

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY - HAWAII CAMPUS
Behavioral and Social Sciences Division
Laie, Hawaii 96762

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

NARRATOR: DAVID and ABIGAIL KAILIMAI

INTERVIEW NO.: OH-126

DATE OF INTERVIEW: 21 June 1980

INTERVIEWER: Myrna Kitashima

SUBJECT: Mormon History in Hawaii

TRANSCRIBER: Myrna Kitashima

DATE OF TRANSCRIPTION: 23 June 1980



INTRODUCTION

David Keola and Abigail Kahanu Kailimai are second generation members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Both were born and raised on the Big Island of Hawaii. David's father, David Keola Kailimai, labored as a missionary throughout the islands with President Castle Murphy and President E. Wesley Smith, mission presidents, in the early nineteen hundreds.

While David served as the branch president for the Honomu Branch during the 1950's, he was instrumental in requesting and receiving huge supplies of food from the Church welfare storehouses to help members during the long sugar strike. He was later told by Hawaii Mission President Arthur Haycock that he was the first to request and receive such assistance through the welfare program. Abigail's testimony and example of Latter-day Saint teachings reflects in her husband and children.

The interview was conducted and this introduction written by Myrna Kitashima as part of an oral history workshop held in Waipahu Stake. She spoke to the Kailimai's during one of their visits to Honolulu.

Kenneth W. Baldrige
28 May 1981

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>TAPE</u>	<u>TRANSCRIPT</u>	
<u>Side A</u>	<u>Page</u>	
000	1	David and Abbie both born on Hawaii
113	2	Activities of David's father, David Keola Kailimai, in Iosepa and in serving missions on Hawaii
217	3	Abbie's Church activities as a youth; memories of David's father
310	5	Church organization on Hawaii
377	6	Missionaries; Church programs; Pres. Heber J. Grant at conference in Hilo
432	7	Family association with Pres. Castle H. Murphy
538	9	Abbie's childhood & youth; sealing in Hawaii Temple; Church activity formerly and at present
635	11	Relief Society activity; family memories; her baptism
707	13	Reference to experience of David's father with David O. McKay and Hugh J. Cannon
739	14	Abbie's counsel to current generation
764	14	END OF SIDE A
<u>Side B</u>		
000	14	Abbie's testimony; account of their marriage and subsequent sealing
129	16	END OF INTERVIEW
130	16	Addendum: Abbie reads of her father-in-law's experience at Pulehu
206	17	END OF ADDENDUM

[000]

Int: This is Saturday, June 21st, 1980, and I am Myrna Kitashima about to interview David and Abbie Kailimai of Hilo, Hawaii, at their room in the Waikikian Hotel, Waikiki, Hawaii. David, tell us when you were born and when were you baptized?

DK: I was born at Kalaoa which is [in the area] known today as Papaikou, [fivemiles north of Hilo] June 12, 1908. I was baptized when I was eight years old by my father, known as Brother Keola Kailimai which is today known as David K. Kailimai. I was confirmed by him in the chapel known as Aleamai Church in that area.

Int: Was Aleamai a branch?

DK: It was a branch at that time; we had membership of sixty-eight people.

Int: And who was the branch president?

DK: The branch president during that time was David Keola Kailimai.

Int: Your dad.

DK: Yes.

Int: Can you recall at that time the membership and how the Church was operating?

DK: Well, I couldn't say much because I was young but I do remember we had Sunday School and we had Sacrament [Meeting], and it was not divided as we have today, different auxiliaries meeting together. They had two meetings, Sunday School and Sacrament [Meeting], and that's all. And most of the meetings are held in different homes; they call it cottage meeting. Every night they have cottage meeting. I remember once my dad went to Brother Charles Hanohano and they had a cottage meeting. I waited for him, usually the meeting we have today is hour, hour and a half; they have meeting anywhere from two to seven hours. I waited for him, I slept in one of those--what you might call--a showcase. Young as I was, I fell asleep, and he was looking for me 'till two o' clock in the morning and I wasn't there. I didn't know that; I was really sleeping in there. I got a good spanking for sleeping in that showcase. So I can say the Church progress's from people like that.

Int: Abbie, would you give us your full name and tell us where you were born and how you were baptized?

AK: My full name is Abigail Kahanu Kailimai. I was born on January the 1st, 1915, at Hakalau, Hawaii; that's on the Big Island. I

was baptized when I was eight years old in a stream just below from where I lived. I can remember my dad baptizing me and because my toe came out of the water, he had to rebaptize me, so I was baptized twice.

Int: And who confirmed you?

AK: My father did. See, in those days, it seems like they bless the children when they are eight days old and they baptize the children when they are eight years old. So we have followed that in our family. All of our children with the exception of one was baptized on their eighth birthday.

[100]

Int: Abbie, how many children do you have?

AK: We have five children.

Int: And how many girls and boys?

AK: We have two girls and three boys. The last child, who is a girl, was adopted.

Int: I see. They were all born in Hawaii?

AK: All born in Hawaii.

Int: Brother David, you mentioned that your dad was the branch president; can you tell us your experiences in observing him in his work for the Lord? Did you accompany him wherever he went?

DK: Well, at the age of twelve, I traveled with him all over the district of Hawaii, and later date, we took a trip to Salt Lake. I was sealed and I received my patriarchal blessing in Salt Lake Temple. And we were asked by Joseph F. Smith to return to Hawaii since they were going to build the Laie Temple, and we were asked to go back and help finance this project in Laie. So we were going to stay at Skull Valley which is known as Iosepa, but President Smith asked us to come back. We are needed in Hawaii, he said. So we came back to Hawaii and resided in Papaikou, our former home, and we stayed in that area 'till, oh, some forty years later when my dad moved [to] various places of the island to preach the gospel. He was asked on a mission some fifteen, twenty years, to the time of President [William] Waddoups, President Castle Murphy, and all those who were after the Murphy's and the Waddoups', he has served under.

Int: Now, you mentioned Iosepa, that's in Utah?

DK: That's in Utah.

Int: What brought about this possibility for you folks to move to Iosepa?

DK: Well, there were some people in Hawaii, they were at the Kalopa Homestead; they were asked to go. Brother John Kamauoha and ourselves and quite a few others, I was young I couldn't remember, but these I do remember because we come from the same district, and we were asked to see if we could help colonize the Iosepa which is known today as Skull Valley.

Int: What year was that?

DK: If I do remember somewhere around 14, 1914 or before that.

Int: Auntie Abbie, you remember something about that time?

AK: Well, he was eight years old when he received his patriarchal blessing and that he was in Salt Lake at that time. So that means, if he was born in 1908, that was 1916 when they were there at Skull Valley.

Int: Were there a lot of people from Hawaii going?

DK: Not too much. Now, on our trip that time were just two families. I just don't remember the name of the other party that went with President Castle Murphy and his family and our family. I think Abbie should remember the name of that man.

AK: There was a name of this one sister, Annie Hoopiaina, who lived in Keaukaha. Her family was one of those that was up in Skull Valley, if I understand correctly.

Int: Did many of them return to Hawaii?

DK: Well, some years later they returned because they couldn't raise anything there. With the snow, nothings grows there even 'till today. So we were asked to come back; I don't remember what happened to the rest of the people there.

[200]

Int: You mentioned too that your father came back with you. During his time as a branch president, was he called on a mission and was that part of your experience, to go with him?

DK: Since I was the only son they had, I [was] attached to my father, I traveled with him when he was asked to go on a mission. In 1921, he was asked to go to Kauai and I followed him to Kauai and we stayed together. And he was at Charles Kelekoma's home; I know them pretty well.

Int: Abbie, will you give me some of your recollections of your growing up in the Church and observing David and your family in the Church activities.

AK: My parents were very active in Church and so, naturally, we went along with our parents to Church. I can remember the whole day meetings like David mentioned earlier, there's a long meeting and

so we would [sometimes] go and sleep at the Kalani's home in Honomu while we're waiting. They're waiting for their parents and we're waiting for ours, too.

Int: What branch was that?

AK: Honomu Branch. And I can remember as a youngster holding the position as a Primary secretary when I was just twelve years old.

Int: Did they have any leaders?

AK: Yes, they did. My oldest sister was our Primary president and from our home at Hakalau we would walk about two miles or little bit more than two miles to where Primary was held.

Int: Was Primary held on a separate day?

AK: It was held on a Saturday.

Int: Were there very many missionaries there at that time?

AK: There were missionaries, not very many. When we lived in Hakalau where I was born and as a youngster going to grammar school, I don't remember having missionaries in our home, but, I can remember having mission presidents come into our home and spend the night in our home.

Int: Who was the mission president at that time?

AK: I think President [W. Francis] Bailey [sic., Eugene Neff (1922-26), according to her narrator check] was the mission president [1936-1939] when I was a youngster.

Int: I see. David mentioned his father's closeness to Murphy, is that Elder [Castle] Murphy?

AK: It was Elder Murphy to begin with. He, I think, if I recall, correctly, he was down here on two missions and then he came down as mission president and then also he was our Laie Hawaiian Temple president.

Int: Can you recall any experiences that Brother Kailimai had with his father on missions or that you had where the missionaries came in to assist or to help the people get started in the branches or did they do that?

AK: When David's father, Brother Kailimai, was branch president for this Alemai Branch that he mentioned, missionaries would come, not as many as we've had in these last few years, but they would come and he would take them with him, especially to help bless a sick member. And there were times when these members may be possessed--you know, with the evil spirit--and he would take these missionaries to go and assist him. They would assist him

and they would go through the experience of knowing that there was such a thing as an evil spirit, and yet before that they just didn't think that there was anything like that.

Int: It seems like Brother Keola Kailimai, as a missionary and as a member of the Church, did a lot for the people or for the membership there in that area.

[300]

AK: He did. And then when we became a district, we always called him as a "trouble shooter" because the mission would pick on him or the district would pick on him to go from branch to branch to sort of--if they had any problems he would be sent there so that he could help them solve their problems or see what was wrong, why did this happen and he would go in and try to be of some help to them.

Int: About how many branches do you recall there were?

AK: Well, the district took the whole island.

Int: There were no wards?

AK: There were no wards at that time. Our ward did not come--we did not have a stake until 1968, I think, but there were all branches and so the whole island was what we called a district. And they would have a council of twelve, twelve men, and they would be sent out. Now, we had Keaukaha Branch, we had Kukuau Branch, and then we had a Honomu Branch, and then going out towards the country we had the Laupahoehoe Branch, and the I think there is one in Kohala and possibly one or two in Kona and one in Waiohinu. That was it.

Int: And the twelve councilmen that belonged to the district, did it cover the whole island or ...?

AK: It covered the whole island, it covered the whole island. And in the Sunday School, Brother William Enos, Sr. was our Sunday School district superintendent and I served under him as his Sunday School district secretary for about, at the most, eight, ten years. I worked with Brother Bill Enos, as we call him. And he would send two by two to each branch that his counselors would go to. So if a counselor is assigned to Waiohinu that means I and whoever I pair off with go along with that counselor to that branch that he was assigned to. And I served with Sister Aina Keawe. She and I were partners; she was Aina Kekoolani at that time and she and I were partners, and they would send us to different branches under the Sunday School program.

Int: You mentioned that you were a teacher, Primary or Sunday School teacher at age twelve?

AK: Primary secretary.

Int: Primary secretary. Your service to the Lord began early in life.

AK: Very early because even at that young age I remember leading the songs in MIA, and I think that's where I got my beginning with this chorister work.

Int: Was your whole family members of the Church?

AK: My whole family were members of the Church. My father, my mother, my sisters, my brothers; some were inactive but we're all members.

Int: Do you recall--was there a large baptism of members going on at that time or during those years or after, through the missionary efforts?

AK: Quite a number of baptisms through the missionary efforts.

Int: Were there also building programs for chapels going on?

AK: There were, but not on the scale that they have the building programs on today--on a small scale. I know the chapels were built; whether they had labor missionaries sent out, I don't know. I can't remember; there must have been some kind of missionary work there.

Int: David mentioned he traveled with his dad to Kauai. Were they sent to the other islands or do you know if the members, the Priesthood members, were called and sent away from their families?

AK: I don't know about Priesthood members. I only know that Brother Keola Kailimai was sent as a missionary to Maui, to Kauai--I can't remember whether he went to Molokai; he may have, but I can't remember if he went to Molokai--and then, of course, on the Big Island itself. My dad also went on a mission to Kona. I can remember a Brother E. K. Simmons, Judge Simmons, who was also sent on a mission, but I don't know of any other brothers from Hawaii--the Big Island--that were sent on missions other than these men.

Int: What was the family life like as members of the Church over there? Did you have some shows? Did the Church bring a lot of families together closer?

AK: It seems like we were just like one big happy family. Although we may not be related through blood, but because of our affiliations in the Church we were just like one big happy family.

[400]

Int: Was there anything in the programs of the Church for the members at that time? Was there anything different that was done then that we do today as far as MIA or holding meetings together, or did all the branches at any time come together for a program?

AK: Yes. We had our conferences like we have today and all of the branches would come into Kukuau and we'd have our conferences there.

Int: Do you recall any Apostles or visiting brethren from Salt Lake?

AK: Yes, Heber J. Grant came to visit us.

Int: You heard him personally?

AK: Yes.

Int: What was your impression or were you too young at that time?

AK: No, 'cause the conference was held up at Hilo High School, if I remember correctly, and our second son, Wesley, who was named after E. Wesley Smith [president of Hawaii Mission, 1919-22], sang the song "A Mormon Boy". And I can remember the girl who accompanied him was, well, we call her Miki Meyers and they had sort of practiced together. So when she started playing and he tried to sing, he wasn't in tune and then he would look at me as if to blame me for him not being able to get started and so they'd get started again and the whole congregation just roared, you know, just smiled and laughed because of this little incident, and he went right on and sang the song beautifully.

Int: Oh, that's good. President Grant, any others that you recall coming to visit?

AK: Well, when David and I were married and we had our children, we moved out to Paauilo. Of course, we've had President Murphy quite often at our home because of this close kinship that we have with President Murphy and his family. We've had President Harold B. Lee in our home, spent the night with us. I think we've had another Apostle of the Church come to Hilo; I can't remember his name right off hand now but it will come to me later on.

Int: Tell us some of the experiences of President Wesley Smith. Is he the one that was close to your family or President Murphy?

AK: He was close, but President Castle Murphy was really close to our family. I can remember this incident that was mentioned, told to us not by Brother Keola himself but President Murphy related this incident to us trying to show how close they were, how their spirits worked together. When he had gone to the post office, and picked up his mail and in it he was ordered to go back to Utah. And so he thought he'd better come down and talk to Brother Keola because he wanted to let him know that he was going home, called home. And when he went to see Brother Keola who was at that time working in his taro patch, he said, "Keola, I came to tell you..." and before he could continue on, Keola said, "I know what you came to tell me, you came to tell me that you're going home." And so I guess that startled President Castle Murphy and he said, "How did you know; who told you that? I have just come from the post office and I just opened my mail now", and Brother Keola said, "I know, the Lord just told me, revealed it to me, that you are called home".

Int: Did he stay at your home many times?

AK: Oh yes, President Murphy stayed at our home many times.

Int: About what year did he leave Hawaii, do you know?

AK: Oh, just a minute. David and I planned--see, David was not very active in Church for several years. And every time I would talk to President Murphy, I said, "What am I going to do about getting David active?" He would say, "Don't push him; he'll one day come into the Church on his own steam; just don't push him". So I kept remembering that. And then he became active, and we were going to the temple and I said, "Oh, President Murphy, we're going to the temple now, you can [help us do our] work in the temple", and he said, "I'm sorry". He left just a week before we went in and we went in for our endowments on July 18th, 1947. So President Murphy left just a few days--he could not stay longer--he went home about a week before we went to the temple [according to R. Lanier Britsch, President Murphy served his fourth and final mission to Hawaii as Mission President, 1944 to May, 1947].

Int: Then he was here during the war years, President Murphy.

AK: Yes.

Int: During the war years, what was the situation of the Church in Hawaii? I mean, did the Church help to keep the people together or give them direction?

AK: Yes, yes, the Church did give direction to the people.

Int: What kind of programs did they have? Along the welfare lines or...?

AK: You know, the welfare program in the mission, or in the island on Hawaii, I don't know too much about. Somehow it did not--well, there's no need for it; maybe I can say it that way, but it was not used much in the mission on Hawaii like we see it today in the stakes where help is given to the members.

Int: Perhaps, were the families close there? Did they share....?

[500]

AK: The families were close, with this ohana system or the Hawaiian system, they always shared with one another. So, and I guess the pride the Hawaiians have--you know the Hawaiians are a proud people--and even if I did not have, I would never go to the Church and ask. I would try to do with what I do have or make the best of it.

Int: You mentioned that because of the close relationship with President Castle Murphy, one of your sons was named for him.

AK: That's right. Our oldest son was named after Castle Murphy and Castle Murphy named his son after Keola Kailimai and so we've

exchanged names. Our oldest son is named Castle and his son is named Keola. And I can recall when our son went on a mission to Hong Kong, I can remember him writing home to us and telling us that, oh, he has to live up to his name because he's bearing the name of Castle Murphy also the Kailimai name after his grandfather who was a great missionary. So he had to live up to his name both as Castle, after Castle Murphy and Kailimai after his grandfather's name.

Int: Has he returned from his mission?

AK: Yes, yes. He got back from his mission in 1963.

Int: You lived in what area in Hawaii most of the time?

AK: In Honomu.

Int: You're still in Honomu?

AK: Still in Honomu. After we got married we moved into Hilo. My parents owned property in Hilo and property out in the country. And one day my parents asked me which property I want and I said, "Well, the one in Hilo". And David said, "The one in the country. We can raise animals there, we can go down to the stream for opae, and then we can go down to the beach and fish". So I told my mother, "Oh, I changed my mind, I'll take the one out in the country". And so there we've been, you know.....

Int: In Honomu.

AK: In Honomu.

Int: Today in Hilo there are wards.

AK: Wards and one branch.

Int: And your stake?

AK: We're a stake [Hilo-Hawaii Stake]. There's two stakes on the Big Island.

Int: There's two stakes. So the Church has grown in your life time.

AK: It has grown.

Int: How about your school years; where did you go to school?

AK: Well, I was born, as I said, in Hakalau and so I attended the grammar school right there in Hakalau. And then we moved from Hakalau to Honomu, which was the next little town towards Hilo, and I went to the junior high school and to the Hilo High School. Graduated there, came to Honolulu and went to two years of business college and that's my education. Then back to Hilo and worked and then raised a family.

Int: That's beautiful. Abbie, do you recall the years that the temple was built down in Laie and your experience then.

AK: Yes, I was a young girl. I was just four years old but I remember some of the things. I remember coming on the boat from Hilo to Honolulu, riding the train all the way down to Laie, getting off the train and we stayed with some member. I can't remember who they were. But I know there were sand dunes here and there in the Laie area and we stayed with this one family. And I remember going to the temple and going into this room with children. And I think that was when all of the Primary children were asked to be there in a kind of a conference-like or a dedicatorial program of some sort, but I remember going into that room. And I also remember being sealed to my parents at that time because I told my mom, "Were we in this room with a low chest-like think and daddy was on one side and you were on one side and so-and-so was there?" And she said, "That's right". So I remembered that we were sealed.

Int: So as a four-year old, you did remember that?

AK: 'Cause I was born in 1915 and the temple dedications was 1919. I was just four, but I remember going to the temple and being sealed.

Int: Do you recall many members coming down from the other islands?

AK: Yes. It seemed like that boat was just full of a lot of members that came over for the dedication.

Int: In seeing the Church grow in Hilo, the area you're from, can you compare what it is like today as compared to when you were growing up as far as membership or feelings or experiences in being involved in the Church programs?

AK: Our family has been active in Church. When I say our family, my parents, my uncle, Keola Kailimai. We've been active in the Church so we've taken part in all of the programs that the Church offered us. And I enjoyed the MIA program because there were a lot of getting together, contests, singing, debating, and all of that, that we enjoyed and we have some of that today, too. We don't have too much of the contests like we used to do, contesting against different branches, you know, and winning the singing contest and so forth. That we really, really enjoyed. But I don't think the work is too much different because it seems like the program has developed and grown more now than ever before with new ideas, but the principles are the same. When this new YM-YW program that the Church tried out, and let the youngsters, you know, work and just be advised by the advisors. Well, I guess it worked alright but I was more for the old MIA program because it involved all of us.

[600]

- Int: OK. I wanted to bring up this point, did you feel that as the Church progressed that there was at times some hesitation in accepting new programs?
- AK: Yes, I think there was some hesitation in accepting. They accepted it but not as readily as, you know, if it was something that they really wanted to get in whole heartedly. They accepted, but, a little slower than....
- Int: It took time.
- AK: It took time, right.
- Int: Were you involved or was your family involved in any of the building of chapels in your area?
- AK: Yes. When they build the Kilauea Chapel, Brother David was there to help. But I can't remember if members of my family--like I'm thinking now of my dad or my uncle--being involved with the building of the chapel. They may have been involved but I can't recall. At the present time David is the Hilo-Hawaii Stake physical facilities representative [on the stake high council] so he's in charge of all the buildings in our stake. And so, he has for the past several months, especially these past several months, we've been trying to renovate, repair, paint, changing carpets, and drapes, and cleaning up floors or redoing floors for our chapels and so he has been very busy with that work.
- Int: Is that involving all the chapels....
- AK: All the chapels in our
- Int: In Hawaii?
- AK: No, not all the chapels in Hawaii 'cause we have two stakes. But he's in charge of the chapels in our stake only which takes in the one at Waihinu, Pahoa, Keaukaha, three wards in one chapel at Kalauea and the Honomu Branch.
- Int: What is your present position?
- AK: Well, my present positions are, I am now the music leader for the stake Relief Society. In the Honomu Branch, I am the activities chairman; also I teach the Social Relations lesson in Relief Society, and I am also the garment representative for the Relief Society, and the music director for the sacrament meeting.
- Int: Were you ever involved in helping when the volcanoes erupted, that last big eruption? Was the Relief Society or Priesthood involved in it from any ward that you know of?
- AK: Well, there was one eruption down at Pahoa, and I think our Relief Society in that Olaa area at that time did become involved

and helped but not none of the other wards because with our eruptions we run to our eruptions and not run away from it. [laughter] So there is not much help with, other than that one incident at Pahoa.

Int: I recall that at Pahoa it did go near enough to the homes where they evacuated.

AK: But with the tidal waves, our branches, our wards did get involved and so a lot of our storage items which was stored for years and not used, all of a sudden became depleted because we used it for the....

Int: Was that the tidal wave back in 1946, that great wave that came and practically wiped out the frontage?

AK: Right.

Int: That was in 1946, I think.

AK: 1946--yes, we helped there, and then there was another one several years after that we were of help also.

Int: Abbie, can you tell me in remembering your childhood if your family practiced the ohana system?

AK: Yes, my family did practice the ohana system. We're very much a family, a close-knit family. In those days we had what we call pule ohana [family prayer] and we have that today, too, but maybe we don't use the word pule ohana but we had pule ohana in those days. And we also held cottage meetings. I remember cottage meetings especially, for we all go to the cottage meetings. But with the pule ohana, that's where I learned to read Hawaiian because then they would get us to have the Bible, a Hawaiian Bible, and make us read and correct us there with pronunciation and that's where I learned how to read Hawaiian. And well, I don't know if other dads were like my dad but when he gave the prayer it was a long prayer and we would start sitting up and then we'd kneel down, then we'd crouch over and turn over on the floor and before he says "Amen", many times we're asleep before he says amen.

Int: On your pule ohana, how were you called together for this?

AK: Well, it was sort of a habit. It was known in our family that after we had dinner and the dishes were washed time was given for us to study. And then at a certain time, maybe it was eight o' clock or, I can't remember exact, seven o' clock, we all already knew, that Dad was already in his chair in the parlor already looking through his either Book of Mormon, or the Doctrine or Covenants or the Bible and so Mom would just remind us, "OK, come on, pau you studying, let's go and have our ohana". And then if we had some more to study, we'd finish up, you know, after that.

- Int: Was that the custom for many of the members of the Church, do you know?
- AK: Yes, it was the custom and we didn't have to be told, we just knew that every night we are going to have pule ohana.
- Int: Were all the children in your family baptized?
- AK: All, all of us were baptized.
- Int: Were you baptized in fonts?
- AK: No. We have a font in the Honomu chapel but we're all grown up by then so when we were little and at baptismal age we had to go down to the kahawai or down to the stream just below our home and be baptized there in the stream. It was like a fun thing, you know, 'cause right after that we'd swim around but it was just like a fun thing and so we keep it up [laughter].
- [700] Int: I think that's good. Abbie, Keola Kailimai seems like he was a very staunch member of the Church as a missionary and many positions that he has held. Can you recall and share with us some of the things you know of these experiences?
- AK: Just especially one experience that he had up at Pulehu. We know that Elder George Q. Cannon worked up there at Pulehu and this experience happened quite some years back when Brother Keola was on his mission. He was there at Pulehu with Brother E. Wesley Smith; President David O. McKay was there at that time; there were some others. I can't recall the names of these others. But, in a book called "Ka Elele o Hawaii" that was written by or put together by Brother Eldred L. Waldron who was mission president in Hawaii, he relates the incident. It's recorded there in Ka Elele. President McKay himself relates of the incident that happened there and I would rather send you a copy of that experience so that you can take it with President McKay's words, how he relates of that business rather than I mention it to you and I may forget things here and there. I would rather that it comes right from Brother McKay's written report of what actually happened there. So I'll mail that to you.
- Int: Then when I receive it I will record it on this tape as written, as a record from your family concerning the incidents and also the Church history at that time.
- AK: Because, to us this is very sacred and important for a member of our family who was on a mission for over twenty-some years off and on, not straight mission, you know, but off and on total to about twenty-some years, to be priveleged to see this vision, this handshake that you'll read about in that when I send this sheet to you. To us, that is really something very sacred.
- Int: And also, you wish to do this to set the record straight.

AK: Yes. [see page 16]

Int: Alright. Now we're coming to the end of our interview, Sister Abbie Kailimai, and I would like to ask you to give counsel to the generation that will be coming after us in your experiences and testimony of the gospel.

AK: When I was a youngster in growing up in my childhood days into womanhood, getting married, and becoming a parent--in my young days, our parents could counsel us, give us advice and we would listen. Today, I find that not very many of our youngsters are doing that. They will talk back to their parents and want to go their own way, do their own thing. And I would like to counsel our young people especially, that they take in the counseling voice of their parents, to listen to them and to take part in the Church programs. To live up to the laws and the commandments of our Heavenly Father because he will bless us if we obey his commandments and if we do not obey, we have no promise.

I want to bear my testimony to the truthfulness of this gospel. I know that God lives and that he hears and he answers our prayers. And if we can endure to the end and I know we will receive much blessings from our Heavenly Father because all blessings predicated upon obedience to his laws. We should take heed to the counseling voice and to the messages and instructions that are being given to us by our prophet because the time is short and we need to obey and to listen.

[764] END OF SIDE A

Side B
[000]

AK: The Lord has been good to us. I know that if we get on our knees and we pray to him in humbleness and in meekness and pray sincerely, he will answer our prayers. We should be grateful and thankful to our Heavenly Father for the sacrifice of his Son and all he has, for his atonement for us which will make it possible for us to return back into the presence of our Heavenly Father. And I know that God lives, that he loves all of us and that we are truly his children. And I pray that he will bless us all in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Int: Abbie, there's one thing more I would like for us to reminisce about; tell us about your marriage.

AK: Well, David was adopted by my uncle, Keola Kailimai, and so that means he dropped his natural father's name. He was born as David Keamo and took on the name of David Kailimai which makes him a first cousin to me because both of our fathers were brothers, not by blood, but by adoption. And so throughout the years we got to know each other, and finally we decided we wanted to get married. And of course, my parents were very much against this; they didn't think this was a wise thing to do; they didn't like it because,

well, with the Hawaiian style that's your cousin. You don't get married to your cousin. But I explained to them, yes, he's my cousin but he's not a cousin by blood. So we approached President Murphy and we told him our situation which he knew and he said, "Alright, I'll go talk to your mama and dad". So he made it a point to talk to my parents and explain to them that, yes, although he was adopted into the family there's no blood ties there and what better thing to keep the families together, anyway [than] to be married. My parents gave their consent and David and I were married.

Int: So President Murphy was instrumental.

AK: He was instrumental in making it possible for us to get married.

Int: And who married you?

AK: An Elder Brown. I can't remember his first name, but an Elder Brown married us in our home in Honomu where I lived with my parents. We were married there right at the family home.

Int: Now, tell me when you folks came down to the temple.

AK: We were married when I became twenty-one years old and that's in 1936. And I worked hard trying to get David to become active, and so in 1947, we came down to the temple and we were endowed and we were sealed on the 19th of July, 1947.

Int: I think that's beautiful; were your children at that time sealed to you?

AK: We had two children. Our first two children--two boys--and we have them sealed to us. Then for eleven and a half years we didn't have any children and then our first daughter was born and then a son, and because David's patriarchal blessings says, "Sons and daughters will come to your home", we had just the one daughter, so we went and adopted us another daughter. [laughter] And so we have two daughters and three sons.

[100]

Int: Share with us your experience in going to the temple for the first time.

AK: You know, when we went to the temple for the first time, going through for our endowments and then especially after--we were sealed the night following, it seems like we just got married, you know; it's such a very good feeling, it's just like we just got married. Not like we've been married and then we just go through the temple, seems like we just got married. It's a wonderful feeling. Really a wonderful feeling.

Int: Abbie, I would like to thank you and David for sharing with us this time away from your family reunion here in Honolulu, the Kailimai family reunion. And we appreciate this very much in

sharing the experiences of your life growing up in the Church in Hilo, Hawaii or in the Hilo area at that time.

[129]

END OF INTERVIEW

[At a family dinner later that evening, Abbie Kailimai read the experience of her uncle and David's father, Keola Kailimai as told by President David O. McKay.]

[130]

AK:

Because of his business commitment, David is not able to continue this portion of the interview. So in his absence I will read from the booklet, Ka Elele, that was published by the mission during President Eldred Waldron's time as a mission president. The Ka Elele recorded events and experiences in Hawaii. I feel this must be done to correct any misinterpretation and straighten the record of the "handshake". The time is in February 8, 1921. The group is at Pulehu, Maui, near the place where the first branch of the Church was established in Hawaii.

We are standing under a huge old pepper tree listening to a beautiful prayer from the lips of President David O. McKay. With him are President E. Wesley Smith, son of Joseph F. Smith, Elder Hugh J. Cannon, son of George Q. Cannon, Elder Samuel H. Hurst and David Kailimai, a faithful Hawaiian elder. While these five servants of the Lord are united in humble thanksgiving, a strange feeling of peace and holiness seems to settle gently over this historic spot. A wave of uneasiness sweeps simultaneously over the little group as if their sub-conscious minds had unitedly discovered that this is no ordinary occasion. Watching them closely, we notice Brother Kailimai suddenly lift his head and open his eyes, he seems to stare straight into space. Wonder, fear and doubt are written upon his handsome old Polynesian face. Now his head lowers and his eyes are reverently closed.

As President McKay concludes his powerful prayer, each eye seem to seek the faces of the other worshippers questioningly. All felt that something wonderful happened. David Kailimai broke the awkward silence by explaining the cause of his strange action. In vision, he saw two hands united in a warm clasp of friendship. Thinking that Elders Hurst and Cannon were shaking hands, he had opened his eyes but he soon discovered that these two were standing far apart.

President McKay, visibly impressed, now spoke, "The veil must have been very thin and you have seen through to the existence beyond mortality."

But Elder Hugh J. Cannon interjects with a note of feeling, "There was no veil at all!"

Later, as the group is enroute to another town, we hear this explanation from the lips of Brother Kailimai: "I must have seen Hugh shaking hands with his father, George Q. Cannon."

"No", replied Elder McKay, "We were all allowed to see the same manifestation. Those hands were the hands of Goerge Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith, the two fathers in the presence of the two sons."

[200]

We rouse ourselves from our present reflection to re-read an incident of the present era. It seems to reassure us that the same loving Father is directing the affairs of his servants today just as he did in the past! [from a chapter entitled "Historic Highlights" by Elder Richard W. Madsen in Ka Elele o Hawaii: The Hawaiian Mission in Review, n.d. [1942], n.p., p. 20-21.]

Int: Again, I would like to thank Brother and Sister David Kailimai from Honomu, Hawaii, for taking some time to share with us their experiences as members of the Church. Mahalo nui loa.

[206]

END OF ADDENDUM