

LĀNA'I RANCH

The People of Kō'ele and Keōmuku

VOLUME I

**Center for Oral History
Social Science Research Institute
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**

JULY 1989

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DEDICATION

From an island once inhabited by evil spirits,
To a ranch,
To a pineapple plantation,
And now a resort destination,
We acknowledge the pioneers of each transformation.

Dedicated to those who cherish Lāna'i,
And respect her past.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

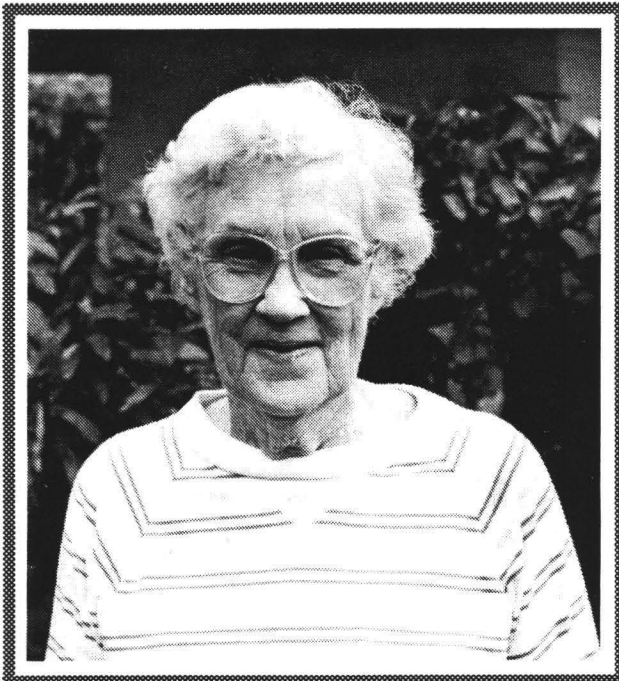
In addition to the interviewees and their families, we would like to acknowledge Donald M. Topping, SSRI Director, and the following persons for their guidance and assistance:

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Sol Kaopuiki
Robin Kaye

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Anita Morita
Richard Morita, Sr.
Nathan Napoka
Nason Newport
Kimiko Nunotani
John Richardson
Misao Sakamoto
Jean Whelan
Gary Yagi

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| Kathy A. Okuma: | Transcribing |
| Glenda L. H. Lee: | Transcribing |
| Charmaine Akau: | Transcribing |
| Judith M. Yamauchi: | Translation |



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1. Jean Forbes Adams (COH photo)
2. Rebecca Mahoe Kauila Benenua (COH photo)
3. Violet Keahikoe Gay (COH photo)
4. Charlotte Richardson Holsomback (COH photo)



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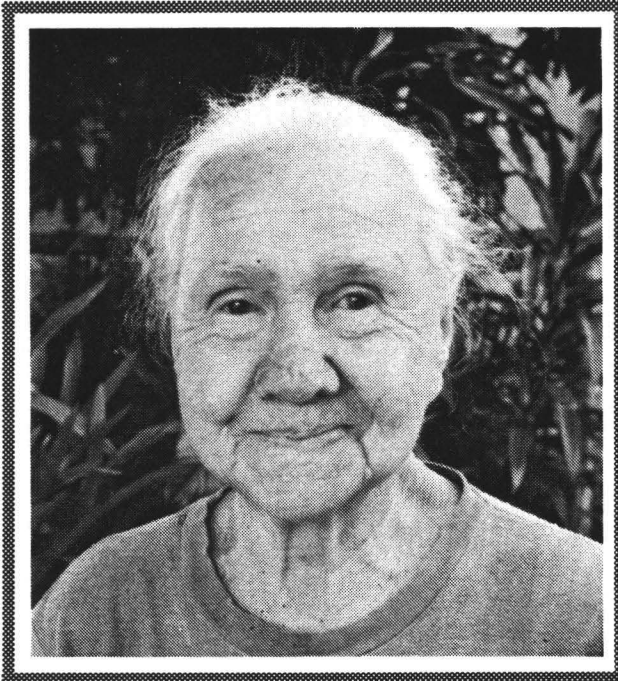
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DEDICATION

From an island once inhabited by evil spirits,
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And now a resort destination,
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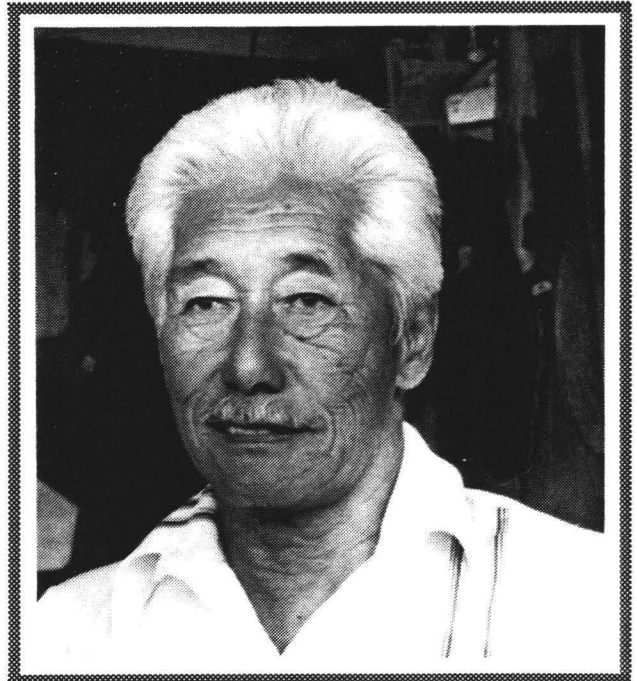
Dedicated to those who cherish Lāna'i,
And respect her past.



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- 5. Mary Cockett Kalawaia (COH photo)
- 6. Elaine Kauwenaole Kaopuiki (COH photo)
- 7. Aiko Muramoto Kurashige (COH photo)
- 8. William Kwon, Sr. (COH photo)



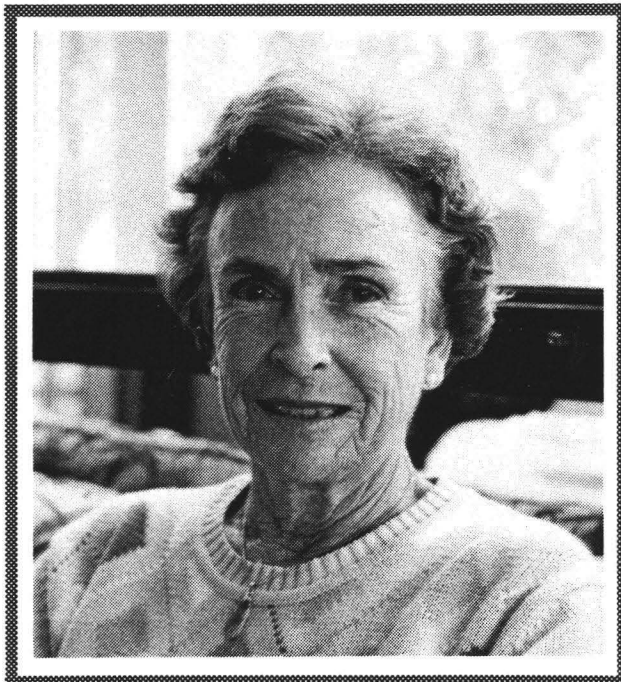
9. Sally Sakamoto Matsuoka (COH photo)
10. Ruby Catherine Munro (COH photo)

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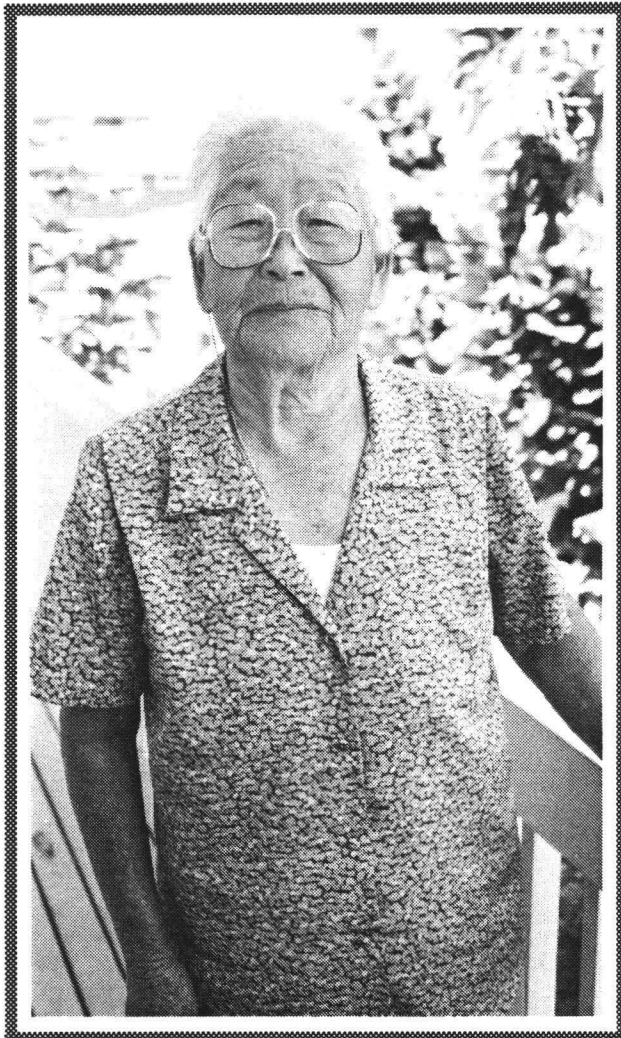
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11. Ruth L. Munro (COH photo)
12. Mary Ellen Richardson Nakoa (COH photo)



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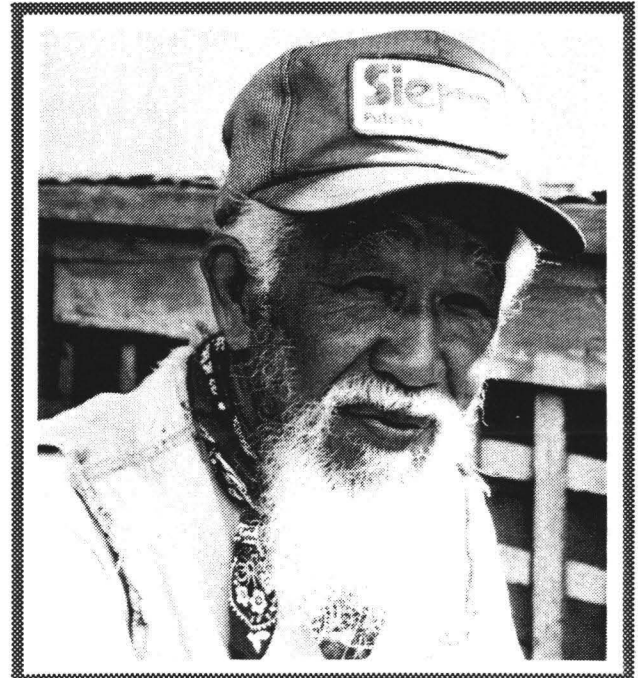


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- 13. Tama Teramoto Nishimura (COH photo)
- 14. Helen Tamura Onuma (COH photo)
- 15. Irene Cockett Perry (COH photo)
- 16. Ernest S. Richardson (COH photo)

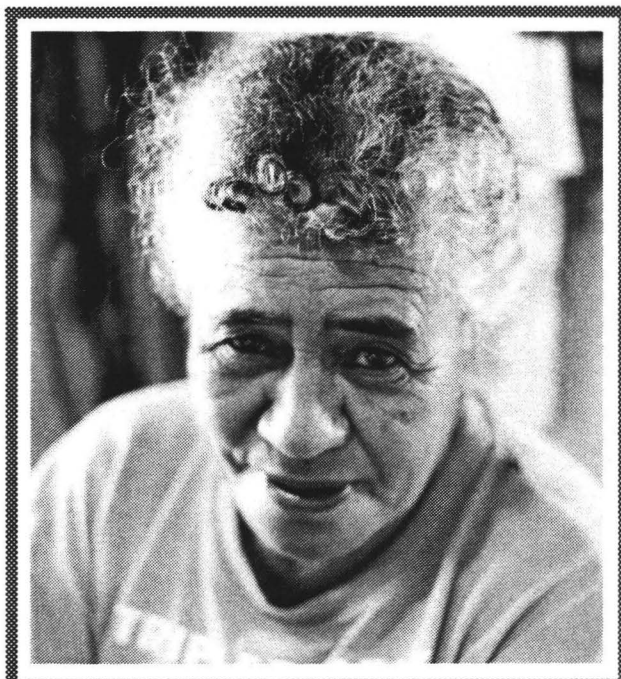
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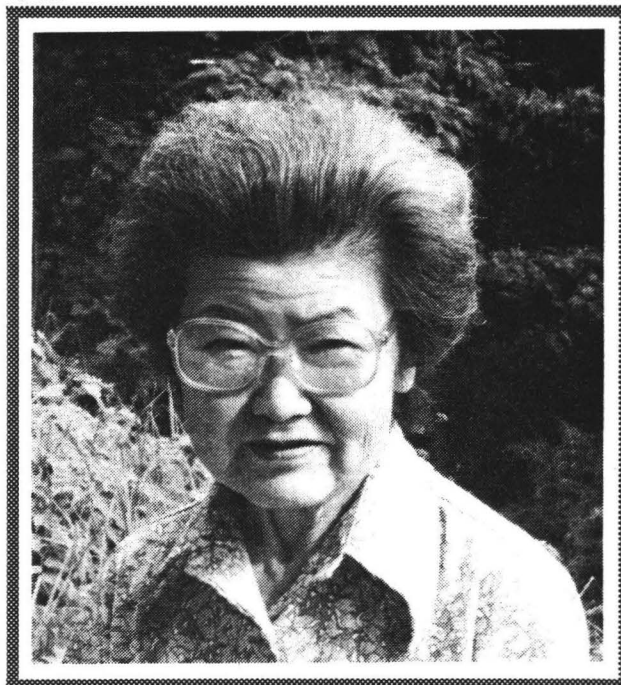
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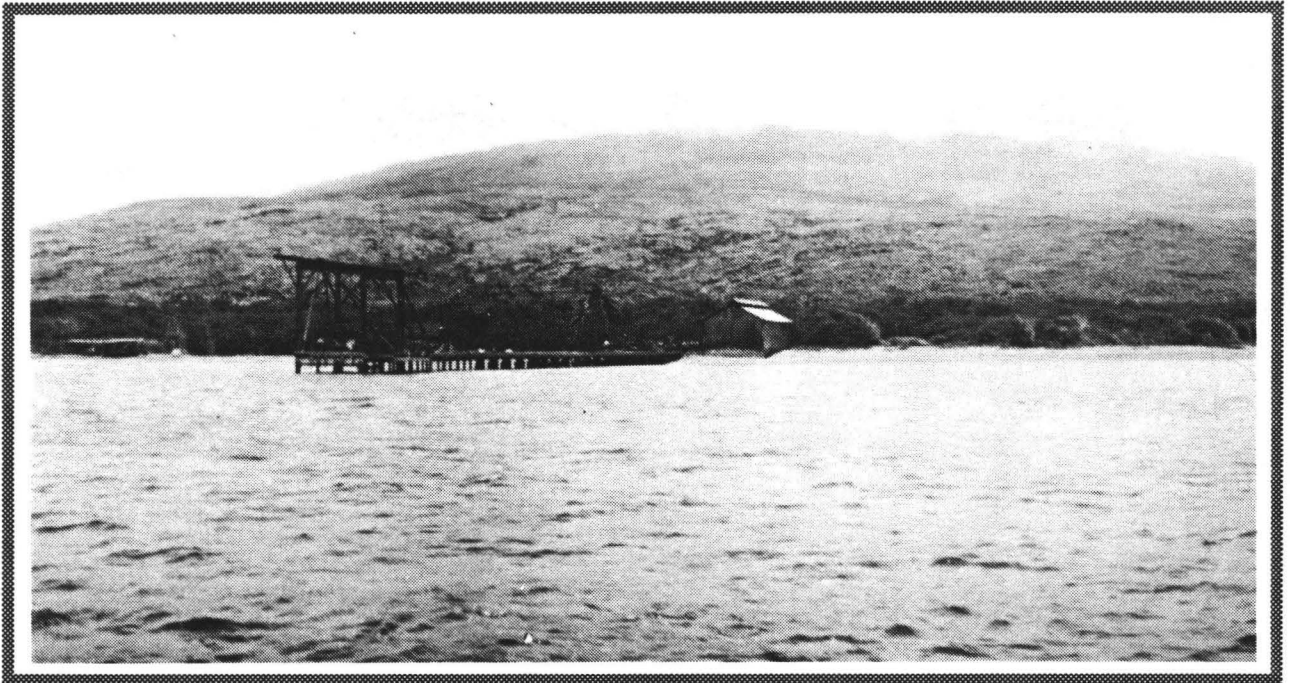


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- 17. Hannah Kauila Richardson (COH photo)
- 18. Rebecca Kaopuiki Richardson (COH photo)
- 19. Fusako Nishimura Uchimura (COH photo)
- 20. Fumiko Abe Watanabe (COH photo)



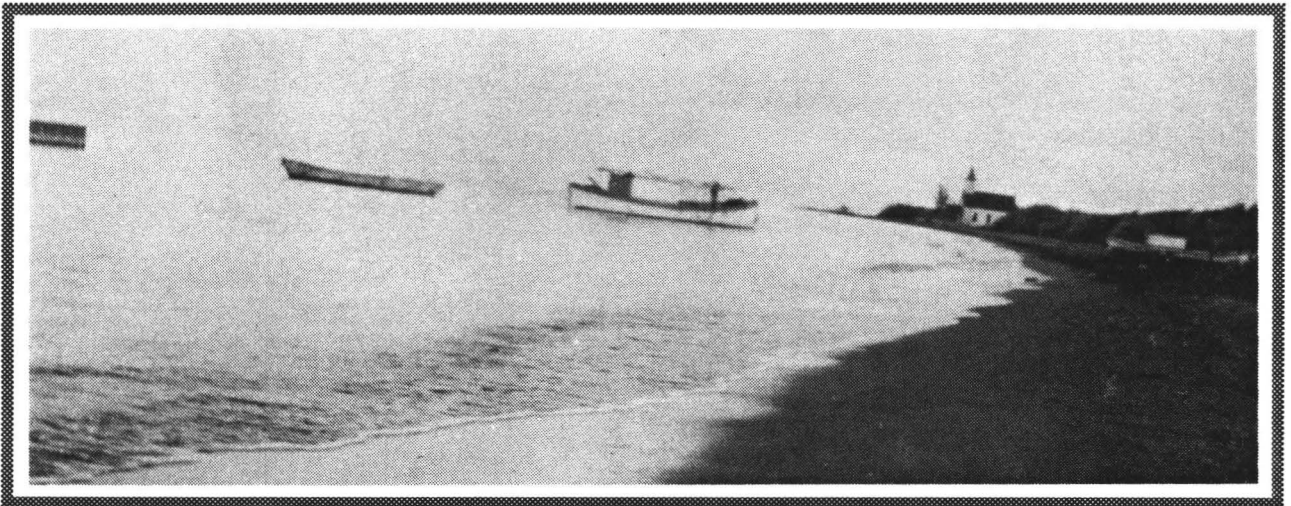
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21. Kahalepalaoa Landing, 1900. (Violet Gay collection)

22. Kahalepalaoa Landing, ca. 1902. Rowboats transporting passengers, cargo, and livestock to *Mikahala* (far right). (Violet Gay collection)

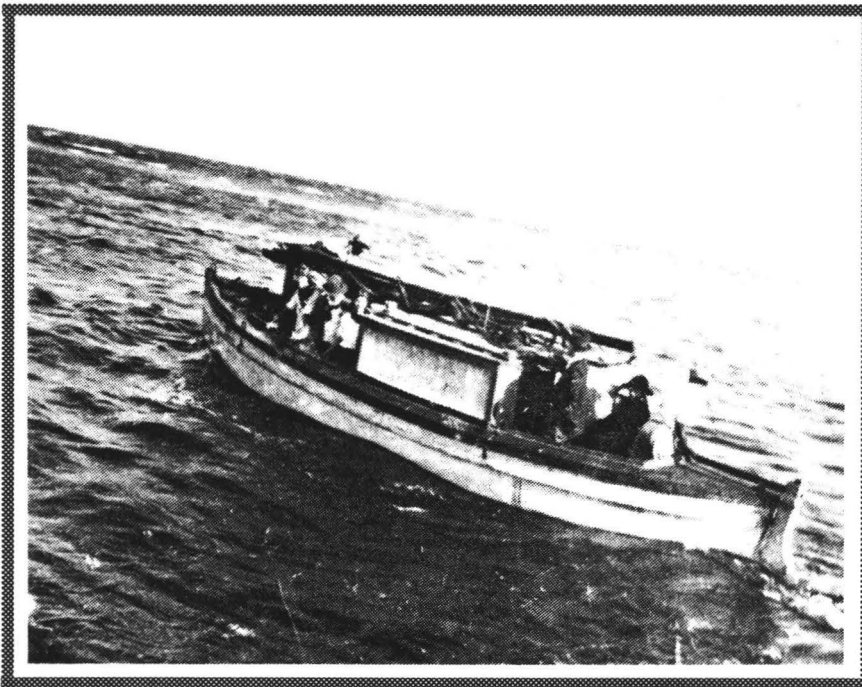
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23. Beach at Keōmuku, ca. 1918. Lāna'ihale Church in background. (Violet Gay collection)

24. Noa Kaopuiki heading his launch, *Akamai*, into the channel, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

25. The launches leave Keōmuku, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

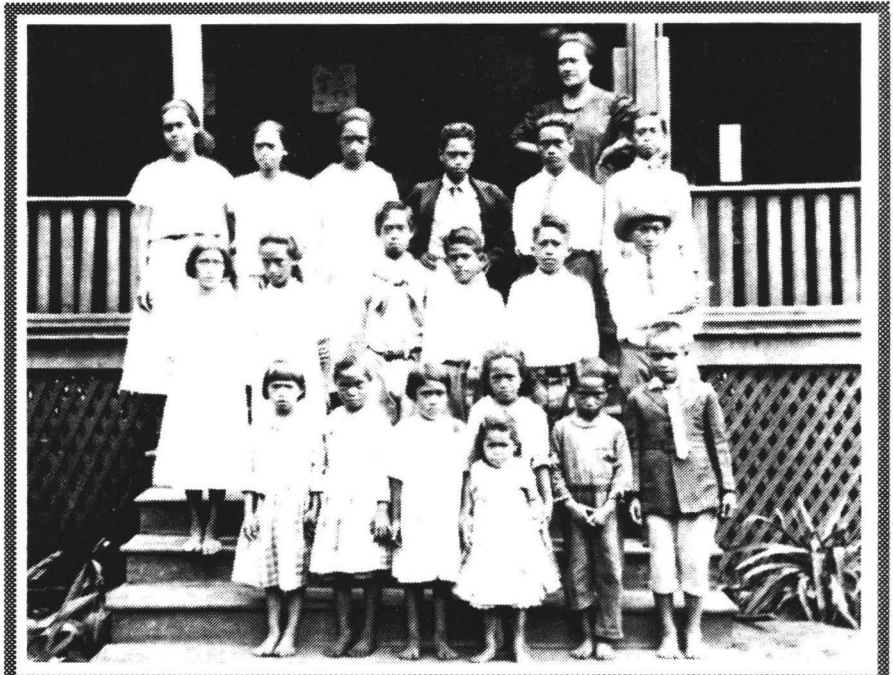
26. U.S. mail, Keōmuku beach, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

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27. Keōmuku School pupils, 1921. *Front row, left to right, Anne Kane, Katherine Kahaleanu, Lei Kaopuiki, Rebecca Kaopuiki (Richardson), Rachel Namauu (front), Harry Kaopuiki, and David Namauu. Middle row, Sarah Makahanaloa, Martha Kaopuiki, Ben Kahaleanu, Jerry Kaopuiki, Daniel Kaopuiki, Jr., Frank Noa Kaopuiki. Back row, Maggie Nakihei, Agnes Kane, Mary Ann Kaopuiki, Sam Makahanaloa, Kawelo Makahanaloa, Mary Kauhane Fitzsimmons Kauila (back), Akuila Kane.* (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)



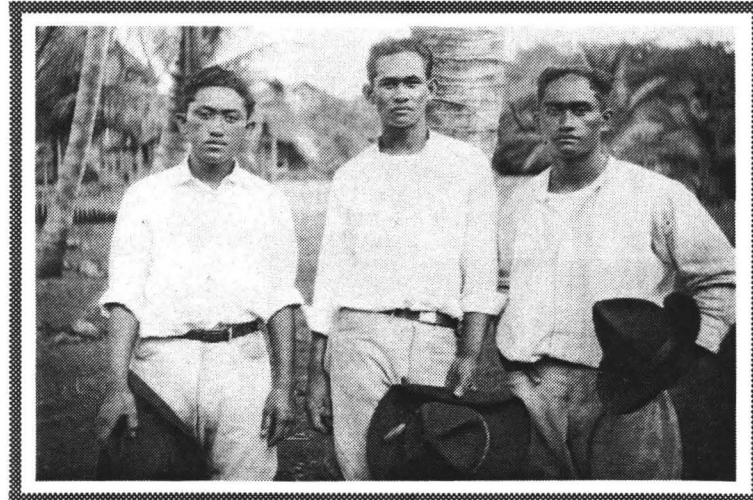
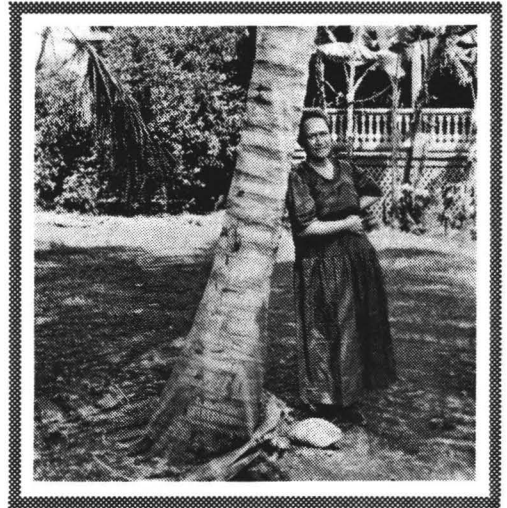
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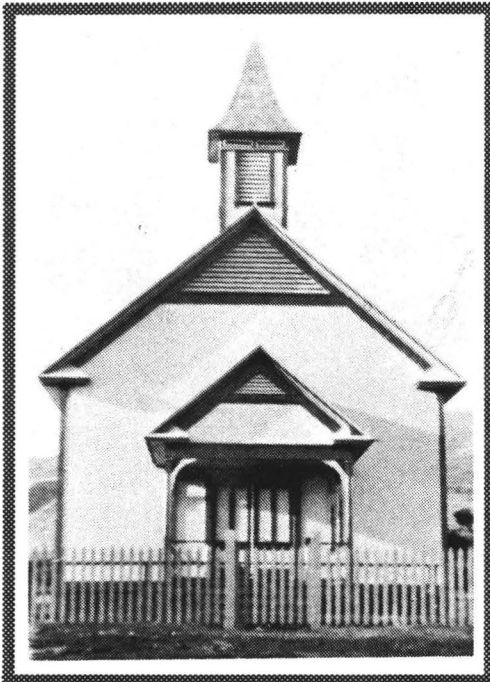
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28. *Front row, left to right, Harry Kapena Kaopuiki, Malia Mano, Rebecca Kaopuiki (Richardson), Lei Kaopuiki, Martha Kaopuiki, Namauu Makaiwi. Back row, Noa Kaopuiki, Sarah Kaopuiki holding Abraham Kaopuiki, Hattie Kaopuiki holding Alexander Kaopuiki, Robert Kauhane.* At Ka'a, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

29. Mary Kauhane Fitzsimmons Kauila, Keōmuku, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

30. *Left to right, John Naauao Kaopuiki, Abraham Kauila, and Enoka Makahanaloa, Keōmuku, 1921.* (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)



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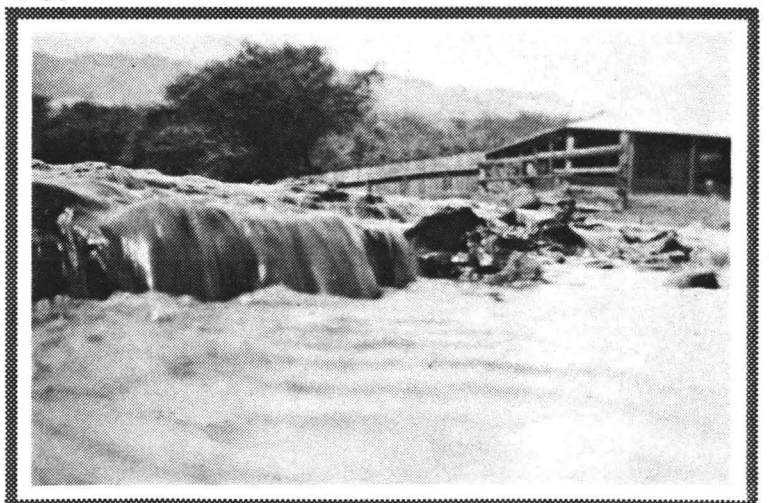
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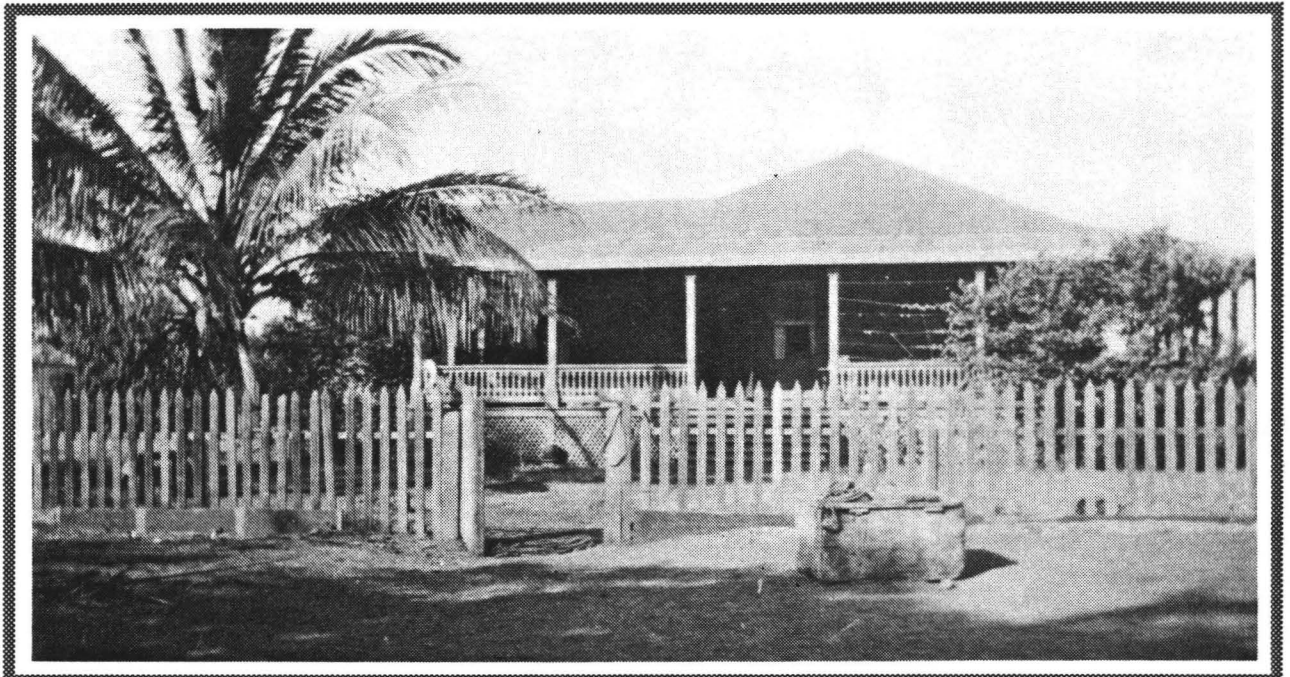
31. Lāna'ihale Church, Keōmuku, ca. 1915. Photo taken from ocean. (Violet Gay collection)

32. Ka Lanakila O Ka Mālamalama Church, Keōmuku, 1988. Presently being restored. (COH photo)

33. Keōmuku village. *Left*, former Maunalei Sugar Company office, which later became the home of Daniel Kaopuiki, Sr. and his family; *right*, Charles Gay's beach home. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

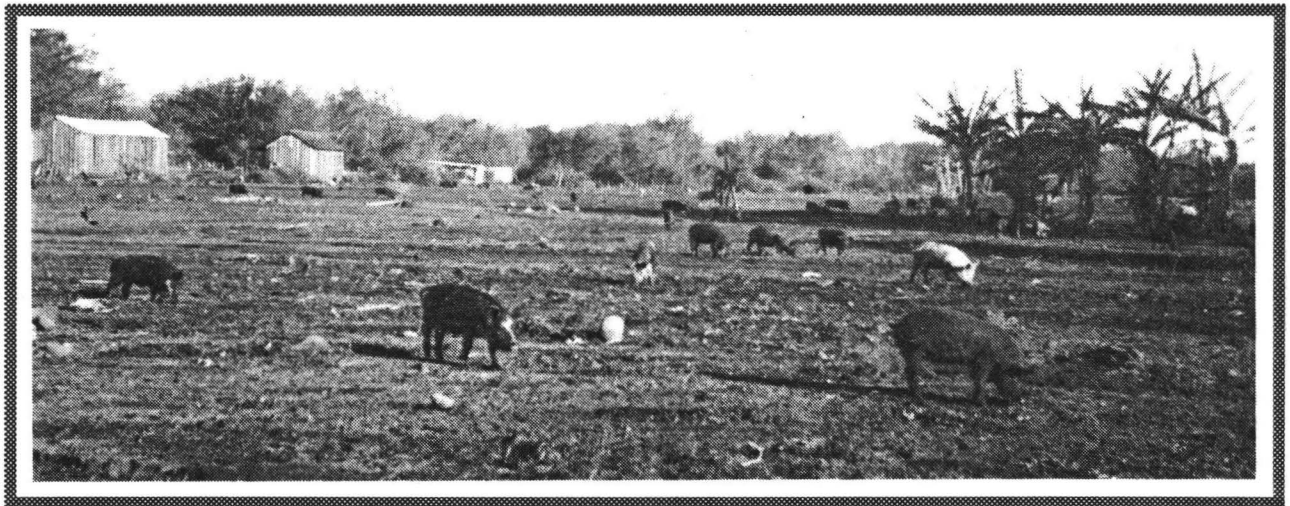
34. Keōmuku freshet, ca. 1915. (Violet Gay collection)





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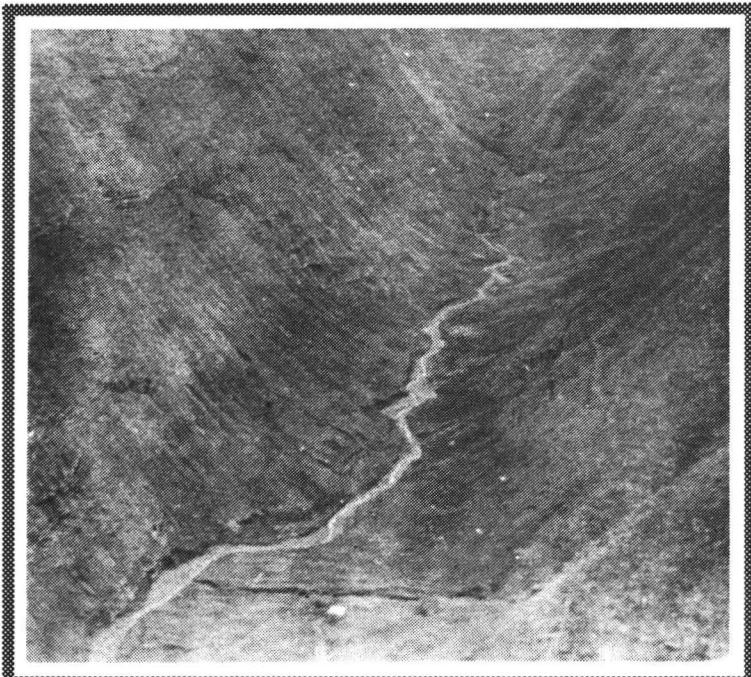
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35. Charles Gay's beach home, Keōmuku, ca. 1915. Formerly occupied by the Maunalei Sugar Company manager. (Violet Gay collection)

36. Gay's pig farm, Keōmuku, 1915. (Violet Gay collection)

37. Watermelon patch, Nāhoko (between Keōmuku and Maunalei), ca. 1920s. (Violet Gay collection)





38. Maunalei Gulch, n.d. The stream was Lāna'i's main water source. *Center foreground*, pump house; *right foreground*, trail leading to Kō'e. (Violet Gay collection)

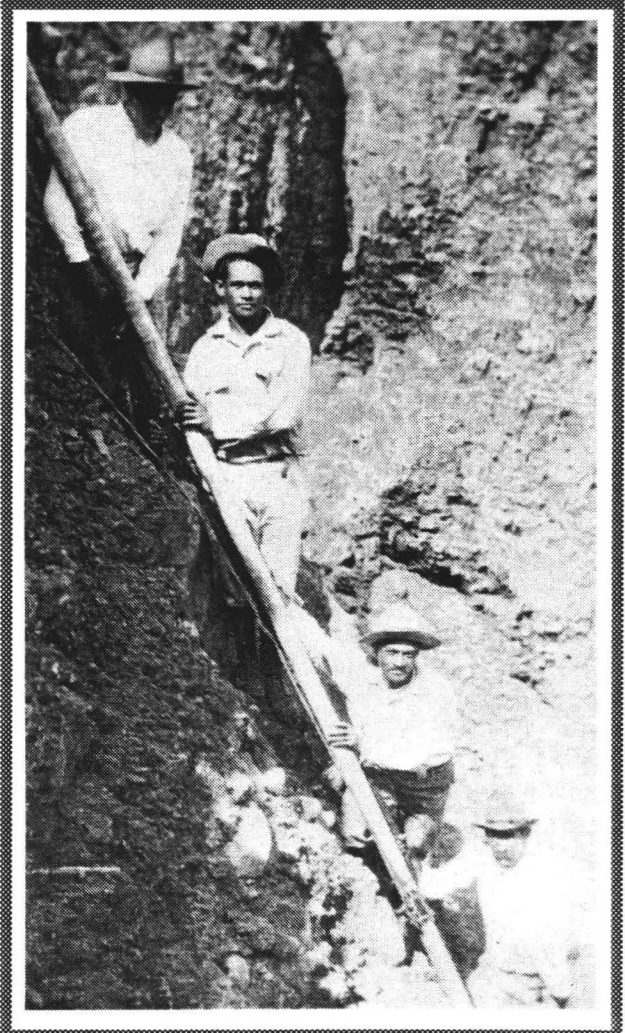
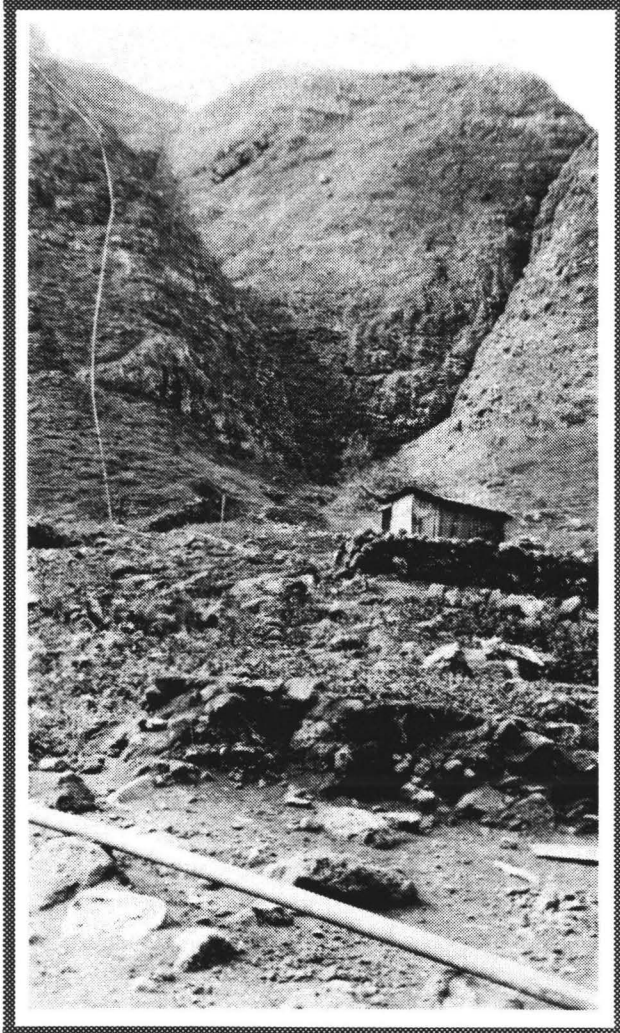
39. Maunalei pump house, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

40. *Top to bottom*, unidentified, Abraham Kauila, David Namauu, James Kauila. Maunalei water pipeline, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

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41. Reservoir, Kaiholena Gulch, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

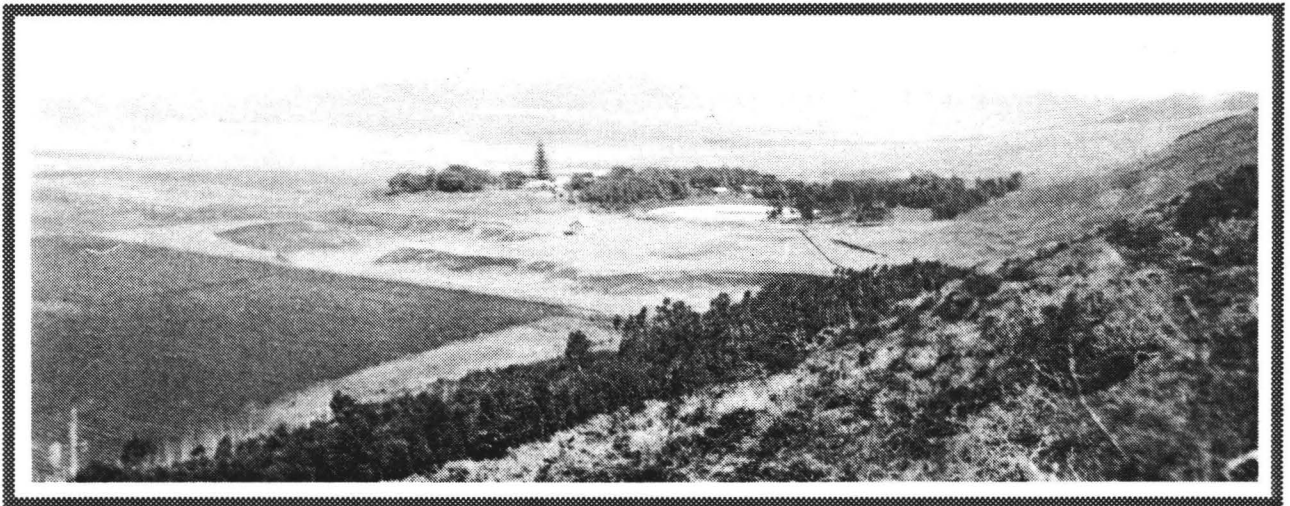
42. Kō'e'e, 1921. Norfolk pine marks ranch manager's home. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

43. Ranch reservoir, Norfolk pine, and eucalyptus groves, Kō'e'e, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)



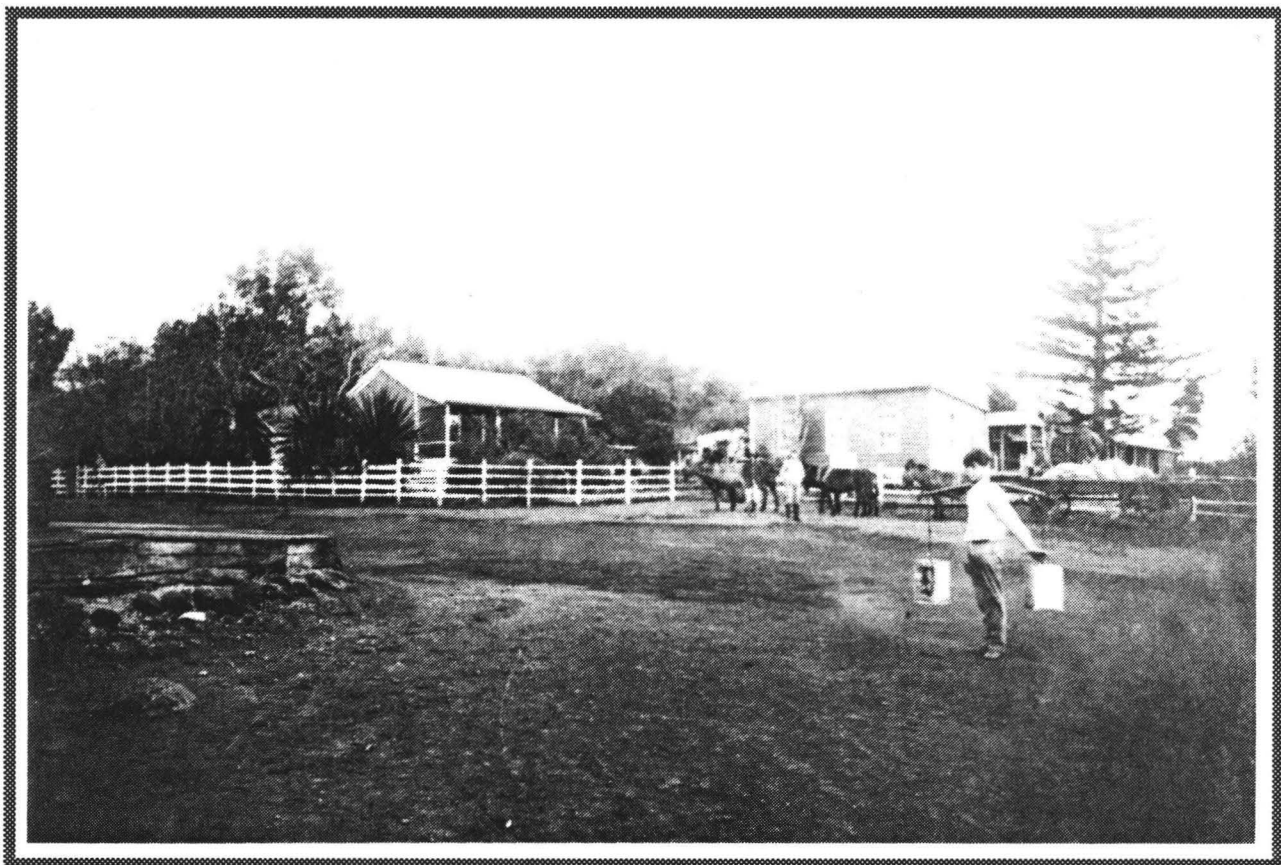
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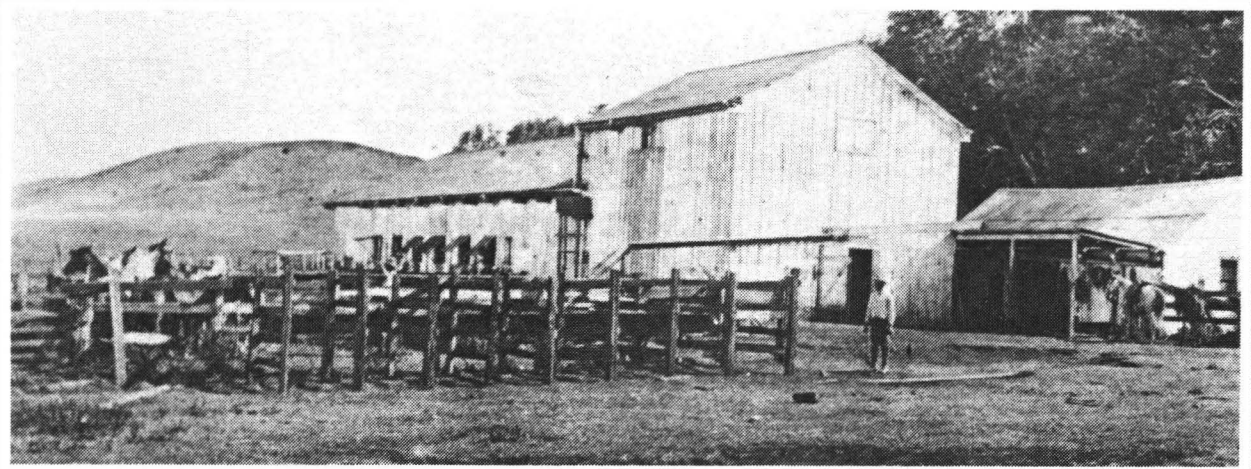
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44. Kō'e, 1900s. *Left*, guest cottage; *right*, ranch manager's home. (Ray Jerome Baker, Bishop Museum)

45. Charles and Louisa Gay with their children, *left to right*, Venus, Louise, Ralph and Violet, on steps of ranch guest cottage, 1908. Agnes Judd stands in back. (Violet Gay collection)



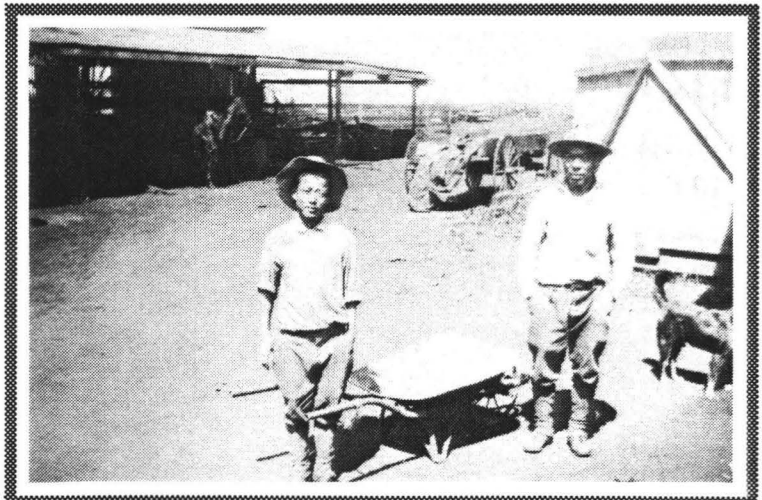
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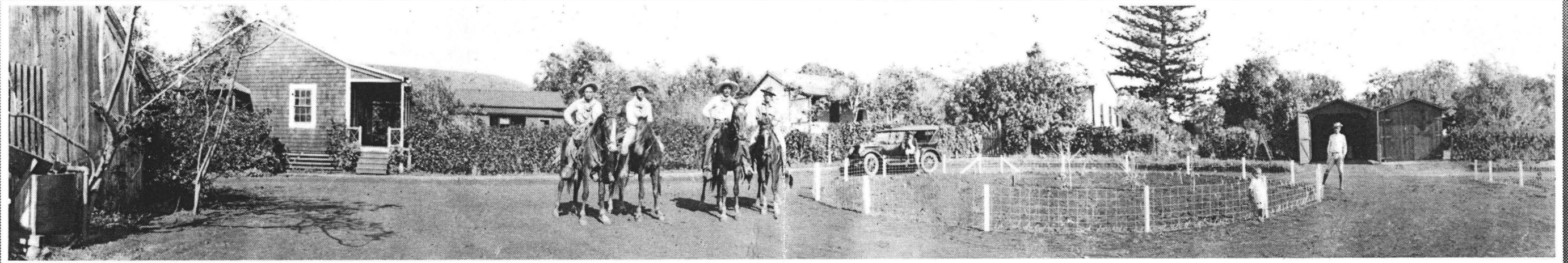
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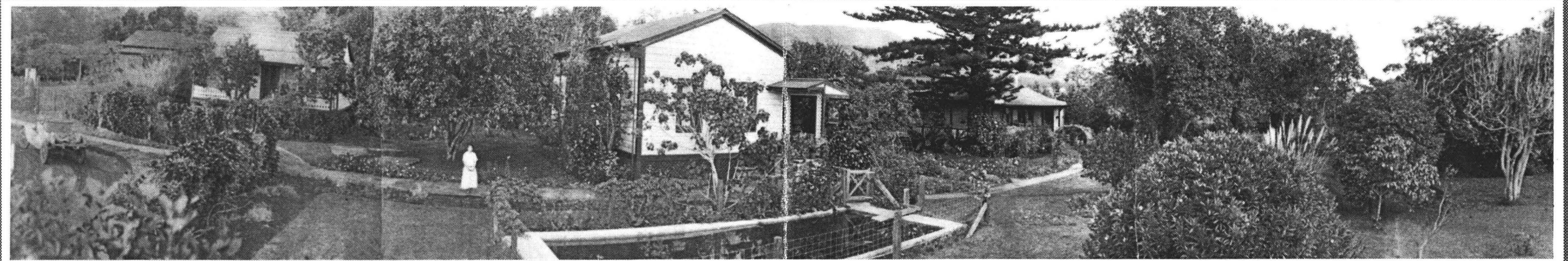
46. Stables and wool shed, Kō'ele, ca. 1900. (Violet Gay collection)
 47. Sheep owned by Charles Gay, Kō'ele, ca. 1905. (Violet Gay collection)
 48. *Left foreground*, Kimo Roberts, and unidentified worker, Kō'ele, ca. 1915. *Left background*, stables; *right background*, blacksmith shop. (Violet Gay collection)





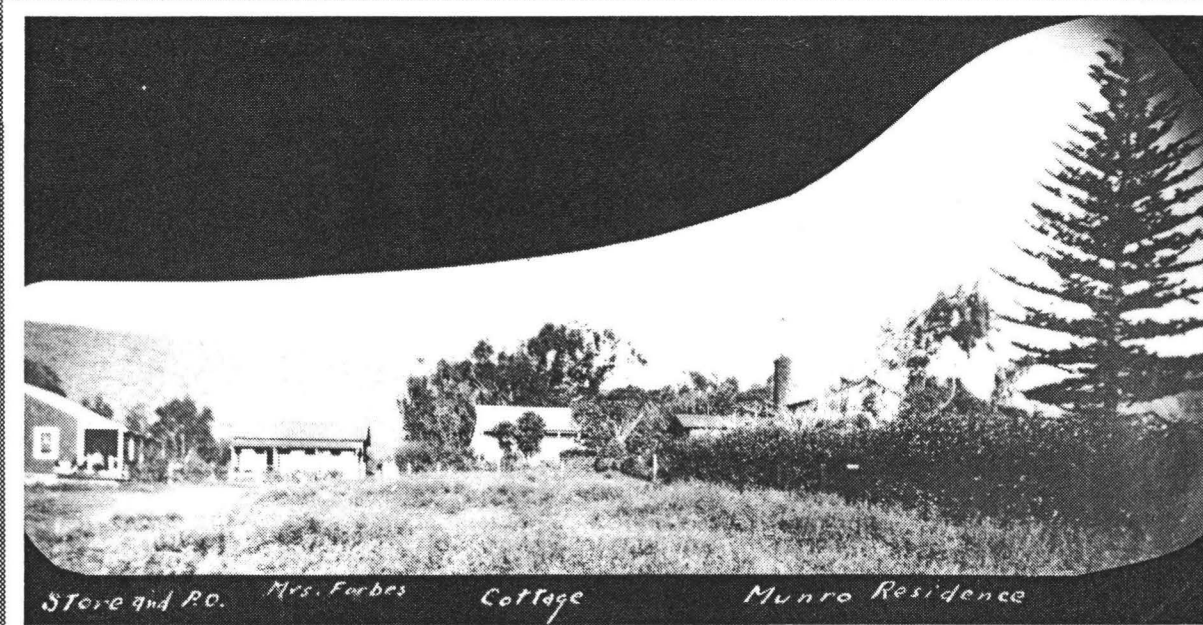
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49. Left to right, ranch store and office (structure with window), Forbes residence, ranch manager's home (next to Norfolk pine), and garage, ca. 1925. Cowboys, left to right: Moke Kaauhaahaa, Abraham Kauila, James Kauila and William Kauwenaole. Others (unidentified) stand beside the newly planted hibiscus circle. (Hannah Richardson collection)

50. Center, ranch manager's home, n.d. (Munro family collection)

51. Left to right, ranch store and office, Forbes residence, guest cottage, and ranch manager's home, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

52. Ranch manager's home, Kō'e, 1920s. (Ray Jerome Baker, Bishop Museum)

53. Jean Munro in living room of ranch home, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)



54. Left to right, Eizo Abe, Fumiko Abe (Watanabe), and Masuka Abe, in front of ranch manager's home, Kō'ele, 1926. (Fumiko Abe Watanabe collection)

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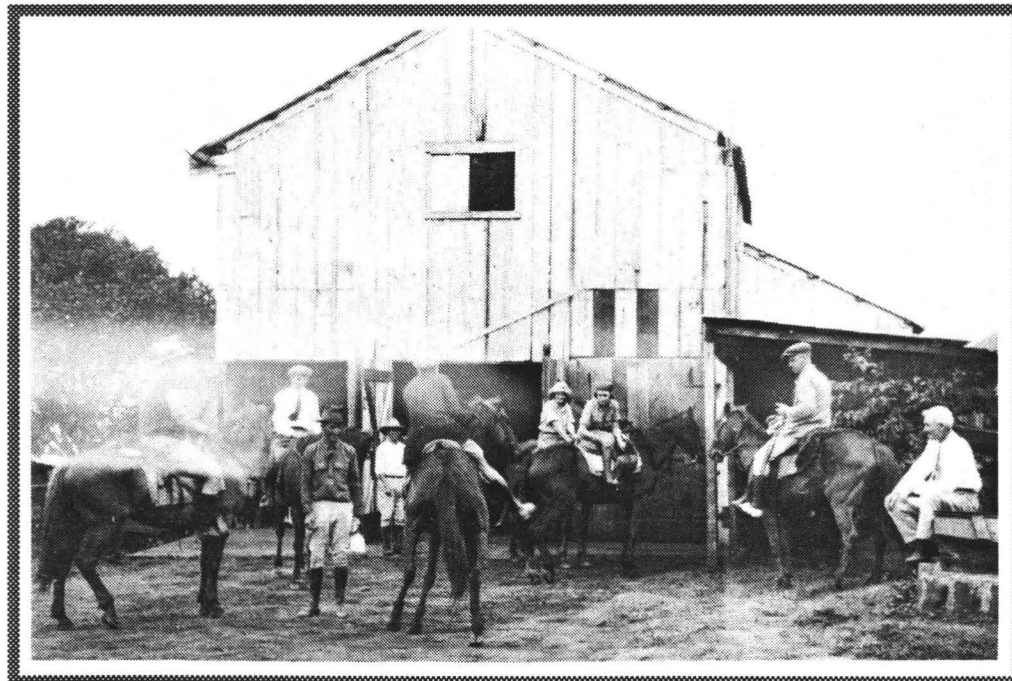
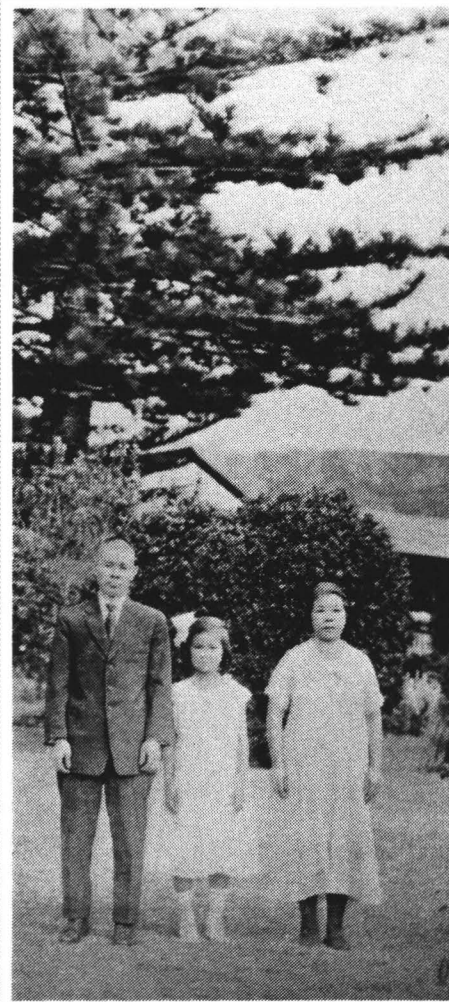
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55. Left to right, Georgina Munro, Ruby Catherine Munro, George Munro (in car), and Kenneth Emory, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

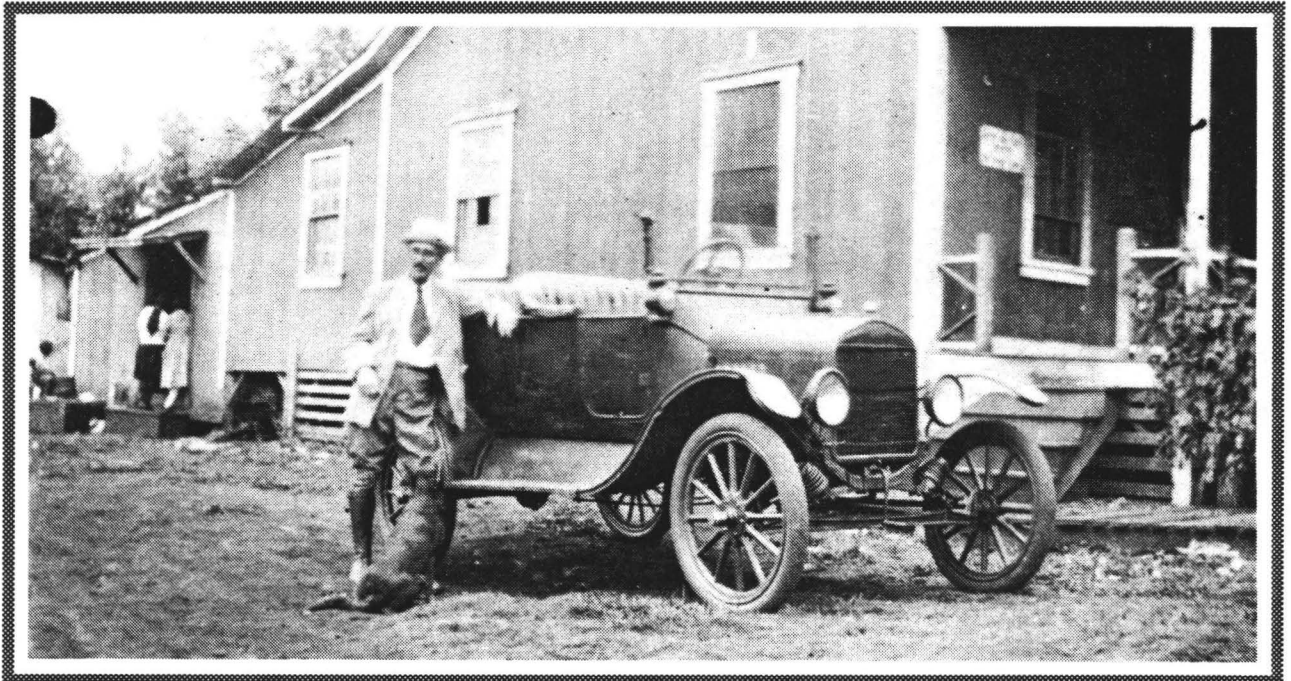


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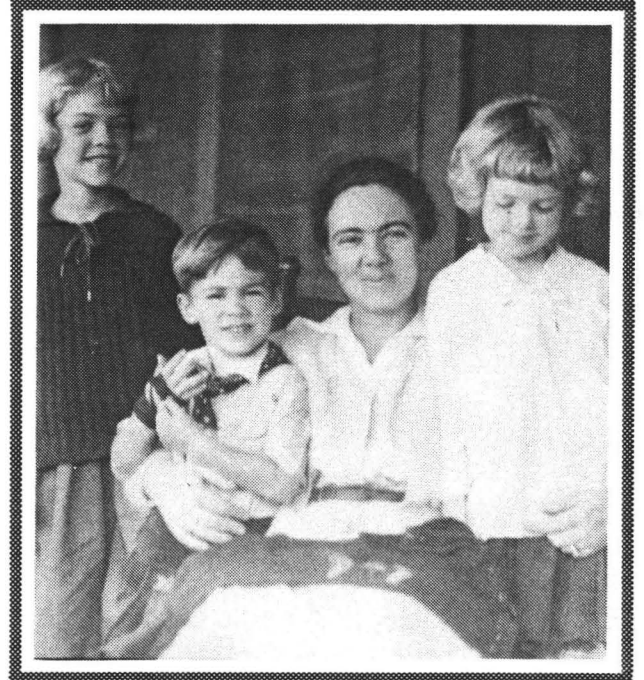
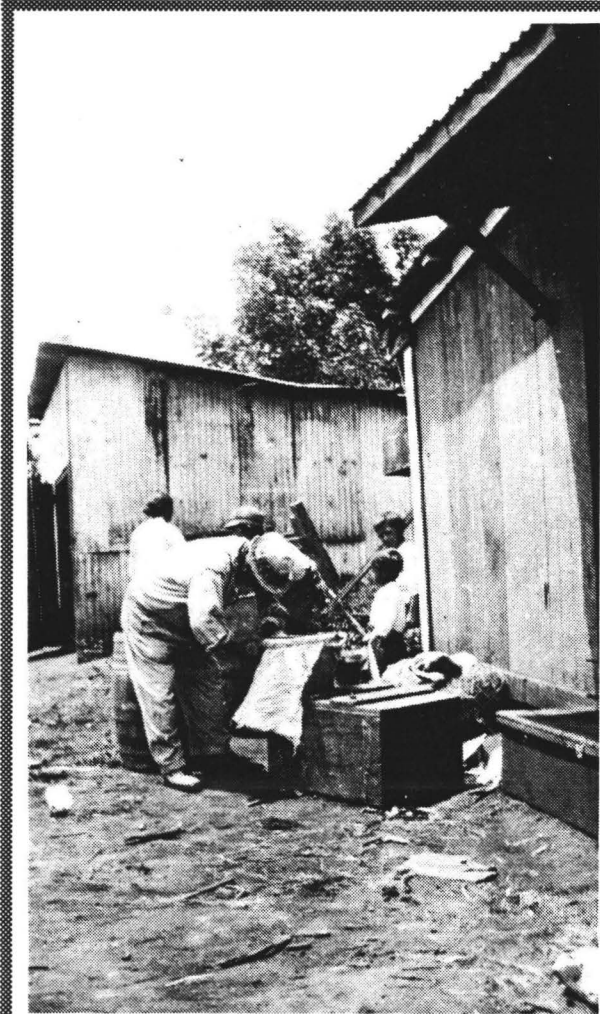
56. Kō'ele stables (formerly, wool shed), 1921. The top floor with the window was where Simeon Kauakahi, the saddlemaker, worked. Third from right, Ruby Catherine Munro. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)



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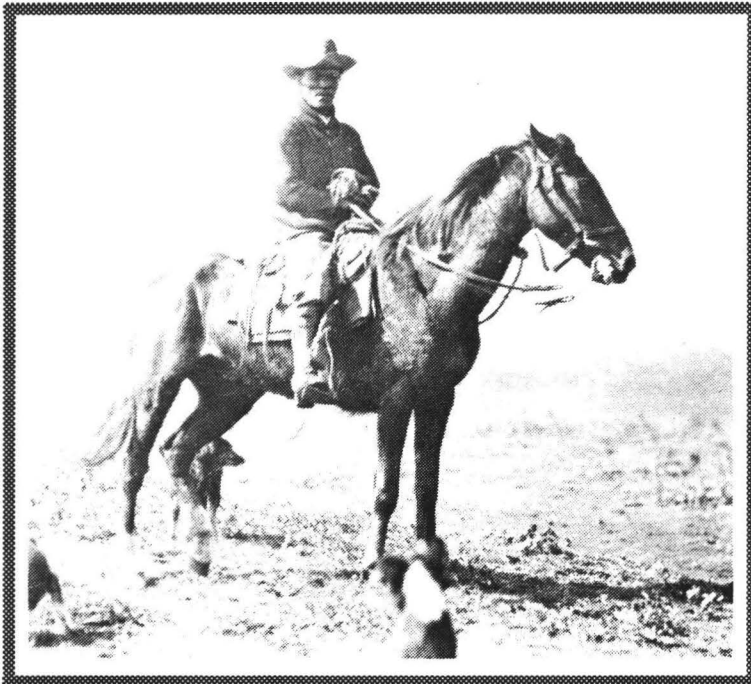
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57. George Munro in front of ranch store and office, 1921. The structure is now the home of Ernest and Rebecca Richardson. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

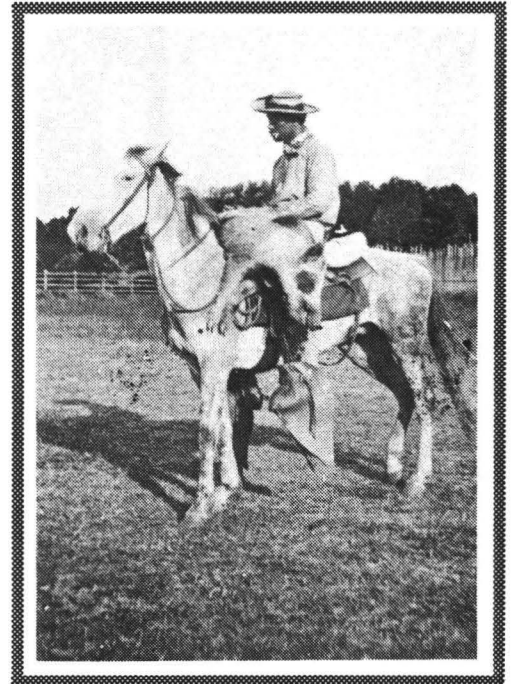
58. Buying poi at ranch store, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

59. *Left to right*, Mary Forbes, Douglas Forbes, Helen Jean Forbes, and Jean Forbes (Adams), 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Jean Forbes Adams/Munro family collections)



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60. Simeon Kauakahi, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)



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61. Ben Keanu Kahaleanu with wild pig, Ko'ele, n.d. Ranch manager's yard in background. (Violet Gay collection)

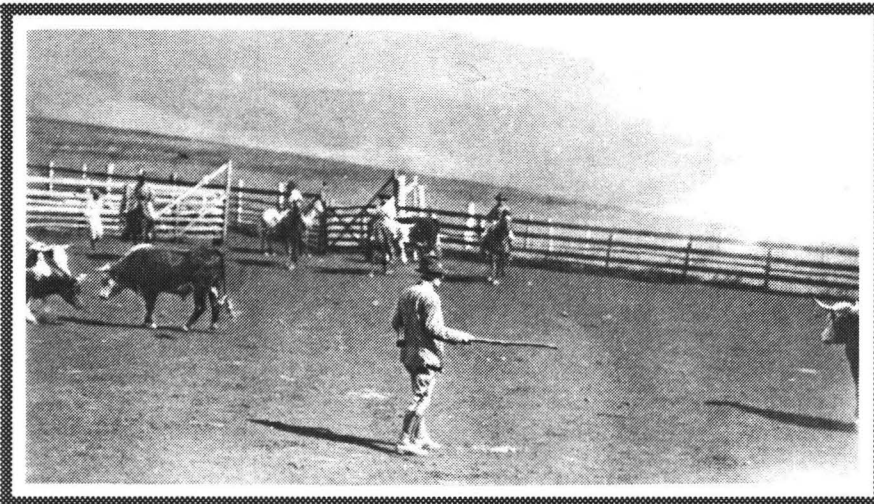
62. Cowboys, left to right: Jim Lalawai, unidentified, William Kauwenaole, Arthur Apiki, David Paa, James Kauila, John Richardson, Sam Koa, Toyoki Morita, Abraham Kauila, William Yokeman, Tsuneo Nishimura, unidentified, ca. 1925. (Hannah Richardson collection)

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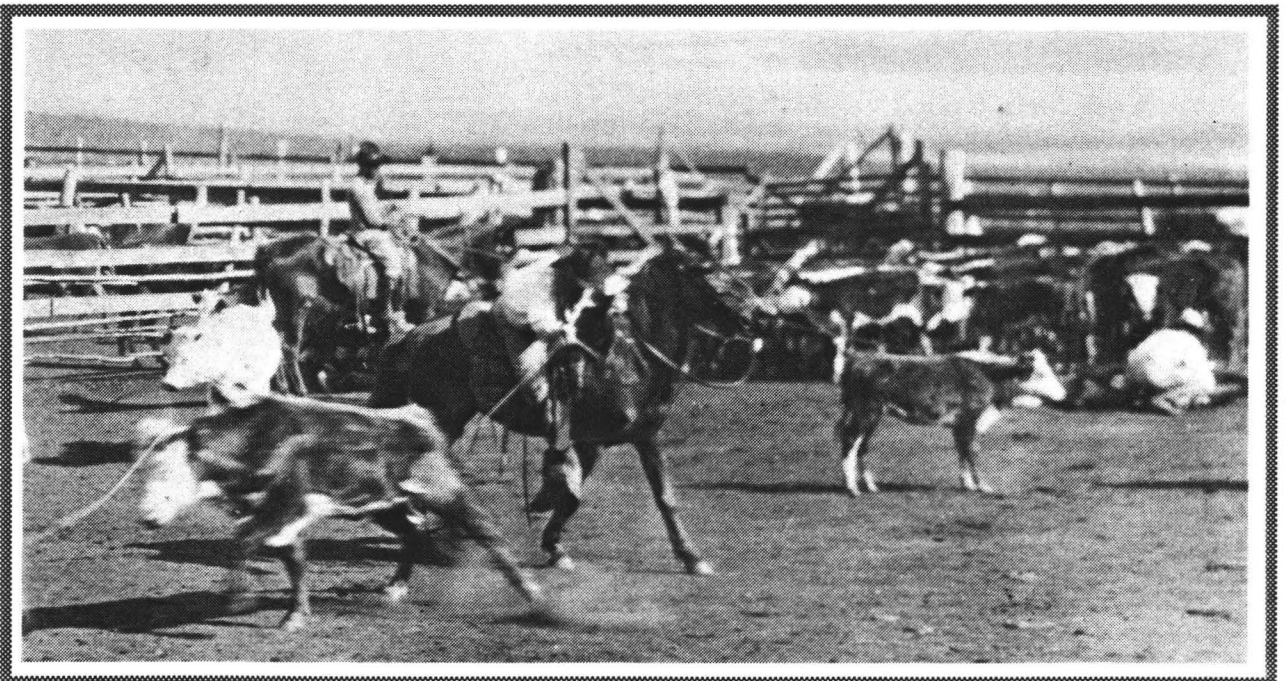
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63. Cattle drive, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

64. Ranch manager George Munro, Kaumaikahoku (presently, Lānaʻi City), 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

65. Cattle branding, Kaumaikahoku, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

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66. Kō'ele residents, 1921. *Front row, left to right, John Naauao Kaopuiki, Kama Mano, Hannah Kauila (Richardson), Gi Hong Kwon, Elizabeth Kapu Kwon (front), Bon Soon Shin. Middle row, Kalanakila Mano holding Kalana Kini, Eliza Manoa Kauila holding Robert Kauila, Malia Mano, John Mano (front), Namauu, Arthur Apiki, M. Gibson Apiki, Martha Apiki Koa, Elizabeth Kwon holding Wilson Kwon, Anna Shin, Lucy Apiki Kauila. Back row, Joseph Makahanaloa, Jacob Apiki, Pili Kahoohalahala, Sam Koa, James Kauila.* (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

67. Kō'ele luau, 1921. *Left to right, Henry Gibson, Pili Kahoohalahala, Kama Mano, Abraham Kauila.* (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

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68. Left to right, Johnny Nakihei, Maggie Nakihei, Ulia Nakihei, and Ayako Tamura. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

69. Kō'e children, 1921. Far right, Kawelo Makahanaloa and Jerry Kaopuiki. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

70. Left to right, Lawae, Kope, Hannah Kauila (Richardson), Joe Keliihananui, Annie Mikala Cockett (Enfield), Mary Forbes, and Jean Forbes (Adams), 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

71. Front row, left to right, Elizabeth Kapu Kwon and Hannah Kauila (Richardson). Middle row, Elizabeth Kwon holding Wilson Kwon, Martha Apiki Koa, and Lucy Apiki Kauila holding Robert Kauila. Back row, Anna Shin, Rebecca Mahoe Kauila (Benenua), and Eliza Manoa Kauila. Kō'e, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)



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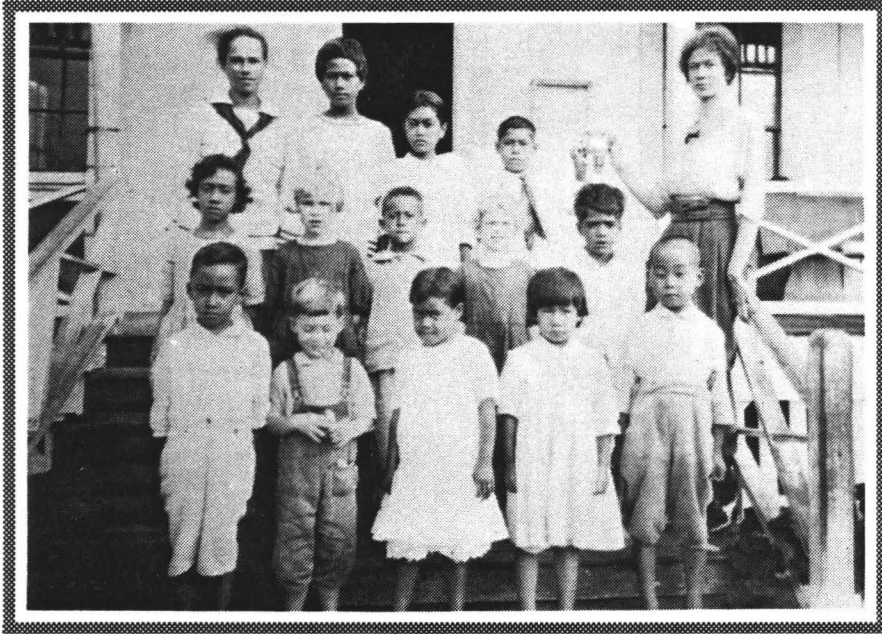




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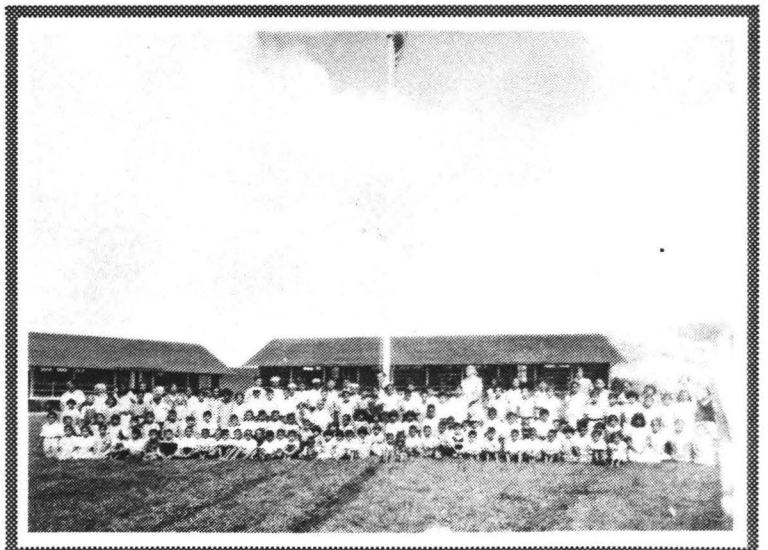
72. Luau at Kō'ele School, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Bishop Museum)
73. John and Hannah Richardson at their prior home, the former Kō'ele School, 1888. (COH photo)
74. Kō'ele School pupils, 1921. *First row, center, Hannah Kauila (Richardson); middle row, fourth from left, Jean Forbes (Adams).* (Jean Forbes Adams/Munro family collections)

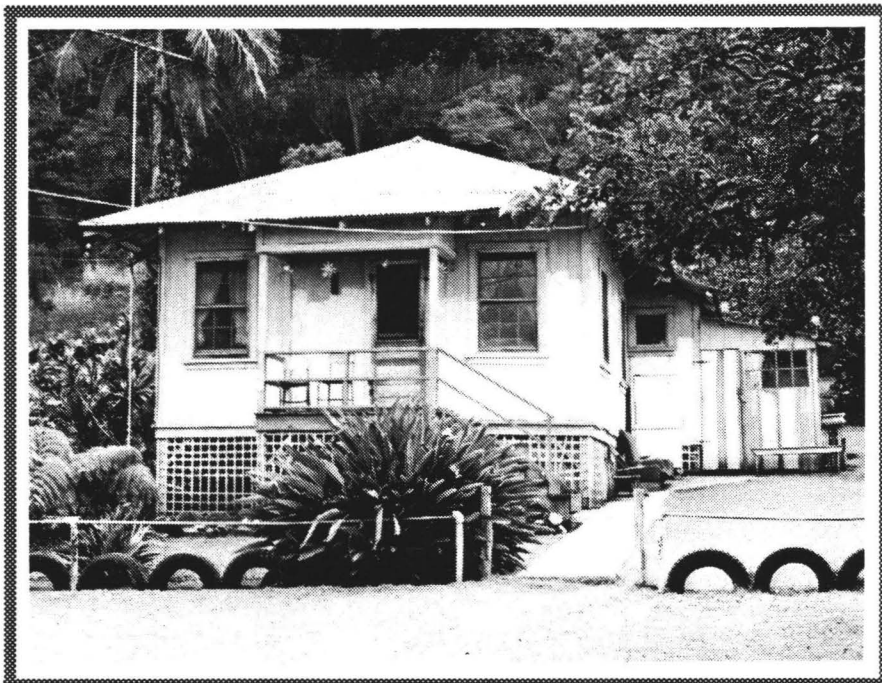


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75. Kō'ele Grammar School pupils, ca. 1927. (Jean Forbes Adams collection)
76. Kō'ele Grammar School, ca. 1927. (Jean Forbes Adams collection)



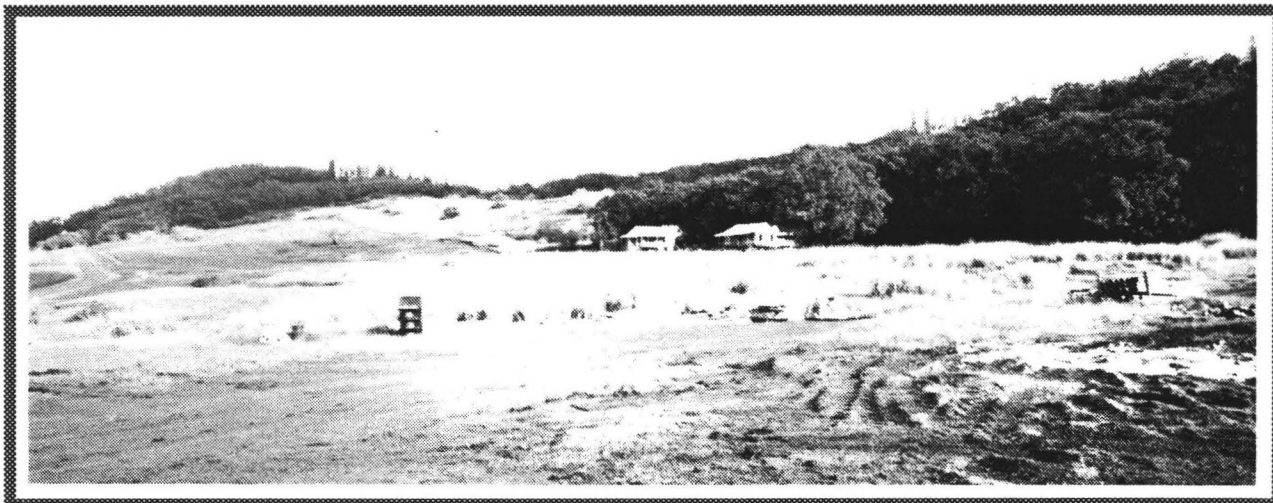


77. Former home of Ernest and Rebecca Richardson, 1988. Torn down in 1988. (COH photo)

78. *Right background*, former Forbes residence and present home of John and Hannah Richardson. *Left background*, former ranch store and office and present home of Ernest and Rebecca Richardson, 1989. (COH photo)

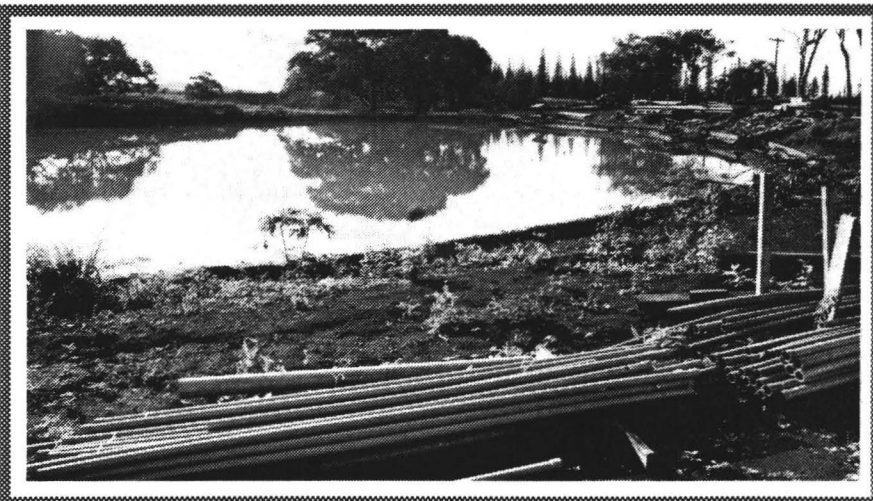
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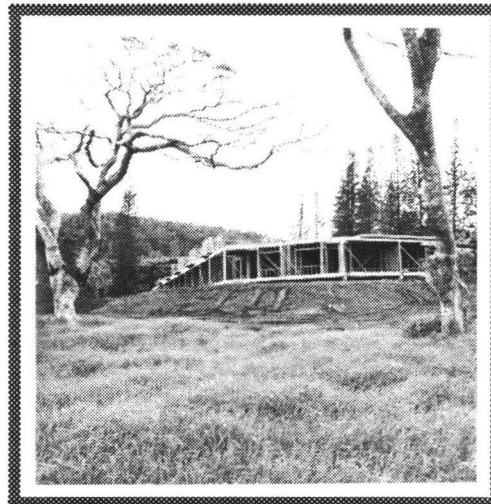
79. Construction of The Lodge at Kō'e, 1988. The former ranch reservoir will be converted to a lily pond. (COH photo)

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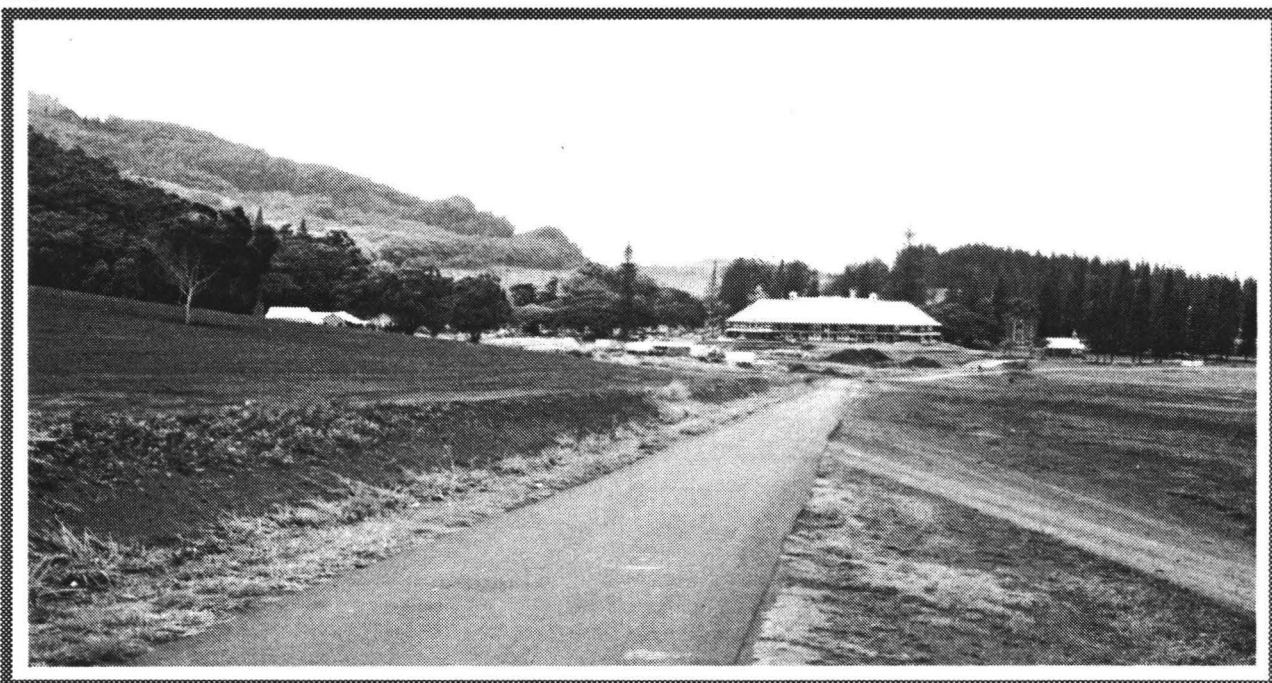




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80. Ka Lōkahi O Ka Mālamalama Ho'omana Na'auao O Hawai'i Church, after being moved to make way for hotel, 1988. (COH photo)
81. Construction of The Lodge at Kō'e, 1988. (COH photo)
82. Hotel near completion, 1989. *Right*, Ka Lōkahi Church; *left*, Richardson homes. (COH photo)
83. Ka Lōkahi Church with hotel in background, 1989. (COH photo)





84. Charles Gay's pineapple field in Nīniniwai, Kōʻele, 1922. (Violet Gay collection)

85. Charles Gay home in Lālakoa, 1920. (Violet Gay collection)

86. Jean Munro flanked by David and Makaimoku Kelihananui, Palāwai, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

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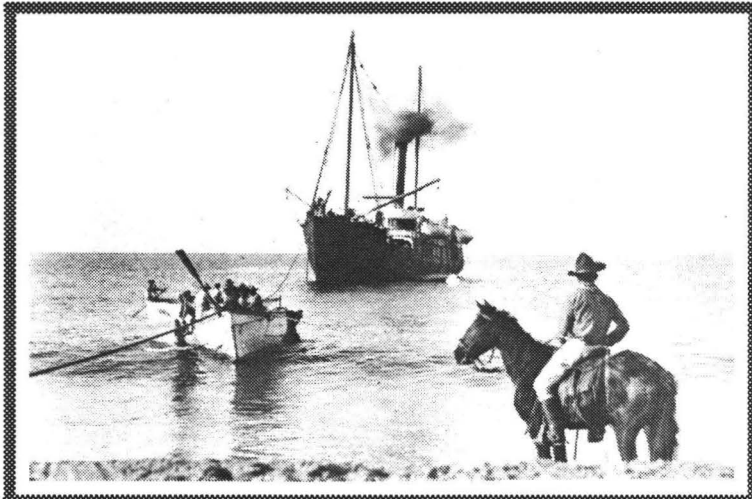
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87. Left, Ogata, the mechanic, and Hector Munro on road between Kō'ele and Mānele, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

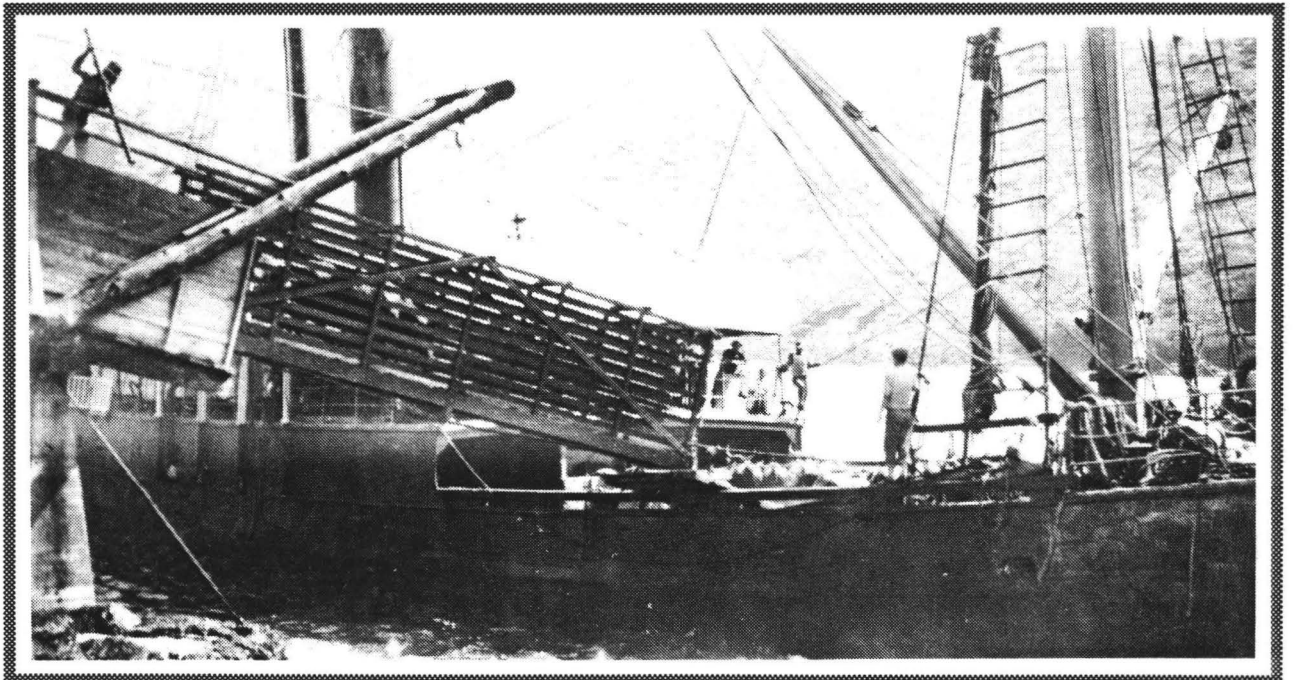
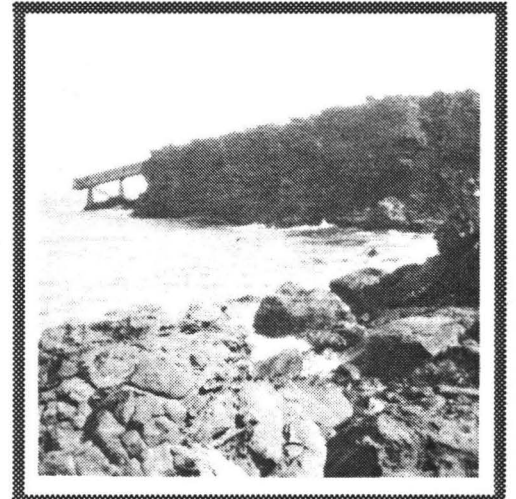
88. Former method of loading cattle, Mānele, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)

89. Pipi chute for loading cattle onto ships, Mānele, 1920s. (Violet Gay collection)

90. Loading cattle on S.S. *Likeline*, Mānele, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)



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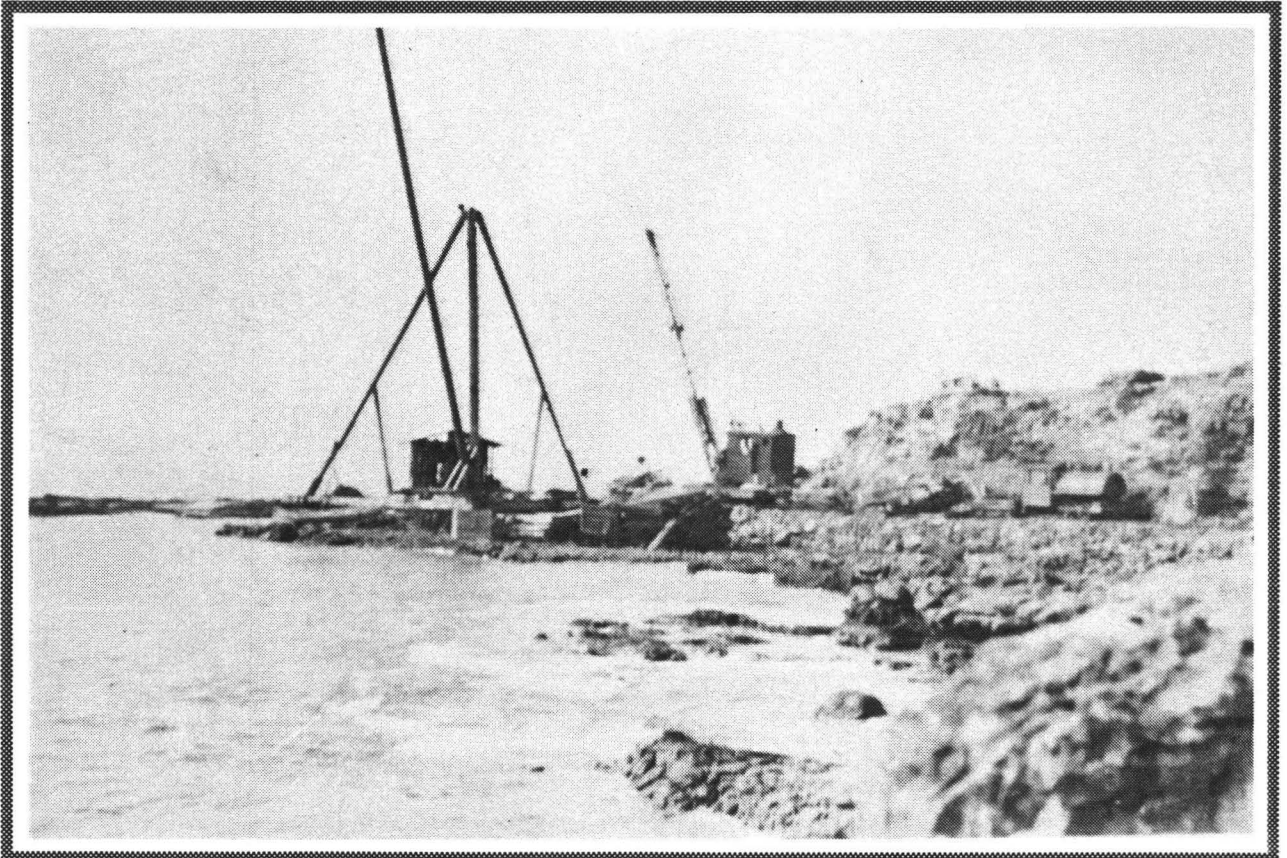




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91. Work on main highway, 1921. (Kenneth Emory, Munro family collection)
92. Construction of Kaumalapau Harbor, 1924. (Violet Gay collection)

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INTRODUCTION

A major emphasis of the Center for Oral History (COH) is to document, through research and interviews, the histories of Hawai'i's communities undergoing rapid and large-scale social, economic, and environmental changes. These changes have become more evident with the Islands' transition from a rural agricultural economy with sugar and pineapple as its base to an international one based on tourism and commercial development.

In many instances, the social fabric of these communities has been altered because of the influx of newcomers--tourists as well as neighbor island residents arriving to work in tourism-related businesses. The need for housing and accompanying infrastructure such as roads, sewage, and utilities puts an even greater strain upon residents of a rural community undergoing these changes.

Castle & Cooke, Inc., virtually sole owner of the tiny, pineapple plantation island of Lāna'i, has decided to transform the island's economy by building two major resort hotels: the 250-room Mānele Bay Hotel and the 102-room The Lodge at Kō'eale. The latter hotel, still under construction at the time of the interviews, stands on the former site of Lāna'i Ranch. The site is historically significant because the ranch represented the island's major commercial activity prior to the beginning of pineapple cultivation in 1922.

This oral history project came about when the County of Maui Planning Department, which oversees land use for the county (which includes Lāna'i) approved Castle & Cooke's request for land development and hotel construction provided that historic, archaeological and cultural sites be identified and protected wherever possible. In recognition of the Kō'eale/Keōmuku area's historical significance, the Planning Department required that "a comprehensive oral and written history project . . . be initiated as a means to enhance the cultural foundation of the hotel as a living part of the community."¹ This was in congruence with an archaeological reconnaissance survey conducted in 1986. It recommended that "effort should be made to collect oral history information from a number of older Lāna'i residents with special knowledge of Kō'eale since 1900. . . . The resulting information should be compiled in a complete narrative report recounting the history of the Kō'eale area of Lāna'i."²

A contract to perform the task was executed between COH and Lāna'i Company, Inc., the Castle & Cooke subsidiary in charge of the development of the two hotels, with both organizations--COH and Lāna'i Company, Inc.--sharing the cost of the project.

Lāna'i Ranch: Historical Background

This historical narrative is based on information found in various written sources (see bibliography). It begins with the ranch's formation in the latter half of the 19th century through the closing of the ranch in 1951 up to 1988, the eve of the hotels' opening on the island.

The documented history of Lāna'i Ranch begins in 1861 when the approximately 600 native Hawaiians living on the island were joined by Walter Murray Gibson and other followers of the Mormon Church who arrived to start a settlement on land they had purchased. Three years later, after Gibson was excommunicated for allegedly misusing church funds, the settlement failed and the Mormons left the island. Gibson, who later was to become an influential but enigmatic figure in the Hawaiian government, remained and consolidated the 26,000 acres of land he controlled to form Lāna'i Sheep Ranch, headquartered in Pālāwai. By 1867, Gibson's ranch consisted of 10,000 sheep and 18,000 goats. While the sheep were imported, the goats were herded on Lāna'i by Hawaiians prior to Gibson's arrival. By 1875, despite protests by Lāna'i residents, Gibson controlled 90 percent of Lāna'i lands either in fee simple or long-term leases, for ranching and farming operations.

After Gibson's death in 1888, the ranch was turned over to his daughter and son-in-law, Talula and Frederick Hayselden, who had been in charge of the ranch's day-to-day operations. The ranch, now headquartered in Kō'e'e, had grown to number 40,000 sheep, 3,000 Angora goats, 600 horses and 200 head of cattle. Lands making up Lāna'i Ranch included the former Gibson lands, government-owned land, and some ahupua'as owned by Honolulu financier W. G. Irwin.

As owner and manager, Hayselden built a 400,000-gallon reservoir at Kaiholena Gulch. This reservoir supplied piped water to the ranch at Kō'e'e. Previously, rainwater was collected in cisterns. Despite this and other attempts to increase the ranch's efficiency and profitability, the Hayseldens lost money. Therefore, in 1898, the Hayseldens established Maunalei Sugar Company. During the sugar company's three-year existence, three wells were dug on the island, Kahalepalaoa Landing was built so that sugarcane could be shipped to Maui for grinding, and a railroad built to transport cane and supplies to the landing. In addition, imported laborers lived in Keōmuku in housing provided by the company.

Plagued by financial problems, Hayselden closed the plantation in 1901. The Gibson estate went into receivership, with financiers W. H. Pain and Paul Neuman assuming two-thirds of the debt and the remaining land and assets. Charles Gay, of the wealthy Gay and Robinson family of Kaua'i and Ni'ihau, purchased the properties held by Pain and Neuman in

1902. He also acquired land held by Irwin as well as some government land. By 1907, Gay owned virtually the entire island.

Between 1902 and 1910, the years of his tenure as landowner and manager, Gay made several significant improvements to the ranch, which he found in disrepair. Gay brought up plantation homes for ranch hands from Keōmuku to Kō'e'e, laid pipelines, dug reservoirs and wells, erected windmills and fences, installed a water-pumping system in Maunalei Gulch, and began experimental farming. Gay, who lived in the ranch manager's home in Kō'e'e, also maintained a residence near the beach at Keōmuku. He utilized some of the defunct sugar company's facilities at Keōmuku--such as the brackish-water wells, windmills, and the Kahalepalaoa Landing--to maintain some ranch operations manned by a few employees. The ranch, in fact, provided employment for the few residents of Keōmuku. Gay also built a school in Pālāwai for his own children and that of ranch employees, and a church in Keōmuku for use by his family and nearby residents.

Although Gay achieved some measure of success after his improvements, he had difficulty turning a profit. He subsequently sold all but 600 acres of his lands in 1910 to a hui of businessmen who formed Lāna'i Ranch Company. At the time of this sale, the ranch consisted of 22,500 sheep, 250 head of cattle, and 150 horses. Gay remained on Lāna'i and, on his 600 acres, farmed corn, watermelons, pineapples and other crops, raised pigs, and built a home in Lālākoa, an area adjacent to present-day Lāna'i City. He also continued to use his Keōmuku home.

In 1911, Lāna'i Ranch Company hired New Zealander George Munro as ranch manager. Munro, who previously worked at Moloka'i Ranch, found that because there had been little subdividing of pastureland, the sheep were roaming the island almost at will and the goats had become wild. The pasture had deteriorated to a point that the sheep numbered less than 20,000. Munro immediately spent \$200,000 on improvements, putting up miles of fences, building a wool-shearing shed, and installing a sheep-dip. He also built a 3-million-gallon storm-water reservoir directly behind the ranch manager's home.

Munro, who had a knowledge of and interest in botany, planted hundreds of Norfolk Island pine trees throughout the island to catch fog drip to increase the ground water supply. Also during this time, Lāna'i Ranch Company began shifting its emphasis from sheep to cattle in order to supply a growing market for beef.

In 1917, Lāna'i Ranch Company sold the island to the Baldwin family of Maui for \$588,000. Under the Baldwins' ownership, a pipeline was constructed from Maunalei Gulch, the site of the islands' only running stream, to the upland pastures. Munro, who was to stay on as ranch

manager until 1935, continued the shift from sheep to cattle, and reduced the goat population. With the improved water supply, the emphasis on cattle, and the decimation of goats which destroyed grazing lands, Lāna'i Ranch began making a profit.

In 1922, despite this relative prosperity, the Baldwins sold the island to Hawaiian Pineapple Company.³ This watershed occurrence signaled the beginning of large-scale pineapple cultivation on Lāna'i which was to permanently alter the island's landscape and social fabric while at the same time signaling the decline of Lāna'i Ranch as the island's dominant commercial activity.

During the decade following its purchase, Hawaiian Pine carefully implemented plans to transform Lāna'i into a pineapple plantation: former pasturelands were cleared and rows upon rows of pineapple planted; Lāna'i City, a city to house hundreds of workers, was designed and built; a harbor at Kaunapali was constructed to ship pineapples and supplies to other islands; and accompanying infrastructure such as roads, cesspools and utilities put in.

Lāna'i's population underwent a dramatic change as several hundred Japanese, Filipinos, and other ethnic groups began arriving as field workers on Lāna'i. The island's population increased from 185 in 1920 to 3,000 by 1930. As the island's new owner, Hawaiian Pine also controlled ranch operations. The company retained Munro as ranch manager under the superintendent of Lāna'i Plantation, Harold Blomfield-Brown.

With the buildup of Lāna'i City, there existed a total of four population centers: Lāna'i City, Kaunapali Harbor, Kō'e'e and the beachside community of Keōmuku. As the company curtailed ranching in Keōmuku, the area's residents began moving up to Kō'e'e or to Lāna'i City to work either as ranch employees or as pineapple field workers for Hawaiian Pineapple Company. Other Keōmuku residents left for Maui or other islands. Only a few remained. In 1929, Keōmuku School, which opened in 1902, closed.

As pineapple growing and harvesting began in earnest--the first crop was harvested and shipped in 1926--Munro reduced the cattle herd and turned over ranch acreage to Hawaiian Pineapple Company. By 1927, of Lāna'i's 89,600 acres, pineapple operations accounted for 40,000 acres, Lāna'i Ranch occupied 44,000 acres, and 5,000 acres were taken up by forest reserve. In this reorganization of land Lāna'i Ranch cowboys relocated many miles of fences.

In 1935, George Munro, Lāna'i Ranch manager since 1911, retired. He advised that pineapple, not cattle, be given primary consideration on Lāna'i, and that the ranch be continued only as long as pineapple-growing

was not jeopardized. Munro, who remained on Lāna'i in an advisory capacity, was replaced by Ernest Vredenburg, formerly of Waialua Sugar Company.

The ranch continued to decline in the 1940s. By 1950, there were only a few cowboys to herd up the remaining cattle on the island. The ranch officially closed in 1951. Shortly thereafter, several ranch buildings, which in 1926 numbered thirty, including the ranch manager's home, were torn down. By 1986, only four homes remained, and in 1988, only two remained.

Castle & Cooke, Inc., which in 1961 acquired 100 percent direct ownership of Hawaiian Pineapple Company, began construction of the two luxury hotels on Lāna'i in 1987. When completed in late 1989, The Lodge at Kō'eale will stand on the former ranch site.

Oral History Analysis

The preceding historical narrative is a summary of the written accounts available to researchers. The value of oral history is that it complements existing historical information found in written sources.

The oral histories contained in these volumes are recollections of present and former residents of Lāna'i Ranch. Although these interviewees vary in age and background, their collective experiences supply researchers with three categories of historical information: 1) heretofore undocumented information on ranch practices and personnel, various agricultural activities, the Lāna'i-Lahaina link, etc.; 2) first-hand information which supplement existing sources on historical developments, such as the changing of ranch managers, the construction of Lāna'i City, World War II, unionization, and the ranch's closure in 1951; and 3) personal descriptions of island lifestyles, such as food gathering and preparation, medical practices, school and church attendance, and family and community activities.

1. New information not found in available sources. The interviews contain detailed accounts of the day-to-day work and lifestyles of ranch cowboys, and their spouses and children. Among the list of interviewees are Ernest Richardson, ranch cowboy from 1926 to 1951, his wife Rebecca Kaopuiki Richardson, whose family lived and worked in the beach areas of Kahalepalaoa, Ka'a, and Keōmuku before moving up to Kō'eale, two daughters, Mary Ellen Nakoa and Charlotte Holsomback, and son Clarence Richardson. Each family member recalled ranch life from different perspectives: Ernest as a cowboy and provider, Rebecca as mother, cook, laundress and keeper of the family home, Mary Ellen and Charlotte as helpers in the home, and Clarence, the youngest of seven children, as the little boy who became the ranch manager's "pet."

Agricultural activities described in the interviews range from Violet Gay helping her father, Charles Gay, grow pineapples commercially prior to Hawaiian Pineapple Company's purchase of Lāna'i, to many Keōmuku families growing watermelons for shipment and sale to Lahaina, Maui, to the growing of pumpkins and sweet potatoes for home use.

Also often mentioned in the interviews is the close relationship between the people of Lāna'i and Lahaina, Maui, mainly because of their proximity. Keōmuku residents made weekly boat trips to Lahaina, rather than riding horseback up to Kō'eale for supplies. Kō'eale residents, too, relied on supplies from Maui. Many Lāna'i residents were born in Lahaina and still had family members living there.

Interviewees were able to give us physical descriptions of the ranch in Kō'eale, i.e., the layout of the ranch homes, when and where buildings were moved and/or demolished, and the location of key structures such as the manager's home, the store/office, the stables, and the school. In 1937, ranch manager Ernest Vredenburg carried out a reorganization by bringing up workers' homes to the ranch from Miki, a camp for pineapple workers. This development, not mentioned in the written sources, was a significant event for many interviewees, as it established community-based laundry, toilet and bath facilities similar to those in Lāna'i City. They also recalled the introduction of electricity.

2. First-hand accounts of historical developments. Interviewees discuss historical developments and how these developments affected themselves and their families. The lives and accomplishments of Charles Gay, George Munro, and Ernest Vredenburg, as well as the effects changing regimes had on ranch workers and residents are related by many interviewees. For example, when Munro took over in 1911, cowboys were put to work planting hundreds of Norfolk Island pine trees. Munro the conservationist undertook this tree-planting policy to improve the groundwater supply. The trees today are enjoyed by Lāna'i's people and are considered landmarks.

The 1922 purchase of the island by Hawaiian Pineapple Company and the subsequent establishment of a pineapple plantation are historical developments remembered well by interviewees. For some, especially women and those attending school, the plantation provided better-paying jobs outside of the ranch. Others were affected by the many non-Hawaiians, particularly Japanese and Filipinos, who began coming to Lāna'i to live and work in the fields.

World War II also had an effect on the ranch people, as many were assigned special guard duty which replaced their regular ranch work.

The decline of Lāna'i Ranch following Hawaiian Pine's acquisition is

related by interviewees who had to move away from Keōmuku because ranch operations were closing in the beach areas. Many Keōmuku families had depended upon the ranch to supplement their family-oriented subsistence lifestyle. Some interviewees and their families left ranch employment for jobs with Hawaiian Pine. Still others left Lāna'i altogether for employment on O'ahu and Maui.

Finally, Castle & Cooke's decision to emphasize tourism by building the two hotels has been met with the bittersweet reactions of interviewees. While some see this change as a positive step toward diversifying the island's one-dimensional economy and as an incentive for the younger generation to remain on Lāna'i, others view the change as a threat to the island's fragile social and environmental balance. Some are apprehensive about a future when no one can leave their doors unlocked and the friendly exchange of greetings becomes nothing more than a practice of the past.

3. Personal accounts of the lifestyles of Lāna'i's people. This is oral history's strongest contribution to the project. The project's goal was to identify the people of Lāna'i Ranch, where they came from, what they did and how they lived on a physically-isolated island lacking in housing, water, transportation, store facilities, and medical services. The oral histories indicate abundant fishing waters and hunting lands enabled Lāna'i's native Hawaiians, particularly in the beach areas near Keōmuku, to maintain a near-subsistence lifestyle for a longer period of time than Hawaiians on other islands. Fishing practices and methods of preparing their catch are described at length in these transcripts.

The most common means of transportation on the island until the 1920s was by horseback. Since ranch operations prior to this time were located in both Keōmuku and Kō'ele, families established residences in both areas making the horseback ride between the two areas--about ten miles on hilly terrain--a regular necessity. Although the only store prior to 1924 was in Kō'ele, and after 1924 in Lāna'i City, Keōmuku residents chose to make the nine-mile boat trip across 'Au'au Channel to Lahaina, Maui for supplies such as food (especially poi), potable water (although many were content to drink the brackish water from the area's wells), and kerosene. A few residents owned boats and made regular commutes for other residents.

Medical services were limited to home remedies prior to 1924, with ranch managers Charles Gay and George Munro providing additional medical care. Patients requiring more immediate attention had to travel to Lahaina. After 1924, with the establishment of Lāna'i City, Hawaiian Pineapple Company built a hospital and clinic for employees and residents.

Cautionary Notes on Using Oral Histories

Historical propositions are only as valid as the evidence they are founded on. They may be supported by corroborative evidence, modified by new evidence, or rejected by negative evidence. Oral history interviews can support, modify, or reject historical propositions. These interviews, however, must be treated with great care. Although every effort has been made to verify statements, unverifiable and questionable statements may be found in these transcripts because oral history relies on memory, which is selective and at times inaccurate. Researchers using these transcripts must corroborate statements made by interviewees before quoting them as fact.

Other limitations relating to oral history concern this project in particular. The majority of the interviewees are children and grandchildren of the original ranch employees. Consequently, there are very few first-person recollections of ranch experiences dating back to the years prior to 1920. Some interviewees, however, were able to relate stories and experiences they had heard from their elders.

Furthermore, since the interviews cover only twentieth-century life on Lāna'i, there was very little tendency on the part of the interviewers to ask questions concerning archaeological sites and legends. When interviewees were asked questions relating to these two subjects in preliminary interviews, the responses were minimal; it was assumed that they knew little or chose to speak very little about these matters.

It is also unfortunate that very little information was collected regarding the administration of Lāna'i Ranch, since no former manager is still alive. Attempts were made to gain records from the public information office at Castle & Cooke, Inc., but we were told that none exist for the ranch.

Methodology

Shortly after Castle & Cooke, Inc. contacted COH about the proposed oral history project, a meeting was held between Castle & Cooke, Inc. officials, Don Hibbard, Director of the Hawai'i State Historic Preservation Office, and COH staffers Warren S. Nishimoto and Michi Kodama-Nishimoto. At that meeting, the focus and scope of the project were discussed. It was decided that the oral history interviews should be limited to Lāna'i Ranch and those areas of Lāna'i which had direct bearing on the ranch and its history (e.g., Keōmuku). It was felt that Lāna'i City, which was established in 1924 following Hawaiian Pineapple Company's 1922 purchase of the island, could be the subject of a separate oral history project in the future.

On June 10, 1987, another meeting was held. Ron Hedani of Castle & Cooke, Inc., James Kumagai and Tina DeJesus of M & E Pacific, an engineering firm overseeing the historical/archaeological component of Lāna'i's hotel development, Hibbard and Wendell Kam of the Hawai'i State Historic Preservation Office, Mina Morita, a former Lāna'i resident and the project's principal interviewer, and COH's Nishimoto and Kodama-Nishimoto were present. At this meeting, the focus, scope, goals and objectives of the project were agreed upon and finalized.

To gain a better understanding of Lāna'i, to identify historical events which affected the island, and to know what written records relating to Lāna'i and Lāna'i Ranch exist, COH researchers surveyed historical materials at the University of Hawai'i's Hamilton Library, the Hawai'i State Archives and private collections. (See chronology and bibliography). A photo search was also conducted at the Hawai'i State Archives, Bishop Museum, and private collections. Independent historian Carol Silva was contracted to conduct a survey of city directories to trace the movements of Lāna'i residents between the years 1890 and 1941.

COH Researcher/Interviewer Mina Morita, who was born in Lāna'i City and raised in Kō'e'ele, made several preliminary trips to Lāna'i to conduct background research, talk to residents about the project, and conduct preliminary interviews. From the thirty untaped preliminary interviews conducted, twenty-one interviewees were selected for taping. Those chosen were selected for their depth and variety of experiences on Lāna'i, their knowledge of Lāna'i Ranch, and their ability and willingness to articulate their experiences on tape for the historical record. The interviewees range in age from forty-nine to eighty-four. When interviewing first began, five members from one immediate family--Ernest and Rebecca Richardson and three of their children, Mary Ellen, Charlotte and Clarence--were interviewed. From that point on, it was decided that the final list of interviewees should reflect more family and ethnic diversity. The final list includes members of many prominent longtime ranch families: Abe, Cockett, Forbes, Gay, Kaopuiki, Kauila, Kauwenaole, Kwon, Munro, Nishimura, Richardson, and Sakamoto.

Interviewees were usually taped in one or two ninety-minute sessions apiece. No set questionnaire was used. Instead, interviewers went into each session with an outline of topics designed for whomever was being interviewed. This outline reflected the overall focus of the project which was the documentation of life experiences on Lāna'i Ranch.

The majority of the interviews were conducted by Morita. Morita, who is part-Hawaiian, is the hānai of ranch cowboy Ernest Richardson and Rebecca Richardson. Her parents, retired Lāna'i game warden Richard Morita, Sr., and Anita Morita, moved from Moloka'i to the Kō'e'ele area in 1952. Her knowledge of and rapport with the Lāna'i community were

invaluable to this project. COH Director Warren Nishimoto conducted interviews with former Lāna'i Ranch residents now living on O'ahu and Maui. In some instances, Morita and Nishimoto conducted interviews together. COH Research Associate Michi Kodama-Nishimoto, a fluent Japanese speaker, conducted the interview with picture bride Tama Nishimura. Nishimura's interview was then translated into English.

After being transcribed almost verbatim, each interview was checked by reviewing the transcriptions against the audio tape. Then, after slight editing, the transcripts were given to each interviewee for their review and approval. Legal agreements were then secured. The interviewees' changes were then incorporated into the transcripts, and the transcripts again edited and checked for accuracy. At each stage, names and dates were checked carefully.

Points of Clarification

Readers should be aware of a few potentially confusing points found in the transcripts.

Whenever interviewees refer to "the city," they mean Lāna'i City. Whenever Keōmuku residents say they "moved up," they most likely mean moved to Kō'eale or Lāna'i City, which are located in the upland central portion of the island (see map).

Lāna'i place names are spelled according to Pukui, Elbert and Mookini's Place Names of Hawaii,⁴ which has been used as a guide to past COH projects. However, if a place name is not found in Pukui et al., Larry Kimura's unpublished study⁵ was consulted. In instances where Pukui et al. and Kimura disagreed on a spelling, Pukui et al. was used, with the exception being "Kahalepalaoa," which Pukui et al. list as "Halepalaoa." Since all our interviewees call the area "Kahalepalaoa," we decided to use Kimura's orthography.

COH has decided not to include diacritical marks in the spelling of Hawaiian proper names, such as Kaopuiki and Kahoohalahala, because there is no reference to consult and most interviewees are not certain about the correct placement of diacritical marks.

Readers should also be aware that Keōmuku School teacher Mary Kauhane also went by Mary Donlin, Mary Fitzsimmons, and Mary Kauila. These four names are mentioned throughout the transcripts; the use of any one name by an interviewee was dependent upon his/her recall.

The schools in Pālāwai, Kō'eale, and Lāna'i City underwent changes in name and location. The schools had their start around 1904 when Charles Gay started Pālāwai School, a one-room schoolhouse for his own children

Island of Lānaʻi





Kō'ele Ranch, ca. 1930. Map based on information from interviewees. (Map not drawn to scale.) Redrawn and adapted from Kaschko, Michael W., *Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey and Preliminary Subsurface Testing of the Koele Hotel Project Area, Island of Lanai, Hawaii*, figure 2.

and children of ranch employees. The school building was moved nearer to Kō'ele around 1912, to the approximate site of the present seventh green of the Cavendish Golf Course. This school is identified as Kō'ele School in the transcripts. In 1927, Hawaiian Pineapple Company built a two-building school, named Kō'ele Grammar School, which was located at the approximate site of the clubhouse of the Cavendish Golf Course. In 1937, Kō'ele Grammar School was moved to Lāna'i City and eventually named Lāna'i High and Elementary School.

Some mention should be made regarding the structures on the ranch, since interviewees talk about some of them in detail (see map). In 1926, Kō'ele was a community of more than thirty major buildings, including the huge, U-shaped ranch manager's home, the ranch office/store, stables, blacksmith shop, and workers' homes. In 1930, the Ka Lōkahi O Ka Mālamalama Ho'omana Na'auao O Hawai'i Church was erected at the ranch and used by ranch employees. Keōmuku residents went to Ka Lanakila O Ka Mālamalama Church and Charles Gay's Lāna'ihale Church. In 1952, after the ranch closed, the congregation of Ka Lanakila O Ka Mālamalama Church moved to a new location in Lāna'i City, Ka Lanakila O Ka Mālamalama Ho'omana O Ioredane Hou Church.

How to Use the Transcripts

This volume contains a glossary of all non-English and "pidgin" English words (which are underlined in the transcripts) and a detailed subject/name index. A biographical summary precedes each interviewee's transcript. This volume also includes a map of Lāna'i, a map of the Kō'ele area compiled with the help of interviewees, a chronology of historical events relating to Lāna'i Ranch, and a bibliography of written sources consulted.

All interviewees were encouraged to read their transcripts and make any deletions or additions they considered necessary before signing the following legal release:

In order to preserve and make available the history of Hawai'i for present and future generations, I hereby give and grant to the University of Hawai'i Center for Oral History as a donation for such scholarly and educational purposes as the Center Director shall determine, all my rights, title, and interest to the following: tapes and edited transcripts of interviews recorded on (date), biographical data sheet completed (date), and notes of untaped interviews (date).

The transcripts represent statements that interviewees wish to leave for the public record. The majority are almost verbatim from the actual taped interviews.

Some interviewees made grammatical or syntactic changes in their transcripts. Others attached additions or explanations. Interviewee additions are in parentheses ().

Minor editing for clarity was done by the COH staff. The flavor and authenticity of interviews were not compromised by this editing. Staff additions are in brackets [].

A three-dot ellipsis indicates an interruption; a four-dot ellipsis indicates a trail-off by a speaker. Three dashes indicate false starts.

Audiotape and Transcript Availability

While these transcripts represent the primary documents for archival and research purposes, audio cassettes are available for listening at Hamilton Library's Hawaiian and Pacific Collection, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Researchers should use the tapes only as supplements to the transcripts, since interviewee and staff additions and deletions were not made on the tape.

The identification number, assigned to each audio cassette and transcript, indicates project number, cassette number, session number and year of interview, in sequence. For example, Tape No. 16-5-1-88 identifies project number 16, cassette number 5, the first recorded interview session, and the year, 1988.

Lāna'i Ranch: The People of Kō'ele and Keōmuku, and other COH publications are available at:

Hawai'i

Hawai'i Public Library (Hilo)
Hawai'i Community College
Library
University of Hawai'i at Hilo
Library
Kealahakua Community Library

Kaua'i

Līhu'e Public Library
Kaua'i Community College Library

Lāna'i

Lāna'i Public and School Library

Maui

Maui Public Library (Wailuku)
Maui Community College Library

Moloka'i

Moloka'i Public Library

O'ahu

Bishop Museum Library
Hawai'i State Library
Kāimukī Public Library
Kāne'ohe Public Library
Pearl City Public Library
Honolulu Community College Library
Kapi'olani Community College Library
Leeward Community College Library
Windward Community College Library
University of Hawai'i at Manoa:
Hamilton Library
Sinclair Library
Center for Oral History
Social Science Research Institute
Ethnic Studies Program
Hawai'i State Archives
Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture
and the Arts
Hawai'i State Department of Land and
Natural Resources

COH's publications include:

Transcript Collections

Waialua and Hale'iwa: The People Tell Their Story (1977)
Life Histories of Native Hawaiians (1978)
Remembering Kaka'ako: 1910-1950 (1978)
Waipi'o: Māno Wai (Source of Life) (1978)
The 1924 Filipino Strike on Kaua'i (1979)
Women Workers in Hawai'i's Pineapple Industry (1979)
Stores and Storekeepers of Pā'ia and Pu'unēnē, Maui (1980)
A Social History of Kona (1981)
Five Life Histories (1983)
Kalihi: Place of Transition (1984)
Waikīkī, 1910-1985: Oral Histories (1985)
Perspectives on Hawai'i's Statehood (1986)
Kōloa: An Oral History of a Kaua'i Community (1988)

Books

Uchinanchu: A History of Okinawans in Hawai'i (1981)
Hanahana: An Oral History Anthology of Hawai'i's Working People (1984)
How To Do Oral History (Second Edition, Revised 1989)

Finding Aids

Catalog of Oral History Collections in Hawai'i (1982)
Catalog of the ESOHP Collection, 1976-1984 (1984)
Master Index to the ESOHP Interviews, 1976-1983 (1984)

The staff of the Center for Oral History, Social Science Research Institute, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa believes that researching, recording and disseminating the experiences of Hawai'i's people will stimulate further research and foster a better understanding of our Islands' history.

COH is solely responsible for any errors in representing or interpreting the statements of interviewees.

Honolulu, Hawaii
 July, 1989

NOTES

- ¹Letter from County of Maui Planning Department to Lāna'i Company, Inc., dated May 29, 1987.
- ²Michael W. Kashko, Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey and Preliminary Subsurface Testing of the Koele Hotel Project Area, Island of Lanai, Hawaii (Honolulu: International Archaeological Research Institute, Inc., 1986), 25.
- ³Hawaiian Pineapple Company eventually purchased a few hundred acres of kuleana land, making the company the owner of 98 percent of Lāna'i.
- ⁴Mary Kawena Pukui, Samuel H. Elbert, and Esther T. Mookini, Place Names of Hawai'i (Honolulu: The University Press of Hawai'i, 2nd ed., 1974).
- ⁵Larry L. Kimura and Joel Q. C. Lau, "Hawaiian Place Names of Lāna'i," Honolulu, 1982. Photocopy.