah. At AreaWide Horizon, every first and third Wednesday, the Public Health nurses come to check the blood pressure of the elderly. I've reported to them many times. Each time I've been told that my blood pressure is normal. So, I'm very happy. Maybe that's due to kuko tea. I wouldn't say it is a fact, but then, I feel that my normal blood pressure is due to kuko tea.
AA: Any others?

PN: Of course, in the kuko, we also add comfrey. My wife never used to drink this tea, but after she read some benefits of comfrey in the Japanese newspapers, she decided to drink it. It seems to help with her movement. So, she and I drink lots of kuko tea.

AA: There were some stuff you had out here...

PN: Oh, that's... Japanese call it hatomugi. It's a variety of a pupu plant I think. You know what pupu is, don't you?

AA: No.

PN: They make seed leis to sell to the tourists.

AA: Oh! Okay. Right.

PN: Those whitish-grey seeds. Hatomugi is supposed to be good for... diabetic people. It won't cure diabetes, but at least, it controls it. After I got the seeds, I've planted them, and we add it to our regular kuko and comfrey tea. It seems to help.

AA: Yeah. Also, I saw this... the first time I came, I saw this yellow weed that you had out here with sort of star-shaped flowers?

PN: Let's see.

AA: I didn't ask you about it, but I remember seeing it.

PN: Were they drying on that screen?

AA: Yeah.

PN: That must have been kuko.


PN: Oh! I don't know about the Portuguese, but Hawaiians use herbs quite a bit.

AA: Okay. Can you relate some Hawaiian stuff?

PN: A long time ago, when we used to cough quite a bit, there was a weed that had yellow flowers. We used to boil it and drink it. That seemed to control heavy coughing.

AA: You don't know what's it called?

PN: No. I don't see those weeds any more. There are so many new weeds and they seem to outstrip the old weeds.
AA: Any other kind of stuff that you can think of?

PN: In the old days, when I used to visit a shrine... a Shinto shrine, this woman used to prescribe herbs for all kinds of ailments. And one of the things that she prescribed was moist heat, using three kinds of weeds. Eucalyptus leaves, sea vine—but I don't know the name. You know, in the old days, you would see them on the beach, growing wild on the beach. It spreads out with a sort of a purplish-white morning glory type flower.

AA: The leaves are around it a little bit?

PN: Something like this.

AA: And it's kind of woody?

PN: It just spreads out. If you go to the Mokuleia beach, you still find them. But you wouldn't find them around here, because the beaches around here are overdeveloped.

AA: It's not sea grape that you're talking about?

PN: No, it's not sea grape. And then Pride of India leaves. Three kinds, you see. You boil them together and apply the boiled liquid as moist heat.

AA: This was for what? To cure what?

PN: When you have aches and backaches and things of that sort.

AA: What about spiritual healers? Faith healers, that kind of stuff?

PN: Oh! I don't know. I've never believed in such things, though. praying loudly to exorcise the spirits. But I've never come across such people in my life.

AA: What about kahunas? Hawaiian kahunas around this area?

PN: I don't know of any kahunas living in Haleiwa. When the Hawaiians died in the old days, they used to have mourners. They would wail for hours on end.

AA: Would they deface parts of their faces, too?

PN: I don't know. I've never gone into the house, because I didn't like the wailing.

AA: What about dentists? When did you first have the dentist here in Waialua?

PN: Oh, we didn't have dentist for a long, long time.

AA: When can you remember? Was it after... about what?
PN: Maybe before the War.

AA: We already had a dentist here?

PN: Yeah. But I know my dentist was from Honolulu who came to the country on week nights. And that's how I went to him. He would come from town. And he had an office in the Doi Hotel Building. That was right in front of the surf shop in Haleiwa. But the building is gone. I think in it's place you see Shimamoto's home. Just on the Kawaiola side of Sato Barber Shop. There was a string of buildings, but those buildings are gone.

AA: He came before the War? He didn't stay here?

PN: No, he came on certain nights.

AA: And then when did we have a permanent dentist in Waialua?

PN: Oh, let's see. Some time after the War.

AA: Was it Dr. Sunahara?

PN: Dr. Sunahara has been here maybe about ten years or so. And Dr. Shimada, Waialua.

AA: You can't think of any other dentists that were here before them?

PN: No, we had to go to Wahiawa. Dr. Kanemaru and who was that man? He passed away a few months ago. We didn't have any dentist in Waialua.

AA: Okay. Did the dentist in Wahiawa, did they have novocaine or did they just come into your mouth and torture you? (Laughing)

PN: Well, it was a very painful operation in the old days. I know somebody who is so afraid to go to dentist because he has had a very painful experience.

AA: So, they didn't apply any kind of numbing.

PN: Well, they did. But not as modern as present.

AA: How did they do it?

PN: I know it was very painful. I mean, even if it's a novocaine or something that they use, it wasn't as good as the present time.

AA: Did they inject it into your gum?

PN: Yes.

AA: Like they do now?

PN: Uh huh.
AA: What about fillings?

PN: Oh, gold! Look at my teeth! I used to go to a dentist in Honolulu. He'll just fill my teeth with gold!

AA: Gold?

PN: Yes.

AA: Regular fillings, they used gold?

PN: Look. I quit because that's the old fashion style. Japanese used to value their gold in their mouth, but not me. So I changed my dentist because he was using too much gold.

(AA laughs)

AA: What is the average cost of these gold fillings?

PN: I can't remember, but they were reasonable.

AA: Why is that you don't agree with the other Japanese in valuing gold in your mouth? Isn't that Oriental?

PN: Yes. But I'm not from Japan. I don't want people to glare at me, you know. Looking at all the gold in my mouth.

AA: Okay. You know, canned goods. I'd liked to know if you've had canned goods as far as you can remember?

PN: Oh yes.

AA: What types were they?

PN: Well, bamboo shoots.

AA: Like 1902? Is that when you were born?

PN: No. 1906. You make me older.

AA: I know. I'm sorry. Say, 1911, will you say that there were bamboo shoots in the store?

PN: Oh! Yes. That's one thing we didn't grow too much in Hawaii. We used to have Haleiwa Hotel right across here. And in one corner of a yard was a grove of bamboo. Some Japanese used to go there for bamboo shoots.

AA: Okay. Bamboo shoots which were imported from Japan.

PN: Yes.

AA: Any other kind of stuff?
PN: Oh, some canned goods cooked in soy.

AA: From Japan?

PN: Yeah.

AA: What about the stuff we have now?

END OF TAPE #1-41-3-76

NOTES

The other half of my third session with Mr. Philip Ninomiya was inadvertently not recorded. These notes are what I can remember. The interview was at his house on August 13, 1976.

CANNED GOODS

Mr. Ninomiya remembers canned goods in the stores as far back as he can remember. He was born in 1906.

He remembers no Spam but remembers the Libby brand of corned beef. He said it was packaged the same and looked the same.

Most of the items he mentioned were imported from Japan. Examples are dried mushrooms and shrimps, soy, cooked canned goods, and bamboo shoots. He mentioned a bamboo grove behind the Haleiwa Hotel where fresh bamboo could be had.

Saloon Pilots baked at Diamond Bakery in Honolulu topped with condensed milk was cake to them as kids.

As far as containers, he remembers the safe and the "ice box." When asked about the ceiling container, he replied that he never used them and so had nothing to say.

SALT

Salt was bought from the stores in plastic bags. Moisture formed easily; thus his mother often had a time scraping salt from the blocks that would form. No one, as far as he can remember, ever made their own salt in Haleiwa. The salt they purchased was U.S. made.

FICTIONAL HEROES

Because of the Japanese school's domination of his early life, all his heroes were Japanese characters in the books he read. Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Sarutobi Sasuke, a magician, were such heroes.

EYE DOCTORS

Dr. Susumu Otake is the only optometrist that has had a permanent practice in Waialua. Wahiawa and Honolulu had optometrists and with cabs, getting to them was not really a problem.

END OF INTERVIEW