WAIMANU VALLEY ORAL HISTORY REPORT

prepared by

Kim Des Rochers

for the

Natural Area Reserve System
Department of Land and Natural Resources, State of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii

and

Sea Grant Extension Service, University of Hawaii at Manoa
Honolulu, Hawaii

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In 1976, Waimanu Valley was established as a National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) by the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Waimanu Valley lies on the windward (northeast) Hamakua Coast, between Pololu and Waipio Valleys, on the Big Island of Hawaii (see Fig. 1). The purpose of the 3,600 acre reserve is to protect physical, biological, archaeological, and cultural resources. Since 1988, Waimanu has been administered by the state of Hawaii's Department of Land and Natural Resources, Natural Area Reserve System (NARS). One of the functions and goals of NARS, as outlined in the Waimanu NERR Management Plan, is to develop an education program which will increase public awareness of estuarine ecosystems such as Waimanu Valley. An additional goal is to promote interest in and awareness of the reserve’s cultural and archaeological resources.

In 1989, the NARS requested the University of Hawaii Sea Grant Extension Service to conduct an oral history of Waimanu Valley. The primary purpose of the oral history project was to gather information on the social, economic, and subsistence activities in the valley during the earlier part of this century. A secondary aim of the project was to collect information on the valley’s natural history (e.g. the occurrence and distribution of plant and animals species; physiological processes such as changes in shoreline and stream flow, tsunamis). The topics covered in the interviews include the following:

- **Occupancy.** Number of people residing in Waimanu; dates of occupancy; family names of residents; location of house sites; number of houses; construction materials.
- **Travel.** Main purpose for travelling into Waimanu; frequency of trips into the valley; mode of travel; length of stay.

- **Ethnic composition.** Ethnic composition in the valley during the first part of this century.

- **Schools and churches.** Level of education available; number of children attending; language in which subjects were taught; number of churches and their denominations.

- **Legends, myths, and superstitions.** Places that were considered kapu or sacred; plants with spiritual, mystical, or medicinal powers; legends or stories of places, plants, and animals.

- **Agriculture.** Types of crops grown and location; varieties of kalo grown; types of domestic animals raised and kept.

- **Fishing.** Species of fish caught; methods and gear used; location and size of fish ponds; types of invertebrate caught and the methods used; types of limu found and collected.

- **Vegetation in and around Waimanu.** Native and exotic species of shrubs, trees, vines, epiphytes; height of trees.

- **Avifauna.** Native and exotic species of forest, sea, and water birds.

- **Mammals.** Sitings of Hawaiian bat, dolphins; exotics: pigs, mongoose, rats.

- **Beach and shoreline.** Condition of the surf throughout the year; size and shape of beach; height and width of rock berm; shark attacks.

The following is a list of the persons interviewed for the Waimanu Valley Oral History Project and their dates of occupancy in the valley:

**Eugene Burke** - Lived in Kukuihaele but visited Waimanu with his father on weekends, holidays, and summers during the late 1920s and early 1930s to tend taro patches and fishponds.
**Wilfred Mock Chew** - Leased 200 acres of land in Waimanu to raise pigs and cattle. Was in the valley when the 1946 tsunami struck.

**Samuel Mock Chew** - Brother of Wilfred. Helped raise pigs and cattle in the valley and currently raises taro in Waipio Valley.

**Lily Chong** - Born in Waipio but moved to Waimanu with her family in 1914. Stayed only three years.

**Bill Sproat** - Kohala Ditch Trail worker for 40 years from 1929 to 1969. Has travelled extensively in the Kohala Mountains and Hamakua Coast area.
METHODOLOGY

A literature search was conducted prior to interviewing. The following sources, institutions, and organizations were consulted: U.H. Hamilton Library, Pacific Collection; Bishop Museum Library and Map Room; Children's Mission Houses Museum; Hawaii State Library; Department of Land and Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Office; Hawaii Trail and Mountain Club; Hawaii County Planning Office; Lyman House Memorial Museum; Senior Citizens Nutrition Center, Honokaa; Imiola Church, Waimea; Honokaa, Kamuela, and Kohala Public Libraries.

Five individuals who once lived in Waimanu Valley were interviewed during the period from December 1989 to May 1990. Two of the interviewees live on Oahu and three live on the Big Island of Hawaii. The transcripts from these interviews are included in this report. The interviews were tape recorded, with each session lasting approximately 1 - 2 hours. Two of the interviews carried over into 2 sessions. Because of restrictions placed by the NARS program on the extent to which the project was publicized, only five persons were contacted and interviewed. The scope of this project was further limited by the fact that many of the original occupants of Waimanu Valley are no longer living or are difficult to track down since many years have elapsed (the last permanent resident left the valley in 1946).

Transcribing each tape-recorded interview took approximately 10 - 15 hours. After the interview was transcribed, a copy was sent to the interviewee for editing (e.g. for people and place names, facts, figures, etc.). Each interviewee was also encouraged to jot down any additional points that he or she could remember that would help to elaborate their story. The edited and corrected transcripts were sent
back to the interviewer who then input the necessary changes. The transcripts are nearly verbatim from the taped interviews. Minor editing was done by the interviewer at the request of the interviewees. Throughout the transcripts, additions made by the interviewer have been included in order to clarify certain words or comments. These are indicated by [ ].

Sea Grant Extension Service has encouraged the NARS to donate copies of the tapes and transcripts from the Waimanu interviews to the University of Hawaii Hamilton Library Pacific Collection which is the statewide depository for oral history materials¹. This would assure the preservation and accessibility of these materials for present and future generations of Hawaiians.

1. Sea Grant has also informed the NARS that before the transcripts can be turned over to the University of Hawaii Hamilton Library, NARS must obtain approval from each of the interviewees in the form of a signature on a legal agreement form. NARS has been provided with a sample legal waiver form used by the University of Hawaii.
EARLY HISTORY OF WAIMANU VALLEY

The earliest written reference to Waimanu is by Captain James Cook. Cook's ships passed within a half-mile of Waipio and Waimanu Valleys on December 7, 1778 but did not land. The next reference to Waimanu comes half a century later, in 1823, by the missionary William Ellis. Ellis's account of Waimanu Valley mentions the presence of a chief, several villages, and approximately 200 inhabitants (Ellis, 1979:265-271). Ellis, like many observers after him, remarked on the physical similarities between Waimanu and Waipio. Ellis also noted the chief of Waimanu and a number of his men loading sandalwood on board the governor's sloop at the mouth of Waimanu Bay. Ellis also gives interesting descriptions of the decorating of calabashes and the various uses of the kukui nut by the inhabitants.

Another missionary, Lorenzo Lyons, made several trips into Waimanu Valley while he was posted at Waimea Station on the opposite side of the Kohala Mountains. Lyons is reported to have descended the pali by ropes in order to preach to the people there. Most of what Lyons wrote dealt specifically with church affairs although his records do give some indication of the population of the valley which, during his time, was approximately 200.

Perhaps one of the more colorful descriptions of Waimanu Valley comes from Isabella Bird who spent two days there in 1873. Bird offers the following description of the vegetation and natural beauty of the area as well as the trail she travelled by horseback from Waipio:

"The pali [cliff] is as nearly perpendicular as it can be. Not a bush or fern, hardly a tuft of any green thing, clothes its bare scathed sides. It terminates precipitously on the sea at a height of 2000 feet. Up this shelving wall...from thirty to forty-six inches broad, goes in great swinging zigzags...altogether the most frightful track that imagination can conceive." (Bird, 1986:235)
Bird also remarked on the presence of a church and schoolhouse in the valley and observed the following activities which at the time, were commonplace events in Waimanu:

"I am sitting at the door of a grass lodge, at the end of all things, for no one can pass further by land than this huge lonely cleft. About thirty natives are sitting about me, all staring, laughing, chattering, and I am the only white person in the region. We have all had a meal, sitting round a large calabash of poi and fowl, which was killed in my honour, and roasted in one of their stone ovens. I have forgotten my knife, and have had to help myself after the primitive fashion of aborigines, not without some fear, for some of them I am sure are in an advanced stage of leprosy...One man is making fishing lines of a beautifully white and marvelously tenacious fibre, obtained from an Hawaiian 'flax' plant (possibly *Urtica argentea*), very different from the New Zealand *Phormium tenax*. Nearly all the people of the valley are outside, having come to see the *wahine haole*: only one white woman, and she a resident of Hawaii, having been seen in Waimanu before." (Bird, 1986:229)

"I wish I could sketch this picturesque scene. In the verandah, which is formed of mats, two handsome youths, and five women in green, red, and orange chemises, all with *leis* of ferns round their hair, are reclining on the ground. Outside of this there is a pavement of large lava stones, and groups in all colours, wreathed and garlanded, including some disfigured old people, crouching in red and yellow blankets, are sitting and lying there. Some are fondling small dogs; and a number of large ones [dogs], with a whole tribe of amicable cats, are picking bones. Surf-boards, paddles, saddles, lassos, spurs, gear, and bundles of *ti* leaves are lying about." (Bird, 1986:230-231)

"An old man, clothed only with his dark skin, was pounding baked *kalo* for *poi*, in front of the house: a woman with flowers in her hair...wading up to her waist in the river, pushed before her a light trumpet-shaped basket used for catching shrimps." (Bird, 1986:238)

At the time of her visit, Isabella Bird estimated the population of Waimanu to be 117 (Bird, 1986). In pre-contact times, Waimanu was second only to Waipio as a wetland taro-producing valley. In fact, the entire floor of the main valley was completely covered with taro patches which possibly supported a much higher pre-contact population than was noted by Ellis, Lyons, or Bird. Bird claims she was told
that the valley had 2,000 occupants just forty years earlier. She says that the "estimate is probably not an excessive one, for nearly the whole valley is suitable for the culture of kalo, and a square mile of kalo will feed 15,000 natives for a year." (Bird, 1986:246). Archaeologist, Ross Cordy (n.d.), estimates that Waimanu's population at contact was approximately 590. By the turn of the twentieth century, however, much of the valley had been abandoned, although a few Hawaiian and Chinese families still maintained homes near the shoreline where they grew kalo and rice. By the 1920s, a few families from nearby Waipio Valley and Kukuihaele intermittently visited Waimanu for days or months at a time, generally tending taro patches or fishponds.

Nearly all that is known about the early cultural history of Waimanu comes from the journals and writings of Ellis, Lyons, and Bird. Although these accounts are brief and often short on details, they nonetheless give an idea of what life in Waimanu was like 150 years ago.

The tsunami of 1946 destroyed all the remaining homes in Waimanu as well as the fields which were under cultivation. According to one study, the greatest height attained by the tsunami was 55 feet, near the mouth of Pololu Stream (Shepard et al; 1950). Today, the valley floor is a marsh supporting mostly exotic species of grass and bulrushes. Very little archaeological work has been conducted in Waimanu Valley. Five surveys have been conducted to date (Stokes, 1919; Hudson, 1932; Loo and Bonk, 1970; D.L.N.R., 1971; Barrera, 1976) and one is currently in progress. One of the first was by Alfred Hudson in 1932. Hudson identified three sites, one of which is possibly a fishing shrine. The next archaeological field work was undertaken by Loo and Bonk in 1970. Their survey, which concentrated primarily on the eastern side of the valley, listed ten sites. Barrera’s survey lists 23 sites, several of which had already been identified by previous archaeologists. Today, many of the archaeological sites are in poor to marginal condition owing to the 1946 tsunami and the water and soil which is constantly being washed down the steep pali.

Few written references to twentieth century Waimanu exist. The memories of individuals who have been in some way connected with the valley over the years are the best sources of information. A major goal of this oral history project has been to interview those persons who once lived in the valley or have some knowledge of
memories and experiences of these individuals follows this section in a series of transcripts from tape-recorded interviews.
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Fig. 1. Island of Hawaii.
Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. 1989
Waimanu NERR Management Plan.

Fig. 2. Waimanu Valley NERR.
Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. 1989
Waimanu NERR Management Plan.
III. 1. Wai'ilikahi Falls, Waimanu Valley.
Photo: Anne Orcutt, Sea Grant Extension Service, University of Hawaii.

III. 2. Waimanu Valley and Stream.
Photo: Anne Orcutt, Sea Grant Extension Service, University of Hawaii.
Fig. 3. Tax Map Key #3-1250, Waimanu Valley.
Biographical Summary for Eugene K. Burke

Eugene K. Burke was born in Kukuihaele, Hawaii in 1917 (?). Eugene is mostly Hawaiian with some Irish background. His mother and grandmother, who were pure Hawaiian, came from Waipio Valley. Eugene’s father, Solomon Burke, was part Hawaiian, part Irish and was a forest ranger for the Department of Forestry during the earlier part of this century. Eugene’s father had a lease through the Hawaiian Homes Commission and during the late 1920s and early 1930s while a young boy, Eugene and his father made numerous trips into Waimanu. These trips were made on weekends, holidays, and over the summer in order to plant trees along the Muliwai Trail and tend taro patches in Valley. There were no permanent residents in Waimanu at that time.

The last time Eugene was in Waimanu was during the 1970s when he was Chief Fish and Wildlife Conservation Officer for the State. Eugene is now retired and lives with his wife in Alea on Oahu.
[We begin the interview by looking at some photographs I brought of my November trip into Waimanu. I start with a picture of a basalt rock platform and ask Eugene if it is an old Hawaiian structure or if it's of more recent construction.]

EB: No. They are old Hawaiian platforms.

KD: Did people ever use them for anything more recently that you know of?

EB: Well, from what I know from visiting the valley, some of these were platforms for homes. Because when the heavy rains came...and then the almost flood-like conditions in the valley...[this necessitated the homes being constructed above ground]. Because if they were down at ground level, then it would be dangerous.

KD: So people would build directly on top of the old Hawaiian platforms.

EB: They would have these platforms for homes as well as for other conditions where they would need to keep above [ground]. But generally, depending on how large the structure would be, where the homesite would be, there would also be areas that they would build for other purposes.

KD: So the homes that they put on there, what were they made out of?

EB: What would normally be the kind of structures in the old days of course, were grass huts.

KD: So when you say the "old days", what time period are we talking?

EB: Well that would be pre...

KD: Pre haole?

EB: Pre-haole yes. Like when missionaries like Ellis...during the time that he visited. From what I learned along the way was that although there was quite a large population of Hawaiians in the valley. I don't know what the actual count was like in those days, but, talking among people who lived there way back, they speak in terms of having quite a large population. The number, I just can't say. And many of them that lived in Waimanu, also lived in Waipio.
KD: Oh, so they moved back and forth.

EB: It was more or less commuting back and forth. By canoe would be the most logical...the route by canoe from Waipio to Waimanu is rather short.

KD: It would be pretty fast, huh?

EB: Those who would use the foot trail, well, that's a hard way to go. Most of those who would do it would be the young people. The elders wouldn't take that kind of route, it would be too taxing for them.

KD: I found it pretty taxing!

EB: And especially in those days they didn't have the kind of tree cover along the trail like now. You've got a jungle of trees that makes the walking to the area much easier because these trees shade you. I think from my earliest recollection...I was about ten years old, nine years old...We would hike in from Kukuihaele to Waipio and then go over to Waimanu by foot trail because we being young, you know, we didn't mind it. We went along because it was full of fun. Although we didn't enjoy the first [part of the trail], going up from Waipio...it's pretty hard. But we also used mules and horses too. We may not ride these animals going up although some people would. But we would hang on to the horse's tail or the pummel of the saddle where the rope stretches back and then there would be four or five of us hanging on to the rope there and the horse would just go on up.

KD: Was it pretty scary?

EB: Well, we didn't notice that. We would stop by the end of the...for instance, one of the cuts that would go up this way [refers to the switch backs going up out of Waipio Valley], and at that point there, we would sit at the edge looking down at the pali at the ocean and then take a break and then walk. And of course, after you get to the top then you wonder how long it will take you to get to Waimanu. The number of gulches that you have to go through! And then, it was at about that time, in the late '20s [1920s], the Department of Agriculture and Forestry that Mr. Bill Bryan who was the state forester then worked for the Department of Forestry as a forest ranger. So, being that he [dad] was very familiar with Waipio, Waimanu, and the trail and all, he was more or less an ideal person for that kind of job. Mr Bryan would send over a lot of trees, young sapling trees for planting and my dad would have one or two workers along with him pack these trees on horse backs or mule backs and take them up and plant along...

KD: Along the trail?

EB: Well, they would spread them out. Where the trail was, they planted off to the side. So if you look from Kukuihaele across Waipio to the pali above there are ironwood pines above there. They planted those. And all of the other big trees that you will find they planted those. And so it took that number of years for these to grow. Prior to that there was just grass and bush.
KD: I bet it was hot then.

EB: It would be very hot, and so commuting by canoes, was so much easier, you know from Waipio to go across.

KD: When I hiked in, I thought I saw koa. Is that possible?

EB: Well, my dad talked about koa and that these trees needed to be regenerated. But koa I'm sure it's coming back. I can't say for certain. But they brought in trees so that it would provide cover, you know, give you enough cover, and of course to prevent erosion. We as young kids, my brother and myself, would go along on weekends and help to plant these trees because we found it a lot of fun. We participated with my dad. We found pigs coming down and they would root up the areas you know, so they [his father and workers] would have to go and get rid of the wild pigs.

KD: So did you just go out and shoot them?

EB: Well, they gave us a sort of food you know. But they would come down during certain periods when it was dry up above, the pigs sort of then work down towards the trail. And they might eat some guava or if they found some ground they could put their noses in it and root around the trees that were planted, then needed to be tended. There were a number of times when we had to go back and replant these trees again [because of the pigs].

KD: So your dad then was doing all this tree planting back in the '20s, you say?

EB: The late '20s and, I believe, the early '30s.

KD: Were people actually living in Waimanu at that time?

EB: I think there weren't any permanent residents during that period. There were those who didn't come out of the valley; the older ones just remained behind. Those who were from Waipio [originally] would go there [to Waipio] to live because of the need for schooling. Waipio would be the place to live. So the Hawaiians moved out [from Waimanu] to come to Waipio because of the need for schools for the children. But the older ones I'm sure remained and perhaps died there, you know. But during the time that we use to go over to Waimanu there were no permanent Hawaiians there. There were little areas like these [points to the tax map key. See Fig. 3] that were cleared out [and then] began to come back and trees were all over. My dad built a home right about here [indicates on topo map].

KD: On the Waipio side of the valley.

EB: Waipio side of the valley. So the trail would come down and end up down about here and then you'd walk along here [estuary]. My dad built a home here, right by this turn here.

KD: Right by the river mouth. That sounds nice.
EB: Again, it was using an old base [rock platform].

KD: There was an existing old Hawaiian platform.

EB: Right. But the home was I'd say from the stream it was up high enough so any big water coming down would not reach it unless the tidal conditions like 1946 would wipe the whole thing out. So he [Eugene's father] built a home here. And there was another home that was still, let's see [looks at map], one of these areas here, there was another home of wood. Wood yes. But there was an old home that we used to go to when we would do some work out in this area here, where we had...some of these like Pelfrey [see Fig. 3]. Pelfrey is one of the kuleana parcels they came in and bought out the kuleanas. Some of these kuleanas were...Some of these names, Kala is one of the old names, Kala.

KD: Some of these people simply had land there but they didn't actually live in Waimanu.

EB: Yes, some land and also in these areas, I believe it was in this area here...

KD: ...Next to Kala...

EB: A fishpond and taro patch was there.

KD: Oh, that's where that was.

EB: I'm sure in all of these [parcels or kuleanas] there were taro patches. Generally where the home would be, taro patches would be right below. So the people would just walk down and work their taro patches. Now this [the map] really just indicates the area, you know, the surveyed area. It doesn't show where these little taro patches were. But there were taro patches along here. Wherever these kuleanas would be, there would be taro patches. Because this is where they could get water from the little falls along here. It's like Waipio. Of course in Waipio, the taro patches are alongside of the main stream. And also, out where these little falls would be, they would also have taro patches. And it was identically the same with Waimanu. But when [people] vacated [Waimanu], then the guavas took over. Guavas would grow so quickly because the ground, with all that moisture and soft soil, guavas just took over. When we'd go over, we'd also come over and tend to the fishpond and the taro patches.

KD: So these, the ones that you tended, were they yours.

EB: No. It was like we could use it, you know. I think my dad had some arrangement made with...no one was living up there. This home that I just mentioned was just that. People came. The families I suppose. Generally it would be the men. Because they'd go in and do some fishing, pig hunting, things like that, and they would stay in that little house. But it was an old old home that was ready to topple on over. But we tended the
fishpond...we would clean it. Get all the grass and things out. There would be mullet, *anae*. It would be in the pond but I suspect it was around in this particular area here. And also the taro patches there. So we were able to utilize...my dad didn’t own it, but he knew the people and...what we actually did was we took care of it ‘cause my dad couldn’t see it go to waste, like all of the other places. He thought that if we could maintain it...taro was there, the fishpond, the mullet was there; we were able to make good use of it and take care of it. But those were the things that we did besides tree planting. But my dad had the Hawaiian Homes lease. There were people from Waipio and also from Kukuihaele that had horses and they would want to take the horses out and let them graze and so he utilized the usable land area...much of this was swamp. And also pigs. He brought in some pigs from the University of Hawaii and hoped that by introducing them in there, he’d be able to let them make free range. There were plenty of things for pigs to live on without having to feed them. Well, the wild pigs would come down and then mix in, and in time, there were no domestic pigs. They all went wild. But my dad felt "well, that’s ok. If whoever could use them, fine". But that was the last we heard about the pigs! We hoped we could have many of them around but they got mixed in with the wild pigs.

KD: About the fishpond. How big was it would you say?

EB: It wasn’t a large pond. I am visioning looking back...I would say...there may have been other fishponds around but this particular one, I would say perhaps not more than two acres. It wasn’t a large pond. Right adjacent to the fishpond would be the taro patches because the stream feeding into it would go into the taro patch and then into the fishpond.

KD: So, the walls of the fishpond, did they just use the big boulders?

EB: No. Well, the base they had some [boulders], but it was mostly dirt. What the Hawaiians would do, what we would do, when we reconstructed it, the pond area when it was overgrown, would be shovel down into the soft dirt and take it and pile it on the banks so that we’re building a mound on the rocks. So it was actually earth built and the grass would just grow on it and then it was packed down. But the base would be rocks. At any time it would be cleaned and the stream would feed into it. The taro patches were done the same way.

KD: Mostly mullet in the fishpond?

EB: Well, generally, that would be the best as far as the Hawaiians were concerned they would be the best eating. *Anae*. Of course, ‘*o’opu* would be commonly found in the stream. And also Hawaiian ‘*opae*. ‘*Opae kolo*. They have long pincers. They’re similar to the prawn but much smaller. And literally they’d be all over the stream. And then there was this, Hawaiians would say, *hihi*. It’s a shellfish that would cling onto the rocks in the river.

KD: *Hihiwai*?

1. According to *Fishes of Hawaii* by Tinker, 1978, *anae* is a particular growth form of mullet which is greater than 12" in length.
EB: *Hihiwai.* Some say hihiwai some say *hihi.* I guess hihi is short for *hihiwai.* And you’d find them all over the streams under the rocks.

KD: We didn’t see any when we were there. We did see a couple of different kinds of prawns, but I wasn’t sure what they were. One was a pretty good size prawn...

EB: Yes, some of them get quite large, but as I said, the ‘*opae kolo*’ was there at the time we were there...lots all over. And of course, the other ‘*opae*’ which is the smaller shrimp. They’re black...we’d cook them and dry them out and they’d be red.

KD: I love prawns. This house that you’ve been mentioning that was kind of in the same area as the fishpond, you say that was made out of wood. Is this wood they would have brought in from Waipio or...

EB: Brought it in by canoe. And in later years the use of wood to construct homes was introduced into Waipio and Waipio just grew and then similarly with Waimanu. At the time Waipio was put into a kind of *haole* use, you know. At that particular period of time as my dad taught me when we talked about it would be, that’s when all of this was also brought into Waimanu. Because the means by getting these planks of wood down to Waipio in those days was by, by horse or mule. They didn’t pack it down but they had more or less like a wooden sled. They put these two by fours or whatever on it and the horse or the mule would...there would be a lead one, and then there’d be a team of horses in the back to restrain. But that’s the way they brought all the materials down.

KD: That’s interesting.

EB: They’d put a number of wood or planks on and just paddle from Waipio over to Waimanu.

KD: What kind of wood was it usually, do you know?

EB: I would never be able to identify what kind but apparently the wood that they had in those days were rough cut unfinished, you know, because of the kind of use they would make of it. And after they got it there, they planed it. Planed it down and then used it to build. But of course I’m sure that the Hawaiians felt that they needed to have wood structures [rather] than grass. They’d have to go out and look for *pili* grass and so...but according to my dad a lot of them still had grass homes. Until the older people, you know, switched over to wood or died. One thing about grass homes...in those days, I suppose they got use to them...when it’s wet, and the sun beats down, and if the air has not cleaned the interior out clean, there’s a smell to it.

KD: Kind of damp?

EB: Damp, you know. I suppose you got to be used to that kind of...so wood became I’m sure, wood became the desired [building material]... but I noticed that there was one grass home structure that was still around.

KD: So you said that was *pili* grass [that they made the grass huts from]?
EB: They'd also use coconut and hala. But pili would be the best. But they made use of whatever.

KD: When you were talking about your house, you built a wood structure too?

EB: A wood structure uh, huh. And wood was brought in by canoe from Waipio. We'd come over on weekends and Easter vacation and Thanksgiving and summer. We lived in Kukuihaele, so we commuted back and forth. Either walked the trail or rode in, or by canoe, or if you can, you can also come along the shore.

KD: I was wondering about that.

EB: But it's somewhat treacherous if you did. Well, we've experienced it. I've gone through that because we'd go spearfishing along the coast you know to Waimanu and we'd have a string of fish along with us. But, that's for the younger guys. But you could walk easier if you walked from Waimanu to Laupahoehoe.

KD: Is there a better time of the year for doing that walk?

EB: Oh yes. During the summer. During the summer it would be the best time. Of course in those days we would have to depend on the moon phase for tide conditions.

KD: Oh, that's interesting! So you guys, so back then people probably were more in tune with noticing the tide and the moon, more so than they are now.

EB: Yes, yes. Oh today, I guess they don't have time for that, they just go. But we depended on tide conditions and looking at the moon phases and the time of the year otherwise, we'd never make it.

KD: The spearfishing, that sounds pretty exciting.

EB: Well, way back when, when spearfishing was first introduced, we made it [the spear] out of bamboo...

KD: Oh, the handle?

EB: Yeah, yeah. And we'd get the rubber tubing from the automobile tire and cut a strip of rubber from the tube and then tied the one end of it and then string it back and then we'd get...well in those days we didn't have the kind of materials...we'd use heavy wire, fence wire, heavy fence wire, we'd straighten it out and then make a barb in the front and a notch in the back to fit it through the handle so that you had a sling.

KD: Oh, that's pretty ingenious.

EB: Well, I mean, it worked. The Hawaiians had of course their own way of spearfishing with harpoons. They'd walk along and...

KD: ...Just throw the spear?
EB: Yeah. But we changed that by using the sling kind. 'Cause when the Hawaiian found he could use the tube, the rubber from the tube from the automobile tire, they could devise that, you know.

KD: And you probably wouldn't lose your spear as often.

EB: Well, if you hit a big fish, you will lose it.

KD: When you swam around...when we were there, the surf was pretty rough...

EB: Yeah. Waipio and Waimanu would be identical in so far as your coast along there, in that you'll find rounded boulders there. When heavy seas would come in there and just roll these rocks right down and then roll them back up. At night we would be sleeping and we'd hear the rocks roll [back and forth when] the seas were heavy. Waipio would be the same thing. When the seas were heavy, these waves would get up onto the rocks and roll [them] down and then roll [them] back up again. And we could see the physical changes.

KD: Yes. So, is that beach, well, when we were there it was kind of narrow except at this far end [I'm pointing to a photograph of the beach at Waimanu] it was a bit wider but here it's real narrow and was mostly just big boulder heaps.

EB: Yeah. Out in this area, when I was there last the tide, the tidal wave that changed this whole part here. There would be boulders all along in here, and more along in here, along in here there'd be another strip of boulders, they'd just pile up, pile up here [pointing to map]. And of course it made it easier for the Hawaiians to come and pick them up and take them wherever they wanted to and so you will notice that some, many of these [boulders that were used to make platforms] are sort of rounded.

KD: Yes, that's true they were.

EB: They just go down to the beach and collect them. One hundred men just...

KD: Oh, so like a fire line from the beach, just pass them along...

EB: Yeah.

KD: So, were you around during the 1946 tsunami?

EB: No, no. Going back later, I was living here, not here [this particularly house in Aiea], but on Oahu. But after it was over and several years later I went back there again and I just looked at this whole change, this whole particular area [pointing to the Waipio side of the valley]. But there was this change primarily up in front here [towards mouth of valley]. Now, this is an interesting area if I may might mention [the area behind the Burke house in Waimanu as indicated on map]. The house...[EB is drawing his house plus "the interesting area" on the map]...Now back here, it was pretty interesting at that time, my dad pointed out to us that there were large square-like rocks. Not the rounded ones. They were more like they were rocks [that had been] treated or
worked on. All we found was one side of it, like this [still drawing a wall-like structure that was located some distance behind his house] and it was close to the pali. And over here was over grown with lantana and guava but these rocks were exposed and I believe there would be more beneath [those] what we could see. We saw about two tiers of these kinds of rocks. We didn’t go and try to excavate or anything. My dad mentioned something about that perhaps this rock formation was built as a more or less like a sacred burial kind of. He was [Eugene’s father] a little superstitious, you know, [and so he] did not want to go and deface it or do anything. You know, Hawaiians would say kapu. And he’d say we have to leave it as is. But he felt that when something like this was constructed, there must be a purpose. The only thing that he could think about would be as a burial [site]. When I was back, the ground base [of EB’s house that is] was still there. It’s still there.

KD: Oh, I’ll have to check that out next time.

EB: You’ll see the formation of rock there. But this tidal wave just wiped this whole area here; it was just like it dug this whole thing out [the area of the sacred burial structure] completely. When I got there I walked back to try to identify the place that I knew where it was and it was like a huge hand had just scooped everything and, you know, put it somewhere else. This area was just shallow. Of course, on this side here there’s...the movement of the tidal [wave], I don’t know what it did, but it sort of made a huge pile of rocks and of course hala trees were growing here and also in here but this particular area [sacred burial site] was completely gone. I walked along and thought jeez, strange. [If it had remained there, then it might have exposed more rocks.]

KD: More tiers of rocks maybe.

EB: More tiers. This whole thing just completely vanished. I was told for instance, the tidal condition came through Polulu then came down [the the valleys toward Waimanu] so that it wiped out all of this and came on over to Waipio.

KD: It must have been something else!

EB: Laupahoehoe on this side [Laupahoehoe iki], well there was a wooden structure, a home there that was abandoned and when we use to go into the valley we used to go out that way to Laupahoehoe and do some fishing in the stream and so on, and there’d be some goats up along the cliffs there, and we’d go goat hunting. But I’m sure that home, that wooden structure, was also wiped out. It was right along the beach there.

KD: Well, yeah, then it was a good thing no one was living in the valley then. Although, tell me, who was, do you know someone named Mock Chew?

EB: Mock Chew. Yeah.

KD: Someone was mentioning to me that he was in the valley, in Waimanu, at the time of it [tsunami].
EB: Right. I think Mock Chew, see, my dad had a lease through Hawaiian Homes back then, then late 20's and late 30's and when he wasn’t well, we left Kukuihaele. So the lease went to the Mock Chews.

KD: Oh, your lease, I see.

EB: Yeah, the Hawaiian Home lease went to Mock Chew. So the Mock Chews would be [quite] familiar with the time of that tidal wave. I’m sure they were using our old place. Which Mock Chew did you hear of?

KD: Well, I ...this was through someone else, I believe it was Sam, Samuel Mock Chew.

EB: Samuel Mock Chew. Must be one of the younger ones. The older, well, we’re related on the Hawaiian side. Their mother and their grandmother and my mother are from Waipio. In fact, in Waipio, they’re almost all related.

KD: So yeah, what is your background? You’re part Hawaiian...

EB: I’m mostly Hawaiian and Irish of course. My mother comes from Waipio she’s pure Hawaiian but my dad is part Hawaiian.

KD: Now, on those taro patches, how far back into the valley were people growing taro do you think?

EB: Well, we were in the valley for instance, you know, during that period of time there was nobody doing it. Yeah, no one. Other than when we would walk along, we would be able to identify these rocks. Well, the walls didn’t go out like this [EB points to the outlines of individual land parcels on the tax map key], these are just the survey marks, but wherever the homesite would be, it could be identified because of the rock. And generally, where these would be found, would be because it would be ideal for taro. That’s the only reason. Because they can grow taro and taro was the main staple, you know. Of course these people, they had to abandon...or they died off, or the kuleanas were sold out. So there are other names on here. I saw Cardoza somewhere... These individuals came in much much later and bought these kuleanas, they either bought ‘em or paid the taxes, you know. When the heirs could not be identified, then these parcels went up for...they’d have it in the [news] paper. So if the descendents did not come to the tax office to claim for it then it was sold at an auction or whatever. But that’s how many of these were handled. If they could not identify the heirs, and some of, perhaps some of the heirs were not aware, perhaps some of the heirs were not interested. So, these names here that are not Hawaiian are those who took advantage; either they were able to find the kuleana owner and made a proposition or, they went through the tax route. These were legitimate transactions. But you will find these non-Hawaiian names there, you know. And I’m sure that, well today, if any of these heirs, you know, for instance today would be interested, they would want to go back because Waimanu, I would think, is such a pristine kind of place that they would want to, you know, go back and identify, “that’s my kuleana”. But I think to me, the present position of this valley is so important. It [Waimanu] reminds me of Kalalau Valley on Kauai. They [helicopters] zoom over. I know the last visit that I made in there, there were a few places where people had come in to stay temporarily but the site that they used and the stuff that they
left behind was kind of disgusting. I thought, "my god why don't they take their stuff and wrap it up, get rid of it but don't leave it as". And it made me feel a little sad that to see that. But if your work is something that could help to preserve...you know, the use of the valley, I think some use should be made but I think it should be in a manner that would leave an impression of, an awareness of what we have, you know. Culturally, historically perhaps if you could talk about the valley etcetera. And then when people come in [there could be] someone that would be able to talk about the valley historically...but leave it as is, you know. We use to go out to this waterfall back here [Eugene looks at photo I have of Wai'ilikahi waterfall]. When it was raining we use to swim and we went out there and we went underneath that fall there and oh, was like tons of water there pouring down on you! We were like young kids, you know. we thought "Wow, beautiful". And this kind of enjoyment I would say that people who go there you know, should be able to try and enjoy. Get out there but leave it as is.

KD: Well, you know, I thought it'd be nice if some people who like you say, make it some kind of limited use. People could even if they wanted go back and still farm taro and stuff like that. And that would be an appropriate use.

EB: Oh yes!

KD: But I'm not sure if there are many people really interested in it.

EB: As I say, I think so today because... During the period that we were in the valley, I could sense the feeling of not wanting to go back, you know. Who wants to go back, I could sense it, but we who were able to enjoy, wished we would be there all the time, you know. I wish I could just go back here, you know [Waimanu]. Because we were able to use the land, use it wisely and kept it the way it was. Although you know, if you could control the growth of lantana and guava and things, fine, it's there. You just can't do anything about it but, if restoration could be done or whatever, fine, but leave it. If you go in, take your dirt with you. Whenever I talk with Gene [Eugene's son]..."oh dad I'm gonna go over and spend the week there". Yeah, yeah I tell him "make sure the guys in there take everything out again, you know."

[Tape turned over at this point. EB was saying something about how he was really interested when he heard about the Waimanu project because he had spent so much of his younger days there.]

EB: ...My ears would perk up because my younger years were spent in the valley and I enjoyed every bit of it.

KD: Gene mentioned something about awa growing in the back of the valley.

EB: Awa, right. And one of the places, one of the interesting things I told to Gene about was the Hawaiian pineapple. Let's see, maybe from this picture I could spot...before this fall here or back here. We found some Hawaiian pineapple. The stems were rather long and then the little pine thing...

KD: Are they little pineapples?
EB: Yeah, yeah. Little pineapple [EB indicates that it could fit inside one's palm]. And I told him about where you climb up there...At the time that we were there we would be able to pick them up and they were delicious!

KD: So, these would be several hundred feet up off the valley floor?

EB: Yes. You’d just walk way up there, you know and being young and agile, you know we just grab onto branches...but we were told "walk up there and find some pineapples!" so we’d take a walk up there and find them there.

KD: I wonder if they’re still there!?

EB: I’m sure because it’s...these plants were able to sustain themselves, you know, in that kind of heavy brush area and they were able to [grow well in direct] sunlight.

KD: It seems strange to grow them so high up, you know what I mean. It’d be a bit of work getting up there.

EB: This is the Kohala side. Now if you go back there some day perhaps, up along this pali, there’s a little waterfall that comes in, not too far from here right, I’d say maybe about two hundred yards or three hundred yards, there's sort of a slight plateau. There’s some Hawaiian banana growing there. And of course it’s quite a hike to get up there but we’d look up there and see those bunch of bananas and we’d want them. It wasn’t that they were a special banana, we could get bananas down below, but we’d walk up there because it was interesting to see them growing up there.

KD: Yeah, well next time, we’re thinking about going in again maybe in the early spring. Those forestry guys are talking about going in again sometime soon, so we thought well, maybe we’ll tag along with them again and this time go farther back in the valley. But yeah, I’d like to find some of these things you’ve been talking about like the pineapples.

EB: I told Gene, next time go back and you take your binoculars and you look and you can see the bananas. Now the pineapples, you will not be able to vision it, see it from down below. But if you know where it is it would be, then you can try to look for it. Those are the kinds of interesting things that we used to do.

KD: So did you explore much in the upper end of the valley?

EB: Oh yeah, we’d go all the way back in here. It’s miniature Waipio. The whole thing is like Waipio and it’s almost identical to that, you know way in the back and sheer pali around. And of course we’d only go back there when the weather was good and not clouded and we’d take a walk. We didn’t take anything for lunches because we had the trees, fruit trees. And we’d catch the ‘o’opu in the streams and hihiwai.

KD: How did you eat the ‘o’opu?

EB: Oh you could fry it, you could bask it on the fire.
KD: That sounds real good!

EB: Oh it is, I think it's one of the most delicious fresh water fish that I can think of.

KD: And how did you catch them?

EB: Ok. You could catch them by where the stream would be. They generally get themselves underneath these rocks. And we'd put our hands underneath and just feel it.

KD: You had to be fast then!

EB: Oh yeah. Well, the 'o'opu will tend to move in there [underneath the rock] hoping that whatever is disturbing them wouldn't get out and grab them. But they'd remain in there and just hold back. Another way we used to do it, we used to go catch them at night. Back around in this kind of area (points to large bend in the river on the map), where the bottom...at the bottom of the stream would be rather sandy. But we'd either walk or go by canoe. And then along the bank where it's shallow, on a dark night, we'd make little torch...

KD: Out of?

EB: Well...we'd have a say, a can a can so high and so wide [demonstrates with hands something the size of a large soup can] and we'd cut it open and we'd cut the bottom and open the top, cut the bottom and put another can of cream, you know, carnation cream and we'd put a can of that in the bottom and make a hole and put it in and then put the...what we used...we...in the cream punctured two holes and then like so, but we punctured a hole and put some cloth, cloth in it and kerosene. And then we'd put a handle to this can that we had. On a dark night we'd go 'o'opu torching. We wouldn't light the torch until we get to the 'o'opu area. And then we'd light it, and then we'd flatten a fork out [to later stab the 'o'opu with]. And then we'd walk along the shallow bank of sand. Now 'o'opu has a tendency of burying itself, bury itself in the sand, and only the two eyes are exposed. And once you are used to it, you will see these two eyes out of the sand. And then we'd use the fork and then...[demonstrates a sort of stabbing motion].

KD: Could you draw me a picture of this torch? I'm not quite sure still of how it looks. And what was with the cream, the carnation cream?

EB: Well the carnation, well you could use any kind of can so long as you take the top of the can off completely. The reason why I say carnation cream because you generally puncture two holes in the side so...when we devised this so called torch we then punctured a bigger hole in the middle and then we put kerosene in it.

KD: Oh, kerosene! I see.

EB: And then some cloth for like a wick.

KD: Oh, I see, I see what you’re saying.
EB: Now, this torch that we designed, made out of any can square or rectangular, we would open this part here [EB is sketching his torch on my notepad]. And we’d also open this top, swing this out. And this top will just open it up. If it’s too long we will just cut it off, cut part of it off. But we’d open this up and leave the sides on, then we’d construct, then we’d have a little hole in there and we’d put this can in there, in that hole. And then the back of this can we’d have a little handle, little handle here, and have this handle attached to the back of the can. So when the torch is done it’d look like this [points to his finished sketch of the torch]. The top would be open, the sides would be gone. There’s no top now. The sides are open half way like a wing and there’d be your can in the bottom. The light, you just hold it this way and it goes right down. And of course the handle is in the back here. That’s how we’d do it and that would get us as many as we’d find and take it home, take it back. And we’d clean and dry it. The little ones, we’d dry. The larger ones, of course we’d, the Hawaiians would say, "over the coals". And believe you me, the 'o'opu is the most tasteful freshwater fish.

KD: I don’t think we saw any.

EB: Well, it’s very difficult to see it.

KD: Like you say, they’re under the rocks.

EB: Under the rocks, yeah. But if you’re familiar...to locate the hihiwai, would be the same.

KD: How did you eat the hihiwai, just raw?

EB: Just boil it. It’s delicious. Just like opihi, you know.

KD: That’s really exciting! Did you ever fish in the stream?

EB: Uh, yeah, well, fishing, we’d stretch our nets.

KD: Oh, you had nets?

EB: We’d have nets. Or, we’d even bring throw nets. Throw nets along the coast. We’d throw net in the river too.

KD: Are these the nylon nets you’re talking about?

EB: In those days they were not nylon. Those were made out of cord. We didn’t have nylon then.

KD: Yeah, I guess that didn’t come out until the sixties or something.

EB: Yeah. And then of course pole fishing.

KD: A bamboo pole?
EB: Any pole. The 'o'opu would attach itself to the bait you know. Earthworms. Mullet of course, you would need to use a net for mullet. Unless you have a certain skill for mullet, you better have some skill. But netting would be the...either throw net or, or what do you say, gill?

KD: Gillnet, yes. What a fun way to grow up!

EB: I think so. Because when I look back I say...Gene of course, he would like to relive all of this. He's with the Division of Forestry Department. He has the fellas that get him out to work in the area, we talk about his visitations and what he does and all that. It gets him worked up, Gene, oh he wished we could go back there and all of that, you know. He tends to be more like I was, you know. My other son, "Oh that's fine dad, great, you had your day" you know. But he [Gene] called me one day and says, "Oh, I talked to this lady that came in and I told them to contact you". So I told him I'll wait for the call and then when I received your letter of course, I called him back and says, "well, they made contact".

KD: Well, we knew we wanted to talk with you immediately because there's this big gap of time between the twenties and now and nobody seems to know what was going on there, because no one was living in there as you say.

EB: Well, I don't know if you'd be able to get in touch with Sam Mock Chew.

KD: I'm not even sure where he's living. I don't have an address. Someone else told us that he had an unlisted number. I'm not even sure what island he's on. [Eugene suggests going to Kukuihaele and asking around.]

EB: So you could probably get from Sam Mock Chew...the story about up to the tidal [wave].

KD: I was also told or I read or maybe even your dad remembered this, rice growing. Was there rice growing at some time? Have you heard of that?

EB: Yes. Rice growing was...from what I've been told by my dad, that [there] was limited rice growing in Waimanu. Rice growing was mostly in Waipio. But they did raise a little rice in Waimanu. But my dad didn't go into it. I didn't see any, I didn't see any rice but I was more aware of the taro. But Waipio, rice was quite a farming there in Waipio. Rice and taro.

KD: What about coffee, was coffee ever grown there?

EB: Coffee was grown and they would grow it along like places...I'm sure, I don't know if you'll find some along in Waimanu...but it would be along the base of the pali. Waipio the same thing. It was generally along the base where they had these kuleanas.

KD: Did they grow the coffee there because...

EB: I'm sure that they made use of the coffee for family use. It was brought in for that purpose and they just grew it and they used it.
KD: Was it good?

EB: Yeah. It would dry out and then with a coffee grinder you know on the wall? And of course guava was so abundant to eat, they could make guava jam and jelly.

KD: What other kind of trees. I saw one or two breadfruit; were there many when you were there?

EB: Ulu. Ulu, yes. Ulu was grown. Whether or not not much of this has been lost to tidal wave, I can't say. But ulu yes was grown. And of course coconut too.

KD: Funny, 'cause you know, we saw very few coconuts, so maybe they have been wiped out.

EB: I'm sure they've been wiped out [by the tidal wave]. But ulu we could go and pick up ulu all over at that time. We'd have ulu with poi and we'd cook it like you'd have it like bread. It's great. Even hala, you know. But it's time consuming.

KD: Any mango back there?

EB: Yes. I think there weren't too many in Waimanu but in Waipio of course, mango are along the cliff area. But we have mangoes in Waimanu also. Not very much but they were. Bananas, yes. All over.

KD: So were the bananas closer to the houses?

EB: Closer to the houses, uh huh. What I mentioned about the bananas growing up there was that you're looking up and you see these bananas growing up there and you think "what are they doing there?"

KD: I didn't see many birds, although we saw heron and we saw a pair of Hawaiian hawks.

EB: Ah, you will find this yes. You will find the Hawaiian hawk there.

KD: Yeah. Beyond that, I don't think we saw any other birds.

EB: You would see the migratory ducks coming into the valley in Waimanu, into the stream. But they wouldn't remain too long there, I've noticed that. But they'd get over to Waipio very few of them would be found in the stream area, the migratories. But they would be over in Waipio. Prior to the tidal wave, Waipio there, towards the beach area there [was] more open water...that marshy kind of area like in Waimanu...well in Waipio it would be more open so that these migratory ducks get in and land in there. Waimanu was so dense the cover, you know, in the marsh area there, very few of them would go in the stream. But they wouldn't remain very long in Waimanu but did go over to Waimanu, I mean to Waipio. You'd find stilts, you'd even of course find plovers. And curlew. Curlew, yeah, you'd find curlew in there. Koloa, the koloa duck, yeah, you'd find very few. Oh, of course, Hawaiian bat you'll find there!
KD: Ah! Did Gene tell you about the bats that came into camp when we were there! We were just all sitting around by the campfire one night and two bats came right down on the ground.

EB: Yeah.

KD: So there were lots of bats when you were there?

EB: Right. I don’t know the habit of the bat, the Hawaiian bat. It was interesting when we used to observe them from the house there just before sunset, and then we’d look and we’d see these little black things, you know. We’d see them all along in here [Eugene points to the area around his house in Waimanu]. And during the day, we would be able to find them hanging underneath some of the logs [that] the waves would wash up on the rocks and we’d find them [the bats] hanging underneath these logs.

KD: Oh really! I always thought they were way up in trees...

EB: Well, they’ll probably be up in trees too. There’d be many of these logs and they’d just be hanging on.

KD: Did you ever try and catch them?

EB: Oh yeah, we just grabbed them on the neck there.

KD: That’s great. So, this was like you say, pretty dense in here [pointing to marsh area on map]. What was growing there when you were there? Palm grass or...?

EB: It was buffalo grass. Gosh it got up to about six feet.

KD: Yeah. ’Cause when we hiked, it was above me, and you could sort of stomp it down a bit but it was real, like you say, marshy underneath. So your dad has since died?

EB: Yes, yes.

KD: He must have had lots of stories about that area.

EB: Yes, because he...in his youth of course, he spent most of his youth out in that area Waimea, Waipio, and Kohala and so he was quite versed with these areas. I guess I was lucky to be able to grow up there at that time with those conditions and doing the things that I did, you know. Again, I would say that, if people would appreciate what we have, there’s so much that they can enjoy. Talking to you these things begin to come out.

[I explain to EB, that in talking with him, more of the pieces of Waimanu’s history begins to fall into place. I mention that with the exception of the accounts by Ellis, Bird, and Lyons, not much else is know about Waimanu during earlier times.]

EB: I’m sure that the number of people that they [Ellis, Bird, Lyons] saw in the valley must have been quite a large group of people. When I say large, maybe a thousand or
more, you know. But what happened to them, the years that have gone by, I'm sure that many of the younger ones left to go to Waipio because they need to go to school. And the older people perhaps remained and those that wanted to leave and get out of Waimanu left and those that didn't wish to leave, remained and they just stayed. When we were there, we would sit out at night and we would talk story about the way the Hawaiians lived before. And we would be talking about experiences that some of the Hawaiians would be relating; as to whether or not we would believe in what they used to experience in the valley of course, we would talk about akulele.

KD: I don't know what that means.

EB: Akulele is a flying god. Akua is a god and lele is a fly. And we'd be talking about this, generally we'd talk about it at night. And, of course some of these stories can be spine-tingling...at the time we'd experience that the akulele came in the direction of a certain home. Where it came from, no one knows. And they'd watch the akulele at night, like a shooting star, across the valley and towards the direction of a home. And then sometimes it reaches...the light would disappear...and to find that someone in that home, would become ill, because [of] the akulele that someone had sent across to that home. And this would be a bad omen. But this is more like story telling. I've never experienced it. But when we talked about it, it was because of experiences that someone in the family had seen this thing. And akulele...among the Hawaiians, whether it's Waimanu or Waipio, is accepted kind of, whether it's a feature or you know, or whether it's real or fiction or you know, that's how it is. Akulele. So if it is story telling, then it becomes a spine-tingling thing because everybody is sitting...If it comes over to your home, something could happen to some member of your family. We just hope they don't come around here!

KD: So you often sat around telling stories.

EB: Well you know, it's kind of a story telling kind of thing, you know. But if you speak to another Hawaiian, and ask, "Do you know anything about akulele?" if he says yes then he knows something about akulele. But if he doesn't, he say "Oh, what's akulele?" then he may not know. The people that we associate with, Waimanu, Waipio and even in Kohala for instance, then we find that akulele becomes a topic for story telling on dark nights.

KD: When you walked in, how long did that take you from Kukuihaele? Was that like two days?

EB: No, no. We would...like for instance if we were to go over for the weekend, after we'd get through with school, we'd leave home about say three o'clock in the afternoon and we'd pack whatever we needed to for the weekend, which wasn't very much, you know. A bag with your jacket and things, some rice, and some poi, and a few little items and then we'd walk...three o'clock we'd get into the valley about seven o'clock that night.

KD: Really?! You made some good time.

EB: Oh yes. We'd...funny thing is, going out to Waipio, going down the valley, we'd run going down from the top of Kukuihaele lookout, we'd just run down the valley. In those
days, boulders were on the road. And we’d run down the valley and then we’d cut across the stream, Waipio now, and then we’d just about run across the beach to the pali, and then we’d just walk and sit up there. We’d get up to the top maybe about four-thirty, we’d be on top of the other side. And then we’d take a little break you know. Then we’d continue on. After that, why going down...

KD: Yeah, it’s not so bad once you’re at the top, but still, that’s incredible time.

EB: We get down to Waimanu when it’s just about dark. The timing, during the summer the days are longer, so we’d generally do it during the summer and it’s much drier. We wouldn’t go when it’s raining because there’s a lot of mud. But we’d go during the Christmas holiday too. Some of these Christmas periods the weather is fine. And then we’d leave and come back Sunday afternoon, again the timing, about three o'clock, "ok let’s go". Plus if we go down from Kukuihaele to Waipio then we’d arrange with some of the people that we...some of our relatives that have canoes, then we’d go by canoe.

KD: Oh, really? So how long does that take from Waipio [by canoe]?

EB: From Waipio by canoe would...gosh...less than an hour. Depending on the sea conditions, you know.

KD: So, when was the last time then you were in the valley?

EB: Oh, let’s see, we flew in with...the deputy director of Land and Natural Resources, gosh I’d say about twelve, thirteen years ago. That was the last time. Flew in by helicopter.

KD: You get a whole different perspective of the valley when you go in that way.

EB: And then of course, we also walked to check on the trail areas we...[the] helicopter took us up and...the top of the third gulley, gulch, from Waipio, then we walked the trail back to Waimanu, to see the condition of the trail that the Forestry people would do. For maintenance purposes.

[I mention something about how when I hiked in there were a number of landslides on the Waimanu switchbacks. Eugene comments on this].

EB: That’s the only danger is when there’s landslides from heavy rains.

[I wrap up the interview by asking Eugene if I might be able to call or come by again if I have any further questions. Eugene also tells me he worked for DLNR (both on Oahu and the Big Island) at one time, and that prior to that he was with the police force on Oahu and prior to that he was on the Line Islands.]
[This interview was arranged so that I could follow up on several questions I had from the previous interview with Eugene. Eugene starts out by clarifying something he had mentioned the time before about the number of times he had gone spearfishing along the coast from Waipio and Waimanu.]

EB: Most of the time it was more or less fishing, doing things which...it was later about 1930 that...on one trip, most of our spear fishing in the breakwater area we did go on one trip along the coast at very low tide condition, where we'd say kaimaki. [EB is referring to an earlier interview when he told me about a spearfishing trip he took with friends. They went along the coast from Waipio to Waimanu.] Kaimaki means flat water. That's the only time we did it, but it was interesting. We were doing things around the area Waipio, Waimanu, and Kukuihaele. This is one of them and we enjoyed it.

KD: I think that's neat. Did you know then that there were tons of sharks in the Waimanu waters?

EB: Well, there's sharks all over. I think it depends as to the time of the year perhaps and if the coast is full of debris; things washing out, they attract sharks. But we were careful not to get ourselves [in such a situation]. The spear that I described was not Hawaiian made. Some individual or individuals introduced it a few years before our time. And it became a public fishing item. We caught a lot of fish. That's the reason why I mentioned spear fishing along there. We did it because the weather was just perfect and there were a number of us. And to me that was...that came back to my mind.

KD: I'm glad you told me about it.

EB: We just did a lot things in the stream, fishing and helped with the taro patches. And as we got a little older, and only two or three years makes a big difference; you become more daring and do things which as a younger person you wouldn't do. But so we did things like run up to "pineapple". And perhaps a name I should mention is Kala. I think the first time [we talked] I mentioned the name Kalo. But the name that I would be familiar with is Kala. When I talked with Wilfred, I said "Do you remember Solomon Kala and Joe Kala?" He said, "Yes." Those are the individuals that I'm familiar with in Waimanu Valley although they've passed away. Because of their more intimate knowledge of the Valley...the Kala people.

KD: So they were living there before the time that you were going in?
EB: Well, I think the family...

[there’s something wrong with the tape; it keeps skipping so that I miss parts of what’s being said. Frustrating!]

EB: That’s who we inherited the property from.

KD: Is that who you went in [Waimanu Valley] with most of the time?

EB: Well, there would be times when they would be in there or would be going in to Waimanu and we would know that so we would come over. They would be in for a week or so. So we knew of their presence in the valley so we would make contact with them.

KD: So, if they were going in and out of the valley, they must have had a little house or something.

EB: Well, you know the area that I mentioned about the kuleana [last interview]?

KD: Yeah...

EB: Where the taro patch was and the fish pond. Well the Kala home, house... Last time you asked if we owned the home and I said no we didn’t we had use of the area there. I should also mention that the fishpond which was outside the taro patch, I said well two, three acres [the size of the fishpond]. But it’s not that big. That’s an exaggeration.

KD: Well sometimes when you’re young, things seem bigger.

EB: So I’d say perhaps half an acre. It’s kind of a unique pond because it was outside of the taro patch. The young mullet would come through the various [stream channels] to get to where the pond was. They’d have to go past the grass barrier [EB is referring to the bullrush grass that grows on the valley bottom] but water would continue to flow through and the young mullet would come in so there was no need for us to go out and get the mullet to stock the pond. And as they grew and the pond area was kept clear they just grew big.

KD: How far back up the river was the pond?

EB: Up in this general area [EB points to a photograph. Pond is approximately 1/2 mile up valley.]

KD: So not so far.

EB: No it wasn’t too far and the fish could either go this way or that way [indicating several possible routes or channels for the fish to reach the pond.]

KD: So before “pineapple” was the fishpond.
EB: Oh yeah. "Pineapple" would be up farther.

KD: I'm sure the wave didn't destroy the fishpond. I'd like to try and find it.

EB: You may be able to find [it]. When we were there I tried to find it, but without a structure, that little house [the Kala house] I just couldn't pinpoint. Just mango trees...but there were areas here that I saw a stone wall. But it could be anywhere.

KD: But it was right down by the water [stream edge].

EB: Yeah, right.

KD: The house that you mentioned, who's house was that?

EB: That was the Kala house. And this is one of the places that we used to talk story. At that little house. And also at our house. Did you ask anyone else about akualele?

KD: Oh yeah. I asked Mock Chew and I asked Lily Chong. Each explained a little more about what they knew about it.

EB: I didn't see anything. But talking about it and listening, wow, it was exciting and spine tingling because you didn't want it coming to your house and somebody get sick and stuff like that. [I tell EB about MC's and Lily Chong's experience with akualele ]

KD: How many other houses were there? There was the Kala house but what about others even though no one may have been living there?

EB: There was one that was...there was a structure that I saw there.

KD: Was it on the beach or...

EB: No, it was just inside of the rocks.

KD: So across the river from your place.

EB: Yeah, across the river.

KD: No others.

EB: Well the Kala house...other houses must have been around because of the rock formations, but nothing that I could identify.

KD: Was this the only fishpond that you knew of?

EB: That's the only one I know of.
KD: Mock Chew thought there was another one up valley.

EB: Possibly. Because unless you were out to look for it...when we were there the one was enough to keep us busy so there was no time to...Now when my dad had the place, a lot of people brought in their horses. He let them bring their horses in to graze. One of my duties when I was a boy was to check where the horses were. I'd saddle up and I'd go with my brother, his name is Walter [he died just recently] he was a year older...you mentioned about pigs, he [Eugene’s father] had hopes that bringing in these pigs would roam the valley area...[the tape is really skipping around right now. hard to follow the conversation]. And one of our duties was checking where these pigs were. And pigs being the way they are they just go and go and you find their droppings but they go on. They were all over in the valley.

KD: Mock Chew was telling me that some of those pigs get pretty big.

EB: Yeah. See with the lease with the Hawaiian Homes [my father hoped] my brother or myself would one day go back. Which would have been fine but it just didn't happen.

KD: You flew in by helicopter once. When was that?

EB: I think it was 1977.

KD: Do you have any idea, I know you weren’t there when the wave hit, but how far back do you think the water went? Because when I asked Mock Chew he said well oh, it went back seven miles. But the valley doesn’t go back seven miles.

EB: Well again, when he says seven miles, he means way back.

[subject is changed to that of the river and how its course has changed over the years.]

EB: I could more or less say that the outlet, the mouth of the stream was more diagonal.

KD: You mean running alongside the coast.

EB: Well yeah, but not in here [not inside the rock berm]. I believe that the weather conditions, heavy seas, flooding conditions, [forced] the stream or the bends in the stream to change. And I’ve seen that. When we went there back in 1976, ’77, the mouth of the stream...there was a big bend back here [points to an area near the old Burke house]. Did you notice back here how the stream meandered? [EB is again pointing to a place near the river mouth on a photo.]

KD: Back here it just curved back more towards to center of the valley.

EB: Then the years that have gone by since we were in there, there have been changes.
KD: Oh, it curved in towards the pali. It did a little bit but not what like you’re indicating.

EB: There were times of the years when these rocks were shoved somewhere else.

KD: Oh. By the high surf.

EB: Right. And then it depends on how the current comes in and moves the rocks. There would sometimes be huge rock piles out there. And very little at the mouth. This would be all sand, black sand. So the physical changes along the beach do occur.

KD: I’m sure the wave, the tidal wave, really changed the course of the river. Next time, I’d really like to get further up valley.

EB: It would be interesting.

KD: Lily mentioned that going from Waipio to Waimanu, I think it’s the eighth gulch, she said something there is kapu. That you had to be real quiet when you went through this area and that it was real easy to get separated from people you’re with. Did you ever hear a story about this?

EB: Well, maybe I can add to it, a story like that. If you talk to Hawaiians that live in the Waipio or Waimanu area...if you were travelling on the trail, certain routes en route to your destination, this is where something could occur. Now, whether or not the eighth gulch is the designated area, you would have to be careful. Things could happen. People are very superstitious. I remember one of my trips over to Waimanu by horseback when I was about [unable to transcribe]. We had a Filippino man who took care of the place. When I got there, the following day, I went over on a Friday and by Saturday we went hunting. We got a big boar. The following day Sunday going back home, I took a portion of this pork in my sack. I left Waimanu a little late, it was about five o’clock in the afternoon. That’s pretty late. When I left the people they said, “Have a good trip!”. But in the back of my mind was the long journey on this trail. That thing bugged me. Then it began to get dark and I didn’t have any flashlight with me. It was just me and the horse but the horse was a very reliable horse, my horse. And I just let the bridle go and he took me home. But each bend that we made I hoped that the horse wouldn’t jump. This would be a sign, you know. But nothing happened, luckily. And when we got home I told my dad, I said, "Boy I was afraid I wouldn’t make it home." But if anything had happened...according to the way the Hawaiians believed, if you have pork and if you know that something could happen, you’re suppose to dispose of the pork. Because whoever is doing this, wants a piece of the pork. So you leave it there. But nothing happened in my case. The horse didn’t rear up. So in Lily’s case, that eighth gulch, I would respect what she said. So don’t take pork along!

KD: So would you have left all your pork if something had happened?
EB: Definitely. Definitely. If my horse had reared up and snorted I would have taken it off.

[I cross-check with Eugene about the location of his house and the gate. He indicates the exact place on the topo map.]

KD: So even during your time, you couldn’t really walk around the valley bottom because of the grass?

EB: Don’t even try it. You get into the marsh.

KD: What was the gate for?

EB: To keep the horses from going back up [the trail].

KD: So that was at the foot of the trail then?

EB: It was right at the foot of the trail coming down. And the house would be about 100 yards away from the gate.

[I mention to Eugene how the tidal wave had picked his old house up, with Wilfred and his father in it, took it out to sea and then deposited it next to the gate.]

EB: So, things are getting more interesting.

KD: Yeah. I’ll let you know what I find out on the Big Island. Did you ever go over here [I pointed to Laupahoehoe iki and nui on the map].

EB: Particularly the time kaimaki. And the waters were just perfect all along in here. There was a house here Laupahoehoe iki right around in here. There were a lot of Hawaiian artifacts in there. One time when we were there my dad said, "Leave everything alone. Don’t touch." There’s a lot of goat in this area. Opihi picking was good. And I'd take a throw net along.

KD: What kind of fish would you catch? Were you swimming through here or walking?

EB: Walking through. But when it’s rough you don’t want to try it. With fishing with throw net was the thing back then. Always with Kala, Solomon Kala. We’d get manini alot and anae. When we went over with Leibert Landgraft, we netted some mullet.

[Eugene talks some about the best time to be walking along the coast. He also warns about the pakalolo growers in the back of Waimanu valley.]

[We end the interview here. The interview was particularly short as Eugene had only had a busy schedule that morning. I mention to him about possibly going in by helicopter and he said he was definitely interested. Eugene also mentioned that when he flew into the valley with Landgraft, during the 1970s, he (Burke) was Chief]
Fish and Wildlife Conservation Officer for the state.]

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Biographical Summary for Wilfred Mock Chew

Wilfred Mock Chew was born in 1916 in Hilo, Hawaii. His parents and he moved to Waipio Valley when we was quite small. His father, Achew Mock Chew was 100% Chinese and his mother was part Hawaiian.

Wilfred attended elementary school in Waipio, junior high school in Kukuihaele, and high school in Honolulu at Kamehameha School. Wilfred moved back to the Big Island after high school and several years later, in 1935, leased 200 acres of land in Waimanu from the Hawaiian Homes Commission. No one else was living in Waimanu at the time he leased the parcel of land. Wilfred lived with his wife Stella in Waimanu for one year raising pigs and cattle. After that, they moved back to Waipio Valley but continued to keep pigs, horses, and cattle there. Wilfred paid a Filippino man to live in Waimanu and mind his animals for him; Wilfred made frequent trips from Waipio to Waimanu to check on the animals himself. Wilfred was in Waimanu when the 1946 tidal wave struck. After the wave destroyed his home and drowned his animals, he returned to Waipio and grew taro. In 1959 Wilfred moved to Honolulu where he is still living with his wife Stella.
Oral History Interview with:
Wilfred Mock Chew (MC)
Honolulu, Hawaii

January 24, 1990

Interviewer:
Kim Des Rochers (KD)
tape # 24-1-90-1

[I begin the interview by explaining the purpose of the interview and what the information will be used for].

KD: You mentioned on the phone that you lived in Waimanu. Were you born there?

MC: No. But I know something about Waimanu because there was some 200 acres I got from the Hawaiian Homes Commission. That’s the reason that I went there to stay.

KD: How old were you then when you began living in Waimanu?

MC: I think I was between 24 and 25, I started over there. I travelled from Waipio to Waimanu on horseback...had some cattle in Waimanu...raised cattle. I had 40 heads of cattle and 450 heads of pigs. That’s what I was doing over there with my wife. Go fishing over there.

KD: Did you fish right at the mouth or up in the stream?

MC: In the stream and along the shoreline.

KD: What kinds of fish were you catching?

MC: Moi, ulua, lots of ‘oi’o. You know, the kind of fish they make fish cake with? That’s the kind of fish. The other kind of fish is nenue, lots of them. Mullets...ohhhh...so much in the river. Prawns, too, yeah a lot of prawns. Go hunting too over there. Lots of pigs. The tidal wave struck Waimanu in the year 1946.

KD: And you were living in the valley at the time?

MC: Yeah. My dad and I.

KD: Where was your wife?

MC: She was in Hilo. We travelled to Waimanu from Waipio. We got to Waimanu about 5:30 in the evening, my 2 brothers [Samuel and Nelson] and I with my dad. Soon as we got to the valley, to Waimanu Valley, my brother told me "I’m going
home". [Mock Chew asks his brother] "Why?" He told me, "I have a funny kind of feeling in me because my horse always want to turn back." So I told him, "Well if you feel that way, you want to go home, you can go home". So he did. He's the guy that loves fishing. He never misses [an opportunity to go fishing]. Always, early in the morning, he wants to go fishing. That's what he does. But that day, when we got to Waimanu, he wanted to go home. So he left and went home, but I stayed with my dad. And we slept there and during the night...that night I was sleeping on the floor and early in the morning around 7:00 he came out and he woke me up, tell me, "Look outside, look outside at the ocean!" So I got up and looked outside at the ocean. From where the house is to the ocean is about 50 yards. When I looked outside I didn't see those big waves, you know, that come through all the time. It was so dry. I saw a big hole going down. The water was receding down. So dry that I could see fish, loads of fish, small ones and big ones that were stranded on the shoreline, on the sand. I wanted to go down to the beach and pick up some of the fish. And when I looked again a second time, I didn't see what I saw the first time. I saw water underneath coming up. Not from the outside coming in, but from underneath, coming up. And we stood there for a few seconds, and I saw the whole thing moved [the wave]. The whole thing [wave] moved from Waimanu going towards Waipio. It struck a big mountain [the pali], a mountain in the back of our home. And the water came back and struck my home with my dad, and took us out into the sea. Water was about chest high in the home. I was so scared. And my dad told me, "Don't get panicked, don't get panicked". We stayed like that for maybe a minute or more and then I saw, I think it was, the second wave that came. It took the house right up the valley. Going up forty or fifty feet high...and took the house right in the valley and...you see where you come into Waimanu from the trail coming down into the valley from Waipio to Waimanu, there's a gate over there because we didn't want the animals to go out from the place. That's why we set up a gate over there. When the house came inside with the wave, it took the house right by the gate. Maybe about fifty yards away from the gate and settled the house right there. I wanted to jump down at that time but I couldn't because the valley was loaded was flooded with water. The whole ocean was inside the valley, covered the whole valley. We stood there about 2 seconds or maybe 3 or 4 minutes and I could feel the house moving. I know another wave is coming. That's when I could jump down. With my dad, we struggled in the bushes and got to the gate and we stood there and my dad and I came back to the house again because I forgot something in the house. I went in the house and at the same time I looked outside at the ocean and the house turned, was turning to a different direction, the door went in the opposite direction facing the Kohala area, instead of Waipio and made it hard for me to come back...I saw a third wave coming so I jumped from the house and swam over to the gate. I stood there and then the third wave came to the house and smashed the house right into the side of...smashed the whole thing into the side of the mountain over there. That was the end of the house then we walked up the trail going up and looked down, I could see my animals going, drifting down in the ocean. Pigs - mothers, sows, and suckling all going down to the ocean, going down until I couldn't see any more. That's my experience in Waimanu.

KD: So what were you doing in Waimanu before the wave hit? Were you farming or...
MC: Raising pigs. Going out into the valley looking for food for them, the pigs. Papaya and guavas and breadfruit and I guess a certain kind of taro called api. It's for the pigs. We bring them down to the house and make a big imu and put the api inside there...and that's what we feed the pigs.

KD: How much taro were you growing?

MC: In Waimanu?

KD: Yeah.

MC: Oh, we didn’t raise any taro over there. But there was some patches from people who use to. Small ones, you know. That's what you see over there. And we see foundations too, home foundations. That's all. No homes. Patches way deep in the valley, guava patches. You can see that people use to, you know, raise taro over there. You can see those things. And there's a waterfall over there. That's where a plane crashed into that waterfall over there.

KD: Which waterfall is that exactly? Is it the first one on the right as you look up valley from the mouth?

MC: The first one on the right-hand side. Waihilau. The name of that fall is Waihilau.

[Interestingly, though, according to the U.S.G.S. topo map of the area, Waihilau fall is the third waterfall up the valley]

KD: When was the plane crash do you know?

MC: I don’t remember. There’s another crash later, not long ago at the end of the valley.

KD: You said you were 24 when you first started living in Waimanu...

[Mock Chew’s wife disagrees with the time of when Mock Chew first began living in Waimanu. The two of them figure that based on when they got married, 1935, it must have been around 1940 when they first went to Waimanu. According to the Hawaiian Homes Commission minutes dated March 30, 1984, Mock Chew acquired a 99-year pastoral homestead lease on January 14, 1935 in Waimanu Valley. This lease of 200 acres was acquired through a transfer. It could be then, that Mock Chew did not actually move into Waimanu until five years later in 1940.]

KD: 1940. So you weren't living in Waimanu in the '30s, then?

MC: No.

KD: You said yours was the only house in the valley. Wasn’t it kind of lonely or did you go back and forth to Waipio?
MC: Back and forth, back and forth [MC's wife agrees on this].

KD: How often would you go into Waipio?

MC: Once a month. By horseback.

MC's wife: Oh that was enough! [She talks some about the frightening ride by horseback to and from Waipio]

MC: From Waipio to Waimanu, there's 12 gulches. It has names for each gulch. The first gulch is Kalaniwahine. The second was is Lapehu. The third one is Kapua. Then the next one is Koho'opu'u, then the next one is Ka'awana, and the next one is Papala, next one is Kuku'ohilo, and the next one is Naluea, the other one is Pukoa. Those are the names. [3 names are missing].

KD: Is that starting from Waipio?

MC: Waipio going to Waimanu. And then from Waimanu going towards Kohala...I sometimes go up into that area to go hunting for wild pig. I went in by canoe several times and everytime I go, my canoe turns over because the waves are too big, rough.

KD: You mean just as you’re coming into Waimanu?

MC: Coming in and going out too.

KD: So after the tidal wave hit, did you try and build another house?

MC: No. I did not. Because uh...

MC’s wife: We lost everything!

MC: I could see the danger. I lost everything. We struggled to bring those animals from Waipio to Waimanu. For the cattle, we had to bring them during the night. Because the time, during the evening it’s better, because it's hot during the day, you know cattle. They can not stand the heat so we had to go during the night and it'd take us about 2 or 3 days to get to Waimanu. We had to rest along the way. Still, we lost some of the animals. Some even went down the gulch. And we had to have a good animal to be a leader. So we had a good milking cow that was easy to guide and the rest would follow.

KD: So that was quite a financial lost for you [referring to the loss of animals in the tsunami].

MC: Yeah. I had good breeds of hogs, too, from the University of Hawaii. Yeah, I got boars and sows from the University of Hawaii. Durac Jersey. That's a breed of hog. And Hamshie (you know, black with a white stripe around). I got some from the Parker Ranch, too. Berkshie. It’s a good breed. So, I lost all that a long time ago. When the tidal wave came and struck Waimanu and I lost all these
animals...some of them went into the valley and survived in the valley. And the wild ones from the mountain comes down and they inbreed. And you can see cross-breeds between these. And there's huge, really huge ones. And at one time I was lucky. I almost lost my life hunting.

KD: How's that?

MC: Because we were in the valley looking for pigs. And I told my friend not to let his dog go. Just hold onto his dog and we just go out and look. And when we see a good one, then we'll let the dog go. We went into the valley and I heard a bark. [MC is saying something here that I can't make out or remember]. Then I got to the place and I saw all my brothers and our friends they were all over at a tree. They said to me, "Be careful, be careful. There's a pig over there in the bushes." So I took my time and went over there and I saw this big boar in the bushes and he was looking at me. At the same time I was looking for a tree too. And I saw that big boar coming towards me, his eyes were on me. So I ran to a tree and my brother went for the same tree too. I couldn't go with him. And I start running. I start running and if the water was deep enough over there I would have dove in but I couldn't do nothing, I had to run beside the side of the stream. And I look in the back, that pig was about 6 yards away, still coming for me. Pig usually does not do that. It come at you one time, that's all. But this one followed me about 300 yards. And I came to the end of the trail and there was a mountain on the right-hand side of me, so what I did, I crossed a small stream and I fell face up. Then I knew the pig was coming for me...and when I looked up I could see was my dog. The dog that I told my friend not to let go. That dog was on the pig's ear. I had told my friend not to let that dog go, but that time that dog was there when I was in trouble. That dog was on the pig's ear. This was a huge one [pig] about 500 pound. So I got rid of that pig.

KD: Helped by the dog!

MC: Yeah. Dogs usually don't go for pig like that, so big. He usually go for 100 pound kind or 60 pound kind. I could tell that the dog liked me because I treat the dog good all the time. So he saved my life that day.

KD: Sounds like you had 2 close calls in Waimanu.

MC: And it's a spooky place too in Waimanu.

KD: Are there any scary stories or legends about Waimanu?

MC: I hear from my grandparents what the Hawaiians say, what they do. You can hear music, things like that. You can hear drums. From my childhood days I hear those stories from my grandparents and my mother. When we were staying in that area in Waimanu Valley my uncle told me, "If you want to go fishing for moi, the best time is full moon. Get your pole ready and watch for the moon and when it's ready, then you go." So that's what I did. I got my pole ready and stuck it underneath the house and then I watched for the moon, and when it came up, I told my wife, "Let's go now! It's time to go." So I went outside the house and when I
reached down for my pole, I heard drums. Drums. Big, loud like. Then the next thing I heard was music.

KD: Singing or...

MC: Singing. So I told my wife, "I forgot something in the house. Let's go, it's very important." So when we got into the house I closed the door and next door I closed it too. My wife asked me, "Why you closing the door?" I told her let's wait [to go fishing]. Let's go to sleep. Then I thought I heard something. So the next morning another person next to our room, one of our helpers, he asked us, "Did you folks hear anything last night? Did you hear music last night?" I asked him, "Did you hear?" And he say, "Oh yeah! I heard something!"

[I asked MC's wife if she had heard any of this?]

MC's wife: No. I didn't hear anything.

KD: So this music is by the old, the ancient Hawaiians?

MC: Yes. I believe so. From the house across the valley, you could hear music too [only the Mock Chews lived in Waimanu. There must have been an old abandoned house across the way from them.] Sounded like they were having a grand time.

KD: Now your house was on the Waipio side of the valley, right? Eugene Burke mentioned to me about a stone wall or some kind of a structure he thought might have been an old Hawaiian burial ground. Do you know anything about that?

MC: Right, right. It was near the shoreline.

KD: He [Burke] thought it was wiped out after the tidal wave. How far back [into the valley] did the wave go, do you know?

MC: Oh maybe fifteen miles about. Now I hear it's all swamp in there.

KD: So all the way to the headwall?

MC: Yes.

KD: Did your pigs pretty much wander all over the valley, or were they kept in enclosures?

MC: Yes. We had stone walls. And they usually come back every evening, they know if they're going to have food, they come back every time. They start increasing, increasing, you know, pigs, they increase so fast. In guava season they don't come home, you have to go out and bang with a can, then they come home. Otherwise they won't come out. So much to eat outside. So what I do is mark them in their ear. Punch holes in their ear, you know. Cut their ear and then castrate them. When the tidal wave came everything went.
KD: So then what did you do? Did you move out that very day.

MC: Oh yeah, we moved out. And when we came back, my dad and I, we went back to look at the place maybe 2 weeks afterwards. Nothing good over there any more. All that time we been staying there taking care of these cattle...we lost everything. How you going to market your animals. It's a problem there.

KD: So your period of time in Waimanu was about 5 or 6 years?

MC: Yeah, yeah.

KD: Do you know of any activities going on in the valley in the '20s or earlier. Were there any people living in the valley then?

MC: Oh, people were living there, yeah. A lot of houses over there. And they would come in towards Waipio. Bring their animals to Waipio. But when we went to Waimanu there weren't any more houses, except one started by Eugene Burke's father. That's the house we were living in when the place was transferred to me.

KD: Before you were living there in the early '40s, when was the last time somebody was permanently living in the valley?

MC: I think in the year 1926.

KD: What happened in 1926 or after that people were no longer living there?

MC: Some people goes there. Fishing, hunting, that's all. That's all I know about that place. I got that place from Hawaiian Homes Commission. Lots of trouble over there because when I'm absent from that place, people go over there in canoe. And they go in and hunt my pigs. Ohhh, I lost lot of pig from people over there. And I even had a court case also. The attorney told me to, "You just go in there and follow my instructions. You put signs all over the place and then watch for anybody going in there. So I did exactly what he told me and then I went back. I reported to him I saw them, I caught them, I talked to them in my home (?). I could see the pigs. They killed all in my place, on my porch.

KD: Where were those people coming from do you think?

MC: Same place where I lived. In Waipio Valley. So I couldn't do anything about it so what's the use? So that's why I changed and went in and grew taro in Waipio Valley. I have a problem because when I started with the Homes Commission they were executive officers. The first one was Wooley, the next one was Len Akana, the next one was David Brent, the other one was Abraham Pi'ianaia, and then the next one was...she died not too long ago. And now, they told me that I don't have half Hawaiian, you know. I don't have enough Hawaiian...

KD: Blood.
MC: I don’t know why, when they let me from the beginning. Why didn’t the next person tell me?

KD: Who finally said then that you didn’t have enough blood?

MC: Pettigan, the last one. But all those four before...

KD: ...didn’t seem to feel it was a problem? How much Hawaiian blood are you suppose to have?

MC: Half.

KD: And how much do you have?

MC: Well my mother is Hawaiian, but she’s mix. My father is 100% Chinese. So only on my mother’s side. My mother doesn’t carry enough Hawaiian. But her parents... Sam Liha? That’s my mother’s brother. He’s a composer of Hawaiian music. And you know that song Hihilawe? Yeah, he composed that song. But that’s my mother’s family. So my mother’s father is Thomas. John Thomas is my uncle...he just passed away. Jacob Thomas, Moses Thomas in Kukuihaele.

KD: I’ve heard of a Byron Thomas. Who would that be? [Byron Thomas is a name I got from the list of attendees who participated in the June 21, 1989 public hearing on Waimanu Valley].

MC: I don’t know.

KD: Maybe one of the sons.

MC: But they keeping on writing to me. They keep sending me letters.

KD: Hawaiian Homes Lands?

MC: Yeah, they keep sending me.

KD: Sending...what?

MC: Uh...

[MC pulls out a recent piece of correspondance from the Hawaiian Home Lands office. It is a form letter requesting his signature on an application for lease lands.]

KD: When were you first notified that you weren’t eligible for Hawaiian Home lands?

MC: About 2 years ago. They keep sending me these things. But I don’t know what I should do with them. I lost all my things over there [Waimanu]. They let me stay there but they keep sending me these things. Yeah, Sonny Kaniho he calls me.
KD: He sounds very nice. He told me he's coming over this way soon.

MC: Are you going up to the Big Island?

KD: Yes, I'm going there next week. I'm planning on talking with some folks in the Honokaa area about Waimanu. There's a Dr. Tomich there. Do you know him?

MC: No.

KD: Well, he knows a bit about Waimanu so I'll talk with him and some other folks who might be familiar with the area.

MC: All those people who used to live there long ago, they all passed away.

KD: Yeah, that's the problem. Do you know of any names of people who lived in the valley before you?

MC: Only those that have already passed away. John, and Joe and Robert...they all passed away already.

KD: All of them, huh? What was their last name?

MC: Kahele.

KD: Oh no! Robert Kahele is another person I wanted to talk with. He died, huh?

MC: The Kahele's and the Kala. They used to live in the valley.

KD: Were they living there before you in the 1920s?

MC: Yeah that's the time.

[I show Mock Chew photographs of my trip into Waimanu the previous November. I asked him about a place name but he didn't know the answer. I also asked him about the red algae growing in some of the areas of the estuary. He didn't remember any when he was in the valley. I tell MC that Burke mentioned something about pineapples or bananas growing on the Kohala side near the first stream. MC knew exactly what I was referring to. He said it's pineapple and that he use to get them a lot when he was in the valley. I asked him if the stone enclosures he used for his pigs were the ones that were already there. He said yes.]

MC: Were there any homes. Was anybody living there?

KD: No, well, no homes or anything. But there was one campsite where somebody had rigged up a bunch of tarps. And it looked like they had been there for a number of months. And then there was another tent that looked like they had been living there awhile too.

MC: On the trail, any houses?
KD: No, I didn't see any.

MC: When you were back in the valley did you see the gate? [MC is referring to a gate near his old place in Waimanu; the gate he mentions in his description of the tidal wave]

KD: No, I don't think I saw the gate. But then I was so tired from the hike in that I didn't see much by that point. So it's [the gate] right towards the bottom of the trail? I may have missed it or it maybe it's not there any more. It was a wooden gate?

MC: Yeah, wooden.

KD: I could have easily missed it because once we were in the valley, I hiked mostly along the Kohala side. I'll look for it next time I go.

MC: Did you go down to the beach?

KD: Yes. I walked along the beach.

MC's wife: Are you really going to go again next time?!

KD: Oh yeah. Next time we're talking about going by canoe or kayaks. But from what you say we better be careful.

MC: A lot of shark in there.

KD: Sharks? Maybe I won't be going by canoe then.

MC: It has to be good weather to canoe. You should go with somebody who knows how.

KD: I could see where it could be real dangerous.

MC: My brother has canoe. He go there all the time. I don't know now. He's good on a canoe. He lives in Kukuihaele.

KD: Oh he does? Are you two about the same age?

MC: He's younger.

KD: Did he go into Waimanu a lot?

MC: All the time. That's the one that came home [the night before the tidal wave].

KD: The smart one!
MC: He doesn't know how to swim. He likes to go fishing early in the morning. Six o'clock he's out there already.

KD: You're not a fisherman, huh?

MC: I like fishing but it's too cold, too early for me. But he really likes fishing with a pole. Looks at the calendar, they follow all that...high tide, low tide. Fish comes in the beginning of high tide, that's when they come in. Two guys I know who know fishing...when tide comes up they rush out.

KD: You were mentioning that the tidal wave had taken you out into the ocean. How far out had it taken you, do you think?

MC: From the house, where the house was, about a hundred yards outside. From the shoreline, maybe 25 feet out.

KD: So how did you get back in? You had to swim in?

MC: No, no. We stayed in the house. The wave brought the house back inland. They talk about 40 foot waves on Oahu...I don't know...this was higher than that. You know, I had about 10 dogs over there...all gone. All gone.

MC's wife: There was another wave that same day [it was actually the same wave but struck Hilo at a somewhat different time than Waimanu]. We lost our poi factory. We lost everything [she tells me about how she almost lost her daughter to the wave. She didn't let her daughter go to school that day because her mother [MC's mother] was coming over from Honolulu to visit. The daughter's school was located close to the water so that if she had gone to school as usual, she could easily have been killed by the wave.]

MC: So from Waimanu, when I left that place, we walked home, we walked all the way to Waipio Valley [MC refers to Waipio sometimes as "home" since that is where he was born] and from Waipio Valley to Kukuiahele where I had my car, and went to Hilo. I couldn't go to Waiakea town where my home was, where my poi factory was. The police told me, "You can not go in there until we let you know. And if you want to know where your family is try calling up the police station." That's what I did and they told me she was [wife], they found her and took her up to Volcano area.

KD: Volcano?

MC: I went up to that place and that's where I found her with my children. A Filipino man was in the area that day and told her, "Come in our truck". That's where she was. And when I went down to look at our place you could see only the foundation. Everything was all smashed. And the market where we use to deliver our poi everyday...it was about 300 yards away. Next thing I did was to go to my poi factory...all gone. And the next thing I went to look at a small super market over there where I delivered my poi. Then I went ot the building and I looked in the store and I saw all the shelves all gone down...canned goods all scattered over the
place. And way on the top shelf in the supermarket I looked, I saw something that belongs to me. When I went over there to pick it up, I saw my saxophone on the first shelf with my bible. That's all I saw. And I really believe in god. I know it's a message for me. And I love music too.

KD: Yeah, I was noticing an ukelele here [on the couch].

[MC digresses a bit and tells me a little about his music]

KD: Where did the poi come from? Waipio Valley?

MC: Waipio Valley. We raised taro.

KD: After the day of the tidal wave, when you walked back to Waipio Valley, you must have seen a lot of damage [from the wave] there.

MC: Oh yeah. I did see.

KD: Did anyone die in Wapio Valley [from the wave]?

MC: I don't think so. I know they struggled in the swamp in there. They almost couldn't make it but they got through. Robert Kahele, he was one of them. Because when the wave came into Waipio Valley, their homes were in the middle. So when the wave came, what they did the three of them [I'm assuming he's referring here to the three Kahele brothers] started running towards the Waimanu area. But they didn't get to the area, ya know, because the wave came in and hit the animals and took them all into the salt water. And when I came back I could see the swampy area all dark and black from the big wave that turned everything over.

KD: When did you move to Oahu?

MC: 1959. Then I go back and forth too, because I was raising taro over there [Waipio]. She [wife] wants to come to Honolulu to do something here so she was selling things on the street [a vendor].

[tape turned over. MC asks me if I saw anyone else while I was in Waimanu last November]

KD: All I saw was a young couple in their 30s or 40s with their two kids and that's all. But they were just hiking in for the day.

MC: Did you go over near the rocks on the shore area on the Kohala side?

KD: No, I didn't. I'd like to some other time though. It looks like you could do it if the tide was real low. Go around the point to Laupahoehoe iki I think it's called.

MC: No. I mean on land.

KD: Oh, no. We didn't go up.
MC: There's some mango trees over there. Pear and coconut over there. And oranges.

KD: Pear? That's unusual. This is once you get to the top or on the way up?

MC: Coming down the valley. From the trail coming down to the end and you go towards the ocean. There's the mouth of the river over there. You cross the mouth and you go Kohala way. And you turn and go up the right-hand side...that's where you see all those things. Mountain apple, rose apple [the yellow one], coconut, there'd be a lot of breadfruit and bananas over there. On the trail going home you see a lot of bananas.

[MC tells me a bit about the spirits that live in Waimanu.]

MC: We used to go into the valley and camp in the valley and then come home and talk story with people who used to live there. They ask us, "Where did you go? What area" Then they say to us, "Oh! Be careful because there's a road the place that you were camping that's the road, their trail. It's very dangerous." Because people they worship idols over there, they worship different things. That's why you hear music like that. But we didn't know we just go.

KD: Like me. But I didn't hear any music.

MC's wife: You don't want to hear music. It scares you.

MC: Oh yeah! There's another house there across the way. Leaning about 45°. And on the corner way on the top by the ceiling there was, what do you call it, gourd. They call it ʻulu in Hawaiian. Feathergod. And then when we first went there, there was another small building over there. A canoe house. Where they keep the canoes inside, I think. So that's where we were sleeping that night. And then I heard that thing going [feathergod] about one o'clock in the morning. Heard somebody dancing. That's the only time I heard that.

KD: This canoe house you said you camped in...that was on the Kohala side right?

MC: Kohala side, uh huh.

KD: That was from a long time ago?

MC: Long time ago.

KD: What was it made out of?

MC: Lumber. Wood. 1 X 12. Or maybe driftwood from the ocean.

KD: Was it thatched at all or did it have a wooden roof?
MC: Wooden roof. [long pause] I did something very stupid because when I start thinking now, you know... when I went there and I wanted to go fishing, see. And I wanted to go to a certain spot. So I built a raft. I went down to the shore and got logs, I got two logs, good ones. Nice sized ones. So I put two together and put a board across. Then I go get my set net, you know. I start pushing with a stick. But I didn't have anything good or solid to push the thing with. I had a redwood stick, you know, redwood is soft. [MC tells about a certain place he was trying to push the boat to. He said the area was real dark in the water and reddish too. The stick broke 'cause I was pushing so hard that I went down into the water. [MC talk again about the moi and 'oio].

KD: Did you ever see a fishpond?

MC: Oh yeah. We lost it in the tidal wave. From the ocean side going into the valley on the right-hand side, maybe about one mile from the shoreline to the area, the fishpond area. And you see a breadfruit tree over there.

KD: So the fishpond was one mile up the valley?

MC: On the Kohala side. [MC tell me about all the fruit trees and stone encloures in the valley. Coconut, breadfruit, mountain apple, mango. Also watercress, big leaf taro api. "I would put a pack saddle on and rig the pig tusks in a V-shape and carry the big taro home."

KD: How far back up the valley are the big leaf taro?

MC: Oh, maybe about 4 miles in.

KD: Oh. So, past the fish pond?

MC: Yeah, past that. You have to come to the pineapple area, the waterfall.

KD: How big was the fishpond in area?

MC: Maybe 100 X 50.

KD: Feet?

MC: Yeah. Oooh the mullet. Big ones. Big mullet. The baby mullet come from the ocean. So we make a trap, and when they come, they follow along the sides. That's the way they go. Not in the middle. They're always on the side. When you see enough of them you get some muslin. Big one. And you put one end in your mouth and hold the other side with one hand and you start scooping. You scoop like that and they're [baby mullet] inside there. You put them in a...don't put them in a can 'cause they'll die...you have to put them in a wooden crock. Sometimes, oh, 200, 300. My dad told me that long ago the people who live there [Waimanu] cut an opening to the pond so you didn't have to walk along the stream. And they'd become trapped in the pond, because the mullet, they like to come to the area 'cause of the spring water. That was long ago. That's what I heard. We use to have
a pig pond in Waipio too. But the wave came and filled it with sand. You can not do anything with it.

KD: How deep was the fishpond in Waimanu?

MC: Pretty deep.

KD: Over your head?

MC: No, no. Up to the chest [MC is about my height, so the pond would have been about four feet deep.] There was so many fish in there. Big ones. The last time I was in there we set a net inside and you can not catch them they’re too big. Because the size of the net is three inches.

KD: You mean the hole or the square of the net [i.e. mesh size]?

MC: Yeah, three inches. The fish just get stuck in there. The smaller ones just go through.

KD: What were those nets made out of back then? Now they have the nylon kind.

MC: Those days they were linen.

KD: So it seems like you have maybe mixed feelings about Waimanu in that it was nice when you where there but after the tidal wave...

MC: Um hmm. It’s very hard for anybody to go there and live, very hard. Transporting your things...Nobody wants to go in there. Those Waipio people they love hunting but because when you see signs, “Don’t go past this area”, you scared, you know. It’s a good place for those things to plant, too. They grow...I’ve seen those things [it took me awhile to figure out that MC was referring to the pot growing in the area]. That’s after the tidal wave. Pig, too. Lots of pigs.

KD: I heard pigs and I saw where they’d been rooting around in the dirt, but I never saw one when I was there. I don’t want to get charged like you did!

MC: You know, the cross breeds, they have the wild and they have the tame inside them. That’s why they’re not too scared. The wild ones they run.

KD: Good!

MC: When we first went there, they told me that Barrow...Barrow is a castrated kind of pig. Watch out for these things because you may come across big ones, maybe about 600 pounds. Because they’re castrated you know. If you see one with its ear sliced, that’s somebody’s mark, you know. Also their tail cut. That’s Barrow. When a dog barks, they run. But not a boar. They’re big. [MC gives a detailed and lengthy explanation on the behavior of this breed of pig]. And another thing is the Hawaiians said was sometimes you hear dogs barking, chasing, chasing, going round and round and you don’t see anything. That’s a kind of spirit.
KD: What's the Hawaiian word for spirit, Burke told me?

MC' wife: Akualele.

KD: That's it!

MC: The long tail...you can see light. That's in Waipio and Waimanu, because they worship those things, they worship idols. They worship baby bones. They keep those thing. And spirit fights against spirit. They send that thing around [the akualele]. And your parents tell you about it and make you scared. But when you know about god, well, he's number one.

[MC mentions that Eugene Burke's brother passed away recently.]

MC: Did you talk with him [Eugene Burke] over the phone?

KD: No, I went to his house. Do you see him very often?

MC: No, no. Not since long ago, when he was with the Board of Agriculture.

[We get a ways off the subject. He tells me about his brother Nelson and a squid fishing trip they took once on Lanai].

MC: Oooh, when I think about that tidal wave...

KD: Yeah, I bet you still think about that a lot.

MC: I had some pack animals ready to...well, that evening [the evening before the tidal wave] I didn't take off the saddle I just let them go and eat. When the first wave came, the house was still inside [the valley, I assume he means], didn't go out yet. The second one took the house outside [the ocean]. The first one came, it was a small one...

[tape turned over]

MC: ...then I went down to the beach. I saw footprints in the sand. I follow the footprints and I see the horse. He in the grass eating and I followed him to the area. I followed him one mile inside. When I saw him, he was all white, you know, because of the salt water. When he saw me he started neighing.

KD: Like he recognized you.

MC: Saddles and guns and everything, gone. [long pause] So Sonny Kaniho, he said he'd come, huh?

KD: Yeah, yeah in the next couple of weeks he said he'd be here. How do you know Sonny?
MC: I don’t know him. I just talk with him by phone. He’s a good guy. He talk story with us.

[I wrap up the interview by asking MC if I can call him if I think of any more questions. He’s agreeable to this. I thank him for his time and tell him I’ll be in touch soon].
Oral History Interview with:
Wilfred Mock Chew (MC)
Honolulu, HI

February 8, 1990

Interviewer:
Kim Des Rochers (KD)
tape # 8-2-90-1

[I begin the interview by asking Mock Chew if he can mark on the topo map I brought along his former house site and the gate that he referred to in the previous interview. Mock Chew had made a sketch of Waimanu Valley before I arrived. On it he has his house site, pig enclosure, trail from Waipio, the gate, stream, fishpond, and other significant features. MC mentions a norfolk pine near the gate. He is able to indicate where exactly the wave deposited his house.]

KD: How far is the distance between your house and the gate?

MC: Maybe three hundred yards.

KD: So here was the stone enclosure?

MC: Yeah, I had the pigs inside there. But now it's no more. Now you're going to see only...no house at all and you're going to see no other people.

KD: I asked you last time about an old Hawaiian heiau. Burke had told me it was somewhere around in here [I'm indicating on his sketch an area near his house].

MC: Yeah right in the back of this [MC is pointing to a spot directly behind the pig enclosure].

KD: How big was it?

MC: Maybe forty by forty feet. And you know, when you go over there you usually kalua pig. When you do that something happens during the night. The dog starts getting crazy, running all around barking, barking, barking. We had a tent outside one night, some of the boys wanted to stay out and make a camp and kalua pig. And we left a kalua pig on the table, see, outside. And maybe about ten or eleven o'clock in the night...oooh, the dogs go crazy. Barking, barking. So one of those guys told me "you know why because the Hawaiians, you know, they come back, and when you do things like that".

KD: ...from the dead?

MC: Yeah. Not one time. Several times.
MC points a few things out on the sketch to me.

MC: When you go up like this [up the Kohala side of the valley], then you see a waterfall over there...

KD: Now before, you said that waterfall was called Waihilau?

MC: Oh yeah.

KD: There's a couple of others [waterfalls] here though. But you're talking about Waihilau?

MC: Yes. There's a smaller one, the first one. There's one more way up. This area here, they call pineapple. [This is located just beyond Waihilau fall on the hillside about three hundred feet up]. Then the stream comes down. Then you go up the stream...cross over and you go inside [deep into the valley] and there's one more fall way up here.

KD: Do you know the name of it?

MC: I don't know.

KD: Is it a big fall?

MC: Oh yeah, it's a big one...here's pineapple and you follow the stream, cross the stream and there's a pond over here, you know.

KD: A pond?

MC: The name of the pond is Kawashima [Kawashima is the surname of Lily Chong's father]. Because that man used to live there before, you know.

KD: When did he live there?

MC: Oh during the time that people were living there.

KD: So not when you were living there?

MC: No, no. Before that. Long before that. But he moved to Waipio. And then if you go to the ocean, you know, there's a trail in there [MC is again referring to his sketch]...

KD: That's the one that's right along the edge of the pali?

MC: Yeah and you see a mango tree over here. And after you pass the mango tree there's...maybe about ten feet inside...there's a pond inside here. All covered. [Apparently, this pond is located approximately three hundred feet inland on the Kohala side of the valley]. And they tell me, "If you don't see this, you don't see Waimanu".
KD: So you'd seen it?
MC: Yeah, I'd seen it.
KD: How big is this little pond?
MC: Maybe about five...
KD: Feet?
MC: Yeah. A small one. Five by five.
KD: So what's special about this little pond?
MC: I really don't know.
KD: Maybe it's the fountain of youth or something!
MC: And after you pass this area, there's two patches.
KD: Of...?
MC: There's a big mango tree over there, and you're going to see a stone wall. And then you're going to come to...you're going to see that pond. That pond I was telling you about.
KD: Which? The fishpond?
MC: Yeah, the fishpond. From the main stream, the main stream comes right inside...and that's where the people used to...long ago they tell me long ago, Chinese people used to live there too. You know, they plant rice and they have...how they catch their fish there...because the mullets come inside, see. They make a trap in there. That's how they catch them.
KD: So that fishpond doesn't look like it's too far in [up valley].
MC: Yeah, not too far in. There's mango tree, breadfruit tree in this area.
KD: Oh, speaking of that fishpond, you were saying [in a previous interview] something about *moi* and catching them during a full moon. Why is that the best time to catch *moi*?
MC: I really don't know. That's what my uncle told me. They study and they know that's the best time to go for *moi*. Oooh, lotta *moi* in this area. The Hawaiians have an eye for that kind of thing. They can see, you know.

[MC's wife interjects something about cane flowers]
MC: No, no. Cane flowers when [i.e. the cane plant flowers when...]...you know, I don’t know what they call that thing. Aholehole.

KD: Aholehole? Oh, the fish.

MC: Yeah. You know it?

KD: Yeah.

MC: Big eyes. When the cane [plant] flowers, that’s the season for aholehole.

KD: Do you know why that might be?

MC: Oh, I don’t know. The Hawaiians, they study all those things. Oh, when you set your net inside you can not take it out. So much in there.

KD: Do you know Lily Chong?

MC: Yeah.

KD: I talked with her for awhile. She’s very interesting. She was telling me about the river. You know, like in your drawing here, it doesn’t come out right in the middle of the valley, like the way you have it. It’s a little closer to Waipio side.

MC: Oh it used to be more in [toward the pali].

KD: Is that true?

MC: Right right. I saw that river in the middle. Then it started moving down.

KD: Lily had mentioned that none of that tall grass was there before and the ground was just...not bare but like a few plants and you could see the stream better. When you were there, what did the valley bottom look like. What kind of plants were there?

MC: This is Waihilau. This is pineapple over here. Kawashima’s pond over here. And you go out and you go inside the other pond. Come out again and it goes this way, to the end of Waimanu. Way deep inside. And where the thing crashed [plane], you know...right in here somewhere.

KD: So the valley was covered with some sort of grass or something?

MC: Yeah. Gee, I’ve forgotten the name of it.

KD: But it wasn’t taro; it was some sort of grass?

MC: No. Just grass. It looked like this [pointing to a photograph I brought]. And afterwards...different. After the tidal wave. Just pulled everything up, you know.
KD: Now how far back, looking at the photograph, do you think the water went from the wave?

MC: Past "pineapple" [see Fig. 5. This is an area MC has mentioned before where the small Hawaiian pineapple grows wild.]

KD: To where the valley separates would you say?

MC: Yeah, yeah.

KD: Lily had mentioned some other houses in the valley, she mentioned eight houses when she was there. Were they there when you were [in the valley]? How many homes were there, not counting your own?

MC: Only one...across the river.

KD: Was it bigger than yours?

MC: Oh smaller. They called it the canoe house. Open at both ends, you know. Oh! I saw one more house over here. [MC indicates both the canoe house and the "other house" on the sketch]. It's the one that I saw a gourd at.

KD: Who’s house was that, do you remember?

MC: Belongs to a family in Waipio Valley. All passed away. Only one more. Mrs. Thomas. She's a part family [unable to transcribe this]. Her first husband was Nakagawa. Nakagawa was adopted by a man, Sam Kapule [Kahele?] I think. That's the only house I saw there. And when you go up this way, you're going to see a stone wall [again, MC refers to his sketch]. You’re going to see a small pond too, a pono pond.

KD: A fish pond?

MC: Fishpond. Spring water. You can not miss this [the fishpond].

KD: Is this fishpond bigger than the other one?

MC: Smaller one. Then you go up...this is Waihilau falls, then you go this way and you go inside [MC is indicating how the valley curves to the right at the point where it branches off]...you going to see awa root.

KD: What is awa?

MC: They make drinks, you know, the Hawaiians. It's a root from on a tree. They pound that root, cut them in pieces and put them in a stone [?] box and they get the juice...and they add water inside there...and they get the juice and they drink. You see Samoans, they do this.

KD: Have you had this stuff before?
MC: Yeah.
KD: Is it alcoholic?
MC: Ohhhh. it is [alcoholic].
KD: Is it like kava or sekau?
MC: Yeah, yeah.
KD: You know, Lily told me of some other alcoholic drink that they make from the ti root.
MC: Okolehau.
KD: Yeah. So there’s different kinds of alcoholic drinks that can be made?
MC: Oh yeah.
KD: Does it taste very good?
MC: No, no. Really strong drink. They get the root, you know. Then they kalua the thing. They smash it and put it in the barrel and let it ferment.
KD: They just stick it in they don’t add water or anything?
MC: I think they put water inside too. And then it rises. And then they go to check it and they kind of mix it and let it come up again. And when it doesn’t come up anymore, that’s when it’s ready to put in the distiller. Do you know what a furo [sp?] ?. Japanese thing.
KD: No.
MC’s wife: Steam box.

[MC draws a sketch of the distiller and box and tries to explain the process of making okolehau. MC is soft spoken and so his explanation of the procedure is somewhat difficult to make out. He mentions that the furo goes inside of another box with a distiller on top of that. The steam goes through the distiller [?] and then MC mentions something about gutters, which I took to mean were on the roof or somewhere of the distiller. It seems that the okolehau travels along the gutters and comes out at a spout. He also mentions something about cold spring water and bamboo.]

KD: Doesn’t sound like it’d taste good.
MC: No. Comes out clear and white. One glass they tell me and you can not walk!
KD: Is it true?

MC: Yeah. When I got married in Honolulu, here, my father brought that stuff you know.

KD: Did he make it himself?

MC: No. You put fire underneath this...burning...slow fire now not high fire. And it starts boiling and steam comes out on top of the furo. You weren’t allowed to do these things.

KD: Oh, it was illegal?

MC: Oh yeah that place...they have barrels, you know. Maybe fifty barrels all filled. The policemen, what they do is they come down and smash all those things.

KD: Is this what they did in Waipio?

MC: Yeah.

KD: Probably they didn’t bother with Waimanu, huh?

MC: Oh Waimanu is too far.

[I’m showing MC the recent photos I’ve gotten developed of Waimanu. MC points to a group of trees in one photo that are located near the shoreline on the Waipio side of the valley.]

MC: I didn’t see all these trees.

KD: So those trees weren’t there before?

MC: No...Before you get to this fall [MC is pointing to a photo with a waterfall] further down...I told you about an orange tree, you’re going to see that. And when you’re past the orange tree, about maybe twenty yards away, there’s a trail going up....

KD: Towards Kohala?

MC: Yeah. [MC is sketching this] there’s a flat area up here and there’s one breadfruit tree. And when we want to go hunting, we talk about what way is the best way, we say go the oceanside or "Let’s go up ulu [breadfruit]". That’s the best way. Sometimes the pigs they hang out here because they like the ulu, see.

KD: When you went pig hunting, what did you hunt with? Guns or knives or...

MC: Those days, we didn’t take guns at all.

KD: What did you use?
MC: Only knife and dogs?

KD: How big a knife? Machete size?

MC: Oh about nine inches.

KD: Only nine inches?! I'm afraid I'd need something a little bit bigger. [I tell MC the story Lily Chong told me about the female pig hunters]

MC: Oh yeah, there's people from Waimanu that do that. The Kala family or the Kahele family. [He tells me about how strong those women were. He relates a story about when his wife had fallen from her horse and broke her ribs. One of the previously mentioned women made a poultice out of some herbs from Waimanu valley]. There's a tree still over there. Second gulch, from Waipio coming to Waimanu. [He doesn't know the name of the plant]. It's so dry. No juice at all. So to get the juice, you have to get ti root, young ti root and you pound the young ti root and you chop the leaves up really fine...

KD: The leaves of the ti plant?

MC: No. The leaves of the tree [that he doesn't know the name of]. [From what I could understand, the two plants are then mixed together. The combined mixture is then squeezed onto the wound.] It's so powerful it draws...even the bones, you know.

KD: So, you take the leaves from some tree...what tree?

MC: Alahe'e. The name of the tree is alahe'e. In Waimanu there's only one tree but when you go to Kona, not the Kawaihae side, the old road side. The Hind Ranch

KD: So what's the exact connection between the ti plant?

MC: The juice. For the juice.

KD: So you have to mix it [leaves from the alahe'e tree] with the ti?

MC: Yes. That woman [one of the Kala women] she know hunting.

KD: What was her name again?

MC: Happy [?] Kala. Lily Chong knows her. Happy Kala.

KD: What other medicinal plants do you know?

[MC's wife suggests I marry a Hawaiian man in order to learn]

MC: After you pass the eighth gulch, you're going to see a building. Did you see any building?
KD: Uh, no. I don't think so.

MC: It's on the right-hand side.

KD: I'll look for it next time.

MC: On the left-hand side you go inside maybe about two hundred yards inside you’re going to see this plant, it grows wild. But in the off season they die down. Similar to ginger. They call it olena.

KD: But it's a kind of ginger.

MC: Yeah. The ginger is yellow underneath.

KD: The root you mean?

MC: Yeah. It's a medicine too.

KD: Oh, what's it used for?

MC: I really don’t know. So expensive over here. You go down to Ala Moana fish market...I saw one alone for $60. I came across that area [near the eighth gulch] when I was hunting. I saw hundreds and hundreds of these things.

KD: What color are the flowers on that plant?

MC: Same as kena plant. Like green. And it’s not tall. Maybe two feet, three feet. There's a song olena. Tells the story about olena.

KD: Oh yeah, that reminds me of another thing you told me about. A song. You told me about some guy who sang a song called Hilihawe. Who was that guy again?

MC: That’s my grandfather. My mother’s mother’s brother.

KD: And what was his name?

MC: Liha. Sam Liha. In Waipio Valley at Hilihawe falls. His home is right at the bottom.

KD: I had a few other questions. Let's see...oh, you mentioned that api, that wild taro. Is that a dry taro or a wet taro?

MC: Dry. Dry.

KD: In Waipio, what kind of taro did you grow there?

MC: Poi taro.
KD: That's a...what kind of taro is that?

MC: White taro. Like in Kauai the poi is reddish, you know. Lavender. In Waipio they don't have that kind of taro. They have kind of pinkish...it gets sour so fast, ferments so fast. That taro takes about seven months before harvest. The reddish is about fourteen months, sixteen months.

MC's wife: It's a long time to get money!

[MC leaves the room for a few minutes]

KD: What was the name of your poi factory in Hilo?

MC's wife: Waiakea Poi Factory.

KD: And that was owned by your husband or his father?

MC's wife: By him [MC].

[MC returns to room]

MC: I was looking for a newspaper clipping but I couldn't find it. On my dad, the taro king in Waipio valley.

KD: Oh really! What was your father's name?

MC: Ahchew Mock Chew.

KD: When was the newspaper clipping?

MC: Long ago. He was raising taro there.

KD: Do you remember the year because I could probably find it at the library.

MC: Oh I forgot.

KD: Before the forties do you think?

MC's wife: Oh way before that.

MC: Yeah. Hawaii Tribune Herald. The other day I was looking at it but I don't know where it's at now.

KD: Oh too bad. I'd like to have seen that.

MC: Next time.

[MC describes the special method that taro is planted so that each plant receives an optimum amount of sunlight. He mentioned that one has to study this technique.]
During the course of this conversation he mentions that his uncle John Thomas was married to Mabel Thomas who I will be interviewing in a few weeks. MC turns the conversation to his pig-hunting dogs in Waimanu.

MC: They were really good smart dogs. Really trained. And some of the dogs when they get hurt, you know, from the boar, the intestines come out?

KD: Of the dog?

MC: Yeah. [the intestines are pushed back inside] And then what you do is you sew them back up.

KD: Sew them with what?

MC: We always take needle with us. We had pointer, German shepherds. But German shepherds are good for nothing. They like nice and big and husky, but they're good for nothing. They can find, but they're scared. Not like pointers or German shepherd crossed with pointers. Or German shepherds crossed with bulldog.

[MC talks at length about his dogs]

MC: And we go hunting just with knives. And when you stab the pig, you don't stab in the front. You stab the pig in here.

KD: So, right in the throat.

MC: Yeah. Goes into the heart. And my dad told me when you go hunting, you don't go in front of the pig. As soon as you approach the pig, they're going to jump for you. You always go to the side. That's the ribs. That's where the heart is. It's just a small knife. Six inches. You just stab the pig and pig lies there...

KD: Immediately?

MC: Immediately.

KD: Next time I'm back there, I'm going to try to find your brother. Where about does he live now?

MC: Samuel?

KD: Yeah.

MC: You have to go past the post office in Kukuihaele. There's a store, there use to be a store over there. Kaneshira's store. Not too far away, brother lives further up.

KD: Do you communicate with him at all?
MC: Oh yeah.

[I asked MC to give me Sam’s address]

[I asked MC what kind of canoe he used to go into Waimanu. It was an outrigger. I also ask him if Jacob and Moses Thomas (who he mentioned in the previous interview, are still alive. He said no. He did mention a Charlie Thomas who was the nephew of Jacob and Moses who is still alive. We talk a bit more about Lily Chong and her brother. I also try and get straightened out the year he went into Waimanu to live.]

KD: Last time you were saying that the year you moved to Waimanu with your wife was what year again?

MC: 1935. Middle of 1935.

KD: And you were how old then?

MC: I was 19.

KD: And you stayed there for five years you said before?

MC: Five years.

[However, MC was present during the 1946 tidal wave. So he either didn’t move to Waimanu until 1940, or he lived in Waimanu for more than 5 years.]

KD: So you two were already married when you were 19 years old?

MC: Yeah. And I lived in Waipio Valley. Go back and forth. We had a man over there. He watch over our things over there. We went back and forth and brought food to him. So I had to live on the land for one year, you know.

KD: In Waimanu?

MC: Yeah. Hawaiian Homes Commission, the rule for the lease. That’s what they told me. Then after that you can go away all you want.

KD: So that’s what you did. You stayed in Waimanu for one year and then after that, you just kind of went back and forth.

MC: Uh huh.

KD: Did your kids go with you when you first moved to Waimanu?

MC’s wife: They weren’t born yet.

MC: After that, all of my boys went in. After I gave up the place.
MC: It’s scary in there, Waimanu. Scary.

KD: The valley.

MC: Uh huh.

KD: I think it’d be real scary during a tidal wave.

[We talk casually about tidal waves and go over his earlier story of the wave]

KD: Did you have other animals besides pigs and cattle? Did you have chickens?

MC: No. Just horses and mules and cattle and pigs.

KD: What about wildlife. Birds. Do you remember seeing any native Hawaiian birds like hawks or crows?


KD: Oh, when’s that?

MC: I think they come during April I think.

KD: Where do they come from?

MC: I think they’re like the plovers that come from Alaska, that area.

KD: Did you ever see anything like bats?

MC: No. Oh yeah! There’s some.

KD: I saw a couple when I was there. Came right down to our camp site. Real close. It was amazing!

[tape turned over]

[MC is indicating the trail to Waipio from Waimanu on the sketch he drew]

MC: It goes up this way. See how it turns here. You’re going to see a big huge rock over here. There’s a long stretch going up. Right over here, there’s a big rock, a huge one. They say, the people that used to live there before, when they go back to Waipio they take pork with them. Or when they come back. When they get to this area they have hard time to pass this area. Because the animals they’re riding on they won’t pass that area. So what they do is they have to cut a piece of pork to feed them.

KD: To entice them, huh?
MC: Yeah, and then they can go on.

KD: So what is it about that spot that the animals don’t like?

MC: I don’t know.

KD: I guess they’re spooked by it.

MC: Yeah, it’s spooky. And there’s one more other place too. The area by that house [the house along the trail that he’s mentioned before] that area too. That place, they call it Ka’awana. Because, Lily Chong, her husband is Ka’awana. His Hawaiian name. Ka’awana. So the name of that place is Ka’awana. Ka’awana means you get lost.

KD: And where was that place again?

MC: Up by the fork [?] going from Waimanu. That’s the area I was asking you if you see a house over there.

KD: I’m going to check that out...

MC: As you go up, it’s on the left-hand side. About three hundred, four hundred yards down.

KD: Well, it seems like it should still be there. The wave couldn’t have gotten that high. So on the eighth gulch coming from Waipio...

MC: No. From Waimanu going back. From Waimanu to Waipio the fourth gulch. And from Waipio to Waimanu the eighth gulch. That’s the same place I told you about olena. As you go from Waimanu to Waipio, it’s on the right-hand side. Olena. And then if you’re going to Waipio, on the left-hand side is that small shack. So Lily Chong’s husband is Ka’awana. His Hawaiian name. David Chong.

KD: Who’s David Chong?

MC: Lily’s husband.

[MC talks a little about Lily’s husband]

MC: On the way going to Waipio, or from Waipio going to Waimanu, at the fourth gulch, the fourth gulch, you can hear the ‘io, the hawk. You listen for them. Always, always in that area.

KD: Maybe they had a nest there or something.

MC: Maybe. All the time.

KD: That trail back then, during the forties, what was the condition of it? Was it fairly good?
MC: We’d have to clean it. My dad had to go to Hilo and ask the County of Hilo, the County Chairman [...].

KD: So you had to ask permission.


KD: Oh, the County would pay your father to clear it?

MC: Yeah, yeah. Before that the trail was all covered. Did you see a lot of yams when you were over there?

KD: No, but I’m glad you’re telling me all this because Lily mentioned that too. She mentioned yams way up the valley [Waimanu]. I guess her dad built a little house up there.

MC: Oh but on the trail.

KD: Oh, on the trail as well?

MC: Yeah. The leaves are big and kind of round. You can see them on the side, the yams are underneath the ground, but the leaves, you can see the vines. And when the leaves turn yellow, that’s when it’s real good. Big kind like this, plenty.

KD: What time of the year can you get them?

MC: Oh I don’t know. When we used to clean the trail, we used to pick some, take home.

KD: What other interesting plants grow along the trail?

MC: Banana. A lot of banana. The bananas there are kind of yellow. When they’re green, they’re yellow. The bananas. And then you know, you see a bunch of bananas, and at the bottom is the heart-shaped...[the purplish flower]. That heart-shaped area...you know children when they’re young they get mumps. So that’s what they do, that heart-shaped...they cut the bottom, that sap...

KD: They put it on the skin?

MC: Yeah.

KD: The sappy stuff.

MC: Yeah, the sappy stuff. When the child has mumps. That’s one medicine. There’s boy from Waimanu, he’s Waimanu boy he knows of...air plant. It’s so tiny, small, the leaves just three petal, two, petal hairy, you know. And what they do is they chew the leaves but don’t swallow them. If you swallow them you’re gone or you’re going to die. So poisonous, but it’s a medicine for dogs. You know
sometimes dogs, the eye inside is blue. Maybe they fight or somebody kick the dog and the eye turns white or bluish in color. You chew that plant and then you blow into the eye of the dog. That's a medicine.

KD: Who is this guy?
MC: His name is Dennis Escalon. He's about sixty.
KD: And he lives in Kukuiehaele?
MC: I think he lives in Kamuela.

[MC tells me where approximately his place is in Kamuela. He also mentioned that this Dennis Escalon used to paddle from Waipio to Waimanu by canoe. MC also talks some about his grand-daughter.]

KD: Let's see. Two more questions and I'll leave you. You moved from Waimanu to Waipio and then you moved from Waipio to Honolulu...

MC: I moved from Waipio to Hilo.
KD: Oh, you moved to Hilo first.
MC: But I went back. I went down into Waimanu. I had some money. So I go with my brother in canoe...
KD: Sam?
MC: Yeah. And go with Dennis Escalon and I went with another guy, two other boys. My brother was good. Dennis was good. But the other guys...ooooh.
KD: Not so good?!
MC: Everybody, "Get ready now" [this was when they were approaching the beach at Waimanu]. Make ready. Be careful". The canoe started to go up...
KD: All of you were in one canoe?
MC: Yeah.
KD: How big was the canoe?
MC: For six people.
KD: How long did it take you to paddle? You came from Waipio to Waimanu.
MC: About twenty minutes.
KD: Oh that's nothing. That's quick.
MC: When it's clear, it's good.

KD: What about by helicopter? Would you ever go in again by helicopter?

MC: Oh sure.

KD: You would?!

MC: Sure.

[I explain how Sea Grant Extension and D.L.N.R., actually N.E.R.R., is considering taking a few of the old timers in again to Waimanu by helicopter. I mention Eugene Burke as well. MC had heard of Bill Lacy and how competent a helicopter pilot he is.]

KD: Did your parents ever talk about Waimanu and how many people had been living there [in the past]?  

MC: No.

KD: Or did you ever hear any stories about the number of people living there?

MC: They used to tell me about people bringing all their animals from Waimanu to Waipio when they started to move to Waipio. And going down into Waipio, they lost lots of animals, especially the cattle coming down the trail. When they come to the point on the road...when the one goes, the rest follows, you know. That's cattle. We could hear people calling, "Oh they're coming, you can see the light, the light. They're coming home." And then you'd hear that somebody lost their animals. I was a small child. I could see lights coming down the trail. They lost lot of animals. That's when they started moving from Waimanu to Waipio. They had a school over there too I understand.

KD: Where?

MC: Waimanu.

KD: Do you remember when that was?

MC: Oh, maybe 1904, something like that. They had a school. The person that really knows something about Waimanu is Eugene's dad [Solomon Burke].

KD: Yeah, unfortunately he's dead. Now there was a Solomon Burke and a Solomon Kala. Is that right?

MC: Uh huh. Yeah.

KD: O.K. I just wanted to make sure I wasn't getting confused.
MC: My uncle, he knows about Waimanu too. Mabel's husband [Mabel Thomas]. He knows a lot of things.

MC's wife: She [Mabel] doesn't know though.

MC: She doesn't know because she comes from Hilo.

KD: Oh. But her husband has passed away, right?

MC: Yeah. He knows a lot.

KD: Did Mabel ever go into Waimanu, do you know?

MC: I don't think so. I don't think so. No.

[MC tells me about a place near Hi'ilawe Falls in Waipio Valley where he saw a yellow bird]

KD: A big one or a little bird?

MC: It was a little bigger than a sparrow.

KD: But kind of a small bird.


KD: Oh! I bet it was one of the native Hawaiian forest birds that they made the feather cloaks from. You might have seen one of the last ones.

[MC tells me about a heiau near the beach in Waipio called Paka'alana. He said Lily Chong knows about it. He saw it [the heiau] in 1926. MC mentioned that he might like to call Eugene Burke. I definitely encouraged him to do so. MC tells me again the story about the day before the tidal wave when he, his father, his brother Sam, and his other brother Nelson went into Waimanu. It was Nelson who wanted to turn back. Sam was apparently quite angry because he had wanted to stay and fish but went back with Nelson anyway (see earlier interview). The 2 brothers walked back to Kukuihaele in the dark.]

I end the interview here. I thanked MC for his time once again and for drawing the sketch of Waimanu. MC plays a couple songs for me on his ukelele. He's good! MC said he was interested in hearing how my interviews in Honoka'a go. I told him I'd report back anything interesting.
Biographical Summary for Lily Chong

Lily Chong was born in 1908 in Waipio Valley. Her father was Sentaro Kawashima, a Japanese immigrant who came to Hawaii when he was 19. Lily’s mother was Mary Kainoa, she died when Lily was 12 years old. She has no blood brothers or sisters but does have a step-brother, Charlie Kalaihi. Lily and her family moved to Waimanu Valley in 1914 to raise pigs, cattle, and taro. At that time, there were only two other families living in Waimanu - the Kahele and Kala families. The Kawashima family moved back to Waipio three years later. Lily has eight children and currently lives in Honoka’a.
Oral History Interview with:
Lily Chong (LC)
Honoka‘a, Hawaii

January 31, 1990

Interviewer:
Kim Des Rochers (KD)
tape # 31-1-90-1

[Lily begins by telling me her family moved to Waimanu from Waipio in 1914. She was seven years old at the time.]

LC: There was only two families living in Waimanu [at the time her family resided there].

KD: What year was that?

LC: Let’s see...I think it was 1914.

KD: Oh! Well then, you’re the first person I’ve talked with that lived in the valley before the 1920s. I talked with Eugene Burke and he said he went in a lot in the 1920s and early 30s.

LC: He lived in Kukuihaele. His father was a ranger. He was the one who planted all those trees when you go up toward the valley, Waimanu Valley, you see all those trees on the Waimanu side. His father was working for, I don’t know what company...My husband and Henry Young worked for Solomon Burke planting trees for the rim [?]]

KD: Division of Forestry.

LC: Yeah, yeah, forestry. My husband went to work for his father planting those trees at that time. And that was when I was already married.

KD: So you said you moved there [Waimanu] when you were 7 1/2. Did your family go there to raise pigs?

LC: Yeah and cattle and taro.

KD: So at that time, only two families were living there...

LC: Only two besides Kapela Kala and his wife Poai. Kapela was brother to Kala Sr. The Kala family and the Kahele family. And these families, they intermarry with each other. My mother was related to the Kahele family through marriage. And that’s why...they were just like relatives.
KD: How many years total did your family live in Waimanu?

LC: Well about three years. My family moved back because they lost some cattle. Some of the people in the valley would chase the cattle [I suppose for fun] and they would go up to a high cliff and the cattle would fall off, and then they broke their leg or something would happen and they couldn't get up and they [people chasing the cattle] would come and tell my father, "Something's happened to your cattle". So my father would slaughter the cattle and then divide and everybody have a share. And it continued! And my father got disgusted so he said, "Might as well sell the rest of the cattle and move back to the valley [Waipio]". So he moved back to the valley and continued raising pigs there.

 KD: In Waipio?

LC: Yeah, in Waipio. And when we went to Waipio there was twelve gulches to get to the valley. So we always take food. And when we get to the sixth gulch, we always rest there and eat our lunch.

KD: What's the name of that gulch?

LC: Koho'opuu.

KD: Did you ride in by horses or did you actually walk?

LC: We walked and on horse. My mother use to ride on the donkey. Because we had a pretty good size donkey and she rather ride on the donkey or mule rather than the horse because they're sure-footed. And the trail is not wide it's a narrow trail. But because people been going back and forth, the trail is always clear. But some years back, my grandsons went down there, they said, there's branches and trees and they have to cut a way through to make a trail.

KD: I walked into Waimanu...

LC: You did!

KD: Yeah.

LC: How long ago?

KD: Not so long ago. Last November, early November. It was pretty tiring. It's a long hike.

LC: It is. I know that before on this side of the valley the river used to be way out. But I understand recently from those that have been in there recently, they say now the water is way close to the pali.

KD: Yeah, it is come to think of it. It's fairly close. Well, right where it empties out into the sea I'd say it's about...
LC: There use to be a house there. It was owned by Solomon Kala, one of the Kala boys. He was the oldest of the Kala family. He married to my mother's cousin, Hannah Kahele.

KD: Was there a Solomon Burke? [I asked this question, because in one of the archaeological reports there is a reference to Solomon Burke, a district ranger for the area. I assumed him to be Eugene's father].

LC: No. Solomon Burke used to live in Kukuihaele and he used to go in Waimanu. He had a house in Waimanu Valley right across the river; that was also Joseph Haena's house.

KD: I see. On the Kohala side or Waipio side?

LC: On the Kohala side across the river.

KD: So, Kala's house was...

LC: Kala's house was further up about, I might say, it's about, not half-way up the valley, it was almost half-way up the valley. There was a big building and the Kala family...most of them lived there. There were about, let's see how many, there were six bedrooms and a big parlor. And the Kahele's married to the Kala girls, lived there with the father and the mother. And there was another brother of the old man Kala that lived way at the end of the pali at the Kohala side, he and his wife lived there when I was growing up.

KD: So there were a few homes then.

LC: There were just about eight homes altogether.

KD: All wooden homes?

LC: Yeah, all wooden.

KD: No thatching?

LC: No.

KD: So at that time no store,...

LC: No, no stores, nothing.

KD: You had to go to Waipio then for supplies?

LC: They have to go to Waipio for supplies. I know my father used to send a Japanese man to come to the Waipio to purchase...you know the Puiolo poi shop? In Hilo?
KD: I don’t think I know it.

LC: His parents used to own the store, operate a store in Waipio Valley. And the people in Waimanu, they used to buy, purchase their things all from there.

KD: So this Japanese man was a worker for your father?

LC: Yeah. He use to go and purchase all the main goods like rice, salt, and shoyu and flour and all these things. But the people in the valley they just lived off the land, most of them. They used to have canoes, they used to go out and catch fish out of the canoe. They would sometimes have four or five canoes go out and get all the fish they can get, they come back and they divide all the fish among the families.

KD: How would they fish?

LC: With a hook and line.

KD: And with a pole?

LC: Yeah, yeah. They have a line sometime they put several hooks on a line just let down, and the fish would come, catch. I know my dad used to go out too with them. My father’s Japanese, my mother’s Hawaiian.

KD: But your last name is Chong.

LC: Yeah, my husband is part Chinese. So my children is Japanese, Chinese, Hawaiian.

KD: So when you moved back to Waipio, did you ever go back to Waimanu?

LC: Oh I went a couple times because my uncle, one of the Kaheles, he’s close to me, so he used to come and take me over on vacation. I used to go there and spend vacation, Christmas sometime summer vacation.

KD: What kind of things would you do while you were in the valley?

LC: As children?

KD: Yeah.

LC: Oh, we just play around. As children we used to be rascal with the cows, so tame, we used to go and milk, take all the milk from the mother cow. And then when she go back, you see they tie the calf at home expecting the mother to go back in the evening so the family could milk the cow and when they go back, hardly any milk, because we kids, we used to take the milk. We used to be so rascal with my cousins.

KD: Did you ever fish?
LC: Yeah, we used to go swimming. They have fish, they have shellfish in the river, they call it *wiwi* (pronounced VV).

KD: Is it also called *hiihiwai*?

LC: I don’t know if they have English name. But we always called it *wiwi*. It’s almost like the *ophis*, only it’s black and there’s a yellow something in the front. And it’s very eatable. We used to go in the night with a torch. And they would crawl out on the rocks. We used to go and pick it up.

KD: And how do you eat them, raw?

LC: No, no. We cook it, although some do after salting it.

KD: Do you have to dig the meat out first or do you cook them in the shell?

LC: No, we just cook them in the shell and then just take it out.

KD: So you just pick them off the rocks with your hands?

LC: Umm, hmm.

KD: You said you fished with a torch. Like a kerosene lamp or...

LC: They make a torch out of bamboo [by Lily’s gestures, I assumed she meant they used a length of bamboo] we put the kerosene in and they have those burlap bags and they roll them up and put it on the top of the bamboo and then they let the kerosene go down and wet this burlap thing and then they light it and it’s so bright.

KD: So what else could you catch out of the river besides *wiwi*?

LC: Oh, shrimp and the other kind, ‘*o’opu*.

KD: Were there lots of them?

LC: Oh they have lots. They have two different kinds. Recently I heard they have tilapia but they never used to have before. Even down in Waipio, they have lots in the river. I guess somebody came, brought it in because before we didn’t have. But they have lots of fishes in the river and so easy to catch. They have mullet. I understand there is a hippie family living in the valley with five children. They live on the Kohala side of the valley, across the river. He sets net in the river...because my two grandsons went over one time about two years ago, they camp down the beach. And this man came and set the net in the river and he caught a lot of mullet and he brought it over and share with them. And they [her grandkids] had meat so they exchanged, you know.

KD: When was this hippie family living there?
LC: About two years ago they were there. And my grandson said they had five children. They don’t go to school. They teach them at home.

KD: When I was there I did see one or two campsites where it looked like people were living, but this was closer to the Waipio side. But maybe I just didn’t see them, or maybe they’re not there any more. So what else would you do in the valley besides fish and harass the animals?

LC: We just stay around. Christmas time they used to have a lot of fun. They all used to ride on the horses. With all the torches we’d ride house to house, have Kalua pig and all those things.

KD: How far back in the valley did you ever go?

LC: My father built a house way at the end, almost to end of the valley. There’s a hill there and he built a house there. Because there were a lot of yams growing there wild. So we used to feed the pigs with the yams and other kind of wild taro. And when we want to fish, we just go right in the front of the house, there’s a running stream, we used to go there. Just shake the leaves that fall in the river and all the shrimp get into the net.

KD: How big were the shrimp?

LC: Those were the mountain shrimp, they call that ‘opae kolo because they crawl. And the other kind of shrimp, they live further down.

KD: I’ll have to look for those when I go back. How did you eat them?

LC: Cook it. Well, you can eat it raw too. When I think back about it I laugh because the missionaries used to go down the valley. From Waipio they go over, they used to have just one horse. One would ride and when one would get tired the other would get down and walk, the other ride to go to Waimanu Valley. And when they reach there, well, the Hawaiian people were...good-hearted. When I think about it my mother used to...we lived further up but, when my mother found out she kind of scolded them.

KD: The missionaries?

LC: No. The people. The family. Her family. Because the missionaries get there and they get a big bowl of poi that’s put on the table. And they get this shrimp and they just sprinkle salt on. You know, when you sprinkle salt on a live shrimp they start jumping, jumping. So while the missionaries are praying, thanking god for the food they’re about to partake, the shrimp’s are crawling out because the salt has gotten out and they can not...so my mother said they should have good sense to cook it or do something about it instead of just leaving it like that.

KD: That’s funny. Which missionaries were in the valley then?

LC: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.
KD: Oh, Mormons.

LC: Yeah, the Mormons. They were all Mormons, the people that were living there.

KD: I didn't know that. You said your parents were originally from Waipio?

LC: Yeah. After my father came back he raised pigs and afterwards he went into rice business...

KD: In Waipio?

LC: Yeah. Because there was a rice mill in the valley before. So he started raising rice.

KD: Did he ever try growing any rice in Waimanu?

LC: No, no. Just taro.

KD: Someone mentioned to me that they thought way-back-when people were growing rice in Waimanu, do you know if that's true or not?

LC: I don't know. I never heard or know anything that Chinese people went to Waimanu. Because the Chinese were mostly in Waipio, that's how they started raising rice. Chong family, Chongwa family, the Dr. Akioka family. The Akona, Ah Sun, Ahuna, and Yap Tulk families. Lota Chinese, they all raise rice so he Hawaiians and other nationalities like...my father and another Japanese were the only Japanese that went into rice business. The rest, they didn't raise rice. But they worked for the Chinese people. And eventually the people in the valley started moving to Waipio. The Kalas and the Kaheles.

KD: Why do you suppose people started moving out of Waimanu?

LC: Well, the parents died. The Kalas. The husband and wife died. So the old people died so the sons and their wives and children decided to move to Waipio so the children could go to school. And so they used to go back and forth but they went back to live in Waimanu Valley.

KD: Maybe people felt too isolated in Waimanu.

LC: Yeah, I think so. Maybe. And not only that, but one of the Kala boys had been drafted in the army in the first World War. And so when he went, the others felt that they should move to Waipio Valley. Because the folks have all passed away there's nothing to tie them there. And then they started having their children go to school too.

KD: Oh, because there was no school in Waimanu.
LC: Yeah, there's no school there, although some years before, there was a one-room Hawaiian school. In olden days too I know when I was growing up there was kind of [unable to transcribe this], if you don't go to school. The police come around and see if you not fourteen or fifteen years old. They have to go to school. And even if you don't show up in school the police come around and find out why you not in school. If you sick, alright, but if not they get after you. They were so strict, but not now day.

KD: You were talking earlier about the river, how you heard it was now closer to the pali. When you were in the valley, where was the river coming out to sea? Was it more in the middle, more to the Kohala side, or more to the Waipio side?

LC: It's more in the middle. Yeah somebody told me it's funny the river has come, has moved in close to the pali now. The trail that used to go alongside the pali to go up that side is covered with the water. I was surprised.

KD: That's amazing. In the valley now, on the valley floor, now what grows there is this tall, I don't know what it's called. California grass I think. It's real tall. Taller than you or I.

LC: Oh really?! There used to be bull rush growing there.

KD: It's thick, you can't walk through it. So I was wondering what the valley floor would have looked earlier.

LC: Oh, they didn't have those things.

KD: So you could easily see up the valley from any point?

LC: Yeah

KD: Because once you're in the thick of this grass, you can't see very far in front of you.

LC: So different, yeah.

KD: What was growing on the ground back then?

LC: Just the river and what you call, water lilies around there. More flat land. The water is different from Waipio, it's dark brown. Is it still the same? It's not clear.

KD: Yeah, that's true it's kind of muddy I guess.

LC: And I found out it's because it comes from the pali. And when it flows down to the main river it looks dark, you know. Brownish, not clear.

KD: You know another thing that's kind of interesting, when I was there, not right in the river, but kind of off to the side in little ponds, there was a kind of reddish algae that grew on top of the water. Do you remember anything like that?
LC: No. They never used to have these things.

KD: How old were you the last time you were in Waimanu?

LC: The last time I went in, I was about twelve years old. And since then, I went one time when I was about 30 or 33. I was already married.

KD: How come you went in then?

LC: Just curious to see how the place looked like. It didn’t changed much then. I’m 82 now.

KD: 82! You’re in great shape. So yeah, I bet it would look real different if you went in now. It’s funny how these places change in not so long a time. Especially since the tidal wave.

LC: Yeah, must be that a tidal wave came in, because it came in Waipio.

KD: Oh yeah, you must have been there then. How far back in the valley did you live in Waipio?

LC: Oh, it’s just right down in the valley. You know, as soon as you get down to the bottom. My father used to have, used to take care, there used to be a fishpond. You know going down in the valley there’s a big area?

KD: In Waipio?

LC: Yeah. There used to be a fishpond. My father used to be taking care of that fishpond. And he used to have a house right down at the bottom of the cliff. But we had a house on the other side of the pali where we lived all the time. But we used to come this side to visit my father. Because he was in charge of the fishpond. There was fish in the pond. The place owned by the Baker Estate. Baker family in Hilo. Now it’s all overgrown with grass and everything. You can’t tell there was a fishpond there before.

KD: I’ve heard there was a fishpond in Waimanu.

LC: Yeah, there is.

KD: Did you ever see it?

LC: Yeah.

KD: Where is it?

LC: It’s toward the Kohala side close to where Kapela Kala’s house. There was a mango tree close by.
KD: And if you're right on the beach looking up the valley, how far in would you say it is?

LC: Oh, maybe about a mile. They had goldfish in there.

[tape turned over]

KD: Yeah, I'd like to find that fishpond if I go back in again. You know that first fall? Is the fishpond before the fall or about even with it?

LC: No, the waterfall is further up. This [the fishpond] is further down. It was close to that other Kala's home. That used to live at that end of the pali, Kohala side. You haven't been that side, huh?

KD: Well, a little bit. But I didn't go so far.

LC: They have mango trees, papaya trees, over there. A lot fruit trees. From what I understand this family that live down there that I told you about...

KD: The hippie family?

LC: Yeah, they told my grandsons that they got to learn how to live off of the land so they go to the beach and get shellfish, and they go fishing, and they go in the river fishing, and they have lots fruit trees...Now if they had yams, they could cook the yams and eat that with the fish. And they had this wild taro too. Very eatible.

KD: What's the name of that yam? [I'm trying to determine if this is the same wild yam that Mock Chew talked about.  Api.]

LC: Aweo. It's not good for poi. But it's good to cook and just eat it.

KD: Like potato?

LC: Yeah, yeah. The taro is white. Because one time I was there, there was just like a famine like. The people, the families that lived in Waimanu they have taro land further up in the valley about half-way up the valley and they have a flat land. That's where they raise their taro. They have taro land. Kohala side. And one time the wild pigs came down and ate all the taro and the people didn't have taro to live on and so they went and gathered this wild taro. And they don't have a container to cook the taro. They cook it in the ground. Just like an imu. Like kalua pig. They cook it and they leave it overnight and they take it out and then they...it's really good.

KD: Sounds good.

LC: I guess that's why they were all healthy people. I never see any of them get sick. Even the women. They used to go up the Kohala mountain and hunt pigs.

KD: The women! Good for them. Hunting with what?
LC: With just a knife, a dog and a bag. I know this lady that married...the two sisters Fahau and Mele, they both married to my mother's family. Kaheles. The husband don't go hunting but the women went with their brothers. The brothers are all husky-looking men. I understand...they're so brave...when the pigs come in, the dog go after the pig they just throw this bag over the pig and they jump on the pig and they stab the pig. And then they slaughter the pig there and then they bring it home.

KD: That's pretty interesting that the women did that, huh?

LC: Yeah!

KD: Boy, there's just no way I'd ever do that. I'll stick to fishing, it's safe.

LC: That's Mary's grandfather's sisters.

KD: Mary...?

LC: Mary the one that brought you over.

KD: Oh, Mary Makio [the women who runs the Honoka'a Senior Citizens Nutrition Center].

LC: You see, her grandfather is Ernest Kala. I know them well. You see, they were Joseph Kala, Alfred Kala, Solomon Kala, Ernie Kala, and yeah, there's about four or five of them Kala boys. They all tall and husky looking. Strong looking. And when they made their okolehau, you know, the liquor from the ti root?

KD: Oh.

LC: Christmas time, New Year time they all drink and they fight among themselves.

KD: Did they make it [the liquor] there in Waimanu?

LC: Yeah. My mother used to be the referee for them.

KD: I never heard of that liquor. They make it just from the roots of the ti plant?

LC: Yeah.

KD: So what do they do boil it?

LC: In fact my father and my brother-in-law, Harry Chong, he used to dig the ti root and then they cut it up and they put it in the ground and then they bring them out, and they start beating this thing. And they ferment it in a big barrel and then they have some sort of thing going, cooking. I don't know how they do it but they distill that. And then they have two different kind or three different kind. They say the
first one when the liquor come out, or the okolehau, they light a match and burn it. And if it’s blue...

KD: The flame?

LC: Yeah, if the flame come out blue, that’s good. And then they separate that. And the next thing they cook over again, and if it comes little bit blue, little bit red, they call it Number 2.

KD: That’s interesting. There was all kind of stuff going on in Waimanu.

LC: Uh huh. Yeah. Sometime I wish I was stronger and healthier...I wouldn’t mind going back down there if I have a way to go there.

KD: You look pretty strong and healthy now.

LC: I just came out from the hospital. I been there with this bronchial asthma when I was in my sixties. My family didn’t have that.

KD: Just you, huh. Well you seem to be doing o.k. It doesn’t seem to be holding you back too much. That famine that you talked about where the pigs came down and ate all the taro...Do you know what year that was?

LC: Oh, when I was about nine years old. I was there on vacation. But my father had some taro land, eight small patches, so he shared his taro with them.

KD: So I take it the pigs didn’t get to his [taro]?

LC: No, no. Because he was further up. The pigs came from the other direction.

KD: When did you move to Honoka’a?

LC: Oh, I moved to Honoka’a...first I moved to Kapulena in 1936. My husband started working with the health department. So we moved, we left Waipio Valley and we came to...before that he worked for Parker Ranch when I first married my husband. And then we built a home in Honoka’a in 1940. And then when my husband died in 1966.

KD: That was a long time ago. After your husband died did you live alone...or I guess you would have had your kids still.

LC: No, my kids were all out by that time. I live by myself. Then I started working for the...well I went on a mission for awhile in Kauai after he passed away. Then I came back and I worked for the Hawaii County Economic Opportunity for awhile. Then I came to work for this Hawaii housing over here. When they started building this place [Senior Citizens Center]. Then when I was seventy I decided to rest. I used to travel to Honolulu because I had two girls there. So I used to go back and forth and I thought, “Oh I might as well stop working and go visiting”.

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KD: Yeah, well, that sounds good. So you'd go into Waimanu if you could get in an easy way?

LC: Yeah.

KD: Did your family ever go in by canoe or boat?

LC: No. All overland. But some people go there by boat. Some on an airplane...

KD: Helicopter.

LC: Yeah.

KD: That's the way you should go!

LC: [laughs] It might just crash down. You know, there used to be now I noticed Waipio...it seems like the ocean is moving in too.

KD: Inland?

LC: Into the pali. And before, you could go from Waipio to Waimanu through the coastline. There is a place...there is a sharp place...I remember when we were young we used to a place called Ainahou in Waipio. It means, "a new land", it goes out...you go beyond that, there's like a channel. And if you can swim, you swim over and then you go into Waimanu.

KD: So you swim across some channel and then you can walk along [the edge]...

LC: ...right into Waimanu Valley. People used to do that. Because the channel was not too wide.

KD: I'd like to try that. I've heard you can walk right along the edge when the tide is low.

LC: That's right, when the tide is low. Maybe you take a rubber boat.

KD: Yeah, really, just in case. That sounds smart. Do you know anything about the sharks around Waimanu.

LC: Yeah. Lota sharks. Used to have lota sharks. Maybe you don't believe but the Hawaiians before, they believed if you have miscarriage in the water or in the ocean, the child turns to shark. The Hawaiians believed that. They used to have this family, I understand a couple, the Kapololu family, that long before the Kalas were there, the Kapololus were there. They had a child like, they claimed it changed into a shark. And if your child was wrapped in a pink cloth or red, then the shark would be in that color. They said, according to the story, this family, they used to go down the beach and they used to see this pink shark comes along. Pink with sort of like dots on the back and they know it's their child that changed into a shark. And they go there and talk to it. And they say if you're related to a shark
family, when you go out on a boat and your canoe happen to capsize, the shark will be right there. But if you are related to any of this kind of shark, it will be there to chase the other sharks away.

KD: That's an interesting story.

LC: I know this...a young man, he passed away already, his name is George Nakagawa. He’s part Japanese, part Hawaiian. But he was raised by a family that lived in Kohala, in Pololu Valley. And he used to go out from when he was a young boy, I think he was taught by his guardian about his adopted parents. How to go fishing, you know. And he used to go out a lot. And he say every time he go out fishing alone, he could see Iota sharks and they never bothered him.

KD: And that was because...

LC: It’s because his family was related to the sharks or they worshipped the sharks.

KD: What other kinds of legends do you know about Waimanu?

LC: Well, they used to have this, what you call...people go in the night, they call it. Nightwalkers.

KD: Is there a Hawaiian word for that?

LC: Well they call that poe o ka po. Anyway, they have these night walkers, they say you could hear the music play. And the gourd, you know, they hit it. Some people see it and some don’t.

KD: I wonder why some [people] do [hear and see the night walkers].

LC: I don’t know, but according to the Hawaiian legend, they say certain of these people that walk in the night, if they want you to see them, you could see them. But if they don’t want you to see them, you could hear the music, the singing, and generally chanting but you can not see them at all.

KD: Now these [night walkers] were the old Hawaiians from way back.

LC: Yeah, yeah.

KD: And was this suppose to be a bad omen or not necessarily?

LC: Not really. It’s just...well they believe that people that already die. And they have a certain time, maybe celebration. Like when they’re leaving. So this is their time to start walking. And most of the time it’s a Kane night they call it. Kane. The night of Kane. That’s the darkest night of all nights they say. That’s when they usually do that. I know when my mother was living, when I was a young girl, this is in Waipio now. There’s a big rock where my father...he raised vegetables and raised pigs there. And somebody said, my grandfather that raised my mother, in olden days, there used to be a cave there. Underneath that rock. My mother said...
could hear the music. We used to hear music and we used to go by the window and listen but we don’t see anything...But my mother, when she was living, she said could see small children, grown up people, all walking.

KD: So you yourself have at least heard this music?

LC: Yeah, I heard, but I haven’t seen.

KD: That’s strange. So how do you account for that?

LC: Sweet music. It’s like a regular live people playing, hitting these...

KD: ...gourds. Well I never heard it when I was there but maybe next time.

LC: Well there’s a place too going to Waimanu. We were told when we were young that when we passed through there, not to talk loud. Just like kapu. Because if you talked loud, you could hear somebody else talking. And you think it’s the people in your group but it’s not. And so they warn you when you pass through there, "Don’t talk loud, talk slowly so you can hear each other". If you yell, or yell out to somebody you could hear somebody answering you.

KD: Where is this place?

LC: You pass the place Koho‘opu‘u, I told you.

KD: Yeah, the number six gulch.

LC: It’s between the seven and the eight gulch. They call it Kaauana. Kaauana means like you be laid away. You know, you be just wandering around. That’s the meaning of Kaauana.

KD: This is interesting. You’re telling me all kinds of interesting stuff. I like all this.

LC: And so when my grandsons tell me they’re going into Waimanu I always tell them, "Remember now when you go there you count how many gulches, and don’t yell at each other, don’t talk to each other because this is true. Lota people get lost there.

KD: Oh. So if you do talk, you can get lost from the people you’re hiking with.

LC: Yeah. Because you hear somebody answering you and you think...

KD: ...you think, "Oh, they’re over there"...

LC: Yeah. And so you follow...and you get lost. You get lost altogether. And you can’t find the person again. Sometimes I think about it these old Hawaiian places, they still have that like power, that leads you astray. I guess because in olden days,
the Hawaiians, they used to worship all kind of things. And when you worship something, that thing becomes powerful. They forget the real god, you know.

[LC tells me about when she was on her mission in Kauai and how those people still believed in "those fireballs"]

KD: Fireballs?

LC: Yeah. *Akua'ele*. Kauai's a great one for that.

KD: Someone else has told me about *akua'ele* but I don't quite understand it. How does it all work?

LC: *Akua'ele* is like...I worship maybe...someone in my family passed away. I take maybe the hair or the nail of the person or whatever that person owns, I keep it. I start calling about that person. And they become just like a live person. And so when I get angry with you [referring to me or someone else], or I have some kind of hatred for certain people, I start complaining, "Oh I don't like this and that". I don't really tell that person to go and do you harm but because I have that ill feeling toward you, this thing that you worship or pray to it might kind of help you out. It goes and does harm to that person. And that's how they call it *akua'ele*.

KD: What does *akua'ele* mean exactly?

LC: It flies up in the air, just like a fireball. I know when I was a kid in Waipio, they had that too. Parents used to say, "When you see *akua'ele*", this fireball flying, just like a ball of fire with something hanging down, "you yell at them, *akua'ele*". And it falls off. They say it becomes ashamed because somebody saw them, say her or him, and it drops into pieces. So when you see it you're suppose to yell at it.

KD: To get rid of it.

LC: Yeah to get rid. But if you just look at it, it will go to that person's house and do harm to that person. Either the person gets sick or he dies.

KD: So did *akua'ele* go just during the night or would they go during the day?

LC: Most of the time in the night. When everybody is asleep.

KD: Then you can't see it and yell at it. That's interesting. Are there any special plants that you know of that were used for religious purposes or for medicinal purposes?

LC: I don't know. You see my mother died when I was young. I was about twelve years old she died.

[LC tells me more about her family. She has two half brothers and one sister from her father's second marriage. Her father's name was Sentaro Kawashima and her mother's was Mary Kalenoe Kapuna. Her father was pure Japanese. He came to
Hawaii when he was 19 and met Mary in Waipio Valley. Lily's Hawaiian name is Lilinoe, which means a misty rain. She has a step brother who also lives at the Senior Citizens Center. Lily has 8 children, 34 grandchildren and 51 great grandchildren.

[We end the interview. I thank Lily for all her help. She says I can come back any time to talk]
Biographical Summary for Bill Sproat

Bill Sproat is 87 years old. He was born in 1903 in Pololu Valley. His father was originally from Missouri and came to Hawaii in the late 1800s after being asked by the Provisional Government Army to help overthrow the Hawaiian monarchy. Bill’s mother was from Pololu Valley and was Hawaiian-Spanish descent.

Bill began work on the Kohala ditch trail, which belonged to the Hind Family, in 1928. Bill retired from the ditch job in 1969 as supervisor and then worked ten years for the Polynesian Cultural Center. Bill has lived much of his life in Pololu and Honokane iki Valleys and has made numerous trips into Waimanu Valley during the first half of this century. Bill recently moved to Hawi to live with his daughter Beatrice.
Oral History Interview with:
Bill Sproat (BS)
Kapaau, Hawaii

March 28, 1990

Interviewer:
Kim Des Rochers (KD)
tape # 28-3-90-1

[I begin by giving Bill some background on the Waimanu oral history project.]

BS: Well, I've been through all that area. You come from Waipio and you come up and... Waipio is cut down to sea level and so is Waimanu. But in between there, there's a lot of little valleys, in fact, there's 11 little valleys that you come across before you get from Waipio into Waimanu. And those little valleys... and when I say little, they're quite deep only they're not cut all the way down to sea level.

KD: So have you gone the whole length from Waimanu to Pololu?

BS: I've been over every inch of this mountain, up and down! When you get to the end of the ditch, there's no more, when you get over to Waimanu side, there's no trail. Only a little foot trail. In fact, I was the one who made the trail because I used to work with the U.S. Geological Survey. We mapped that area in there.

KD: When was this? When did you work for U.S.G.S.?

BS: Before I came here. I used to camp out there, when I say work, I didn't for any special length, but for weeks I would camp out with them [U.S.G.S.] and help them map.

KD: What year, do you remember?

BS: I have to kind of guess that because I was still kind of a young paluka then.

KD: Was that in the '20s or '30s or...?

[Bill Sproat's daughter, Beatrice, is present during the interview and she states that Bill was assisting with the mapping during the early 1940s.)

BS: There was so much area there I just lived in the mountain. We're the ones that mapped that area for they had no map. After Waimanu there's Honopue, Honokea, then you have all these right down the line... Pololu, Honokane nui, Honokane iki. I knew every inch because we lived in the mountain there. We had a home in Honokane iki. In fact, we still have a home there. That's where [my] kids were raised.
KD: So what do you remember about Waimanu? Was anyone living there?

BS: Yeah. There were people still living in Waimanu. But they would come more from the other side [Waipio]. Because this side, from Waimanu, they didn’t come up here. There’s no trail on this side. But there was a big mule trail from Waipio to Waimanu. And there were homes all in Waimanu.

KD: About how many homes do you remember seeing?

BS: Gosh, I don’t know. I was not sure just how many people lived down there but there were homes you could see. If you got up on the cliff and look down and you could see all these houses here and there in the valley.

KD: Were they [houses] mostly towards the beach or...

BS: Yeah, yeah. Well, when I say towards the beach, close enough to the beach but all that area, because you know, the valleys when they get down there they widen and they have taro patches and what not. But if you went back far enough and there was homes when the people didn’t have to go any place.

KD: Would you say there were more than 10 homes that you remember seeing?

BS: Oh yeah, and then some.

KD: Twenty?

BS: No. Maybe not that many but there was a lot of houses there but nobody living in them. But there was some families still living in Waimanu?

KD: Do you know the names of any of those people?

BS: I knew at the time but I can’t think of them now it’s so long ago. And then, I didn’t have too much to do with them I just went through and back. And I took people through that wanted to like the people that worked for the government they were in that kind of business to make maps and all that and I took them in there. Not very many people knew the country, Hamakua people stayed on the other side, Kohala people stayed on this side, and in between, hardly anyone went. The only reason we went in there was because we had the ditch here. The ditch took in all the streams that had water. Then there was quite an area with no trail except the foot trail that we made so we could go back and forth. And I stayed in there by the weeks.

KD: Did you hunt a lot?

BS: Oh hunting...I used to take the [boy] scouts in there camping for their badges. I used to take them in and stay there for a whole week. They had to learn how to camp so every boy brought enough food to last him a week. Not where meat was concerned because I would furnish the meat because every day I killed one pig. We find pigs all day long. Of course, I had my dogs with me. We don’t kill the pigs early
in the day because we don't want to carry anything with us. When we get closer to where we're going to camp that night, o.k., when I hear the dogs bark I go up there, take a look, if I see a good one I shoot it, and then everybody cuts his hunk off.

KD: And you did that in Waimanu as well?

BS: We did that all the way to Waimanu and back. This was in between the end of the ditch trail and Waipio. And we went up toward the upper part of the mountain because the farther down the deeper the valleys get. And steeper. Because the water is running downhill. Actually, to get across them we had to go close to the top of the mountain, where the valley was small enough where we could go down the side. And I say small now in comparison to down below. You know what Pololu looks like? It's shallow compared to back in the mountain. And it took time. We stayed in there for days and weeks. When I went with the Geological Survey to map that country, we stayed in there for weeks so they could map it and get an idea of how deep these valleys were because the bottoms were quite steep where the water ran fast through there. Quite a bit of erosion went on there.

KD: So you shot them [the pigs], you didn't kill them by knife?

BS: We shot them and then we stabbed them and bled the thing, but you've got to bleed an animal to get all the blood out of the meat. And, when you get back up into the mountains there you have a lot of shrimp in the streams.

KD: How many different kinds of shrimp are there?

BS: There was only one kind before. Then there's the prawns. And they only stay near the beach.

KD: And the other ones stayed farther up valley?

BS: Yeah. And they didn't come down no matter how big...that's why Hawaiians refer to them as 'opae kolo. 'Opae that crawl. The streams. You have some heavy rains, but they never get washed down because they go up towards the sides and climb up. That's why they call them 'opae kolo. Crawling 'opae. You don't see them by the beach, water can't wash them down.

KD: What are the other kind called?

BS: 'Opae oehe'a. It's a big one that never goes up. They're down by the beach. But you go down by the beach and you don't find those 'opae kolo, that's the real Hawaiian 'opae.

KD: So you've caught a lot of those shrimp?

BS: Oh yeah. You can eat them.

KD: And how did you catch them?
BS: Well the easiest way to catch them, is you go where the water's running. And you put a bag or anything, and you move the rocks away. See, they go down with the current or into the bag. But when I say bag, you need a real net. We generally carried a dip net with us. The water could go through it. And we cooked them. And we ate them raw. Only the Hawaiians ate them raw.

KD: What else could you get out of those streams?

BS: We had some mountain 'o'opu. They don't get very big. And the nakea, the big one, certain times of the year when you have those floods, those heavy rains, they come down to the ocean. And that's where they breed. That's where they have their young ones. You can see them going up by the thousands. Going back to the mountain. They live in the mountain but they get hatched by the ocean. They go back to the mountain to grow up. When the stream is big they just go to the side of the stream where the current is not strong.

KD: Any fish?

BS: 'O'opu.

KD: Besides 'o'opu.

BS: 'O'opu go up and down with the currents. 'O'opu nakea they get to be pretty good size [BS indicates size with his hand]

KD: So about a foot?

BS: Yeah. Then we had the 'o'opu nopili. Nopili is the kind that the streams can't wash down. They have a sucker under here [on their underside] where they get to a rock and stay right there and swim up stream again. Nopili don't get very big the biggest one gets about that big [again indicates the size with his hand].

KD: About a foot?

BS: A dark color. The others get pretty good size. Nakea, the light colored one.

KD: What about hihiwai. Did you ever see any hihiwai in Waimanu?

BS: Yeah. Hihiwai goes all the way into the mountains but the Hawaiians lived in there and they would plant anything they want that took up a lot of room away from where they lived. That's why you find all kinds of things that grow up in the middles [of the valley]. You go to the second valley, Honokane nui. From the beach to the mountain that stream goes up, no waterfalls. And they terraced off. Soil formed back there and you have all this area patched off. You raise taro, you don't have one big patch, you have a lot of little patches. We replant. And while you're replanting one you're still living off the [other taro patches.] A lot of labor went into fixing these valleys up. And in Waimanu, from the ocean to the mountains, thousand of Hawaiians could live there. Waipio and Waimanu.
KD: When you were there, what kind of houses did you see? What were they made out of?

BS: Oh they were beginning to make wooden houses. But still you would see a lot of people living in grass houses.

KD: Like *pili* grass?

BS: Yeah, *pili* grass and other vegetation. And they made those houses right down to the ground [BS is referring to how the roofs of these houses would extend all the way down to the ground.] They put grass on like they put shingles on a house. The further down the roof the more water you have [running off].

KD: And you saw this in Waimanu?

BS: They were still living in some grass houses. You go back into Honopue, that's the last valley where the ditch starts. And not really the last one...the last valley that's cut down to sea level. Because a lot of them, even though they're pretty good size, they're not cut down to sea level. They jump over the cliff. There was an old guy living in Honopue and where I stayed with him for weeks sometimes. Finally he died and I buried him in there.

KD: How many people do you remember at any one time living in Waimanu?

BS: Not too many. By that time [there were] so many plantations that they went out to work on the plantations. There were some old enough and that [Waimanu] was home to them. And they don't want to go out, they just stay there and die there.

KD: Do you think there was more than 25 people living in Waimanu?

BS: Oh, at some time; that valley is terraced off from the ocean to the mountain.

KD: But when you were there.

BS: Twenty-five. Could be about that much. About 30 maybe.

KD: What do you remember the valley floor looking like?

BS: If you go way up into the valley, you'll see all these taro patches. Wherever they [the Hawaiians] could level off, because the patches had to be level. The whole bottom was like steps [terraces]. You can't afford to have all this [taro] in one big patch. You use the taro by patches. When you finish with this patch then you plant that again and go to the next patch.

KD: So you saw quite a few patches in Waimanu.

BS: All the way from the ocean to the mountains.

KD: What about rice? Somebody mentioned to me that they grew rice in Waimanu.
BS: At one time they went and planted rice I heard.

KD: Was that before you were going in there?

BS: Yeah. That's when the Orientals came here and went and planted rice. But actually, when plantations came up, they [Chinese] went and worked for the plantations.

BS: A few of those old guys like Kahikina who lived in there until he died. He lived in a grass house at the base of Honopue. I wish I could take you in there. He had a beautiful set-up there. You should have seen it. At the time he was living in a grass house. And not only grass, ti leaves. They made houses out of ti leaves.

KD: I never knew that.

BS: In fact, it's easier to make a ti leaf house because the leaves...they didn't take it off one leaf at a time. No. They broke the whole head of the ti off and laid it just like a big shingle. And you know how they shingle the house, they start from the bottom and work up.

KD: So these ti leaf houses, you saw them in Honopue?

BS: Yeah.

KD: Do you remember that in Waimanu?

BS: In Waimanu, they had some extra little houses outside, you know, to shelter something.

KD: What other kinds of plants or trees do you remember growing in Waimanu?

BS: Well, for one thing papaya, mangoes and by that time you had stuff like pears. But papayas, they always had papayas in the islands. That was part of the stuff they lived on.

KD: What about ironwood in Waimanu? Were those trees there before...

BS: No, no. I remember when Pololu never had any ironwood trees.

KD: So were those planted.

BS: That's all planted.

KD: Who planted them?

BS: Hawaiians. Because they're an easy tree...they'll keep growing even if you have a bare area. The seeds fall on it and the seeds grow anyhow.
KD: So what kind of trees were growing right along the coast at Waimanu?

BS: One was o‘hia trees. They’ll grow close to the ocean. The lehua. They call the mountain apple lehua too. But the real ohia is the one with the red blossoms. And you had yellow too. I was in charge of the ditch for 40 years.

KD: Besides doing some mapping for U.S.G.S. what sort of work would you do along the trail?

BS: Well, just keeping the trail open. This is the second wetest spot in the world, the Kohala mountains. And water that came from the heavens and watered the ground...and you had a lot of rain and growth and there’s a lot of that stuff that turned to soil. That’s why in the bottom of these valleys there’s a lot of soil. And anything would grow there. We lived in Honokane ike and we still have the lease on that place. We leased that valley from the Bishop Estate. And when the Japanese came and wanted to lease all this place they wouldn’t give them the valley. They give the valley to us. I raised all my kids in there. Luckily I had a wife that was a nurse so I didn’t have to worry about my kids. She was a professional nurse.

KD: How many kids did you have?

BS: Actually six grew up but I had seven. One died when he was little. Only one girl all the rest boys.

KD: Poor girl.

BS: No, no. She took care of herself! My mother grew up in Pololu but she became a school teacher too. Taught school in Pololu. That’s why she could live in the mountain. When my dad came and got a job up there...we lived in Honkane iki. We were the only family there from the ocean to the mountain. Honokane iki is the one with no waterfalls in there. Every available spot was terraced off for planting taro. Taro was what kept the Hawaiians alive. Taro. And ti leaf. That’s why you find ti leaf all over the mountain. Ti leaves were an important item in the Hawaiian...they could make hales, you don’t take the leaves off one by one. You break the head off.

[BS recalls great numbers of fish along the coast]

BS: You talk about fish! All kinds of fish.

KD: Like what kind?

BS: Well sometimes the akule would come in there by the schools. Then you can also find one fish that only the kings ate. The moi. They got to be pretty good size.

KD: Like two feet or eighteen inches?

BS: Oh yeah. Big moi. That’s one of the best eating fish. They live along the coast in the rough. White water. We just go down, throw in our hook, pull out a couple of moi and go home.
KD: Yeah, tell me about the kind of fishing you did. You mainly handlined? Or did you have a pole?

BS: We had a pole. We also caught *ula*. I caught an *ula* once that was 103 pounds after we took all the insides out. We weighed him the next day and that's how big he was.

KD: How long was he?

BS: He was almost a fathom long.

KD: This was right at the mouth of the valley?

BS: Yeah, right on the coast.

KD: Do you know if they're any fishponds in Waimanu?

BS: When I went to Waimanu there was hardly anybody there; [everyone had] just about [left] the place.

KD: So you don’t remember if there was any ponds?

BS: Oh they had their freshwater ponds. They had ‘*opae* and ‘o’*opu*. *Nopili* and *nakea* [Bill mentions that the Hawaiians ate only the *nopili* ‘o’*opu*. The napili fed on the moss growing on rocks in the stream whereas the nakea lived off worms and other organisms.]

KD: What was the condition of the trail in those days, say between Waipio and Waimanu?

BS: The trail was good, you could ride a mule. But not on this side. No trail from here. We were the only ones out there. We didn’t need to go, I went more for curiosity. Then I took the U.S. Geological Society out to map all this mountain. They didn’t even have a map for the mountain. Nobody else was that curious about the area I guess.

KD: In your time, did a lot of people go back and forth between Waimanu and Waipio?

BS: Oh yeah, when people lived there. Easy enough to go. Too bad you come here so late. You should have come here when old Kahikina was living in Honopue.

KD: What was his name?

BS: Kahikina.

KD: And he was an old Hawaiian living there?
BS: He had a whole settlement in there. He had several houses all grass houses. All grass and *ti*. They put it on like shingles.

KD: So this man, did he live with his family or was this a whole community of people?

BS: Oh yeah, yeah. Kahele. He raised a guy named Kahele. We called him Wawaeke kake meaning jackass feet. Because he was born without the front part of his feet. He had only the heel.

KD: How could he walk?

BS: You'd be surprised! That guy walked all over this mountain.

KD: Really? With crutches?

BS: Just walking. He carried a stick too as a cane. Kahele was his name.

KD: What was his first name?

BS: Kahele. That's the only name we knew him by. He was not Kahikina's son, he was raised by him. And Kahikina had no wife.

KD: Did they fish with net much?

BS: No. They had a throw net.

KD: What was it made out of?

BS: By that time this throw net was made from a fine cotton cord.

KD: So how many years total were you working on the ditch trail.

BS: I was in charge there for 40 years.

KD: So when was the last time that you hiked out there, what year, do you remember?

[Bill begins to stray a bit here.]

BS: Before [the trail was made] they [Hawaiians] never did come out on foot. Always by canoe.

KD: What kind of canoe?

BS: They had by this time some log canoes but then again it wasn't a practical thing because if you only had a few men... Those canoes are big and heavy. So they made canoes out of redwood. Flat bottom. Pointed on both sides with an outrigger on it.
KD: So you had taken the U.S.G.S. in there during the '40s?

BS: Yeah, before I took over the ditch job. See, my dad was in charge before. I was only a boy but I knew the mountain.

KD: So did your sons do any work along the ditch trail?

BS: Well my second son took my job there for a few years after I retired.

[The subject is changed back to fishing. Bill mentions catching squid and opihi on the shelf along the coast.]

KD: What about sharks?

BS: All along there. In fact, sometimes coming in there akule. The fish come in schools when they’re there, a lot of sharks are around trying to catch them. The akule. And we broke the law a little bit. We didn’t have net ‘cause it’s deep in there. So we took a piece of dynamite, maybe half a stick of dynamite, and threw it right into the school there. That goes off and the water is covered with fish. But still what you kill is nothing. You could see that whole school moving out there.

KD: Where would you get the dynamite?

BS: We worked for the ditch company, we had to have dynamite for all those trails, so we had all the dynamite we wanted.

KD: What year did you retire?

BS: 1969. I was in there for 40 years. I took over in the teens sometime.

KD: Like around 1915 or something? [According to his daughter Beatrice Ayoso, the actual date was 1928. From 1919 Bill was in and out of the mountains but was not actually working.]

BS: Yeah, yeah around there. I was in charge for 40 years. Then my son took over.

KD: What’s your son’s name?

BS: Dale.

[I find out that Bill Sproat is 87 years old; he was born in 1903.]

KD: Is there anything else you can think of about Waimanu that’s special or worth mentioning, like legends?

BS: Back then, at night when you stayed with these old folks, that’s all they do is tell stories. Because you had no T.V. or radio or anything like that and they tell stories at night. But you had to know Hawaiian, they [the stories] were all in Hawaiian. They couldn’t speak English a lot of these old guys.
KD: So you were fluent in both English and Hawaiian?

BS: Oh, well, my mother was a school teacher and she taught not only to speak it but read and write Hawaiian.

KD: She was half Hawaiian, part Hawaiian?

BS: Yeah, yeah. Half Hawaiian. Her father was Spanish.

KD: What about your father, where was he from?

BS: Missouri.

KD: Oh, he was a Mainlander.

BS: Yeah. He came in to help to overthrow the monarchy.

KD: Oh really!

BS: But the monarchy overthrew him! But actually, I asked him how in the world he ever came here. He said he left home. See, his folks settled Pennsylvania. Then they moved west and settled in Missouri. That's where he was born. He was the last in the family; eight of them in the family. Five girls and three boys. When he grew up he left home and he came west and I asked him how he ever came here. He said he came west because what he was going to do was he was going to come west get on a ship and go to Alaska and to look for some of the gold because they discovered gold in Alaska. That's where he was headed for. He said, when he got to San Francisco he was walking along the waterfront looking for a ship to go to Alaska, he said two men came up to him and asked him if he wanted to join the P.G. Army, the Provisional Government that overthrew the monarchy. These were the white men that came here as missionaries, and these were their sons. They were going to take the islands away from the Hawaiians. Because Queen Lioukalani didn't agree with the things they were doing, see. So he came here, and when he found out what they were up to, he said "No, to heck with you guys. Now you come here and you want to take the land away from the people that own it. We Americans don't believe in things like that!" So he got out of the army. He wouldn't go along with them. He and another guy - who was another farm boy like him - a farmer from Missouri, they bought themselves a schooner. They wanted to go to the South Seas. They hired an old sea captain, retired. They paid him to sail the boat to Tahiti for them. They started for Tahiti...they were out almost crossing the equator when a hurricane came up and hit them wrecked the boat. Broke both masts and they just drifted for days and finally they drifted clean back and wrecked on the Kona coast.

KD: Wow! That's a great story!

BS: That's how he stayed here. My mother met him in Honolulu because she was a school teacher she was sent to school in Honolulu and became a school teacher. They met down there and married.
KD: And she [his mother] was part Hawaiian?

BS: Yes. Spanish. Her father was Spanish.

KD: And her mother was...?

BS: Hawaiian. Born and raised in Pololu.

KD: And so eventually your father worked on the ditch trail?

BS: Yeah.

KD: When you worked on the trail, who were you working for exactly?

BS: It belonged to the Hind Family. And they owned the plantation out here. They needed the water to water their cane. So the ditch was quite a job too. It comes all the way from the mountain travels miles in the mountains, then it comes out here and from the valley over here all the way to Hawi. All time built on 1/10 of 1% grade. And there's more to it than you think. You go there and you see some places where those valleys are deep and they built flumes across there. I was in charge of that too for some years so I know every inch of the ditch. And that tunnel is built on 1/10 of 1% grade, almost a flat grade. But when you put 50 million gallons a day, coming through that tunnel, that's a pretty fast current coming through there. You can't walk up against it when you're bringing down 50 million gallons. You got to cut it down to 30, 35 million gallons about waist deep. Then, when you push a boat up through the tunnel, you walk in the eddy that's formed by the boat with a flat bottom. They take all the heavy stuff up through the tunnel on the boat. And stuff that you can carry on the mule, you carry on the mule. I was working on the boats going to the Mainland, but they came and got me to take my dad's place. They couldn't find anybody who knew the mountain. So they came looking for me. By that time I was just going to quit the boats anyhow because I met my wife. She was a Rodenhurst [wife's maiden name], see. Her mother was Hawaiian. And we had decided to get married. She had her training at Children's Hospital in Honolulu. She knew how to take care of kids. I never had a sick kid in my house. Her mother was pure Hawaiian, but her father was British. The Manu family [This was her (wife's) mother's family's name.]

KD: Manu as in bird?

BS: Bird. Never said what kind of manu though.

KD: That reminds me, what kind of birds do you remember seeing around Waimanu, Waipio?

BS: Oh yeah. When you go into the mountains, you find all these old Hawaiian birds. O'o different ones they made the capes from. 'I'iwi. There's more. On this mountain there were plenty. But gradually, they have these hawks, they killed them. Hawaiian hawks. But still they can't kill them all off. But you got to go in the
mountains...there's a lot of them, these birds suck the *lehua* flower, the nectar. I see them many times, see them flying from flower to flower.

KD: Do you remember any Hawaiian crow?

BS: Yeah. I can't think of the Hawaiian name. I guess I'm getting old. Before they used to just come right out. I never talk about it. I better start telling more stories so I can use the names of these birds. But I never thought anybody would come and check up on me.

KD: Any *koloa*?

BS: No. *Koloa* you have to go up in the open country. Like Waimea, you have *koloa*.

KD: Any stilts?

BS: Once in awhile you see the long-legged one. [BS is talking about the *i'iwi* and *mamao* birds next:] And they didn't kill those birds either. They just pulled out so many feathers...

KD: How did they catch them do you suppose?

BS: With sticky...You see these birds [come to] suck the *lehua* flower, and then they [Hawaiians] put it [a sticky substance] on the branches when they going to come and land.

KD: What was this sticky stuff?

BS: *Ulu* tree. Breadfruit tree [white sap]. Back in those days I talked to the old folks all in Hawaiian.

KD: Did you talk to anyone in Waimanu much?

BS: Oh yeah. Talked to all these people that come there. I stayed with him in his shack. I stayed with an old guy in Honopue a lot. He was almost like an *ohana* of ours. [BS is repeating the story about Kahikina here.]

KD: Did you do any other job after working on the ditch trail.

BS: Yeah. I stayed home and raised pigs [in Honokane iki].

KD: Those houses that you saw in Waimanu...were they built right on the ground or on any platform of any sort?

BS: They made rock formations to get it off the ground, to keep dry. Those walls were quite thick. You're higher in the center and the thing slopes away from the house the way they built the foundation. By the time the water gets down there the water can't come in, goes away from the house.
KD: Who owned the Hind Ranch?

BS: It's not a ranch it's just a water system. John Hind owned the ditch. Finally they sold out. The upper ditch belonged to the ranch up there. So the lower ditch they furnished the water for this district.

KD: If I'm in Waimanu and I want to walk to the next valley over, where do I start the hike...going towards Pololu?

BS: When you get down to Waimanu it drops straight down, maybe 75 or 80 feet to the bottom. So what I did was I stretched a wire across there and had it go down with a little runner.

KD: Was this on the Kohala side of the valley?

BS: Kohala side. This side, no trail. But then again, there's another way. There's a beach that goes along the base of this cliff and you could walk.

KD: What's a good time of the year to do that?

BS: Summer time. Because you have longer days in the summer time and you have less rain in the summertime and you have a calmer ocean because you don't have the winds like you have in the winter months. When you go there, you have to check that your low time so that low tide is in the morning. So you don't have high tide. It's been so long since I've been over there, but I heard that there's one part there the landslide came down for a couple hundred yards. Blocked off the trail at the base of the cliffs.

KD: Laupahoehoe iki.

[The interview is ended here. We've talked for nearly 2 hours and I get the sense Bill's a little tired. He takes me for a walk on his daughter's property to show me the gardening he's been doing. During this walk I take a photograph of Bill and learn that he worked for the Polynesian Cultural Center as chief of the Hawaiian village. He worked at the Center after the ditch trail job. His daughter Beatrice told me afterwards that Bill had retired from the ditch trail job in 1969 and then went on a Mission (I assume with the Mormon Church) for a couple of years, worked for the Polynesian Cultural Center for about ten years. Bill recently moved from his own house at Pololu Lookout to live with his daughter in Hawi.]
Biographical Summary for Samuel Mock Chew

Samuel Mock Chew was born in 1924 in Waipio Valley. He is the fifth of eight children in his family (4 boys, 4 girls). Sam's mother was Hawaiian and Irish; his father was a Chinese immigrant who was once a big taro farmer in Waipio. Sam helped his father with the family taro and poi business.

Sam went to Waipio Elementary School for grades 1 - 6 and Kukuihaele School for grades 7 - 9. Sam is a retired supervisor for the Honoka'a Sugar Company. He currently farms taro in Waipio and sells the leaves for making laulau to a market in Waimea.

Sam and his wife Hazel have eight children and live in Kukuihaele.

The interview took place at the home of Debbie Texeira (Sam's daughter) in Honoka'a. Present during the interview was Sam's wife Hazel, his daughters Debbie and Moana; his son, and 2 grand-daughters.]
KD: When did you first go into Waimanu?

SM: I went to Waimanu when I was thirteen years old.

KD: Did you go with your brother Wilfred at that time?

SM: Yeah.

KD: Would you go into Waimanu with your father or would you just go in as boys, as a group?

SM: My family. My brothers and my father too.

KD: How often would you go into the Valley?

SM: At least twice a month.

KD: Was your family growing any taro there?

SM: We had taro, but mostly we had pigs. Every two weeks we’d go and take food for the pigs, for the young ones.

KD: At the time you were going back and forth into Waimanu where were you living?

SM: In Waipio.

KD: So did your family ever actually own or lease land in Waimanu?

SM: No one could own the land; it was Hawaiian Homes. Wilfred leased land from Hawaiian Homes and he had to live there for one year. It was hard. But he had one person live there. Caretaker.

KD: For the pigs and house?

SM: Yeah. Filippino man. He stayed there alone.
KD: It must have been lonely for him.

SM: Well, I think he liked it. Because when he was living in Waipio, he was alcoholic. So when he went out there [Waimanu], he got away from all those things.

KD: When you went in [to Waimanu] with your father, did you do anything like go hunting?

SM: Mostly fished. We had plenty pigs; we hunt but not that much. It was too easy; the pigs were right there. But if we hunted we went on top of the ridge.

KD: On the Kohala side?

SM: The Kohala side for pigs. It's more of a sport there. The valley, too easy. The pig comes to you.

KD: When you first started going into Waimanu, do you remember how many houses there were there?

SM: I believe there was only two there or one. Before that, plenty houses. But later, they took all the houses and made them into one. That was a big building.

KD: And where exactly was that house?

SM: Close to the beach.

KD: At the bottom of the trail?

SM: At the bottom of the trail.

KD: And that’s the house that use to be the Burkes’?

SM: Yeah. But in their time it was smaller. We made it bigger.

KD: How did you get all the materials into the Valley to build?

SM: During that time from the ocean by canoe.

KD: Wilfred told me the story about the 1946 tidal wave and said you were with him on that trip.

SM: I was. It was pretty late and my other brother insisted that we go home.

KD: Was that Nelson?

SM: Nelson, yeah. And we both came home.

KD: Lucky thing!
SM: Yeah lucky. I was young. Going back on the trail at dark, not too easy. We stayed there overnight but the next day we came home. Not the same day go and come back.

KD: So you were in Waipio then when the wave hit?

SM: Yeah.

KD: Did your house there get hit?

SM: Our house was never hit. It was way in.

KD: I’d like to get an idea of what Waimanu looked like at the time you were there.

SM: At the time we were in there it was all open. You could see from one end to the other end. When we had that place we had to maintain it. Had to keep it clean.

KD: How did you keep it clean?

SM: When the trees would come up, the young ones, we’d go out every day and cut them [to keep the valley open]. And you when you looked, you could see right through.

KD: Not anymore.

SM: I haven’t been there in a long time. Overgrown now.

KD: Where were the old taro fields located?

[There’s a long pause while I show Sam some photos of my recent trip into Waimanu.]

SM: You were asking about hunting before...around this area is where we would climb up top [Sam is indicating the area near the first spring on the Kohala side of the valley.] Near the top is bamboo. Hawaiian bamboo. [Sam is also looking at a photo of the river mouth looking towards the Waipio side of the valley.] It use to be all open in here and there use to be a stone wall here that came across. Big stone wall. That’s where we use to raise the pigs. Around here, there’s a cave. [Sam is pointing to the same photo at a spot in the bottom of the pali.]

KD: Who made the stone wall?

SM: I think the Hawaiians. It was ten feet high I think. Not too big, about eight feet wide. We use to keep the bull in there. The breeding boar. And this boar would knock this wall down, you know. The bull would wander way up valley, towards the end. [Looking at another photo...] This is the fall they call Wai’ilikahi [the major fall on the Kohala side of the valley.]. And on this ridge here, I believe right on top, there’s pineapple [this is the ridge that’s just to the right of Wai’ilikahi falls.] It’s a Hawaiian pineapple.
KD: Do you suppose the Hawaiians planted that?

SM: I think so. The leaves are real long and the pineapple is real small. There’s a big field up there. Over here, there’s some mango trees, you go further up the pali, and you see a black spot. Right below there’s a pond. You get mullet up there. That was for the king. A little pond there, but it’s up really high though.

KD: How high up, a couple hundred feet or so?

SM: Yeah. It wasn’t a big pond.

KD: I’d never heard about this before. Interesting.

SM: You talk about taro patches...most of the taro patches are all about here [upper end of the valley]; and by the mango trees, there was some taro patches. But you can not tell now because of all the water coming down from the pali; covers all this. Right where the spring comes down, right there.

KD: How big was that patch?

SM: Small patch.

KD: Like twenty feet by twenty feet?

SM: More, more. If you go up past the waterfall, you’ll see patches. And if you go up this side [the left hand side of the upper valley], you’ve got taro patches. But they’re in places where the water can come in.

KD: Was taro ever grown in this part of the valley [the lower mid section]?

SM: This area was all grass. And these ponds are deep you know.

KD: Like over your head?

SM: Oh yeah! And you never had these trees before [SM is referring to the ironwood trees that currently grow along the beach]. Same with Waipio.

KD: So it was just nothing before?

SM: Nothing. All bare. Did my brother tell you about the old school there?

KD: In Waimanu?

SM: Waimanu. Around this area [points to the photo with the ironwoods growing on the beach].

KD: Right under the ironwoods.
SM: Yeah, they had a school. When I was there, there was a foundation.

KD: Do you know when the school was last used?

SM: I don’t know. Long time ago.

KD: I’ve also heard there’s a fishpond in the valley.

SM: That’s the one I was talking about. The one at the bottom of the spring. But there’s one more near Wai’ilikahi [near the head of the main valley]. Big pond, but now it’s all covered. But the pond is big.

KD: Do you remember about how big it was?

SM: Oh, it couldn’t be more than one acre.

KD: And was there a wall around the pond?

SM: I think one side, yes. A stone wall. Yeah. I think it must be there still.

KD: Should be. I don’t think the wave got that far back into the valley. But you mentioned before the pond by the spring was smaller...

SM: If you go there you look for an ulu tree near the wall, you know. Right by the ulu tree. Right outside. Hard to find though. It’s all filled up with dirt from the pali. But that pond had a wall right around.

KD: All the way around or just part of the way?

SM: Square. [He finds a photo that has some mango trees on the Kohala side of the valley.] That’s where the little pond is.

KD: Do you know anything about rice growing in Waimanu?

SM: I never see, but I know they had rice over there. If you go up valley [Kohala side] you’ll come to a place that’s real narrow along the swamp...but about fifty or hundred feet outside, there’s a cement...

KD: Like a cement platform or something?

SM: Yeah platform. That’s where they’d bring the rice. Those days they use to [unable to transcribe]. And same in Waipio, in a couple places they had but over there they had one. But I know they planted rice there.

KD: And was it the Chinese that made this cement platform?

SM: Chinese.

KD: When did they stop growing rice in Waimanu?
SM: I don’t know. But in Waipio too. I never see.

KD: And so they’d carry the rice out by horseback or mule?

SM: I believe horseback. I don’t know. I know poi they took out by canoe to the Kohala side. Too bad that guy who live over there died, huh?

KD: Who are you thinking of?

SM: Kala. And Kahele. John Kahele, he was good. He knew all the gulches and I never write them down, the names of the gulches. He knew all the waterfalls in Waimanu. He named [could name] every gulch from Waipio to Waimanu. I walked that whole valley [Waimanu] when I was young

KD: So when was the last time you were in Waimanu?

SM: Oh quite long ago. In the seventies I think. Late seventies.

KD: Did you go in at that time with your brother?


KD: In the ocean or...

SM: The river.

KD: Did you fish in the river with a pole or net?

SM: Across net. How we do it is we set the net alongside the grass [bank?] follow the river down and the fish would come and go here [SM is pointing to a bend in the river] then set the net across. Near the ocean where the water come out. Plenty fish.

KD: Like what kind of fish?

SM: Mullet. In the ocean *moi*. I’d go around this bend here too.

KD: Laupahohoe iki?

SM: Plenty fish there too.

KD: Would you walk across to there?

SM: No we went by boat. But all rocks there though.

KD: What about birds. Were there any native Hawaiian birds in the valley?
SM: They get small birds. But only in the mountains you see them, on top.

KD: Do you remember what kind they were?

SM: I don't know.

KD: Did you ever catch 'o'opu?

SM: Oh yeah, there's plenty. But we hardly go for 'o'opu. Because in Waipio you have that. But you know what they call "V"? The black shell? We use to get plenty. The lower part [of the river] gets a different type [of "V V"] and the upstream gets a different kind.

KD: Oh, so there's two different kinds?

SM: Yeah. The upper one is a good one. But you got to go way up there.

KD: Way in the back of the valley.

SM: Yeah, yeah.

KD: Is it a bigger one or just different?


KD: Maybe the ones farther downstream are smaller because everyone picks them...

SM: No no. They're different. The same as opihi. They hang onto the rock. There use to be plenty but I don't know now.

[Sam's wife Hazel (HM) interjects a few thoughts]

HM: They use to catch a lot of moi there. But now days you don't get as much.

KD: Maybe too many people fishing.

HM: I think so. But they use to bring them back by the tubs. Go out on outrigger canoe and bring them back. I think the road [trail] going to Waimanu now isn't too good.

KD: I think Forestry tries to maintain it but when it rains it just gets washed out.

[Sam's daughter Debbie explains that when the hunters used to use Waimanu Valley they cooperated with each other and maintained the trail and built little shelters along the way.]

HM: Sometimes they used to take a pick axe and haul a saw over on the animals and cut down branches and trees that fell over.
KD: Was your house [in Waimanu] built directly on the ground or on some sort of platform?

SM: On the ground.

[Sam’s wife Hazel tells about when she went into Waimanu by canoe during the early 1940s.]

KD: Was Wilfred the first one in your family to actually lease land in Waimanu from Hawaiian Homes?

SM: Yeah. After Burke.

KD: One thing I didn’t quite understand was... did Wilfred go into Waimanu as soon as he got the lease in 1935 or did he wait for awhile?

SM: He had to right away.

KD: He hung onto that land for quite awhile then.

SM: Yeah. Are they [the State] going to just leave the land like that [as is]? 

KD: Yeah. It’d be nice if some people could go in and farm taro but unfortunately I doubt that will ever happen. Could you give me some information on your family background? Your dad was pure Chinese?

SM: Yeah.

KD: Was he from China originally?

SM: Yeah.

KD: What about your mother?

SM: Hawaiian.

KD: She was pure Hawaiian?

SM: No, part Hawaiian.

KD: Your father’s name was...

SM: Achew Mock.

KD: And your mother’s?

SM: Matilda Thomas.

KD: So is it just you and Nelson and Wilfred?
SM: Yeah.

KD: No girls?

SM: Four, four [four boys, four girls]. I have another brother in Honolulu, Moses.

[Debbie asks Sam if there were any heiaus in the Waimanu.]

SM: No I never seen any heiaus. But there was one place that had a rock...that was in the image of a man...but I think it’s in Kona now.

KD: Who took this rock?

SM: My father told me that one guy came from Kona and wanted the stone and they brought it out on mule and that’s a couple hundred pounds you know. It was a fish stone. [This may be the fishing shrine that Hudsun (n.d.) refers to in his archaeological report]

KD: Oh, it was like a fishing shrine or something.

SM: Yeah, yeah. In those days there was a lot of fish there. Now [that the stone has been removed], not as many.

KD: Where was it located [within Waimanu]?

SM: Right by the house.

KD: Do you remember when it was moved?

SM: Before the forties [1940s].

KD: And some guy from Kona wanted it?

SM: Yeah.

KD: Maybe it’s good fishing there now.

SM: Our house was close to the river and from the house you could see the fish. Plenty fish. You just kept the fry pan ready; you just go and get them and come back.

[Sam starts talking about the music and singing you can sometimes hear in the valley.]

SM: I could hear drums playing. Me and my other brother were young at the time and that guy that was living there [the Filippino caretaker]...but that whole night I was covered with my blanket [over my head].
KD: How old were you?

SM: I was young. But I never believed that until I heard it. But that guy that lived there he heard.

KD: And it didn’t bother him?

HM: He says he shut his door.

SM: He was an old man. Old Filippino man. He was brave though.

HM: He use to tell us stories too, you know. He use to tell us about this outrigger canoe that use to come up the river with a torch. Spooks.

[Debbie says that John Kahele had lots of stories because he lived in Waimanu. She said that people weren’t just travelling back and forth between Waipio and Waimanu but from Waimanu to Kohala as well. "Waimanu was the meeting place." The people from Kohala made their own trail to get to the valley.]

SM: When we use to go into Waimanu by canoe we used to go in towards the Kohala side where there’s sand.

[tape turned over]

KD: Where did you go to school?

SM: Started in Waipio, then Kukuihaele two years, then never complete school.

KD: Up to what grade?

SM: Nine. It was hard life then. Had to get up 4:30 in the morning, climb up the hill [from Waipio to Kukuihaele] to go to school.

[Debbie explains that Sam and the other Mock Chew kids lost their mother when they were young. So the boys learned how to cook and clean house.]

[Sam’s daughter Moana mentions that it’d be good if her father could get into Waimanu again. She mentions the possibility of him going in by helicopter. Sam points out that it would be easier for him to show me where old taro fields, fishponds, grave sites, etc. are located.]

[Debbie asks Sam about the plane crash during the 1960s. They took the old-timers who knew the valley to help look for the plane.]

SM: The helicopter took me right up to the waterfall. Dangling. They took two [men] at a time. We look, look.

KD: So did they find the plane?
HM: He showed them the spot but they couldn’t reach them.

SM: When we use to go camping in Waimanu we had plenty food. All we took was salt, sugar, shoyu, frying oil, maybe even flour. We had pigs too.

KD: How many pigs did you have?

SM: Plenty pig. In the morning you see them all going out, then at night they’d come back [to the pig house]. We had cow.

KD: About how many cows did you have?

SM: Oh, forty cows. [Also] ducks, chickens, turkey. Turkey is hard to breed ‘cause there’s too much mongoose. Even the chickens. Use to feed the ulu to the pigs. There’s a wild taro. We go about two, three to four times a week. Way in there [the back of the valley]. Bring them on mule and come back. Kalua. Put them all in one imu. That’s what we feed the pigs.

HM: Did Eugene Burke have much to say about Waimanu?

KD: Yeah. He remembered quite a bit from his father’s forestry days.

SM: I don’t think the father had that place [in Waimanu] too long.

KD: No, I don’t think so either. Do you know if koa grows along the trail between Waipio and Waimanu?

SM: No. No koa trees.

KD: Do you remember any grave sites in Waimanu?

SM: Yeah.

KD: Do you remember where they’re located?

SM: Kohala side near the spring.

[Sam’s wife Hazel thought that there probably weren’t very many gravesites as there was mainly just the Kahele family living there.]

[It was also mentioned that since Sam was one of the younger children in the family, he had to stay at home and help his father grow taro and prepare poi which is the reason why he was unable to go on to Kamehameha school like his older brothers.]

[The interview is ended here. I will definitely try and get Sam and Eugene Burke to go into Waimanu by helicopter and show me where some of the old buildings, fishponds, taro patches, and grave sites use to be located. I’d also like the two of them to describe their house in Waimanu (i.e. size, number of rooms, etc.). I think by actually getting them in the Valley and seeing it again after so many years, many]
more recollections and experiences will come to life. I believe that asking the two men questions while actually being in Waimanu will be extremely valuable and useful and that much important information would be recalled that might not otherwise be brought up during a typical interview.]
Appendix 1. Wilfred Mock Chew’s Sketch of Waimanu Valley during the 1940s.
WILFRED MOCK CHEW: Current applicant who states that "Yes, I am one supposedly on the waiting list." Mr. Wilfred Mock Chew's letter is attached as Exhibit "C." Relevant documents furnished by the Department are attached as Exhibit "C-1."

A research into the files of Mr. Mock Chew revealed that he acquired a 99-year pastoral homestead lease on January 14, 1935, to 200 acres in Waimanu Valley, Hawaii, through a transfer. The lease was originally issued on September 26, 1929.

On April 1, 1946, a major tsunami hit the Hawaiian Islands and correspondence in Mr. Mock Chew's file states he suffered extensive losses including his residence and animals. On September 12, 1956, the Department received a letter on behalf of Mr. Mock Chew from the then Mayor of Hawaii County to exchange the Waimanu pastoral lot for a pastoral lot in Waimea. The Hawaiian Homes Commission at its meeting of October 8, 1956, told Mr. Mock Chew "to surrender his Waimanu area and wait and take his chance for a homestead at Waimea, and it was so ordered." Mr. Mock Chew complied by submitting in writing a surrender of his Waimanu homestead lease and filed an application for a Waimea Pastoral lease. Both documents were received by the Department on November 21, 1956.

The Hawaiian Homes Commission's minutes of November 30, 1956 reflect the following:

"Report was made that Mr. Wilfred Mock Chew, lessee of Lot 1, Waimanu, had surrendered his vacant area in accordance with the understanding he had with the Commission at a meeting held at Waimea, Hawaii, and had filed an application for one of the four pastoral lots in the upper Kamoku section. The Executive Director stated that applications for the Kamoku section were closed on September 30th, and Mr. Mock Chew's application had come in after that date and could not be considered. MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Brown, seconded by Mrs. Smythe that the surrender of Lot 1, Waimanu be accepted; that Mr. Mock Chew's application for a pastoral lot at Kamoku cannot be accepted because it was filed after the closing date of September 30, 1956. Carried unanimously."

The Department notes that as a result of the Hawaiian Homes Commission's decision of November 30, 1956, Mr. Mock Chew's application of November 21, 1956 was not accepted and therefore not placed on the Waimea Area Pastoral Waiting List. A review of the waiting list does reveal that Mr. Mock Chew again submitted an application for a pastoral homestead lease and placed on the Waimea Area Pastoral Waiting List as of July 17, 1962.

FINDINGS: Mr. Wilfred Mock Chew was not among the 187 pastoral applicants who constituted the 1952 Waimea Pastoral Waiting List. It can be asserted that he was a homestead lessee to 200 acres of pastoral land at Waimanu in 1952 and presumably would not be eligible to apply for the 1952 Waimea Pastoral Waiting List.

However, the matter of non-acceptance of Mr. Mock Chew's application of November 21, 1956 should be further investigated as to its rationale, propriety and basis in law. In the face of the decision of October 8, 1956, it is difficult to establish that Mr. Mock Chew surrendered his pastoral lease on a promise of a pastoral lease at Kamoku. It is likely, but certainly not conclusive, that Mr. Mock Chew may not have been eligible to submit his application of November 21, 1956 had he not tendered a surrender of his homestead lease held at that time. The rejection of his application, however, casts a cloud of suspicion over what may have been the Commission's good intentions.

Appendix 2. Minutes from the Hawaiian Homes Commission's November 30, 1956 meeting.
RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Department recommends that the Hawaiian Homes Commission informs Mr. Wilfred Mock Chew that he was not an applicant on the 1952 Waimea Pastoral Waiting List.

Commissioner Kamai moved, seconded by Commissioner Ahuna, to inform Mr. Wilfred Mock Chew that he was not an applicant on the 1952 Waimea Pastoral Waiting List. Carried unanimously.

2. The Department recommends that the Hawaiian Homes Commission approves an investigation of the basis upon which Mr. Mock Chew’s application of November 21, 1956 was rejected and a report of the investigation be submitted to the Hawaiian Homes Commission by May 25, 1984 or sooner.

Commissioner Kamai moved, seconded by Commissioner Ahuna, to approve an investigation of the basis upon which Mr. Mock Chew’s application of November 21, 1956 was rejected and a report of the investigation be submitted to the Hawaiian Homes Commission by May 25, 1984 or sooner. Carried unanimously.

ACTION

GENESIS LEE LOY: Current lessee of a residential and agricultural homestead lot. Mr. Lee Loy claims that he should be placed on the 1952 Waimea Pastoral Waiting List by virtue of his applying for a pastoral award in Waimea.

Mr. Genesis Lee Loy’s letter and relevant documents are attached as Exhibit “D.” Department-furnished documents are listed as Exhibit “D-1.”

FINDINGS: Mr. Lee Loy was among 427 applicants for the 1952 Waimea pastoral awards which resulted in the Hawaiian Homes Commission establishing a qualified list of 187 applicants for pastoral lots. Mr. Lee Loy’s application was not included among the list of 187 applicants who survived the Hawaiian Homes Commission’s review process. The Department notes that when Mr. Lee Loy applied for a Waimea pastoral lot award, he held a 99-year residential homestead lease at Keaukaha which was awarded to him on August 22, 1949.

At issue is whether Mr. Lee Loy was among the 187 pastoral lot applicants who constituted the 1952 Waimea Pastoral Waiting List. Exhibit “B-1” reveals that his name was not listed.
Appendix 3. Map with Lily Chong's notations of house, school, and taro fields ca. 1914. [Note: Lily assumed that the closely spaced contour lines indicated the extent of the valley sides rather than the steepness of the valley walls]
Appendix 3a. Lily Chong's letter which accompanies her map.