BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: LOUIS AILA, JR., Honolulu Iron Works laborer, Pearl Harbor painter, musician.

Louis Aila Junior, Hawaiian-haole, was born in Waialua, June 27, 1901. While growing up, he spent time living in Kawaihapai as well as Waialua. His formal education ended with the sixth grade.

His first job was as a laborer with Honolulu Iron Works; he joined the National Guard in 1916 and served with the Army during World War I. After his discharge, he was: a stevedore, cane hauler for Ewa plantation, a housepainter, and a conductor with Honolulu Rapid Transit.

Hawaiian culture, music, language and the Mormon religion have always held important places in Louis' life. He began to play Hawaiian music professionally during the 1930's. He played with Bill Lincoln's group and traveled with him to New Zealand in 1940 to entertain for eight months.
Tape No. 2-1-1-77

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Louis Aila (LA)

March 5, 1977

Makaha, Oahu, Hawaii

BY: June Gutmanis (JG)

JG: When your sisters were having children, did your mother help name them? How did she get the names?

LA: You know my sisters' children?

JG: Mhm.

LA: Oh, well in that case, when my sister got married, my mother already passed away. So, when my sister got married most of the name, Hawaiian name was on her (four) husbands' side. They used family names.

JG: They didn't tie the names to special events, or something, or a dream...

LA: No, no, no, no, no, no, they used, like for instance, maybe I have some aunties died, eh. When they have children--I have some daughters like that. Well, we always try to use those names, that way. We perpetrate the name while we living. The person's died already, like maybe my grandma's aunty's name was Kamaka, so, when she died, when I get a baby girl, well, we try to name that girl in honor of her. That's how Hawaiians do it. We tried to carry the family name as much as we can. But the way I'm looking now, the Hawaiians don't do that. They picking, picking all this kind famous name, like Kaiulani and then Liliuokalani all that kind, but we don't do that. My parents don't do that. Sometimes we pick the name from My Hawaiian Bible. But in most cases that I know, my family, all the names were picked from our ancestors that passed many, many years ago. We would carry on their names.

JG: As you grew up was the importance of these names explained? In other words, did they tell the kids that got the names what the name meant and why they were given it?

LA: I don't remember, but my Hawaiian names's Kiokina (Hawaiian form of "Johnson"). That's from my grandfather's name. According to Hawaiian, I took grandfather's name, Louis Johnson, see, and my dad's names's Aila. That's not a Hawaiian name, because it came from Johnson, see? I took that name Kiokina till today. People who knows me well from my country (Waialua), they call me that name. But when I come to this place (Waianae), people don't call me that, they just call me Louie whatever-it-is, or Aila, see.
One of my sister's name was named from Molokai, Kanealae. That's her name, but I think more for the lady that from Molokai that collected with the chief way (i.e. had a child by a chief). Something like that. So that's how my sister took that name, Kanealae. That's a Molokai name; that's not Oahu name. I have an older brother by name Opunui. We took that name from our old ancestors, maybe my dad's grandfather, great-grandfather, see. And then, another brother of mine was Mamoka. That name I really don't know about. Maybe it came from some of the old family that died many, many years ago. And then we have another brother, Kamakahiki. So that's when we came in that line of Lono Kamakahiki. You know our genealogy, we come in that line of Lono Kamakahiki. One of my brothers was named Makahiki. Should be Kamakahiki. And then my dad's also is Kamakahiki. Aila Kamakahiki, you see? And then I didn't know much about Lono Kamakahiki till later I read stories of this and that. But the Aila family, originally we came from Waialua District. But this Lono Kamakahiki, one of his son roamed in here Waialua District--I don't know, maybe three, five, six hundred years ago--roamed Waialua District, and one of Lono Kamakahiki's sons came and married one of the Aila family, our family, so it produced children. So that's the story of Kewela Aila. Then we have Kaena Aila, and one daughter, Koalau, Hoalau, something like that, married one of the chiefs in Kauai, see. I saw that lately. Only lately, I saw that in a book. I saw in (Aberham) Fornander's book and then (S.M.) Kamakau's book. Whether it's true or not, I don't know. But it says the story in there because, one of Lono Kamakahiki's son is, I know his name Keikihumahana. In his young days he roamed back and forth, roamed the Waialua District. We come from Waialua but we're the only Aila in the whole territory. There's nobody else. No Aila besides us. Only my family.

JG: How do you interpret the name "Aila"?

LA: "It's there." Well, somebody interprets differently, says, it should be "oil". I say, no, no, it's not "oil". You listen how I pronounce. "Aila." When you mention oil, kerosene oil, "Aila." So you see, the sound is different.

JG: Lot different. When you had cousins and things, did they live in Waialua District or did they come out from town or what?

LA: You mean, cousins? Shee...I don't know if I have any cousins. You know why? Because I going to tell you. I know only my dad.

(Laughter)

LA: So, I don't remember I have a uncle on my dad's side. And I don't remember I have a uncle on my mama's side. So it's just like I'm out. I get one cousin but it's not, what you call...

JG: Not a real cousin?

LA: No, not a real cousin. But I don't want to bring that in, because
my grandfather Johnson fool around with this other woman and got this children. Illegitimate, eh? But my (grand-) mother was a real, real wife that my grandfather married, see? So that side I don't count to me, you know, because my grandfather fool around with some other wahine, then get these girls and boys and they have children and have grandchildren even today.

JG: Let's go back to school. You said you went to a one-room schoolhouse, right?

LA: Yeah.

JG: What kind of classes did you have?

LA: Well, in those things we have, reading, and then we have arithmetic and we have history of the Hawaiian Islands those days, see. Now no more. I don't see that. And we have geography.

JG: Did you have Hawaiian Island geography?

LA: Yes, we have Hawaiian Island geography and then we have regular geography for the Mainland or whatever it is, and spelling. Now, all that, you get from first grade to six grade.

JG: How much of your time do you think you spent studying Hawaiian history, and Hawaiian geography? Do you feel like you got a really good foundation in Hawaiian geography?

LA: No, no those days I didn't think nothing of it. I thought we are well-versed in our language so I thought we had Hawaiian history, Hawaiian geography. When it comes time to the class of Hawaiian history, we all look our own study. But, I feel that the history is not deep; it's too light. Not deep, deep language, you know, very slight language, because maybe if I went to high school then maybe it's different. I'm still in elementary yet, see? So, in geography and all that but too bad my parents really cannot afford to put me in high school. We were poor, see?

JG: Very few people went to high school at that time, anyway.

LA: And then we get money, my parents had no money. Sure, they got land but they got no money, and then he was only a farmer and a fisherman, my dad, see? But, ah, too bad, I think (if) we had a little money, and me, I think I would be a little more smarter, and I get chance to go high school. But no, so that's the reason in 1916 I make up my mind to quit school and go on my own, and that how I went on my own till I married and I have children and my wife died and then I married in Hawaii (Big Island) again. So that's how till today, see?

JG: When you were studying history, you just had things like Kamehameha; you didn't go way back...

LA: Oh, no, no, no. No, no, not to Kamehameha. Oh, maybe we know about
Kamehameha as a king of Hawaii, and Queen Liliuokalani—we knew about that. But, not way back, no, no, no, no.

JG: At home, did you talk about the legends and things?
LA: No, no.

JG: Did your parents tell you any Hawaiian legends?
LA: No, no...

JG: Stories?
LA: My daddy, I think he knows a lot, but he don't open up his heart to teach us, you know. I don't know why. If you would say something, he don't outline the whole story, maybe he just talk part of it, so we don't know the rest, see? My dad, he's not selfish, but I don't know why. He's pretty bright in Hawaiian; he's bright, you know. But, see, he went to a Hawaiian school. But when they stopped the Hawaiian school, from then on he didn't continue. But he's pretty smart, you know.

JG: Did he go to the Emerson School you know, old man...
LA: Reverend Emerson. I really don't know. Reverend Emerson was the missionary. But, I didn't question him which Hawaiian school he went. But he must have went down to Waialua, Hawaiian school. Maybe so.

JG: Did he have Hawaiian books in the house?
LA: No, no, no. No Hawaiian books. No more.

JG: Did you take a Hawaiian newspaper?
LA: Oh, yes. During those days everybody have Hawaiian newspaper, this Kua Koa. And then another newspaper, Aloha Aina. You see, a train used to run down all the camps (as far as Kahuku). Every Friday they used to deliver the paper and we go down to the depot and wait for the paper. My dad subscribe to them all the time. So they read in Hawaiian, my dad, you see. So, how I come to learn how to read Hawaiian because, although I familiar with the Hawaiian language I listen how my dad read. And when he get through, when he read it, pau, I would get the paper and I would try to read myself and I pretend that I know how to, but I pick up as I go along. That's how I knew how to read...

JG: Was your father reading to your mother, or to you kids, or to just everybody, or what?
LA: No, he's just read, but maybe if we are all around he just sit down, and we all listening. But as I say, we are familiar with our language, and when he read, well, most of what he reading, we know what he's talking about. So in order to get used to how you going to speak the
language, I sneak the paper, you know, when he stop reading and I started to read myself till I continue to get the idea of reading this. And that's how I know how to read. That's way back when I was 12, 13 years old, I used to follow. My dad don't teach me how. No, no he didn't teach me "Ah, ae, ee". No, I just listen to how he read and I'll go get a newspaper and I read. But I know what's the ABC's in English. So that's why I'm lucky I get the privilege that I read Hawaiian newspaper way back. And when I left the country—we came to the city—I continue speak the language. And with the people that I live with in Honolulu, we speak Hawaiian all the time. We continue to carry on the language. We prefer to speak the Hawaiian language more than English. Now I'm talking about 1914 to 1916 when I came to the city. This family that I live with, we speak good Hawaiian, so we continue to speak the language. And when I go to work down at the Honolulu Iron Works foundry, a lot of Hawaiian workers were there. And we all speak Hawaiian. We continue the language.

JG: Up in Waialua, what about the stores? Did the storekeepers speak Hawaiian, or did they speak English?

LA: The Chinese, those days, they speak Hawaiian. When this Hawaiian go to the store, they speak Hawaiian to the Hawaiians.

JG: In the church, was the church in Hawaiian?

LA: Church in Hawaiian. All our Sunday School, our hymn, all in Hawaiian. Nothing, none in English. Our lesson in the church all in Hawaiian.

JG: What percentage of the population up there would you say was Hawaiian at that time?

LA: Oh, in Kawaihapai we only had about 40 to 45 Hawaiians. It's just a little village. It's not a big place. About 40 to 45 people.

JG: Where was your church located?


JG: What kind of church was it?

LA: Mormon church. But we have some of that locality, they belong different churches. But we all come together. We, all Hawaiians those days, all stick together. They love one another. Regardless. They don't question you whether you a Catholic, or you are a Protestant. We all meet together, and then, well, anything to be done, some families need help, the whole community give hand. Without paying. They just go and offer their services. That's how the Hawaiians did it. If somebody building a house, well, he don't have to ask us to help him. No, we know he building a house. The whole community go there and help him. But first you ask, "You need any help? We're here to help you." "Oh, yeah." Then we all pitch in. Repair the
house, build a house, you know, maybe they want to clean the taro patch. You know, in the mountain there was a lot of taro patches. And then plow the taro patch or plant the taro. They all get together, see? To help one another. The Hawaiians those days, they really stick with one another. And they love one another. They work. They help and no money. We don't have money those days. But the love and the respect is more than you know what I mean. We don't worry those days. We don't get money. But the food, there's a lot of food. Lot of poi, lot of taro, lot of fish. We go hunt up the mountain. Hunt goats, hunt pigs, hogs, in the back of the mountain. Mokuleia got lot of pigs, lot of hogs. Wild pigs. And goats. Lots of goats, those days. And we love goats.

JG: Did you have a garden?

LA: Oh, yeah, we have a garden at home and then we have a patch up toward the mountain there where the water come down all the time. That's where our taro was and we plant sweet potatoes. Sometimes around rainy season we plant corn. Those days he (father) followed the old Hawaiian calendar. You know, when to plant potatoes, when to plant bananas. He don't plant fruits any old time. There's certain times he knows. He look by the stars, the moon every night. And he's an intelligent man. He can come out at night, he say, "What night is this?" We have name, eh? He can come out and look out and say, "Oh, this is so-and-so." And he says, Hawaiian calendar thirty days every month, not 29, 31, no. Thirty days every month. That's Hawaiian calendar. He goes by that, so, well, he predict something, come true. And when he go fishing, he knows what night to go fishing. He don't go fishing any old time. He knows what day to go fishing.

JG: Instead of saying the third, he'd say like it was the night of something...

LA: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. They all go by Hawaiian name, like Ku, Ku-kahi, Ku-lua, Ku-kolu, and maybe Olepau, Ole-ku-kahi, Ole-ku-lua. What they call in English? What they call that?

JG: The phase of the moon.

LA: Yeah, the phase of the moon. He's pretty smart. I got all of that in a book. I kept it, but I didn't get the experience of my dad. He don't need that; he just go out at night, and he just look and, this is the name. He pinpoint the name of the night. And he know what night to go catch certain kind of fish. He know what day to go to catch certain kind of fish, see? But now-days we go anytime. Whether it's good or not we go anytime, see?

JG: Do you know what kind of taro you had up there? Do you know the name?

LA: I don't know. I forgot already. I know the kai, piialii, and shee, some more, but I kind of forgot now. The thing is maybe someday
they'll come back in me and I'll note them down. I keep them see? I know there's a lot of different species, you know.

JG: What was the reason for planting different taro? Because of their taste, because they ripen at different times, because you used them for medicine, or what?

LA: Well, I think certain taro will mature quicker than the other taro. You know certain variety of taro, sometime they matured earlier than the other taro. But that's what I'm thinking, now. But some taro maybe take about 12, 14 months to be matured. Some taro going take longer, but some taro, before that. I really don't know, because I was so young. I'm not a taro planter. I would just go help my dad, that's all. See? But too bad I have no knowledge pertaining to different taro. But I just help my dad.

We used to go in the taro patch and then pull the weeds and plant the taro and then at a certain time when he knows it's matured, he tell us go in the taro patch and we pull the taro. He comes and helps us, too. And then we keep the huli. We kept that so we can replant them again. Ah, good old days, but shee, how many years now I don't handle that?

JG: That was a wet taro you were planting...

LA: Wet taro, yeah. No dry land, all wet taro.

JG: What about your sweet potato? Do you remember any varieties of sweet potato?

LA: Oh. Well, we have some mohihi. Some kaneala, and then I kind of forget, but many, many varieties of sweet potato. Since we never practice that all these years, you kind of forget. Unless you note them down and you keep a record.

JG: Did you plant any of them because they were good for medicine?

LA: Oh, not that I know. But I know a medicine there, a Hawaiian sweet potato. They call it mohihi. They used for medicine. I don't know for what kind of sick. But this only what I heard people say. Most time they plant just for eat.

JG: Did you keep any livestock?

LA: No. We have chickens. We don't keep so far as I know. We didn't keep any pig. If we want pig we just go up and hunt right in back of the mountain. We go hunt, get pig. Wild ones, you got to know how to prepare. Like my dad and my brothers and sisters know how to prepare. So you won't, they say, smell. There's no smell their way. I don't know how do they prepare. You know, cover the pig, or we just chop 'em, get the skin out, just chop 'em, sew 'em up and then when we like pig to cook, we just cut so much what we like. "Salt meat," they call it, "Puaa paapaakai."
JG: What about the cow? Did you have any milk cows?

LA: No, no, no, no. We didn't have no milk cows. All that we used to come to the Makua Ranch (Oahu). The head cowboy there, his wife is relative to my dad, see. So when we want a cow to milk, we come down to Makua and get. They give us one cow. We take back to Kawaihapa. Lead 'em on this trail, you go all round all the way back and then we have cow for milk. Everyday we used to have milk, everyday. But we never did breed cow. When come dry, walk 'em back and we get another one. Bring 'em over. Free. No pay. The ranch give us that, because the ranch foreman, the wife is a relative to us, see? When some of the Hawaiians who really like cows for milk, they give. They don't give, but they lend, you know?

JG: Whose responsibility was it to milk the cow?

LA: Oh, my brother's. My older brother, older than I. Every morning, milk the cow. We used to drink till we get bloat, we tired. And pure milk, too, you know.

JG: Did you have regular chores assigned to you or did you just wait till Momma or Papa said go do something? You know, like yard work that you had to do every week?

LA: No, no, no. We come back and we know what our responsibility. We do. They don't have to tell us. We do what we think that the children should do. We have our gardens of flowers and we plant flowers, too. And onions and maybe lettuce. It's a small garden. For family, you see. We do clean up. Parents don't have to tell us. We know our share work that we have to do.

JG: And you're used to watching and helping the older kids and little by little learn?

LA: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

JG: What kind of celebrations did you have? What kind of parties?

LA: Oh, the only parties we have is Christmas and New Year's. It's the most important parties we have. But we cling more to the New Year more than Christmas, you know. And then, just think, during our days there's no Christmas tree those days. And we used to go get this pine tree, you know. Ironwood. Well we used to go cut them and bring them over the house and we just stand 'em up in the ground and then we have no toys, nothing at all to put on the leaves, eh? But we put all kind of paper, whatever it is, mark 'em and paint 'em and put 'em on top, you know, for decorate, eh. But we enjoy, though, those days. We really enjoy.

JG: Did you make those paper chains, you know, where you can make a loop of paper and glue it?

LA: No. We don't have any glue. Maybe we tie it with a thread or string. Tie it around, you know. Ah, those days...
JG: What kind of special meal did you have? Did you have your family, or your friends come over, or what?

LA: Well, when my friends come over, they got to eat what we have.

JG: You didn't go for this big special hams, special...

LA: No, no, no, no. Because we had one store in the village where we were staying, but they don't have no meat down there. Maybe they had canned stuff and cracker or maybe cream, rice, but there's no market down our place, no market at all. So, when friends come over they got to eat what we give them. But those days they don't select what they want. Like when we go to their home whatever they get they tell us participate in the food with them. We don't ask questions, we just eat what they get on the table. With the old Hawaiians you cannot tell what we going to eat, no, no. Very rude, you know. So we were taught by our parents when we go to relatives' house or friends' house, don't choice what you want. What is on the table, you got to participate what they got on the table. Never say anything, see? When friends come over our house, the same thing. They cannot say, "I cannot eat that." No, no, no. The Hawaiians really get after you, you know. Very insult, you know.

JG: Did you have something like a luau for Christmas or New Year's?

LA: Oh, yeah. Christmas and New Year that's all the time we have luau. We don't celebrate. Even our birthday we don't celebrate. Well, maybe have chicken just for the family due to the fact that we not too well off. We poor, eh? But what we get we satisfied. And we happy about it, you know?

JG: What did you do for Christmas or New Year's?

LA: Our Christmas we have kalua pig. That's what we most enjoy. We kalua the pig. And we have fish. And have lot of stuff from the beach, you know, limu and opihi and all that. We have like regular party feast. And New Year the same thing, see?

JG: Now there were about seven or eight families in your village. How many of them were having parties?

LA: Well, those days, nearly every house get a party. Every home, I mean. And then like for instance, I'm kalua-ing the pig at my home, okay. I'm going to invite all these other houses to come my house. Eight house? Well, I'm going to invite. They all come my house. Okay, don't eat too much, you know, so when you pau, all us we go to the next house. We just roam, maybe the whole night, take the whole night, we go, you know, and celebrate. That's how we used to live those days.

JG: When did you start eating? Two o'clock in the afternoon? New Year's at night?
LA: At night. Maybe after twelve o'clock, eh? But we prepare, kalua the pig maybe in the evening, get ready and twelve o'clock at night we get the New Year. That's when we start celebrate.

JG: Did you make noise, or...

LA: Oh, yes, firecrackers and all that kind. Those days lot of firecrackers from China, eh. Everything was cheap. Noise, sometime we used to get this square can at night. You know this empty square can, we get this big boom, boom, boom! We used to have music, and singing. Oh, all kinds. And the older people would drink up and then, you know. But one thing I know, I very happy because when they come to my home, don't eat too much and then we go to the next house. The whole gang going, you know. See, and we go the next house, maybe we eat a little and pau, we go the next house.

JG: Was this just the men or did the women go from house to house?

LA: No, all, the whole family.

JG: Everybody...

LA: My whole family's house. Let's say we going Sam's house. We all go there, and they come in here and participate with us, too. And we go there, and from there go to the next house. Keep going till we complete every house. Sometime maybe end up in the morning. And the celebration continue the next day. That's how the Hawaiians celebrate those days, with lots of food. You see, that's one thing, lots of food. And I remember those Hawaiians say pretty hard to get liquor. Used to catch the train. Go all the way Waialua to the liquor store to buy. Those days they have wine and they love wine, see.

JG: Buy the gallon bottle?

LA: Buy the gallon in the basket. I remember, one gallon. There's a basket around, outside. I remember two kind of wine. They call 'em Tokay wine and port wine, those days, way back. Oh, they get maybe five, six, seven, nine gallons, whatever it is, according to what you want. Come back on the train. And they drink wine and celebrate the whole night till the next day, see?

JG: Waialua was where you did most of your shopping?

LA: Waialua we do most of our shopping. They have more bigger store there. But we stay Kawaihapai small store, but not too big store, but good enough to get sugar, and then maybe little rice, or canned stuff.

JG: What kind of canned things did you buy?

LA: Oh, like salmon and then corned beef and sardines. You know those small sardines? That's what they used to have those days. Canned
sardines, only five cents for one can. And then we call this sockeye salmon. Maybe about twenty cents or something like that. Cheap, everything cheap those days.

JG: What about clothing? Did your mother make most of your clothing?

LA: No, only our home clothing my mother makes, like, you know, for the home. But most of our clothes we buy. We go Waialua and buy. I remember I use to wear overalls all the time. They used to be my pants, you know.

JG: With the bib?

LA: Yeah, yeah. And then I used to go with that. We bought from the store. I used to go to school with that. And then, the whole week I go with the same pants, the same shirt. But shirts, sometime my mother sew shirts for me. But not trousers. And then sometimes we used to play marble and the okole puka and this and that, well, I go say, "Mama, gee, puka the okoles." "Okay," She patch them up and wash them, pau and then continue go to school, you know.

JG: Where did she do her washing?

LA: Down at the stream. On a rock. You get a regular rock and they used to have a wooden paddle to knock the clothes, you know. Go along with this, use soap and all and the stream go down the water like that. Poor mother, you know, everything is hand.

JG: Did your mother make soap, or did you buy it from the store?

LA: No, we buy it. Those big kind of brown soap. A big block, oh, about that big. (Holds hand about six inches apart) Where one block take about four or five time to wash and before it fade away, you know.

JG: You told me one time that your father used to take you up to Kaena Point, or up towards there to fish, up where the uhane is...

LA: Yeah. I used to go with my dad fishing down Kaena Point all the way, but in the meantime he give us a little story about the place. That's how I know. Otherwise I wouldn't know, see? Sometimes he don't like tell you the story. I don't know why. Those old Hawaiians, you know. He knows a lot, but he don't come out and say, maybe. There's a lot of those caves on the other side. Kaena. Lot of important caves; they were explained to us, but I don't know. Those caves, lot of people go hike. They go in there. They get some paddles, and some way back from the old time, you know. But I didn't enter those caves once, because I heard my parents say if you going to do wrong in those caves you might get trouble, see. So we scared see? But the people who go hike, they go right in and pick what they want. And somebody get this bowl of poi, what you call, made out of this, ipu, you know? All in there, you know, sitting good, and they take 'em, see?
JG: What kind of fishing did you do when you went up that way?

LA: Oh, we used to go inshore fishing only. Mostly inshore fishing.

JG: Line and pole?

LA: No, no. We have nets. We have... I don't know what they call it in English. We have nets that two person would hold one end and I'll hold one end. Maybe my side, I got about ten, fifteen feet long, and the other side ten, fifteen feet long. All depends on the place where you going to lay this net. Some place is so narrow you cannot use the longer net. You got to use the shorter nets. That's why my dad used to have all kind of length of net down that area. Because the condition of the place where we go is not open. You have some place so narrow, and you got to use shorter nets. And then sometime use this kind net, we call it upena hopai. Upena hopai means it's just like a scoop net, but it's not a scoop net; it kind of come long that way. Maybe about six feet long. Sometimes, for certain kind of fish, my daddy get little more longer one. You know when the big hole like that, you just scoop the net where my dad know the fish going to come out. You just put the net there and somebody with a big long rod—in the hole now, I'm talking about the hole—that's a lot of fish in the hole and they come out and they go in the net.

JG: You scare them out?

LA: Yeah. There's another kind, they call this kind, you have to surround the net. We call upena kuu.

JG: Then you were fishing in those little coves down along there?

LA: Yeah. In those little coves. And then my dad knows which place is kind of narrow, he use the shorter net. And if the channel is little wider, he use little more longer net. That's how he used to do.

JG: Would you go down one morning and come back that day or, would you spend the night?

LA: Oh, we come back that day. But, we do mostly night fishing. Maybe we leave the area where my dad born, maybe in the afternoon, let's say about two o'clock in the afternoon. We walk. From the point, to that spot is maybe close to six miles. We walk on the track, you know. Railroad went all the way to the Point. And when kind of dark. He knows what time to wake up and start. At night, now. And then we start fishing from there going up toward that place. All the way till in the morning. By that time, oh, lots of fish we catch there. All different kind of fish.

JG: How did you prepare those fish to eat?

LA: Some fish we used to just boil. Ordinary boil them and we eat. Some fish if we wanted to dry, we cut and we take the intestines out and we salt 'em and then we dry 'em.
JG: How did you dry them on a rack or in a screen or what?

LA: No, no, we have this galvanized shack, eh. Down there. Well, on this galvanized shack, we put some clean bag or whatever it is and then the fish. Heat down there's so strong. Just put it on there to the sun. When we live down closer to the beach, we dry 'em on the rock, see. No screen at all. We just dry 'em on there.

JG: What did it take? A day, two days?

LA: Oh, one day. Maybe a day is enough, because Kaena is a hot place. Oh, very hot.

JG: How did you salt the fish?

LA: At first when the fish is fresh, we still can eat raw. But afterward, maybe certain kind of special fish, we going to salt 'em. Get the scale out. We cut it and take the intestine out. We salt 'em. And then, maybe for the next day, if you want to eat raw fish, but before you eat raw, that fish, you have to put it in the water to get the salt out. You know what I mean? Sometime too much salt, you got to put them in the water. So get some salt, so you going to taste just right when you can eat. So, we continue. That's how.

JG: How long after you've been fishing, one day, two days, you could eat it raw? With no salt?

LA: Maybe only about a day, day and a half. You cannot leave too long. Maybe two days you can eat. Maybe. 'Cause you no ice box, those days, yeah? We have to have safe, they call it, and sometime we put the fish in the ti leaf. Wrap it so kind of cool it off. But most time we eat, when we go fishing we come eat the raw fish that day and we don't leave any for the next day. We just salt 'em all up. All the rest, so it won't be spoiled. For sure not spoiled, see, and dry 'em out.

JG: Did you and your father do that, or did your mother do the salting and drying?

LA: No, the whole family, sometimes everybody. Whichever person available to do, they do, see?

JG: Did you ever make beef jerky?

LA: No. Oh, oh, yeah, but we never do beef jerky, but we do goats. We used to catch goats, and shoot the goats, and come back and get the skin out and then we cook whatever you want, or fry, whatever it is, and the rest we make like jerk meat, eh? And we dry 'em out. Ah, that's good. Kind of partly dry, half dry, ono.

JG: Did you ever tan the skin?

LA: Only my brother, oh, he likes that, you know? We keep the skin, you put it on the ground and you stake, you stretch it out. You put this,
you know, the dust from the firewood, ash! You rub it on. That's what you do. And then, when it dries, the goat skin nice.

JG: What did he do with it after he dried it?

LA: Yeah, we use it for a rug in the house, or give to friends, whatever it is.

JG: What kind of transportation did you have? You walked a lot. Did you have a horse?

LA: No, we didn't have a horse. We walk to Kawaihapai, to the station, and if we want to go to Waialua, we walk to Kawaihapai. It's about maybe two miles and a half from where we lived. And catch a train, you know.

JG: How often did the train go?

LA: Oh, everyday. One trip each way.

JG: So you catch it going into Waialua...

LA: And catch it coming back. From Kahuku.

JG: Do you remember ever going to town, into Honolulu when you were a kid?

LA: Maybe once a month I used to come into the city with my mother. We used to come with my mama. My grandfather left some money, you know. And then, when he died, so we come into town, maybe my mother go to the bank get about ten dollars. In those days ten dollars go for a lot of stuff, you know. I still remember.

JG: What did she do besides go to the bank when she came to town?

LA: Oh. First, you know, we go to my nephew's home at Kaka'ako. We stay there. From there, well, maybe I don't go to the bank, only my mama. I stay home play with those kids. And she going get the money and then when she come back, we go the store to buy certain thing, and we buy whatever we want and we catch the train that evening, and come back.

JG: You go in one afternoon and come back the next?

LA: Next afternoon. Sometime, all depends. Sometime we sleep for one night or two or three nights and we come back.

JG: Did you ever go to any church functions...

LA: No.

JG: ...theatre or anything?

LA: Especially down near Makua. You know we have the (annual Mormon) church conference down here way back those years, 1910, 1911, 1912.
Maybe this year down Makua, next year down Kawaihapai, and the following year maybe Punaluu. And maybe the following year Kahana Bay.

JG: Oh, you go that far?
LA: Yeah, that far. Church conference, you know.
JG: Well, the train went to Kahuku...
LA: At Kahuku, the trains pau. That's the Oahu Railway.
JG: How did you get from Kahuku down to Kahana?
LA: Good question. From Kahuku to Kahana they have a narrow railway there. Private railway. They call it Koolau Railway. We get on that train and go to Kahana. There's a terminal there. And then, I don't know what their schedule over there.
JG: When you went to the conferences, that was several days, wasn't it?
LA: Several days. Maybe, let's say, we leave Kawaihapai Friday morning and reach down there Friday evening. And then Saturday night, the following day, day of the meeting...you know, Hawaiians those days, they always, "Oh, you come my house" and then "You come my house" and then, you know. Sometimes you don't even know who they are. But we belong to the same religion. "Come, come my house." That's how.
And then that night we have a concert. Compete. Singing. Each group go on the stage and then who gets a prize. First prize, second prize. Ah, those days. The lei you got. They come and put the lei on you, on your neck... Ah, those Hawaiians.
JG: Up in this area what kind of flowers did they make into leis?
LA: In Waianae, mostly get maile flowers. And Makua. Mostly get maile. Go up in the mountains get maile. And some people, they plant carnation. These people around here, these Hawaiians. Those days they plant carnations and some other kind of flowers.
JG: So you got maile and carnation leis?
LA: Ah, they mix 'em together and maybe different kind of flowers they mix with the maile, aaahh...
JG: Did they grow much ilima up here at that time?
LA: Well, I knew had ilima those days. When we live in Kawaihapai we have ilimas, too. We have ilima. We plant and we take care of the ilimas.
JG: How did you carry your clothes and stuff? Did you have a suitcase, or did you wrap 'em up in a bundle, or what?
LA: No, we have this kind, old kind suitcase and whatever. Sometime we
bring 'em in a bag or whatever it is. You know, those days we don't make fun of other people, you know.

JG: Did you take your own blankets and stuff?

LA: Yeah, we bring our own blanket and our own clothes and our own towel, whatever it is. And then, we used to come down Makua. I remember we used to stay with a family. The name was Kamoku. They have no pipe water, but they have this outside well with the pump; you pump the water. With a handle, and the water come up, but good water, fresh water. I remember that. Ah, nice time. Makua was one of the best place...they have lots of food to supply the congregation. You know, Linc McCandless was the owner. And then he offer one or two pigs for the church. Maybe six, seven, ten pigs. All depend how many pigs they want. So, this Makua could feed the whole people how many times a day you can eat and eat and eat. You know.

END OF SIDE TWO.

SIDE THREE.

JG: Today most of the churches have buildings outside for cooking or conference rooms...

LA: They had a church down Makua, that's where there is a cemetery now. Before no more wire fence. Next to the cemetery was the church. And get one more, what they call, just like a hall below next to the church. They serve the kaukau there. But I don't know where they cook. I think they had outside stoves cook.

JG: Did your family cook outside?

LA: Yeah, we cook outside. And then, lots of wood. And then the food is so ono, eh? And not only that, the only thing get a lot of smoke. That's the only thing, you know. You see? But we cook outside.

JG: But all the women in the congregation prepared the food?

LA: Women and men.

JG: What kind of food did they serve you folks for breakfast?

LA: Ah, they serve you in the morning poi, lunch time poi, evening poi. Yeah. And those Hawaiians, those days they love their poi. Ahh. I used to do the same thing. I used to eat morning poi and then lunch time poi and the evening poi, till...

JG: Who pounded it when you had these big meetings?

LA: Good question. You know, they don't pound, but the boys' industrial school at Waialae. I don't know if you know where about Waialae. Way up north shore. Now is taken over by the University of Hawaii
where they feed cows. That used to be Waialee Industrial School
before. And then these boys used to plant taro down there. The
poi came from there. And the train used to bring it all the way
from Kahuku. From Waialee down here. Ah, good taro. We mix it in
with the water. And then, no machine, those days. Those boys used
to pound with the hands. Yeah, hand, they pound with the hands.
No more machine like now.

JG: Did your family buy pounded taro, or did you pound your own?
LA: No. Pounded our own. And sometime we mix it with flour.

JG: There's a special name for what you call poi when you mix flour with
it. What is it?
LA: Oh, well it's called poi palaoa. But sometimes when that poi palaoa,
we all little poi. If you get used to that poi palaoa, you don't
care for poi, taro poi. We were brought up that way. You know,
they used to mix this flour, mix in just like you going to cook hot
cake. You know, mix a lot, and then you have this square can, and
you mix like the pancakes. And then before used to have this kind
of bag. Flour bag come in fifty pound. We keep the flour bag.
And this can water, you got to put them in imu, now. This can water
fill 'em up pretty high, about three-quarter. And we mix this flour
outside first and we put them in this bag, we put them in this can.
And the water then come pretty close to the top. And when the imu red
hot, and we put 'em on the imu. Just like you kalua pig.
Early in the morning and in the evening you get, the flour is cooked.
Cooked kind of hard, you know. And we used to pound that flour. On
the poi board. And that's the best poi, you know. Once you get used
to it, you don't want to eat regular poi because you get accustomed
to the taste, eh? But, more ono if you mix with some poi.

JG: And when you mix poi with it, then you half-half, or just a little
bit...

LA: No, don't have to be half-half. Maybe you put only a quarter poi in
there. If you sometimes you put too much poi you spoil the taste
that you get accustomed to with the flour poi. Oh, yeah, we were
brought up in that way, too. My family.

JG: Back to the conference. When you went to conference, you went down
on Friday and you came back on Sunday night, Monday morning, when?
LA: Monday morning.

JG: And all that time all the ladies were out there cooking...

LA: Cooking, and the mens helping. You know, those days very nice,
important days, because, you know why, because, maybe I don't meet
you once a year, you get more aloha because I haven't seen you for
the whole year, so nice we meet again. So it's just like you know
somebody for years, but, no, maybe you only met them once or twice, eh.
JG: How many people would attend those conferences?

LA: Well, I would say, maybe people of Waialua, Kahuku, Kahana and Makua. Oh, maybe about two, three hundred people. Those days there's only one religion. And then, to my way of thinking those days are a lot of people. Yeah, about two or three hundred, because you get the Kahana side, Punaluu side, Waialua and then Kawaihapai and this Makua.

JG: So that district went from where? Kahe Point all the way around to Punaluu?


JG: This was another (Mormon church) conference?

LA: This (was) another conference.

JG: When they had the meetings, how much of the day was spent in regular church meeting?

LA: Oh, maybe, like, we get for Sunday School, I think. We used to start early, maybe start from half past eight in the morning. There's many other different congregations that want to participate. You cannot start nine, ten o'clock. It going be too late. Maybe we start, I think I remember if I don't make mistake, about eight o'clock in the morning.

You know, they have, the language those days it was so fine. All in Hawaiian. Chee, so wonderful. Our school, the teacher gave us question and we give the answer. We all stand in the back. Oh, we about maybe 12 years old—he (teacher) give the question in Hawaiian and we have to answer him. You know the Bible questions? Ah, so lovely. And then Makua had the same thing. Had this congregation down there have the same thing. They have a young boy too, was their teacher, you know. And he stands way up in the hallway. And we on the pulpit, eh? Oh, maybe take about till about twelve or after twelve. From eight o'clock.

And then we have lunch. And from there on, we continue. Have nice time, drink up. When people want to drink, drink, but, it's a gala affair, you know, really. Me, I miss that.

JG: They didn't let you drink in a Mormon conference?

LA: No, no, no. But some people there are not Mormons. They visit us, maybe from Waianae. Lot of the Waianae people come down there.

JG: Just come because their friends are there?

LA: Their friends, yeah. Then they know one another. Some from Honolulu even comes. Some of them come down there. But they don't drink in the church premises. Maybe they drink at their home.

JG: Go to their friend's house.

LA: The friend's house, yeah, yeah.
JG: Then they have meetings again in the evening, or...

LA: Yeah, they have meeting in the evening again.

JG: So you had the whole afternoon for socializing?

LA: Yeah, socialize. Right, right, whole afternoon. So you spend the whole afternoon in a workable condition. No more da kine just loaf around. No, do work till in the evening. But the main Sunday School is pau already. Yeah, yeah.

JG: They did a lot of singing at those?

LA: Oh, lot of singing.

JG: What kind of instruments did they use to accompany...

LA: Well, guitar. I remember they used to have guitar, ukulele. They used to have mandolin. They used to have violin. And they used to have...I'm talking about Saturday night, have concert. And they have flute, you know flute? And banjo. Not this kind banjo now. They have the 12 string banjo, you know. Four keys up and one straight. And they used to play the banjo. (Imitates banjo playing) And they have bass viola those days. But they don't use the bass viola pick, like how the boys doing. They use with the bow. I don't think so they know about picking. They just use a bow. Ah, good old days.

END OF INTERVIEW
Tape No. 2-14-2-77

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Louis Aila (LA)

June 9, 1977

Makaha, Oahu, Hawaii

BY: June Gutmanis (JG)

JG: First of all I'd like both your father and your mother's name.

LA: Oh, my daddy is full-blooded Hawaiian, and his name is Kamakahiki Aila. And my mother is Caucasian-Hawaiian. Her name is Caroline Aila when she got married. But prior to that, she was Caroline Johnson.

JG: What is your Hawaiian name?

LA: Oh, my Hawaiian name is Louis Johnson Kiokina Aila. Kiokina is my Hawaiian name.

JG: You said Kiokina is Johnson in Hawaiian?

LA: Equivalent to Johnson.

JG: Is that why you don't use a Hawaiian name, because it's really a haole name?

LA: Yeah, in fact, that's a haole name. But I have no Hawaiian given, you know, so I took my grandfather's English name, Johnson, and Kiokini is equivalent to Johnson. So when I was brought up, when I was young, all the neighbors around my area (Kawaihapai and Waialua), when they call my Hawaiian name, they always call that name, Kiokina.

JG: Did they use that name when you were young?

LA: Oh, yeah. When I was young in the country, they used that name all the time. They call, "Oh, Kiokina." They hardly call me Louis, you know.

JG: When did you start using the name Louis?

LA: Well, my name Louis is this way. When my mother gave birth to me, she consulted with my daddy. Traditionally in my family we like to carry the family's name, to carry on. Whoever pass by, we carry on the name, so that's my grandfather's name, Louis Johnson, that's my mother's dad, so my mother talked to my dad. She said, "Since I don't have any children that name to my dad, so how about name this
boy my dad's name?" So that's how I took my grandfather's name, Louis Johnson. And then, Aila is my daddy, see? But at that time, they didn't select a Hawaiian name for me, so after about four, five years old that's when my parents and my mother call me Kiokina all the way through. So the neighbor, the people around the neighborhood, well, they hear my mother and father call me Kiokina, so they continued carry on till today. I mean the old people, but now more majority of them pass away.

JG: What do your brothers and sisters, your family that you have today call you? Do they call you Kiokina or do they call you Louis?

LA: Well, in my family, I haven't got any. My sisters and brothers all pass away. Just myself living. When we live in the country, my older brothers and sisters, they call me Kiokina.

JG: So they used that. What was the name of the school that you first went to?

LA: First, I went elementary school in Kawaihapai. You hardly hear that name now. That's where the Dillingham Airfield is now. But, according to the map, it says Mokuleia, but majority of the area of that airfield is in Kawaihapai District. That's where I was born. No, that's where I was brought up, raised.

JG: Where were you born?

LA: In Waialua. Waialua town, but way toward the mountain. The place they call Kanikiula. People now-days, they don't know that name. They don't know, see? Only the old timer, like, older than I, they know what's Kanikiula mean. But you talk to the young generation now, they don't know. Only what they know is Waialua.

JG: About where is that located today?

LA: Well, on the road to Haleiwa when you pass one of the town, they call Kaihuwai. Okay, when you come from Waialua you coming down through that pineapple field, cane field and you kind of going down. And some garage and stores on the right and you get a bridge, Two Bridge (Twin Bridge), they call it. You get the first bridge and the second bridge. So you pass these two bridge, that area is called Kaihuwai. That's why they have stores there. They have show-house there. And then our community center is there, you know. And you pass that and you go in little further down, is a cane field on two sides, and when you hit the first road that go across cane field, and you turn right...

JG: Mauka.

LA: Go mauka between these cane fields, oh, maybe about quarter of a mile up, and you turn right, oh, maybe one block. That's where used to be, that's where I was born. That place was originally my grandfather's place, Louis Johnson.
JG: How old were you when you moved up to Kawaihapai?
LA: Oh, about eight or nine.
JG: You didn't go to school, then, up in Waialua?
LA: No, I didn't go to school. I started to my school in Kawaihapai.
JG: Then you were eight or nine when you started to school?
LA: Yeah, about eight or nine years. I didn't go to school about six or seven years, like the children now-days, you know. 'Cause moving from place to places, so, I start about eight or nine years when I went to school, elementary school.

JG: What year were you born? What's your birthday?
LA: 1901. June the 27th.

JG: Now, what was the second school you went to?
LA: Well, I went to Kawaihapai School till, I don't know, about the fourth or fifth grade, so I shift back to Waialua where I was born. So I went there for a little while, in the Waialua School. And then due to financial trouble, you know. When I recall back, my parents, too bad they didn't have no funding that they could put me through school, see. I didn't graduate from school. I just went to the six grade, that's all. So I stayed in Kawaihapai till about 1914, 1915, something like that. And 1916, at vacation time, we made a trip to Molokai, the Hansen's disease settlement. Kalaupapa. You know I have two brothers was there. Dad and I went. Can I say the story?

JG: Oh, please do.
LA: Yeah, so I went there in 1913. (Actually about 1916.) I was 12 years old that time. So I saw the place. Saw the condition of the patients. Look awful, you know. Some of them patients, their eyes almost closed. But I went there and visited my brothers, you see. And when we came back from Kalaupapa, we stayed in Honolulu. So my dad continued on back to the country, but I stayed some with our relatives. Part of our relatives in Honolulu. I stayed for a while, so a friend of mine told me, "Say, you want a job?" I was young boy at that time, you know. So, I was looking for job, too, you see? Say, "Okay, come on." So he took me to Honolulu Iron Works. That's the first place I ever worked during my life.

JG: Was he working there?
LA: Yeah, he was working there, you see.

JG: What did you do?
LA: I was in the boiler shop.
JG: You were about 13 when you started to work, then?

LA: No, no, no. More than that. I think about close to 16. No, about 15 years old. And then I worked there till 1918. I joined the National Guard in 1916, 1917. So in 1917 when the United States had declared war on Germany, they mobilized the guard and so we went and had examination and all and then we went in the Army, the regular Army.

JG: Let's go back to the first job, then I want to ask you about the Army. How much were they paying you at Honolulu Iron Works in those days?

LA: Dollar a day, and then every Saturday we had our pay. Six dollars. Just like when you figure on your lunch and everything, well, maybe you only get three or four dollars a week.

JG: Now you worked six days a week. How many hours a day?

LA: Eight hours.

JG: Were you living with your relatives?

LA: I was still staying with relatives in the meantime. Later on, I got married.

JG: You didn't have to pay room and board out of that six dollars a week?

LA: No, I paid. We used to have a room. We pay four dollars a month. No, after I got married. But prior to that I live with my family, so I didn't pay anything. You know Hawaiians, they don't pay.

JG: Did you take lunch to work, or did you buy lunch there?

LA: No, I take lunch to work. I used to take little bowl of poi and whatever it is. Those days I cannot go without poi. I have to eat poi.

JG: And when you started working at Honolulu Iron Works, were there any people there that were speaking Hawaiian?

LA: Oh, yes, majority of the workers in the boiler shop where I'm at, I would say about eighty percent or eighty-five percent was all Hawaiian. From that area, Kaka'ako area. And we all speak Hawaiian. That's way back now, I'm talking about. 1916. 1917. We all speak Hawaiian. We very seldom speak English. And then I get involved with these Hawaiian people, so we speak the language. Some of them they older than me, so we continue carry the language. Oh, wonderful, yes.

JG: That was a very satisfying job, then.

LA: Oh, satisfying job, yes. Yes,

JG: I got to skip backwards again. I forgot to ask you the name of the church that you attended when you were living up Naialua side.
LA: Kawaihapai?

JG: Yes.

LA: Oh, the name of the church, we had only one church there. We call that, a Mormon Church.

JG: Oh, there were no Protestant...

LA: No Protestant. It's a small little village only about, I would say about 35 to 45 Hawaiians, that's all. A small community.

JG: You mean families?

LA: Families. No, I think about seven or eight houses. Families. All Hawaiians in...

JG: Seven or eight families, about 35 people?

LA: About 35 to 45. With the children and all. And see, we lived in harmony, happily, happy. We don't get too much money. Families don't get, they don't work. They just farming and fishing. And hunting. That's all the Hawaiians did those days. But they live happy. Forever happy. And that was the way we lived, just like we real family to one another. Just like we blood relation, but, not. If sometime maybe they want to put up a feast, you know, for the church, a feast, a banquet which is about the same in Hawaiian now, a luau. Which is very incorrect to me, to my way of thinking, very incorrect. We never used the work luau those days. We always used that work ahaaina, for banquet. I still remember. But the Hawaiians those days were the Hawaiians of old. You know, way back. So they don't use luau. They going to mention luau only it comes in the edges, young taro leaf. You see? So the Hawaiians those days, they work together, they stick together. They help one another. You have a banquet, you want a preparation, whatever it is, or kalua the puua, the pig and everything, we all go there, and participate, help. Without no pay, you know, just you help. And one night we have party at our house, you know, ahaaina at our house, oh, the community all go in and help. That's how the Hawaiians used to live back then. And I remember when I was ten, twelve years old, they have taro patch up towards mountain. Hawaiians used to plant taro toward the mountains, closer to the mountains, where a lot of water from the mountains comes up. And sometimes they want to clean up the taro patch and plow the taro patch. The whole community will go up there. Like, for instance, if I own the property, maybe I got six, seven taro patches to be clean, way up. And then plow, whatever it is, the whole community turn out. That's how we used to live.

JG: How did people get the land up there?

LA: Well, during from the kingdom days. You know, when they...

JG: Land grant.
LA: Land grant, yeah. That's how they got the land. See, you get one big property from the mountain to the sea, but each time, you know, as time goes by, well, I don't know. They have some administration, haole guys. Well, each time, you know, maybe they (Hawaiians) owe and they owe and they lose the land little by little till now they don't have any. I think only one more family own land down there. I don't know whether it is the government or Dillingham, I don't know.

JG: Most of that land was lost because of debts?

LA: No, because of, since the War. The second World War. So they condemned that place. I don't know how many years the government condemned the place and then they took it over.

JG: For Dillingham field?

LA: The Dillinghams. But originally the name of that site, right there, is Kawaihapai. It's not Dillingham. But it's not on the map now when you look. So, I came from there.

JG: What does that name mean?

LA: You know, "kawai" means "a water." "Hapai" means when you lift. The water, how you explain in English? Hapai is "lift." But in English, I don't know how you...

JG: Does that mean the water coming rushing up?

LA: Rushing up. But I don't think so. It means the other way, more like a river. That's what I think it means, "the water of life," something like that. That's what I'm thinking. See? Anyway, that's our Hawaiian. When you say "water of lift," the people now will explain oh, "lift" just means when you lift the water. But maybe there's another way of explaining, you see. Could be pertaining to our life, the way how we living now. You see? That's my opinion now. You see? So just to my opinion is "the water of life."

JG: That could be the secret meaning.

LA: More of a sacred meaning. That's my opinion now. Could be there's another way of explaining, but, whenever we were young we don't bring out, "What is Kawaihapai means in English?" You know. We didn't bring that up. We just say, well, Kawaihapai, Mokuleia, Kaena, and then, what do you call, Koikaia, well, all those different places, see. So, it's a wonderful, wonderful living, you know. The Hawaiians, they so poor, in money. They haven't got money. But, they love and cooperate there. You see?

JG: That could be the secret meaning.

LA: More of a sacred meaning. That's my opinion now. Could be there's another way of explaining, but, whenever we were young we don't bring out, "What is Kawaihapai means in English?" You know. We didn't bring that up. We just say, well, Kawaihapai, Mokuleia, Kaena, and then, what do you call, Koikaia, well, all those different places, see. So, it's a wonderful, wonderful living, you know. The Hawaiians, they so poor, in money. They haven't got money. But, they love and cooperate there. You see?

JG: That could be the secret meaning.

LA: But I could see the difference between those days and now. We Hawaiians, we not there. We out. Too more apart now. To my opinion, it looks to me they try to ignore their language, especially the generation going on. And then, we got too much Westernized. You see. And they forget their own language, their mother-tongue. That's one reason our Hawaiian people now, they cannot speak Hawaiian. You see, and that's just the
trouble. But in my case, I didn't quit, you know. We were brought up Hawaiian. We speak Hawaiian in the house. That's everyday language, now, with my family.

JG: What about the other, six, seven families that lived up there, did they...

LA: They all speak Hawaiian, regardless.

JG: They all spoke Hawaiian at home?

LA: At home, and even out in the public. Like, for instance, we have, let's say, a big banquet. You hear the Hawaiian language, bang, bang, bang, bang. All the way through.

JG: And what about at church?

LA: Well, Hawaiian, I glad you brought up the subject. In our church, we have Hawaiian book, hymn, you know; we have hymn. All our lessons in our Sunday School, and then our senior group, whatever's, and the youth group, all the lesson is in Hawaiian. And our hymn, all in Hawaiian. Our grace, all in Hawaiian. Sermon, everything in Hawaiian.

JG: If you only had seven or eight families living there, how did they maintain the church? Who did the preaching, and...

LA: Well, we have a person there by the name, Kaiona, we call it. So, during those times, they call the leader of our church, they call President. But now they don't call President, they call Bishop. So, he carry on, and if there's any deficit like that of the church, he call all this parents and the leader of each house, get together to maybe make a little party and then to get some money for the church.

JG: When they had a party, was that an ahaaina that they had?

LA: Ahaaina, right.

JG: And who came to the party? I mean, if you were selling tickets to it...

LA: Those days, we don't sell tickets. Never did sell tickets, but sometimes we have families from Waialua district. At those time, the (Oahu and Railroad and Land) train was still running, you know, back and forth, so when they hear occasion like that, it's a banquet, or ahaaina, whatever it is, then they would come down, yeah. No invitation those days, you know. For instance, if I said in Waialua, "I know the people in Kawaihapai and I know they're going have a party." I just come down. Not like nowadays you have to be invited. You got to send an invitation. No, our days, those days, no invitation. We just come down, but the food is there. But whatever you love, in your heart, how much you want to give, quarter, half a dollar is sufficient.

JG: You have a calabash, or did you pass a collection...

LA: No. Calabash, calabash.
JG: There was a man in the village that was the kind of church leader?

LA: In our village? Yeah. He's the leader, so we call him our President, president of the church.

JG: Had he been to school for teaching...

LA: For ministering? No. No, he haven't been to school. We just, self-learned. But the Hawaiians those days, but, now is one thing. The Hawaiians used to have a Hawaiian school. I don't know what year was that. So my daddy told me that he went to Hawaiian school. But I don't know what year, maybe, maybe 1870, maybe 1880, I don't know.

JG: Was that in Waialua?

LA: Yeah, that was in Waialua up, not in Kawaihapai, you know. Waialua, this Hawaiian school.

JG: Was that Dr. (John S.) Emerson?

LA: Emerson. Yeah, during Emerson's time. So my dad told me that he attended that Hawaiian school there. That's a Hawaiian school. But, I didn't ask him why did they stop the Hawaiian school. What he told me was that completely they stopped them. But he doesn't know the reason. He don't tell me. But that, the Hawaiian school was stopped. By whom, I don't know.

JG: Now, Emerson was Protestant and you folks were Mormon...

LA: Yeah.

JG: Do you know how that changed...

LA: Well, that change came through in the missionary of the Mormons. You see, the Mormons, they great for penetrate each district, you know. And this Mormon haoles that come from Utah, they learn the language in Utah before they get here. When they get here, they know about fifty percent of the language already. They study Hawaiian in Utah, so when they come here, their main headquarters is Laie, in the city at Kalihi Street. So they send these missionaries out. But, maybe before I was born, I don't know. They penetrate the Kawaihapai district. That's how in the whole Kawaihapai---well, there were few Christians, very few. No Catholic. So they formed this Mormon Church down Kawaihapai, and that's where I used to go to church when I was a young boy.

JG: Was that any of the reason that your parents moved from Waialua up to Kawaihapai, was because of the church?

LA: No, no, no. Just because our daily life of living, see. We knew a place, we know that place can support us with food. You see, up in Kawaihapai, they got taro patch. You can plant corn, you can plant sweet potato. So, I believe that's how we moved down to Kawaihapai.
JG: Was there too little land or too little water in Waialua?

LA: No, where we were at, there's no water, but only water that come, a stream that goes in my grandfather's property. That's from the (Waialua) plantation. That goes for the sugar cane. But there's no taro patches... Nothing like that. But not in Kawahapai. They have water from the mountain. Till today, I believe so. And lot of taro patch. Right where we were on the lowland. And Hawaiians, different families who go up and plant taro and whatever it is, or plant sweet potato, or corn, whatever it is, see.

JG: So it was easier living over there?

LA: Oh, yeah. Easy to live. No money, but easy to live there. Lot of food. And lot of fish.

JG: And you said you went back to Waialua later?

LA: Well, I went back only maybe a matter of one or two days, and I'll come back to Honolulu, see. I don't stay down my country too long, about a week or two. No, never did.

JG: When you joined the National Guard, why did you join? How did you join? I mean, how did you meet up with the idea?

LA: That's a good question. While I was working in the Honolulu Iron Works with this friend of mine that took me down Honolulu Iron Works and I worked there, so we are good friends. We lived at same place in town. The same block, you know. And then he already join National Guard, see, and he told me one time, one day say, "Aila, you like join National Guard?" At every Thursday they used to have a drilling, at Honolulu National Guard. I said, "Gee, I'm too young. No, I'm too small." He say, "That's all right, when we get---" I was pretty tall, you know. I'm five feet eight, something like that. I was young. So he said, "When you get down there you figure up a way to make it (your age) twenty-one years. There's no problem." Sure enough, the night that (we) went there to register, (the recruiter) says, "How old are you?" "Twenty-one years." Well, I got to figure way back what old, what year I born, to make twenty-one. That's how I got in, because we don't have any I.D. card those days. No I.D. card at all. That's how I joined the National Guard. Oh, so young that time, I remember. And then Daddy Kekahuna was still living in Farrington, down there. He was our adult. So when I got in, I believe I was one of the youngest. You see. So, about this eight enlisted men, you know, National Guard, they intelligent. They encourage them. It's all right. They speaking Hawaiian. "Oh, you don't have to worry. You come in, we take care of you." So naturally, I know how to speak Hawaiian, and they speak Hawaiian to me, well, more better yet.

JG: Kekahuna was what?

LA: He was a sergeant.

JG: So he spoke Hawaiian to you?
LA: Oh, yes. Not only him, all the rest of the non-commissioned officers
and then even our captain was Hawaiian.

JG: About how many men were there in your...

LA: Oh, I think each company was about to eighty to a hundred, hundred and
ten.

JG: And all of them spoke Hawaiian?

LA: All, everyone speak Hawaiian. There's none that cannot speak Hawaiian.

JG: You never got a haole or Japanese...

LA: No, not in our company. No, no, we have no Japanese, no haole, no
Chinese in our company. I think few Portuguese. Local born. I think
so, but majority was Hawaiian. Majority.

JG: Did you meet in the evening?

LA: In the evening, yes.

JG: Now how much were they paying at that time for...

LA: Nothing, just free.

JG: Oh, you just went for free.

LA: Free. Yeah, we don't get paid. During our time, we don't get paid.
Just as soon as you knew you want to go, so we go. So after the United
States declare war (World War I), so they mobilized the Guard, see.
So we took physical examination again, and whoever pass, well, went
in the regular Army.

JG: When you were in the Guard, did you have a uniform?

LA: Uniform.

JG: They gave you that?

LA: Yes, they gave us that. But we don't have cap like they have this new
war now. We had a regular, sort of cowboy hat. The hard one, we have
that. And then our uniform, we have, you know, our coat, whatever it
is, outside they have, you have to button up here.

JG: Real high neck.

LA: Yeah, real high neck.

JG: What did you do beside Thursday night drill? Did you drill all the time
you were there, or what...
LA: No, no, just Thursday night, all drill and then instruction. You know.

JG: Guns, or what?

LA: Instruction. We have leaders. They tell us what is what, what is what, you know, have regular schedule. And then we'd drill right in Armory Hall.

JG: What kind of instructions were these?

LA: Concerning about military. Yeah, procedure, whatever it is.

JG: Did they teach you to fire a gun?

LA: Oh, yeah, but blank, you know. They teach you how to fire a gun, and then man of arm, what you call it, you know what I mean, eh?

JG: Yeah.

LA: Right shoulder, left shoulder and all that kind. And then forward march, and all this different...

JG: Had you ever used a gun before?

LA: Well, yeah, I use a gun, but I didn't shoot the gun once. We march with guns on, see.

JG: But when you lived out in the country, did you ever go hunting?

LA: But not shoot. I used to go hunting with my older brothers. They do the shooting, I do the carrying. I remember, yeah.

JG: How did you hear about the outbreak of the first World War? When did you first...

LA: Well, it's through our local newspaper. And you know, rumor around well, Germany attack our submarine---no, our boats, our ships, so that's how we started. I believe so, if I don't make mistake. That's how United States involved in that clash with Germany. Sinking our ship, you know, supply ship.

JG: You were inducted into the Army then, after you got your physical? Where did they put you?

LA: Oh, they sent me to Schofield. But a place, a camp, they call it Castner. I believe they eliminate that name now altogether. You know where the Kemoo Farm?

JG: Yeah.

LA: Okay, when you go down, before you reach Kemoo Farm on the left where
those big concrete buildings, they used to call that area Castner.

JG: Like Castner Ford?

LA: Oh, something like that. They used to call that area Castner where you come down on the left. And then I believe the old barracks is still there yet. It's a concrete barracks, up and down. But Schofield is way far up. But now they don't use that name, Castner, just Schofield the whole, that's how I look at it.

JG: Now was this your whole company, most of them that you were with?

LA: Oh, yeah. We went, our company...

JG: Did they continue to use Hawaiian a lot?

LA: Oh, yes. Yes, they still continue to use Hawaiian. But, in meantime, we have to learn a little English, too, because we in the Army. But still at other times when there's no drill, or no meeting, whatever it is, we speak the language.

JG: But your drill sergeant started to use English, then?

LA: Oh, yeah, use English, right.

JG: Was it the same guy you'd been going to National Guard with, or was it a different sergeant?

LA: Well, no we've different sergeants. We've different sergeants, right, right.

JG: What did you do while you were there?

LA: Well, I was a regular soldier, infantry soldier. And later on we took courses for promotion, and I was promoted to corporal, those days. And no sooner after that, couple of months after that, well, we were discharged. I just spent ten, eleven months in the Army. That's all. Was because the War pau, eh? Armistice was signed, eh? Armistice. So pau, first thing you know, we all went out.

JG: So you weren't called up until the War had been going on for quite a while?

LA: Well, seems Germany bomb our ship, torpedo our ship from their own. Well, we get prepared. That's how we took the mobilization, that's why we was mobilized, and then went right in. 1917. 1918, isn't it?

JG: 1918 was when it was pau.

LA: Oh, yeah, 1918. About later part of 1917 I went in.

JG: What did you do after you got out of the Army?
LA: Well, when I got out from the Army, at that time, we don't have no security from our government. When you get out, you go find your own job. Yeah, you on your own. That's why these veterans from the Second World War, they lucky. But not our time. You on your own. We used to walk, footmobile all the way, you know, in the city. And then, I worked for stevedore for a while. And then I worked for the Ewa Plantation, I believe in 1919 to 1920, for one year. And then that job wasn't satisfying, so I went back to the city.

JG: What was bad about the job up...

LA: Well, you really work. And then only a dollar a day. Still only a dollar a day. And then, well, the job I worked was to haul cane from the field. Haul out to the main track. And then if you don't get all those cut canes that fill up, from the field, you don't get on the main track where the engine come and pull, you continue work. You have to, till all those cars that already fill-up be out from the field. You know they lay these temporary tracks in the ground. So sometimes we work till eight, nine o'clock. No over time, none at all.

JG: And for one dollar?

LA: For one dollar.

JG: There wasn't any union then?

LA: No, no. No union. We haven't got a union.

JG: How did they pay you, with cash or coupons?

LA: With cash, but in the meantime when we get no money, get no food, well, we go to the store and then charge, you know. And then by the time the payday comes, maybe you only get few dollars and the rest go to the store. But the plantation give you a home and wood for cook stove.

JG: Oh, they gave you cook wood.

LA: Yeah, wood. Wood, yeah, those days. And light, free light, whatever it is. If there's no electricity, well, they furnish you with kerosene.

JG: Hawaiian Homestead came in about that time, didn't they?


JG: Do you remember anything that people were talking about that idea of homesteads?

LA: No, not around 1920, 1921, no, I haven't heard.

JG: What about later?
LA: Oh, maybe later, then, one of our leaders, you know, the old time leaders like for instance Prince Kuhio Kalanianaole and then John Wise and Simeona Desha of Hilo, and Abraham Kualaloku of Kauai, and then Sam Kalama of Maui, they are one of the leaders on each island. And then Reverend Akaiko Akana, and they're brilliant people, they're smart. And they in conjunction with our Prince Kalanianaole, so they the ones that formed this, what you call, to seek these Hawaiian Homestead. That's way back, 1924, 1925, something like that, see.

JG: Do you know any of the people that got any of those early homesteads?

LA: Gee, I kind of forget. I know in Nanakuli the Kaiwi family, but they're all gone. Maybe only grandchildren now living. The Kaiwi family and...

JG: None of your family got homestead?

LA: No, none of my family. The original group, you know.

JG: What about after you got through working at Ewa, where did you go to work?

LA: Oh, I went back to the city and then I do some painting, house painting. Not steady, maybe one, two months and lay you off and you walk and look for another job. And then in 1923 I went to the Rapid Transit office and apply for to work on the street cars and I work on street cars about nine years. And then still the pay was only 35 (cents) an hour.

JG: Thirty-five cents an hour. Well, that's a little better than a dollar a day. That's about three dollars, about $2.80 a day.

LA: Oh, something like that. (Laughs) It's a hard job, especially when you're conductor, you on your feet all day. And then you know how the street car run, they always jagging a jig, till my leg got bumped, even till now from that place. So somehow or another, I look for another job, so I came out and we went entertain. No, no, I work for City and County. 1934, I believe so, 1933, 1934. (Actually about 1920, 1921) For about a year or two. And then that's when Franklin Roosevelt was President. Was a fine President. For a little while and then I went to the Rapid Transit and I worked for the Rapid Transit till 1930, something like that. And then I came, I went to entertaining, Hawaiian.

JG: You worked for the City before you worked for Rapid Transit?

LA: Yeah, I worked for the City before I worked Rapid Transit. And then... (LA worked as a painter for the City and County.)

JG: About what year did you quit the Rapid Transit?

LA: About 1931, or something like that. The street car was still running, regular street car. You know with the trolley pole, overhead, yeah. And used to have motorman and conductor.
JG: The ones on the track.

LA: On the track. And just, during those days, five cents fare. You know, only five cents. And then for school children, two and a half cents. But they have tickets, small little tickets. Each ticket worth two and a half cents. So children come on and use the ticket. That's how, those days.

JG: How did you get started entertaining?

LA: Oh, well, that's a good question. You see, right, in my life, as I say way back when we were young in Kawaihapai in our church we do a lot of our Sunday School and in Hawaiian. Study and the teaching and learning. In the meantime, we used to sing these Hawaiian hymn songs. Just like how we're singing down...

JG: Let me ask you another question. Before we get to the entertaining, in those years between the time you got out of the Army and you started entertaining, how much of the time were you able to speak Hawaiian? On the job that you were in, were there people that spoke Hawaiian in that time between 1918 and the time when you started entertaining?

LA: You mean Hawaiian in general, or just my friends, or what?

JG: No, just you personally. How much were you able to keep on speaking...

LA: Well, to my opinion, whichever Hawaiian I meet, I speak Hawaiian and they can answer me in Hawaiian.

JG: In other words, you checked them out, every Hawaiian you...

LA: Well, I don't have to check them up, I just look at them and I notice this Hawaiian able to speak the language. So is easy for us, 'cause I can tell, see. Not like now. Today I see a Hawaiian, I doubt I can tell that he doesn't know how to converse with me. Is a difference, see the difference? Way back, even around 1925 up to 1930, every time you see a Hawaiian, I'm talking about myself, I talk Hawaiian to them. They answer me in Hawaiian. They know what I'm talking about. And when they talk to me we used to converse in Hawaiian. Till after the Second World War that kind of thing kind of changed. That's why, in my opinion.

JG: Now let's go back to the entertaining. You started telling me how you...

LA: Well, you see, I love to sing. All my life. When I was a young boy. I started from the church. We used to sing church hymn. And then my sisters, we have ukulele and we have guitar in our house. My older brothers and sisters, they love to sing. That's just like talent, they sound talented. So when I see them, I say, well, it runs in me, too. So whatever they sing, I learn and I
sing myself at home, see. That's outside of the church. Singing. So, that's way back 1918, 1917, 1918, 1919, 1920. So during those days I'm very interested in singing and music, see, and then I start to play steel back in 1920, steel guitar. And then my older brothers, they didn't play steel guitar, but they play violin and mandolin, you know. And banjo, the old banjo, you know, five strings. Well, they plays banjo, accordion, my older brother. And they good singers.

JG: What kind of music did they play?

LA: Hawaiian. Hawaiian singing. No English, none at all. Everything in Hawaiian. With the exception of some songs that compose by the composer way back. Some, just like a hapa-haole song. But you get the touch of Hawaiian in there. No, no more this rock and roll stuff. Just like, for instance, we take this song, "Honi Kau Wiki-wiki." Sure and then, but the sound, Hawaiian, you see. They got some English word in, too, but the sound is Hawaiian. So this song still popular today, and that song was composed way back 1913.

I know the composer, Henry Kailimai compose that song. So in the 1915 when they left here a group of Hawaiian musicians--I don't know maybe about fifty or eighty--they went to a fair in San Francisco. They have a fair, something like that. So there's all these old timers, they already compose a lot of old numbers here, see. They went to San Francisco fair, what do you call, fair? But when they got through, lots of them remain in the Mainland. They continue their life, their music life. Music business. But the majority of them all gone by. And then, but, since I tell you, I love to sing. And then sometimes I get in the group with some aged mens, Hawaiian mens, and I listen how they sing, and I catch onto the words, and I copy the way they sing. Well, I understand the language, too. And then that's how I continue my life. When I came to the city, where I'm staying in Honolulu, I'm married already, so around Christmas, New Year, New Year, well, there's Hawaiians living right around that camp, whatever it is. Well, we all rehearsal, you know. Well, I was one of the youngest, then. All the rest were aged. We rehearsal for Christmas Eve. Way back, we used to go serenade, you know, oh, everybody. We walk, no car, we walk. Kalihi District. We don't make much money, but it's a thrill. We happy about it.

JG: What kind of songs were you singing?

LA: Real Hawaiian songs, that's all.

JG: Were they hymn songs, or...

LA: No, no, no. Happy songs, you know, no hymn songs. We used to go house to house, walk, and serenade. "Merry Christmas." Then we play the music and we sing. Sometime they give us ten cents. You know, sometime give us quarter. Sometime they haven't got any, well, they come out, "Gee, sorry we haven't got anything." "That's all right. Still it is Merry Christmas." You know. You know the
feeling. It just like, whether money or no money, we out, too. To enjoy, you know.

JG: How many of you were there in the group?

LA: Well, it varies, sometimes four, sometimes five. All depends. And year after year we have to do that till the time came that we don't go out and serenade. I think the last time I remember somebody came up my house serenade Christmas I think 1946, I think. That's the last time I remember a group came up. Well, they were my friends. It was Christmas morning. Early morning. And then I hear this mandolin, with this guitar and ukulele, so I told Momma, "Well, I know what group is that. That's my former mates. We used to play together." And then I had a violin, mandolin. I bought a mandolin. I got violin in my home, see. But I quit going out and serenade. So, well, that thrills me when they came in serenade. I think about way back I used to do the same thing. So "Oh, come in. Have a little drink." They didn't want a drink. They say, "No, no. We just came, we thought of you, we came to serenade." So I get one of my prize mandolin. I gave to this boy. I bought that mandolin, so I figure well, he loves to play mandolin. And the mandolin he got not very good, so before, prior to they left I say, "Well, Joe, I'm going to tell you I have a mandolin, Martin mandolin. I'm going to give you this mandolin." He say, "What?" "I'm going to give you this mandolin. I give with my heart, because I know you love to play mandolin." So he still get that mandolin till today. And he teaches children how to play mandolin on the mandolin I give him.

JG: What was the first job you had entertaining?

LA: Wait, wait. Not my job, but I play for somebody.

JG: Well, when you played for somebody.

LA: Well, I remember I played with Johnny Almeida way back (1925). It's a private job, so he call me. Prior to that, we used to play on the KGU (radio station) every Wednesday they have a Hawaiian program. (LA made error on time sequence. He worked for Johnny Almeida on radio in 1928.)

JG: Did you get paid for that?

LA: No. On the house. Johnny Almeida was got the contract for that job. So he call me. Well, I go up and help him. Not every Wednesday, but when I got time I go in. And after that sometimes, when Johnny Almeida get a job, you know, private job, he call me and we go out. But I don't remember which, who, what house, I don't remember.

END OF SIDE ONE.

SIDE TWO.

LA: Three, four hours, maybe we get three dollars, four dollars those days.
JG: Each, or...

LA: A piece, each, yeah. Each.

JG: What about the hotels? Did you ever play in the hotels?

LA: Oh, way later. Well, I used to play in the old Halekulani Hotel, I remember. Lot of our noted old time Hawaiian musicians. They are known, their name is still known till today. Boys like Joe Kamakau. And then Ernest Hobron. And Bill Kahele. Joe Bishaw. But majority of them all gone, except Joe Bishaw still living. I think he's about 85 or 89 years. He lives in Waikiki. They're the musicians. They're the singers. No mike involved. They don't like, they don't sing with mike. Only when they started sing, just like a band singing. So powerful, and then, well, those days, we don't sing with mike. So on and off, once in a while, they call me. I go out with these old people, older people, to play for them. And compare my age with them, maybe I'm twenty, twenty-five years younger. They older than I. But that thrill in me, desire in me to sing, I love to sing, and I like to sing with Hawaiians that knows a song, and then sing the song and pronounce the words correctly.

JG: Is that the way you were making your living then?

LA: Yeah, afterward, afterward, I entertain and I got in music life with Billy Lincoln, and I play with him nine years. Billy used to have a group way back, 1937, 1940 up to 1945. I play with him nine years.

JG: Where were you playing most of that time?

LA: Well, it was most on private jobs, you know, Homes, weekends, sometimes they have company sponsor their business over the radio, and they call Bill Lincoln and then we go there and we get paid, but not too much, but we get paid. So...

JG: You started during the Depression years...

LA: Yeah, yeah. Right, right.

JG: Now how did the Depression affect your family?

LA: No, no. Didn't affect much because we know how to manage to live our life, see. The main thing in our home, the poi, that's the main thing. We don't care if we get steak. It's okay if not. We can go along with it. You see? You know what I mean, yeah?

JG: At that time, were you buying your poi mixed, or were you buying the taro and cooking it?

LA: No, no. We mix, already mix by the poi shop that, I remember the days when they don't have no machine that mix the poi. Chinese.

JG: In the shop?
LA: In their shop, in the poi shop. I remember the days they used to pound with the hand. And...

JG: With a stone pounder?

LA: With a stone pounder. And big board, you know. They have poi shops in the city. I remember those days. And Chinese would do the cooking and the pounding. Chinese.

JG: About what year would that have been?

LA: I think between the 1930's and the 1920's. Between around that area.

JG: They were pounding it by hand...

LA: By hand.

JG: Then they, what? Mix it in big bowls?

LA: In the big drums, whatever it is.

JG: Did they do that by hand?

LA: Oh, by hand, everything by hand. Not too soft, kind of...

JG: Lumpy?

LA: Thick, lumpy. When we go there, to buy, if we go directly to the poi shop and they put it in the bag, cheap. Maybe quarter, maybe for twenty pound, twenty-five pounds. For quarter.

JG: You buy twenty-five pounds...

LA: No, I mean that's how cheap the poi was those days. Sometime you buy a quarter you get more than what you want. Especially for a family of four or five to feed, you know.

JG: How often were you buying poi?

LA: All depends on when our poi bowl come empty. (Laughs) Yeah, yeah, right.

JG: What about the second World War? Did you hear about that? Did you know that things were unstable in the government, or...

LA: No, I was surprised, because I haven't seen a paper where there's any disagreement between Japan and our country. Because nothing so far comes out whereby we figure something's going to happen. You know, but the day of the bombing I was in Kaneohe. I was really surprised. And then when this Japanese planes...

JG: Were you living or visiting over there?
LA: No, I was living Kaneohe that time. And then I was out in the yard cleaning, and then I saw this airplane right about—I think they want to bomb that Kaneohe Air Station. And then, gee, I look at the plane. Gee, that's not American plane, you know, to my opinion. Sure enough, was a Japanese plane. They were try to bomb Kaneohe. From that morning. And then, first thing you know, came out in the radio. That's how we know they attack us. So nothing, there was some damage, maybe, down Kaneohe, but not civilians home. Because Kaneohe is kind of far out, yeah, from the homes.

JG: When did you hear about the fact that it was a bombing?

LA: It came from the radio. Right down there, so in every house they put the radio on, eh? To find out, and that's how we know there was a bombing, see.

JG: What did you folks do then?

LA: Oh, we got little excited, but what can you do? We had to be calm anyhow. But the city was pretty damage. But I didn't see, you know, because lot of mens were on the way to work, you know, Pearl Harbor. I didn't know whether they turn back or some of them came to Pearl Harbor to help, eh. But I don't know too much.

JG: What did you do the next few days?

LA: Ahh, wait, wait, wait. Oh, yeah, that was 1940?

JG: 1941.

LA: 1941. Oh, no, we didn't, we stayed home. We just stayed home. And then, after that, I was still entertaining with Bill Lincoln, see, in the city. And then, in the year 1941, not too long after that, government order from Washington, you had to sign your name. Everybody was to tell what can you do, and we went down next to the post office. What you call that building there, all line up, register what do you know in your line of occupation. Keep on going, keep on going. That's 1941, so, in December the 13 or 14, I work for the government, Fort Shafter. In the painting department, I worked there. So is easy job. And then, I used to go help spray all the shops, you know, machine shops where they have those big windows, spray it black paint, you know, so outside. That's how we used to do. I remember, in case when the plane fly at night, they don't see the light wherever it is. So, I continue work there till I was retired.

JG: Were you still entertaining during that...

LA: Yes, we still entertaining, still entertaining. We go out and play. Private jobs.

JG: Did you go out at night? Did you have passes?
LA: No, no. I don't know, somehow or other we get permission with, what they call, in charge of the—-you know. They send car for us.

JG: Most of your entertaining, then, was on the military base?

LA: Yeah, military. Most of the entertaining was military. But they sent car for us and take us home. And sometimes, if we have a job, private job, maybe, let's say seven o'clock in the night, we go there early during the day, so we don't come back till next morning. And when the job end up ten, eleven o'clock at night, we remain there till next morning. I mean, private job, not connected with the government. So, we stay there till next morning. And we come home. Ah, good fun, good fun.

JG: What kind of pay were you getting for entertaining?

LA: Oh, pretty good. That time, well, we get maybe five dollars an hour. (LA made an error. He means they were paid five dollars per person for an entire night's appearance.)

JG: Each, or for the group?

LA: No, each. An hour. And then sometimes, we have tips, yeah, and we split our tips. And we lucky, thirty, forty dollar tips, well, we split among us.

JG: When did you first get your house up in Makiki?

LA: Oh, in 1928.

JG: Did you live up there for a while?

LA: Yeah. Most of my time I live up there. With the exception of one year I lived down Kaneohe.

JG: That was a pretty Hawaiian community, wasn't it?

LA: Right, pretty Hawaiian community. And then, very quiet and humble. No interference from outside. They live happy. They don't make trouble. As far as I know, no trouble at all. They have they party, whatever it is in orderly manner.

JG: Were most of the people speaking Hawaiian?

LA: Oh, majority, let's say, up to 1935, most of them speak Hawaiian, especially the young ones up to 1935. But, around 1930, the year I went up there, well, most of those Hawaiians speak Hawaiian. Even those children, children about six, eight years old, they understand the language. They speak the language.

JG: So you were speaking Hawaiian daily, then.
LA: Oh, yeah, continued till today.

LA: Did you tell me one time that you'd gone down to New Zealand?

LA: Oh, yes, we made a trip to New Zealand in 1940. Entertaining. With Bill Lincoln Hawaiians.

JG: Was the entertaining on a ship, or did you go to New Zealand?

LA: No, New Zealand. Bill got some kind of contract with somebody there. So the person that hired us, he's half-Maori, half-English, so he been to Hawaii couple of times, so he knows about Hawaii. So somehow or other, he met Bill Lincoln in Honolulu, Hawaii, and then maybe they consult about the trip. So couple of years after that, they call us, and so we went.

JG: Was that in a hotel, or...

LA: No. no. We just travel around. We don't travel, we stayed on, you know these cars, these trucks that take people around, what they call it? You have everything in the car, where you can cook...

JG: Trailer-house?

LA: Trailer-house, yeah. We used to travel in a trailer-house, and we lucky we travel in a trailer-house, because we have two big cars and two trailers. So, that's how we know more about New Zealand, we penetrate the interior of New Zealand. But if we'll go on a train, we cannot, we come close to the cities, that's all. But we penetrate interior of New Zealand.

JG: How long did you stay in New Zealand?

LA: Oh, seven or eight months.

JG: And you played all over the place?

LA: All over, only north island. All the way from Auckland, north of north island all the way to Wellington, the capital.

JG: What kind of places were you playing? Hotels? Schools?

LA: Well, first, no, no. Sometimes in a school, sometime in a opera, opera house. They don't call theatre there, they call opera house. You know, those English? Well, we played in Auckland, one of the known opera house, they call it, oh, I forgot the name. It's a high class place, you know, high class. You know, at the back, when you face to the front, you know, they have this, they go like, you know?

JG: Tiers.

LA: Yeah, tiers, you know. So beautiful, you know. And, I forgot the
name. That's where most, all the known troops in the world, when they go there, they open in there. That's where we first open, and from there on we continue, go down to south, all the way south. North, and Wellington, Manganui, and then Hawksbay, and Gibson Bay, and all those different places.

JG: When you were away, did you meet any Hawaiians who were living down there?

LA: No, none. No Hawaiians in New Zealand. But the natives there are just like Hawaiians.

JG: Were you able to speak with them?

LA: Oh, we speak with them, and then we speak our language. They understand us. And when they talk their language, we understand them. Not hundred percent, maybe, but by the time they get through, well, I know what they're talking about sixty percent. I understand. Their language very close to ours. And then, they more shy people, this New Zealand, old people. They just keep to themself, but this half-Maori that took us all over, Mr. Bennett, well, he's part-Maori himself. So he do the introduce, "Well, this so-and-so." Well, and then we started talk Hawaiian. It's same thing. We talk aloha, they know what's aloha means.

JG: Did you ever take any other trips for entertaining?

LA: No, no. Not beside that, with the exception of the islands within Hawaii.

JG: You went outer islands?

LA: Oh, yeah, we went Kauai, Maui, Hawaii, Lanai, you know. Still was working, playing with Bill Lincoln at that time. He used to go concert Kauai.

JG: Go on the boats?

LA: Yeah. Yeah, on the ship and when we get off there, we get on the bus or train, go to a hotel. And from there, at night, we go entertain. Like Lihue, Kauai and Waimea, Kauai and then Hilo, Hawaii.

JG: You went up to Waimea, Kauai?

LA: No, no, no. Yeah, Waimea, Kauai.

JG: Where did you entertain up there?

LA: Well, there's one hall over there. I don't know what kind of hall. I don't know, I forgot what hall. Well, that's the only place we entertain, Waimea and in Lihue. I forgot what's the name. And then, we go to Hilo. We go to Hawi and Kohala. And then from there, we go to Waimea.
JG: There must have been a lot more people living there then than there are now.

LA: Oh, yeah, lots of Hawaiians those days. Plenty Hawaiians. And that's where Bill Lincoln come from. He come from Kohala. And then, they really turn out for him, the first night. Oh, packed. There's no room. Lot of people want to come in. Cannot come. So that's our first trip when we went. The next night, we perform in Waimea (Big Island), you know, Waimea. And the following night we played in Kailua-Kona. They still have the gym there, the old gym before. Well, we played there, and then when we got through there, we drive. All the way have driver, see. We have bus driver, we drive all the way went down to Hilo. See, because a long run from there. So we took that cut that goes up to that saddle road. All the way up, and then we come into Hilo. 'Cause time we reach Hilo early in the morning is kind of almost daybreak. Oh, take all our gears and everything is already prepared. We know, some friends home, we live there. Rest, people want to sleep. And bathe, whatever it is, and get ready for the night, performing in Hilo. Bill, oh, he was so popular around those years. Make lots of money.

JG: I can remember him very well.

LA: Yeah, he used to make lots of money. But I don't know if he still have that money yet till today.

JG: Did you ever record with him?

LA: Yeah. Couple of records we record with him. And then it's good to record, but he makes the money, not us. Only what is, well, this is your share of cutting record those days, forty dollars. Forty dollars. Forty dollars, but the rest is, you know, maybe the royalty and all that. It's not important. We don't grumble.

JG: There's not much royalties, anyway.

LA: Yeah, yeah.

JG: I'd like to ask you a couple of questions about things today. What do you think about what's happening with Kahoolawe?

LA: Well, with Kahoolawe, the way I feel that, the way how our youngsters penetrate in, go in there, I don't even feel it too much. I'm not feeling too much, because I think they have to follow, if there's any law, follow. According to the law.

JG: What would you like to have done with the island?

LA: Well, the way it looks to me, I feel within my heart, since the War is over, the second World War, you know, is over, I feel that the land should be bring back to the state whatever it is. Because, the war's not continuing. Okay, prior to the second World War, the government wasn't using that island. So why don't bring them back the same like
how prior to second World War? Give us back that island.

JG: What would you like to see done with it, if the government turns it back?

LA: Well, try to, just anything, have a ranch there, or I don't know, maybe plant some watermelon, all those kind that can grow in that hot weather. That's how I think. And maybe, have a little Hawaiian community, not these lazy Hawaiians. Active. And work, you know. I hate to use that word, lazy Hawaiians, because...

JG: Well, there are lazy people everywhere.

LA: I not supposed to use the word, but, gee, make them work. Not to go there and then, oh, we sent here, well, we get free place to live. No, no. Go and do something. That's how I think. But, to my opinion, the island should be bring back to us for the simple reason the War is over. Why do they want to use and continue?

JG: What about Makua Valley?

LA: Well, Makua, I feel the same way.

JG: How far do you think we ought to go trying to get that back, you know, get it back to the people to use?

LA: Well, the quicker is the better.

JG: How much action do you think we should be able to take? How far do you think we should go?

LA: Oh, I think we should continue--how would you say that word--nagging, whatever it is, I guess, our government. That's the only thing we can do. Till maybe someday they'll release that portion to us, because Makua is a very fertile place, because I know. I used to come there way back, and we used to have Sunday school way back when I was 12, 13, 14. And then, used to we had a lot of Hawaiians down there. I could name about a dozen Hawaiians, but they all gone, pass by.

JG: About how many people you think used to...

LA: Well, at that time, the majority of them was ranch cowboys, most of them. But some of them, they live on the sea and the land, you know. They camp down the beach, they build their own shack. But they happy. You know, they go fishing. And not connected with the ranch, not connected. But they live there.

JG: Did anybody grow any taro? Was there enough water?

LA: No, no, no. No taro. Only sweet potato, sweet potato, cucumber, corn and watermelon. You know at the back. Oh, the watermelon so sweet. Because I tasted those watermelon when I was a young boy.
You know I think the land is so dry that really produce.

JG: I have one more backward question. When you were young, or as you were growing up or as a young man, did your family ever use hooponopono?

LA: No. The only thing, now, going back to that, my dad, he knows a lot of this, what do you call, this medicine that growing, what they call it?

JG: Medicine?

LA: Yeah, like you get uha-loa and you get all that.

JG: Lapaau.

LA: Lapaau. Well, my dad knows lot of medicine that fix for certain kind of ailment. So down where we living, too far from the doctor. Doctor stay way up over ten, fifteen miles and we have no car. Get no horse to go. So anytime when we get sick, well, my dad just gets certain kind of, you know. Just bring them home and then pound them. Put Hawaiian salt inside and he say, you put a little of your shishi in there. Boy, guarantee.

JG: Works.

LA: But not this kind hooponopono what I'm talking just like you were kahuna-fied, you know.

JG: Right.

LA: No, no. We believe in the man above. We have our own family service within our own family in the evening. When my dad say, well, all in Hawaiian now, we have our evening prayer so we all get together.

JG: When you had trouble in the family, when somebody wasn't getting along with someone or you had some pilikia with the neighbors, how did you settle that?

LA: Well, that we settle, we refer that to our daddy. My daddy and then he'll think it over, what he's supposed to do. Then he leave, I mean, he leave all up to the Almighty Lord. So, we stick together. He prays and we humble. Then that's what I remember.

JG: What if the neighbors were having some kind of a disagreement when you were young? How was that settled?

LA: Well, we don't interfere with them. They have their own trouble, well, that's their own trouble. Unless they come up to us, maybe, and ask if they need help, well, maybe my daddy have to help which he can help, you see?

JG: Yeah.
LA: But my daddy is not the kind stuff that try to act kahuna. No, my
daddy is not that kind of type. We have a lot of Hawaiians even
till today. They're bum, bunch of fakers, as far as I'm concerned.
That's my opinion I'm talking. I'm not afraid to talk, because I
know a lot of them, you know. They try to act just like they kahuna,
but they don't know a darn thing. And then, I don't know, they study
the kahuna from all the books they learn. Yeah, that's how they
study kahuna and they bring forward out to people that doesn't know
much, eh. And then, naturally these people gonna listen. You see?
But I don't go along with that.

JG: You don't believe that?

LA: Yeah, yeah. You know what I mean, eh? Some of them they make believe,
make...but lots of them, they don't hide. Boy, lot of people believe
them, you know. I don't go along with them.

JG: If someone were to ask you, "How do you define a Hawaiian," how would
you describe a Hawaiian? What is a Hawaiian?

LA: Well, the first thing, Hawaiian is a Hawaiian. The Almighty Lord
produced the people on this earth all kind of nationality, all dif-
ferent nationality. Okay, we are Hawaiian. In the first place, the
first thing we should perpetuate our language. That's the first
place. And then uphold the law of the land. And then, go to church.
And don't live an extravagant life, you know. Don't have, don't live
the good time life, and then have ahaaina every weekend. No, I don't
go along with that.

You know, like you pass Nanakuli, you reach pass all the tent. Well,
that one ahaaina, I talk to Mama here. Well, that's not a bunch of
stupids. See, they're wasting their money. I don't know, maybe is
okay, but every time when we have a Hawaiian you see with a tent on
is say ahaaina. (Refers to signs put up along highways and roads
directing people to a party.) But their minds are strong on that
way of living, you see? They not economical, most of them, majority
of them. And what the consequence? Just couple of days ago, see
in the paper they evict these Hawaiians. But, to my opinion, I might
be wrong, but I'm not wrong to my way of thinking. They should do
that, evict them out of that place. That's not the first time the
Hawaiian do that. They taking everything for granted. You see?
"Oh, I'm Hawaiian. The government give us property. The government
build house for us." But pay the mortgage, they don't. They neglect
that line, you know. They want too much this life of living, good
time. I don't go along with that. To me, when they evict these
peoples—I might be wrong, but I don't think so--within me, I think
they should evict them so give lesson to the rest of the homesteaders,
because not only now that happen. It happen all these many years. I
want to tell you, our chairman of the Hawaiian Home Commission, I not
going to mention the name. He was the chairman. He was a member of
the Hawaiian Home Commission. He was a good friend of mine. He told
me about my Hawaiian people. And he said, well, he stayed up for
two or three years on the position and he left the position then for
some reason. He say, "I very disgusted with our people. When they
go around every year, they check, you know, how much they own, you know? Delinquents, you know, they owe? Some of them they don't even can pay dollar a year. Gee whiz, six family cannot pay one dollar a year, so I get so disgusted with my people, so I relinquish my position to be a chairman. Get too much headache, you know." But, that was many, many years ago. So, you figure, many, many years ago they still continuing till today, but they should give them lesson, just like evict these people out. So other homesteaders would say, "Gee, they really mean business. Oh, we got to be on ball. Got to wake up." No, my people take everything for granted. I don't think this is right. That's what I think. Maybe I'm out of the question, I don't know. That's how I feeling. But the first thing, they should keep the ways of living, the language, that's the most important thing. Their culture. Yeah, the culture, but the language should be come first, in order for our people to combine and get together, the language should be there. If not, we cannot come, be together. We cannot be united. I don't care what; I mention that in one meeting. I say, "If we Hawaiians, like all the Hawaiians in this gathering here, I bet 95 percent of you Hawaiians cannot speak, cannot converse in Hawaiian." Yeah, I say, "How many of you Hawaiians can speak in Hawaiian, have a conversation in Hawaiian? Put your hand up. None. See, that's the reason the Hawaiians today not united. You got too much Westernized. Yeah, you forget your language. You forget your culture. You too much haole-fied." That's how I talk. I don't care, see, if they like, okay. They don't want, ah, I don't care, see? So, the only thing the Hawaiians get back together in the fold, learn your language, speak your language and get down to business. That's the only way.

JG: Who would you say is a Hawaiian? Who is a Hawaiian?

LA: Well, who is a Hawaiian, the one that perpetuate his language, perpetuate his culture and then live within means, yeah. Don't go like for instance, like maybe the next door see the other Hawaiian get a new car. And I get a little old car, but it stay in good condition. "Well, more better I'll get a new car like him." No, no. That's no way of living. You should be patient within as long as your car is okay. But don't try to, what do you say, just because the other man got about eight thousand dollar car and you going to match up with them, no. That's stupid. The old Hawaiian, even no more cars, they walk. Couple of miles they walk. I used to walk to school five miles every day. One way. And five miles back. But we content. We know the life, how the Hawaiians live before. But after, when little modern they kind of adopt the Westernize idea. Oh, even a couple blocks, these kids now don't want to walk. They rather you take them and drop them off.

JG: Would you say the people who have become greedy and lazy are not Hawaiian?

LA: Well, maybe they Hawaiian in body, in spirit, but they not showing their Hawaiian. Hawaiian, what do you say, how would you say, I don't know how you would say in English. They not showing they're
Hawaiian just like the old people before. They not showing that especially now. That's what I think.

END OF INTERVIEW.