EDWIN KAPALIKAUOHI CROWELL, retired Chief of Police

Eddie Crowell, English-Hawaiian, was born on July 31, 1901 in Koloa, Kauai, one of eight children of William Olin and Hoakalei Kamauoha Crowell.

Crowell went to Waimea Elementary School, Kamehameha School, and Punahou School, and left to become a beachboy in 1920. In 1923, he became a merchant seaman and returned to work as a special police officer for a few months in 1924 after the Hanapepe incident. His father was Deputy Sheriff for the Waimea District and was wounded in the fight between strikers and policemen.

Mr. Crowell worked as a merchant seaman until 1932, came back to Kauai and became a police captain in Waimea in 1933. He was made Waimea Deputy Sheriff in 1935, appointed as Kauai Sheriff in 1941, elected to the same position in 1942, appointed Chief of Police in 1943 and served in that capacity until retirement in 1968.

Crowell married Marie Keikilani Robinson in 1935 and they had three children. He was a member of the East and West Kauai Lions Clubs, the Kamehameha Lodge, and the Lihue Episcopal Church.

He passed away in December, 1978.
CT: This is an interview with Mr. Eddie Crowell, at Wilcox Hospital; November 3, 1978. The interviewer is Chad Taniguchi.

Could you tell me about what you did after you went to Punahou School?

EC: After I left Punahou? I went in the merchant marine. Between the islands, you know. Regular seaman. When I went in the merchant marine, I had the intention of getting license to be skipper someday. Then I travel between the islands. Then I changed. When I got to San Francisco, I changed. I got a boat to go to New York.

CT: In 1922 you joined the merchant marine?

EC: Yeah.

CT: And then you were going between the islands?

EC: No, not between the islands but between the Mainland and the island. Matson boats, you know. Then I stayed there until...eh, I forget now. I caught a boat--I don't know when. I cannot tell you when I caught the boat to go to New York. But anyway, I got the boat to go New York. When I hit New York, I met some of my friends, from Kam School, you know. So I quit. I stayed there for a while.

CT: What were your friends doing in New York?

EC: They were on the merchant marine. They happened to be in New York. So I got on a boat with them. So we came to San Francisco, and [we went] all around. We went to Portland and Oregon and all that. We would get lumber and come back. Then we got to San Francisco. When we got to San Francisco, this boat... 'round the world boat. And had Hawaii boys on there, from New York, see. We knew them. So we asked them, "Eh, get any job?"
"Yeah." Because they had some Filipino boys, they all quit. So we got on that boat to go around the world. So we went around the world.

CT: What was your job on that?

EC: I was merchant seaman.

CT: What did you have to do as merchant seaman?

EC: Well, you know, just like ordinary sailors, eh.

CT: What did you do on the boat? What was your job?

EC: Just clean up, you know. And tend to the rigging and all that. Just regular ordinary seaman, like.

CT: Those days, what kind of ship was this?

EC: Steamship. And we went around the world. To Japan, China, Philippines, Shanghai. And Singapore, India, through the Suez Canal, to Italy and southern France. Then right back to Boston. From Boston, we came back to New York. When we get back to New York, we quit.

CT: How long did this whole 'round the world trip take you?

EC: Shee, I forget, though. I cannot remember. I think about three months, I think.

CT: You remember what the ship was carrying?

EC: Passengers, regular passenger boat. Then I quit. I got on another boat, regular freighter. Between New York and San Francisco. And then I quit again. I got another boat from New York to Australia. Australia, New Zealand and Rarotonga—-that's a small island, eh. They just like Hawaiians, them, the Rarotongans. They understand what I say, you know.

CT: No kidding?


CT: Even the other parts of the language also are similar?

EC: Yeah. Just like Hawaiians. And they had one Hawaiian man on the dock as foreman. He had been away from Hawaii 40 years. He never touch Honolulu in a while. Every time he go to San Francisco, he pass Hawaii, he look, he can see Hawaii. But never touch. He went when he was a young man on a whaling boat. So he got married down
there, his wife and daughter died so only him left. But he was a
foreman of the dock.

CT: He married a woman from Rarotonga?

EC: Yeah. Well, the same people. But from the Penguin Island. They
speak like how Rarotongan. Was very interesting.

CT: You know, you were maybe 22, 23 years old that time. What did you
think of traveling around the world and seeing different things?
What was your impression about traveling around the world at that
time?

EC: Oh, was good. Something new, eh? Something you never even think
of seeing in your own islands. Philippines, different. And China,
different.

CT: What do you remember of China at that time?

EC: I was in Shanghai. Well, those days, Shanghai was not like now.
Like before, the policemen over there was all Hindus. In Shanghai.
They no more Chinese policemen, only Hindus. And rickshaw. Oh, we
used to go ride rickshaw everyday. (Laughs)

And there was lot of counterfeit down there. Dimes, eh. You pay
the rickshaw man the dime, they look, they throw 'em down. They
say, "No good." But you get that in change from somebody else, eh.

CT: They were counterfeiting dimes?

EC: Yeah, dimes and quarters. Chinese money, you know. Those rickshaw
people, they can tell. They throw 'em down. He say, "No good."

CT: How many days did you stay in Shanghai?

EC: Two days. Then I went back again. On a boat I was on, from
Australia. We went to Shanghai first, then they went to Australia.
Then New Zealand, then Rarotonga.

CT: What did you get paid as a merchant seaman, in those days?

EC: Oh, those days was $60 one month, those days.

CT: Was that good pay, though?

EC: Oh, was good pay for those days. I was quartermaster on one boat.
That's the next to Third Mate, you know. You get $60. The regular
A&B--able bodied seaman--you get $55 each.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

CT: You were talking about how much you were getting paid. Sixty
dollars a month.
EC: That's way back in 1924.

CT: You had to buy your own food?

EC: No, no. The ship pay. All they pay you is your monthly pay. What work you do, they feed you.

CT: How often did the boat stop in port?

EC: All depend where you go, what cargo you go for. Like in Australia, we go for iron ore. Lumber. You know, they get some kind of wood over there, if you drop 'em in water, they no float, they sink.

CT: Where did you take that iron ore and wood; where did you transport that to?

EC: We took 'em to Baltimore. Baltimore and Norfolk, Virginia.

CT: From the United States to Australia, did you bring anything? When you came from mainland United States to Australia, what was your cargo?

EC: Oh, we went direct to Australia.

CT: You didn't bring anything in the ship?

EC: Yeah, we brought but I don't know. I don't know what kind. Is regular freighter. You see, in a boat, passenger freighter. You can travel by freighter. Had quite a bit—I think had about six or eight passenger rooms, cabins. You can take passengers. Cheaper that way, and then you see plenty, you know. Quite a few people, lot of people that take that. Take it easy.

CT: You said there were a lot of Hawaiian boys sailing at that time?

EC: Yeah, most of them...when I went I'm the only Hawaiian in our boat. Had other people there. Then the last year I went on the boat, I made two trips to the Philippines. Of course, I been to the Philippines before. But this, I went to Manapala. For sugar. From Manapala, we take the sugar direct to Norfolk Virginia. Go straight. Go through the Panama. That's....what did I say, that time?

CT: You taking sugar from Philippines to Norfolk, Virginia.

EC: Yeah, the sugar. And I went back again. And when we first came, we stopped off in Honolulu. We brought some cargo for Honolulu, but I didn't know what he brought.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

CT: In Manapala.
EC: We anchor about a half a mile from shore, way up. And the sugar come seven miles on barges. And over there, the current is swift when he goes out. When the current goes out, all the water go, the barge stuck on the mud. And they got to wait, wait, wait, until the water come back, come up, and they come out again. That's why, take us over two weeks. There was 7,000 tons, over two weeks. Honolulu and Lihue, six hours, all full already.

CT: You mean, every time the tide go down, you got to wait?

EC: Yeah. Every time the tide go down, they stuck in the mud. Even the tug get stuck. Then they wait, wait, and the water come up. High tide, bring 'em up, then they come out.

CT: This is 100-pound bags?

EC: 125 pounds. Come in by bags. Over here, they don't come by bags, they just shoot 'em down the chute.

CT: Yeah, now. But in those days, even Hawaii was bags, eh?

EC: Yeah, bag.

CT: That much difference? In Hawaii, you could load the same amount of sugar in six hours. And over there, you had to wait two weeks?

EC: Yeah. Because they stuck on the mud, eh. Sometimes they got to wait. Us outside only four, five hours. So they work day and night. Then we used to go ride Filipino sailboat, they call paraw. Some swift, boy. Hoo, good riding. They charge us 50 sentabos one hour. That's just like 25 cents, eh.

CT: You sail 'em by yourself, or they...

EC: No, they sail 'em but you ride 'em. Go like that, you know. [Leans over to one side.]

CT: Almost tip over.

EC: Yeah. So you sit down on this side. Outrigger like. Sit down over there, then you [straighten] up, see. Good fun.

CT: Did you eat the food over there, too?

EC: No, we ate on the boat. The boat cook and everything.

CT: Why was that? Why wouldn't you eat on shore?

EC: We don't have to eat on shore. If we eat on shore, we got to pay.

CT: Not because you afraid of getting sick or anyting like that?

EC: Well, I don't know. We not accustomed to that kind of food, eh.
Yeah, if I didn't come back, maybe I would have been a skipper by now. Because I was getting ready for my third mate's license. I was studying for third mate, that time. I was quartermaster. The next step was third mate. So, if I hadn't come back, I would have taken my third mate's license in Norfolk. Norfolk or Baltimore. But this second time we wen stop off in Honolulu, I met my father. He was in Honolulu. So he urged me to come home.

CT: What year was that?
EC: 1933.

CT: You mean, you was sailing all those years?
EC: Yeah.

CT: You sailed seven or eight years, then, altogether?
EC: Yeah.

CT: Why did your father ask you to come home?
EC: Well, he said he's getting old, eh. Now, if I had stuck to one boat, I would have gotten my license earlier. But I quit and I go another boat. I quit, I go another boat. See, you don't have the full time, see. My intention was to see as much of the world as possible, before I get my license. Which I did. I even went to Havana, Cuba.

CT: What was the cargo?
EC: It was a passenger boat, see. We stopped over in Havana, before we continued on to around the world.

CT: You didn't pick up sugar over there?
EC: No, no. Those days, was not under the present regime. Was under the other one.

CT: Well, in 1924, can you tell me about how you were in Honolulu and then later on, how you got back to Kauai.
EC: I forget the month. I quit a boat in Honolulu. I was on the Maui.

CT: Were you going inter-island, at that time? In 1924, were you going inter-island or were you going Mainland-Hawaii?
EC: Mainland-Hawaii. And I left the boat, and I was spending a vacation down at Kailua, Oahu. Fishing and all that. Then my uncle's brother-in-law came down and tell me, "Eh, there's a big scrap in Kauai. Your father got cut on the head."
"Is that so? Take me back." So I came up. And my uncle was a doctor, see. Dr. Hanchett. Alsoberry K. Hanchett. He was a doctor in Honolulu, he was with they City and County; physician, eh. He went with the National Guard the day after the fight. So I went the following day.

When I went the following day, my father was home already. From the hospital. He had cut. So my uncle examined the cut.

CT: Cut on his head?

EC: Yeah. And the arm. When my uncle examine the one on the head, the doctor who had sewed it didn't do a good job. So he cut 'em open again and sewed it over. So I stayed.

Then that first day I get there, my father deputized me as a special officer. Go inspect.

CT: What did your father say when he first saw you, when you came back from Honolulu.

EC: Oh, he hugged me. He was home laying down. So when he saw me he grabbed me. So... I came home with another boy. Another boy and I .... quit the Maui together. Robert Nawai. Later on he married a girl from up the valley.

CT: He was from Kauai, too?

EC: Yeah, he was from Waimea Valley. He was on the boat with me. So two of us quit. I mean I quit first. But he quit too. But he happened to stay in Honolulu. So when I came up to Honolulu I saw him. I said, "Eh, I'm going back Kauai because they got a fight down the other side."

He said, "You going? Well, I going too." So both of us got....

So when we got home, my father deputized me as special officer to start right away. I said, "Eh, Nawai is over here. You can give 'em a job?"

"Okay."

But he was stationed in Camp 4, with the other special officers. But me, I just go home. I go inspect the station then I go home. See how they figure, each station at night get two officers. They all right so I go home.

CT: What stations were these?

EC: Camp 6, Camp 9, Camp 8, Camp 7, Camp 5, Camp 4, Camp 2, Camp 1. Eh, plenty stations, you know.

CT: Only Hawaiian Sugar area?
EC: Yeah.

CT: What about Kekaha, Mana...

EC: No, no, no more. Only the Hawaiian Sugar. Robinson, no. Robinsons, they not on strike, see. This is between the Ilocanos and the Visayans, see. The Visayans were against the Ilocano. That's how they had a fight.

CT: So what was the reason for having policemen in the different...

EC: So that it won't start up again. They can make a report. We go check. "How's everything? Everything all quiet?"

"Oh, yeah." See, so...

But after that first tussle, no more trouble.

CT: What kind of trouble did you think there might be?

EC: Oh, they rise up again, eh. And then they start with the knife and axes. Cane knife and everything. But no more.

CT: You think they were going to the strike camp?

EC: Yeah, they thought that maybe that people go from one camp to the other, eh. Try to rise 'em up again. No more.

CT: So what was the job of the special police at the different....places?

EC: Just to watch that nothing happen. If anything happen they just call.

CT: Oh, they had telephone?

EC: No, they get that....what you call....they just let us know when we go by. No more telephone those days over there. If anything happen, well, anything happen, see. The best way they can do is catch a car and go. But nothing happened. Everything quiet.

CT: How long did they have this special police?

EC: I was there from September to December. When I left in December, they was still watching. I left December 23; I went back to Honolulu. And I caught a boat, went back to the Mainland.

CT: Did the special police stay 24 hours a day?

EC: Yeah, day and night.

CT: How many shifts did they have?
EC: Three shifts.

CT: And did they just stay in the open, or did they have a house for them?

EC: In the corner they had a little shed. They built a little shed in the corner of the roadway going in. So any cars going in they stop 'em.

CT: And what would they do when they stop the car?

EC: They check who's who. If people from the camp, they let 'em go in. People not from the camp, they keep 'em out.

CT: What about people walking and on horse like that, they would stop 'em too?

EC: Yeah.

CT: Did they have like special passes for even if you didn't live in the camp but you had business to do. Did you have to have a special pass to go in?

EC: No, no. It's just us, we just ask 'em what they going to do and all that. That's what I think. I don't know, but that's what I think anyway. So my job was to—night shift, to check the night shift. Sometime I get home about 3 o'clock in the morning.

CT: What time did you start?

EC: Oh, I start about 8 o'clock.

CT: And how did you get around?

EC: Car. Automobile.

CT: So you went to about 10 different camps?

EC: Yeah.

CT: In one night?

EC: Because the camps are....Camp 5, Camp 6, Camp 7 right there. Close by. Finish one, go inside here. Camp 8. Then Camp 2, that, you got to come Hanapepe way. Got to go up.

CT: And at every station did you stay for little while to talk with the police, or you just check and then go?

EC: Oh no, I talk to them. Check everything and then I go.

CT: When you came home....first time you came home from Honolulu in
1924, do you remember what your father said about that shooting? You remember what your father said about the fight?

EC: All he says that they tried to stop them. But when they were backing up, those people keep on coming near him. And finally, one guy, I don't know what the hell, he hit a policeman, and then the fracas started.

CT: Hit the policeman with what?

EC: Cane knife.

CT: Not your father?

EC: No, not that time. Later on, my father got cut. In the same record. They were backing up. With this---they had gotten this Filipino the other people were holding. And they were bringing him out. When they were bringing him out, then the other guys were coming up to them with sticks and....rakes and shovels and knives and everything.

CT: Did the Filipinos have gun?

EC: That, I don't know. I didn't find out. I don't think so. I don't think they had. Most of them had cane knives and shovels and rakes and all that.

CT: Did you get to talk to the other special police too?

EC: Well, I talk to them but all they tell me is what happened. After that happened they started fight, this four officers jump on a high rack and they started to shoot. When they started to shoot, the Filipinos started to run away.

CT: You remember who the four that jumped up on the high place?


CT: How old were these guys? Mr. Nunes, Mr. Aipolani, and Mr. Taniguchi; how old were they at that time?

EC: Oh, they were middle aged. Taniguchi and Nunes, they were in their young twenties. Aipolani was little older. And one more, one more. Four of them. I forget who the other.

CT: Were they special police or were they regular police?

EC: Special police.

CT: When they were not special police, what was their regular job?

EC: Oh, some of them were cowboys, eh. Like Nunes, he was cowboy for
Gay and Robinson. Aipolani was part-time cowboy. Hulu Taniguchi was part-time cowboy.

CT: All for Robinson?


CT: And you know when they became special police, how long did they serve?

EC: I don't know. I left, you know. When I left they were still there, the special police. How long after that I don't know.

CT: What I'm trying to find out is did they serve for like couple days and then go back work, or did they have to quit the other job to...

EC: I don't know.

CT: Or maybe they had two jobs at that time.

EC: No, no. When they were working for the special police for during the strike, that's all they was doing. They couldn't work two jobs. But maybe after the strike and everything pau, then they went back to do their work. But that, I don't know. I left already.

CT: How much would special police get paid at that time?


CT: Was good enough pay to quit the other job for little while, anyway.

EC: Yeah, yeah.

CT: You remember some of the other people who worked as special police?

EC: I know them but shee, I forget their names.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

EC: I worked little while [on the Kauai police force] and I became captain, see.

CT: You came back in 1932....

EC: September. With my father. I met him in Honolulu. He told me come home, so I came home with him. Then from September until December, I didn't have anything to do. So I spent most of my time up Kokee. Hunting and all, we had a Kokee lodge up there. Like a vacation, like. Then January 1, 1933, I got a job as police officer in Waimea. And later on I became captain. Then I served under my
father. My father was the deputy sheriff over there. I served under him until he passed away in 1935. October, 1935. Then when he passed away, Sheriff Rice appointed me deputy sheriff. Then when I served deputy sheriff until the Japanese hit Pearl Harbor. The day after, the Army called me to go Lihue.

CT: For what?

EC: To take over. Because Sheriff Rice was sick. The regular sheriff,

CT: That was William Rice?

EC: Yeah. Sheriff William Rice. He was not well, see. So the Army called me to go over there to take over. And I served under the Army. The Army had Provo Court down there. The Army police, on the motorcycle, they were doing all the patrol work. So I was under the Army. So I served under them. And later on, the governor took over, because they took away the governor's powers when the Army took over. And later on, they returned the power to the governor, and the governor took over. Then they had an election. Then I was authorized to run for sheriff, 1942. So I ran for sheriff, I got elected. Then July, 1943, the governor appointed the police commission. Charlie Rice, Sinclair Robinson, Joe Jervis, and couple more others--I forget their names now. They appointed me chief of police. July, 1943.

CT: Does that mean they did away with the position of sheriff?

EC: Yeah. So the legislature did away with election of sheriff. Did away with that. Instead of that they established a police commission. A commission appointed by the governor, in those days. And later on, the legislature changed that and made the police commission appointed by the mayor, or at that time, county chairman. So I was appointed chief of police in July, 1943. And I retired as chief of police on December 31, 1968. Almost 26 years chief of police. I am graduate of the FBI national academy (October 3, 1947).

CT: When was that?

EC: I graduated in October, 1936.

CT: Going back to that 1924 time, did you know any of the policemen that were killed?

EC: I know them when I was a little young boy. But later on, when I became older--I never had occasion to meet them. I cannot say that I knew them.

CT: You knew their families?

EC: Oh, their families down Kekaha, eh. Most of the families down Kekaha.
CT: Kipe Naumu.

EC: Yeah, their families from Kekaha. But I'm not intimate with their families.

CT: Can you, if you can try remember, what the feeling was among the Hawaiian people at that time, about the strike and about the shooting.

EC: Well, they felt bad but nothing to arouse something like, "Oh, we going get 'em," like that. Nothing, they don't show. Nothing shown like that. Usually, when they group get like that, get riot, go get guns and all that, "Come on, we go shoot 'em." But no.

CT: You mean sort of to take revenge for....

EC: Yeah. [They didn't.]

CT: I guess two sides were hurt, yeah? Two sides were hurt, that time. The police, people died, and the strikers died too. So after that, there wasn't any more trouble when you were special police?

EC: No, no more.

CT: Did you ever go to Lihue, to the trial during those days?

EC: No, I never.

CT: And when you came back every night, from checking the special police stations, who did you report to? Or did you log something in a book or whatever?


CT: And then, who did your father report to?

EC: Oh, he reported to the Lihue office, eh, Sheriff Rice, eh.

CT: And did he have to go to Lihue everyday?

EC: No, call by telephone.

CT: Did he consult with like Attorney Kaulukou and...

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

CT: I going ask you again, if your father consulted with Attorney Kaulukou.
EC: Yeah. Oh yeah, they got to do that, eh. He was the county attorney.

CT: Do you know if your father had to consult with other people at that time?

EC: No, no. Most of the time he consulted with Sheriff Rice and Coney. Jack Coney and Kaulukou, they were working together in a--- Jack Coney was partly the prosecutor, eh. He goes around and prosecutes cases for the County. So he was with Kaulukou all the time. So my father consulted with them.

CT: Did he ever consult with....Mr. Robinson, or anybody else in the plantation?

EC: Nah. Not Robinson. Robinson's was not on strike. The Robinson's Filipinos, they were not in the union. The Robinsons paid them what the unions paid the other plantation people. So they didn't have to join the union.

CT: How about the Hawaiian Sugar manager?

EC: The Hawaiian Sugar, well, they have their own union. That's the trouble they had. The Visayans and the Ilocanos. But the Robinson people, they were not on strike because whatever the union people pay their union wages, Robinson pay their employees. So they didn't have to join the union. Robinson made it that way. So they stayed in Robinson camp and worked for Robinson. And nobody bothered them.

CT: You know who the manager at Hawaiian Sugar was, at that time?

EC: Baldwin, eh? First name....maybe your father know the first name. I don't know, I forget.

CT: Those days, the special police was paid by what?

EC: The county. But during the strike, the special police were paid by the plantation. The money came from the plantation. I think so. I don't know. I don't shoot for sure, but I think the money came from the plantation, to pay the special police.

CT: From Hawaiian Sugar?

EC: Yeah. Must be. Because they were the only people in trouble, Hawaiian Sugar. (The policemen were paid in cash by my father. He received the money from Hawaiian Sugar Co.) Outside of that.... that's Olokele, see, Hawaiian Sugar. McBryde didn't have any trouble. Robinson didn't have any trouble. Only the Olokele place.

CT: What about Koloa?

EC: No.
CT: Hanamaulu?
EC: No.
CT: But Kapaa had a strike camp too. Kapaa side.
EC: I don't know.
CT: You didn't go Kapaa.
EC: No.
CT: Looking back on that strike and the trouble, you get any comment?
EC: I was not here long enough to see what happened. So I cannot comment anything.
CT: Knowing what you know now about police work and about labor and management relationship, do you think there was any other way to handle that problem, at that time?
EC: ....I don't know. I cannot tell you.
CT: You know, later on when you became chief of police, was there any other strike or another incident where something bad could have happened?
EC: When I first---chief of police, they had trouble in Lihue. Under Burns. Sort of strike just like, Hanapepe.
CT: Burns?
EC: You know Burns, Caleb Burns?
CT: No.
EC: He was the manager here before, Lihue. And the Filipinos were all crowded together at Hanamaulu. Before you get to the shops, you know where the Hanamaulu restaurant, the post office, that entrance way inside there. They were all crowded inside there, they all ready to fight. So we had replacements from all over come there. Kaulukou was there. I was there. And the captains from all over, that district. Finally, they quiet down, everything fine.
CT: You know what year that was?
EC: Shee, I tell you, I forget. I cannot remember that.
CT: Was it after the war?
EC: Oh yeah. Yeah.
CT: You remember what issue...
EC: After the war? When the war over?

CT: 1945.

EC: I think so, was after the war.

CT: You remember what the big trouble was about?

EC: I don't know. I think was about hours, eh, labor hours.

CT: At that time, did the Filipinos have guns or cane knife?

EC: Ob yeah, they have. But they didn't show it over there, though.

CT: They didn't bring the gun, or...

EC: No. Some of them had guns, though. Must be. But they didn't show it, you know.

END OF INTERVIEW
The 1924 Filipino Strike on Kauai

Volume I

ETHNIC STUDIES ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Ethnic Studies Program
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