INTRODUCTION

David Kupele was born on the island of Maui in 1897; he has been a patient at Kalaupapa for nearly seventy years and plans to be buried there. This interview was part of a series done with Kalaupapa patients as an outgrowth of interest by Dr. Ishmael Stagner to do research in the area. Brother Kupele was 82 at the time of the interview but he seemed quite alert. Following the transcribing the transcript was returned to Ku'ulei Bell a friend and fellow Latter-day Saint, who went over the material with him and answered the questions which were raised.

The transcribing was done by Cassie Wilhelm, a student at BYU-Hawaii. Dr. Ishmael Stagner then listened to the tape and made necessary corrections. I then listened to it and made minor editorial changes. Another student, Tammy Au, did the final typing, Diane Stant coordinated the processing and prepared the Table of Contents.

Kenneth W. Baldridge
Director
9 April 1980

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END OF INTERVIEW
Today is Saturday, February 24, 1979. We're at the Kalaupapa Branch at the LDS Church. We're meeting with David Kupele who first arrived at Kalaupapa in 1915 and has lived here ever since. In attendance also are Kenneth Baldridge, Ku'ulei Bell who helped to arrange this meeting, and I'm Ishmael Stagner.

Brother David, where were you born and when did you come to Kalaupapa?

DK: I was born at Huelo, Maui and born January 7, 1897.

INT: 1897.

DK: 82 years.

INT: You're 82 years old? When did you come to Kalaupapa?

DK: 1914, I went to Kalihi Hospital, first place. I stayed there, had to stay there for one year. And you had to take the treatment. And if you don't take the treatment they had to ship you to come over here--Kalaupapa. So I didn't like to take the treatment 'cause the treatment was not [perfected]; they were trying on us. So, I didn't like the idea for take the treatment. And those who took the treatment, most of them died, 'cause they trying to find the cure. And it's not guaranteed, the kind medicine they giving us. Was IQS for drink [a medication used at that time], that's the name of that liquid, and Chaulmoogra, Chaulmoogra Oil [warmed and mixed with other vegetable oils, this was an ancient remedy for leprosy in India and China. It was used at Kalaupapa into the 1930's with minimal success. Mauritz, A Brief World History of Leprosy, (rev. 1943), p. 130]. But I didn't like to take. At first I tried and I didn't like the taste, then I hear them talking about, "Oh, they trying to find out if they can find the cure," da kine medicine what they giving us.

INT: Who decided to have you come to Kalaupapa?

DK: Oh, after you don't take the treatment they have to send you to Kalaupapa.

INT: And so you came over here. How did you feel when you learned that you had to come to Kalaupapa?

DK: I was sad. They said when you come here you cannot go home. Had to stay over here all your life, until--. If you get cured then you can go home. But, they didn't; most of them died; some of them after they get the medicine from Carville Hospital, then people was going home little by little. But, like us, well, handicapped, you know, once
we can always think alike. At first, I was working; I don't know, might be my eyes sort of cataract. The ear cannot hear good, I don't know from what. So, I retired '74, 1974.

INT: What was Kalaupapa like when you first came here in 1914?

DK: Oh, a lot of entertainments, fire. Holidays, we have sports and that's the thing that we forget home, you know. We enjoy ourselves and don't think too much about home. And every holiday we have sports right in front here, you know. Just here [laugh]. Horse race, and we start the race from way down to the cattle trod, you know, when you come into the settlement, that's where they start the line. And I used to be one of the jockeys.

INT: You were one of the jockeys?

DK: Yeah, I was young that time, I like horses.

INT: Now, when you came, was there electricity here at Kalaupapa?

DK: What was that?

INT: When you first came here, was there electricity here at Kalaupapa? Did they have electricity, and electric light, and all that?

DK: No, no moa [more], no moa. Gas and oil. Kerosene stove. Kerosene oil stove. It's not [indistinguishable].

INT: Where did you live when you first came here to Kalaupapa?

DK: Lived in the Baldwin home, Baldwin home, the place you was looking at.

INT: Now the Baldwin home was for single men?

DK: Yeah, single men, married men get no wife. You go out there and stay with the boys in this place.

INT: How many lived at Baldwin Home when you were there?

DK: Oh, eighty-two, something like that. All together the boys and the brothers, you take care the Catholic brothers. When I see them, they not sick, you know, they kokua like you. And I always think to myself, "Gee, someday they going [be] sick like us," you know, because this kind sickness they said, contagious. And one of the brothers, his name is Brother Louie, he's the one that dresses us, the sores, you know, and he's the one with the wheelchair [wheelchair used as cart for moving supplies, dressing] he had to pack 'em. And carry 'em to the bathroom, big bathroom, for all the boys. The tubs are all lined up two sides and wash'em, take off all the dressing, cut 'em off and take off. And right next is the dressing room, where they dress the sores. After get them bathed, washed and carry'em to the dispensary and dress the sores. I see [him] put his finger in the ulcer, you know, some of them get big kine ulcers [helpers were to use gloves for "trimming" the sores]. I think they find out if the bone is rotten. You know,
sometimes, the bone get rotten. If you don't check up, maybe some day maybe you get--I've seen so many of them get the poison, and go up [into the body system].

**INT:** What did the poison leg look like once the leg got poisoned?

**DK:** Oh, yeah, like the cord [trouble with cords in the leg], 'cause I used to be one of the ambulance driver and the hospital was not enough room, so you had to stay home, those who not very serious, not too bad. So, they had to stay home, and I had to go pick 'em up, take them down, dress, pay, take 'em back. But, those who really bad, cannot walk, they had to stay in the hospital. This brother, when we look at, you know, we just come in the settlement, and we look how the brother was doing. We take a peep how he was doing; we walk away from there. We talk about the brothers they going get sick someday, this kind sick. But no, they didn't get sick until they died or they went out. And today they find out that sick, you know, make me think of--you know--I live this old way and I think back. Maybe this is the thing that the Hawaiians they wait to die so they thought they would, like how always, you get in trouble with the land outside Hana. Maybe it's the thing that you'd lease the land to them, to the plantation, and it is an end. My grandfather died. Then they like own the land. If I didn't live this long, nobody would know about the land we have in Hana. My niece was telling me, "Eh, you know all this name, by here, look at that?" She don't know, of course. I know my grandfather; I see him; before he died, I know him. He died 1903. I was a small little boy yet at the time. I use to run down to my grandfather's house, grandmother's house. Back and forth to my father's house or my mother's house. And my niece was asking me if I know the name of this person. I look, "Gee," I said, "this is our grandfather." Then he start telling me about Hana land. Oh, get Hana. Then I start to think about all the Hawaiians that died over here [Kalaupapa]. When I first came over here, most Hawaiians. Oh, talk about Hawaiians, only few of other nations, but most are Hawaiians.

**INT:** And they were mostly Hawaiians that were here at the settlement?

**DK:** Yes, that time.

**INT:** You remember any non-Hawaiians, haoles or Japanese or Pakes [Chinese]?

**DK:** Few, few. Not very much, then afters, later, then Japanese started to come more and Filipinos.

**INT:** What did you do for entertainment and for social activities over here?

**DK:** Oh, we had entertainment; we had sports and had entertainment, in the hall here [i.e., Pascoal]. The other hall [previous to Pascoal] here before I cannot talk about over there. I'm talking about when I was here. Then they when build this [Pascoal] hall here. I think this hall was 1917, no '18. Built out there already. And they opened, they have the opening of the hall and they had entertainers, you know,
a lot of entertainers. And we was in the club, that fishing club, and we exercise, you know, and next time we almost hit the ceiling, you know. The boys circle like that and the boys scared. Almost reach the ceiling. Oh, I never know that I can exercise that high. And we all was young that time.

INT: And strong.

DK: The old folks came up then, and plenty people too, that time was nice. Really nice.

INT: Now, when you came over here, was the settlement still at Kalawao or was it already beginning to move towards Kalaupapa?

DK: I think about half. Half of the settlement was down here already. So they want to move all of the whole Kalawao down here. But, Brother [Joseph] Dutton, he's one of the brothers. He was in the navy, something like that [Dutton was a Union veteran of the Civil War. As a Catholic priest at Kalaupapa he served from 1886 to 1930. He died in Honolulu March 26, 1813 and is buried at Kalawao]. But after the war when he come back, his sweetheart left with the other person, so he gave up this life and come here and stay with the patients. Everytime, I think, everytime the battleship pass here, right in front here, shoot the gun. Salute or something like that, I don't know. Just because Brother Dutton was in the navy.

INT: Tell me about the old Federal Hospital over at Kalawao. What do you remember about the old Federal Hospital?

DK: This is what I hear, you see. They usually have a patient go inside there. They take patient to check the patient inside there, but they could not come out. If you go in there you had [to] stay right inside that area and people don't like when you take away them from home. They come here, then they stick you in there, yeah, in a small little place like that. So, they didn't like the idea, so they all move out, and then the building went without nobody, till I came. When I came here, the cook was still here, the cook that cooked for the doctors. And there were two doctors over there, was Dr. Maguire and another doctor [Dr. Wayson]. He use to come to Kalihi, the other doctor when they like.

INT: Did the doctors stay here very long when they were assigned to Kalaupapa?

DK: Oh, before the lady doctor [Dr. Grace Hedgecock] that stay here, used to stay over here, Dr. [William James Arthur] Goodhue [Served as resident physician at Kalaupapa, 1902-1925. He died of leprosy in China in 1941.]. And he had his wife, his wife Tina Meyer, daughter from Meyer up here, maybe you should go up. When I came here, he had three children, two boys and one girl. And now one of them is a doctor, Willie Goodhue. And the daughter is Marty Goodhue, married already.

INT: Were children allowed to stay here at Kalaupapa?

DK: No, the doctor keep his children right in a small little backyard he get. That's how we have a road go right around Kalawao by the beach way. He was one that take his children every afternoon, take 'em up to
Kalawao around the beach way. And he used to pay the people to clean and make a trail down the beach way going to Kalawao.

INT: If the patients had children, what would happen to the children after they were born at Kalaupapa?

DK: They have a nursery down the old [Baldwin Home in Kalaupapa. It] has a hospital [actually an infirmary for babies] right there [gestured], and nursery. They have ladies that come in to take care of their husbands. When you ask your husband get sick, come over here and you want your wife to come in. You can ask the Board of Health if your wife can come to take care of you. You come and you take care of your wife, your husband or your wife. Some walk down here to take care of their children.

INT: David, tell us about some of the jobs that you had while you were working here at Kalaupapa.

DK: First, I would clean up the settlement, all our settlement over here. Clean up settlement. Then because of, I believe, because when you work--what's today?--when you work, you had to work, 'cause people usually talk when you work, you have to work, you know. And no sit down like some of the boys. From that time on I decided to keep on work, work. They sit down; I keep working. Then I see the boss go to the chair and I think he not feeling well, then I think he betta' go home. If he sick, eh, 'cause he sick too. So, they work little while and they stall. I keep on working, then all of a sudden they give me little better job, you know. Go mason [i.e., get a job as a mason]. Before that one old church used to be a jail, you know, they make one jailhouse because too old. All stone, stone right around. And I had to build up the jail. They were going to build one jail right down here someplace, but because too far from the hall, so they want to take 'em up close to the hall in case anything go wrong in the hall, just easy for the policemen to take 'em and throw 'em in jail. Before they make their own liquor, they use to make beer, wine--no, no, swipe wine. [Laugh] Make swipe. They no sell liquor in here, you know, that time, so they sneak and make swipe. They catch 'em and take 'em to court, throw 'em in jail, or they bust 'em down. And I remember when we was building this new jail, they use to pick up the rock, 'cause they had one small stone crusher, you know, not too big. And some of the boys, you know, they lazy, they put big rock. When they put big rock, it stuck, [laugh] broke down. So, they send us go pick rock, down the river, all different kind sizes, you all want. The bigger size all in the other bag, had to pick that one so that mix more easy. So, I never forget, a lot of us boys that time was picking up rocks for the jailhouse. And we find the barrel of swipe, you know [laugh] and so the workers, they drink. They like swipe, you know. They run home go get gallon, they come back with the gallon. Some of them get drunk on the job. Anyway, that's how I was starting to get a better job, 'cause if you work, work. You don't have to work hard while you keep on moving. That's how they get better job, a better job. See, they sent me up the pali. Before, they used to have a silent picture, and when the
talkies started coming in, oh, they want to make money out of the picture, you know. Entertainment committee over here formed to make money for entertainment, so they order the picture and I had to up and bring 'em down. And the Ladies' Social Club, they great help too.

INT: You used to ride up and down the pali on a horse?

DK: Yeah, nearly every day.

INT: How long did it take you to ride up and ride down?

DK: Oh, it all depends if I have to hurry up 'cause sometimes when you late, you have to hurry up. Take about little while, hour and a half. Oh, if you take your time, if you early, you take about one hour, give your horse time to rest. We have one resting place, two places, and everytime when I take people up--I used to charge them $3.00, cheap. And when they go in front, I follow them, you know. Their horse stop, I tell them, "No, this is a resting place." The horse knows, they go there, then they stop. And the same when they go the next stop, they stop. And the same when they go the next stop, they stop. So, when the horse stops, that's the resting place. "Oh, yes, okay!" So, we have entertainers come in, Genoa Keawe them, they just come down.

INT: Most of your entertainment came from topside?

DK: They had to come down through the pali because no boat. So, when they had boat, so they sometimes come on the boat.

INT: When you first came to the settlement, how did you come into the settlement? Did you come through the pali or did you come on the boat?

DK: No, we came on Likelike, way back Likelike, the Mikahala. I came on Likelike and left town about 8:00. I neva' can forget that. The silence like, you know, when you leave home. And when we came over there, where they land the boat, yeah; we had to stop quite far out. Was about 300 feet away from the shore. And we see plenty people, get plenty people, they know the shipment, they come down the line. Way down here, all the way out, full of people. Oh, you see them enjoying themselves, very happy. Lot of people, yeah? When they started bringing us up on the boat, you know when we come close to shore, we look up, gee, the kine cases [patients], we no more this kine cases today. Heavy kine cases, heavy.

INT: Were you scared when you first came and you saw the first patients?

DK: Yes, I was scared, true I was scared. And I don't blame the people that come here. I was a patient myself, and I see--yeah, I was scared. Even after they check us up, the girls had to go to Baldwin Home. Some, they have family here already, they go with their family. And when we left for Baldwin Home, gee, on our way going up, only few houses, you know, and we was wondering, "Gee, where they going take us?" Down there they said, "We going take you folks up the Baldwin Home." And to us pretty far up, that way from town. Gee, kind of feel
sad, you know. We was living down here where get plenty people, but up there, then we see the houses, you know. "Oh, there's a lot of houses here," [i.e., Kalawao] but half of the settlement already down here [Kalaupapa]. Anyway, when time for eat, we have lunch. Big dining room. Round table, and there's a couple of small tables. And not full, you know. They put you between empty spaces, yeah, the patients. They put us all one place, all right, yeah, but no, they put us between the patients. Every day I scared so I cannot eat. I don't blame people if they scared, but after coming out and see these kokuas living with their wives or with their husbands, then that thing get over, you know. So why we get scared? They seem to eat together with their wives, so that's the thing that worry you know, I get worry. And then I start to eat, they put down, I eat, same plate.

INT: What did the diet consist of when you first came over here, or what did the patients tend to eat the most of? Was it Hawaiian food? Was it hospital food?

DK: Not too much like today; we have more than what we had before. We just had stew, that's all, one, that's all.

INT: You had stew; did you have poi?

DK: Whatever you like, poi or rice, that's all. Not too much sweets. But they have a banana field, that's the thing. Oh, I like banana, I don't know why, but that's why my whole family plant banana. They plant a field, and we use to work in there. First, we went work in Waikolu because I know boys come up there. They still like to work because clean yet. So, six of us boys went to Waikolu to work in the taro patch.

INT: Do you remember the flu epidemic in 1918?

DK: Yes, that's right. A lot of people died. Four was the highest, four died one day. I neva' see that much before. I was driving the ambulance that time and they drive hearse four one day. Horse, there's no car, no automobile. They have the horses for pull the hearse. And I had to go out to the stable and harness up horses for pull the hearse.

INT: When somebody died during that time, did you bury them right away or did you keep them for a funeral or what did you do? What was the procedure? After someone died, what would take place?

DK: Oh, they have people that dig the hole, they get paid for dig the hole.

[Interruption]

Good thing. The people that came up here from Kalihi--they come up here once in a while. And then when they have entertainment for them because they feel happy. Our people feel happy because they come up here enjoy, they prepare music and maybe that's the cause [of them catching the flu]. Some of them sick, get the flu and that night, we all get together, mix up, dance. Then the next day, plenty of our people get the flu. And I never forget because I use to plant a lot of watermelon in my yard, you know, my whole yard, where my house is now. The whole yard in watermelon too. And I plant one-third of the yard, you know one-third, that's all, one month and the next month, another third,
and the last one. Three months, once start with fruit, ooh, a lot of fruit. I eat watermelon and I feel better. Everytime I feel better. People use to come and buy watermelon. If they no like buy, I give. Neva' mind, take 'em, take 'em—cause they get flu. I give them to take home. Because it helps me, so maybe can help them.

INT: Was it hard to bury people? The soil over here looks very rocky. Was it difficult to find places to bury people over here?

DK: They have a Catholic yard over here for grave and they have our Mormon church. So, if you a Mormon, they take you there, or if you Calawina [Calvinist, i.e., Protestant] they take you right next to the house. And that's how, what you call... The one who dig the hole, they better know he had to go either one of the Mormon church people to show where to lead, 'cause had to line up, some for the Catholics and the Protestants.

INT: What was the test that was usually done to determine if someone had leprosy or not? How did you find out that you had leprosy?

DK: I don't know about others, but in my case, when I was a small boy, I was just going school the first year; they didn't vaccinate me. My second year, then they already let us know the day before that the doctor was coming. "The doctor going come tomorrow and you, and you," pointing to all the ones that neva' have vaccination. So, I think that if the teacher neva' tell--our father was a patient; died in Kakaako. That's where the old settlement use to be, Kakaako. The teacher went tell the doctor, his name is Dr. McKonkie. I neva' forget I get sick from this doctor. I neva' forget him.

INT: Dr. McKonkie?

DK: McKonkie. And this teacher went tell the doctor that this boy's father died from this kind disease, Kakaako. So, the doctor went put me on the side, then he started to vaccinate the rest of the ones that supposed to be vaccinated. Come to my time, he had a piece of bone--look like a bone but I don't know. It's white, white like bone, to me. About one inch long, half-inch wide. He went get one thing, a tube; from the tube, squeeze on top then he spread 'em up. When he came, scrape, and put papers on and he said, "Stand." I want go sit down like the other rest, they went sit down, but me, no. Make me stand over there. And he said, "Bumby [later] I'll let you know when you can sit down over there." Quite a while I stand over there with that thing on top. That night I had fever. I don't know what fever was, anyway. But when I come over here and get the fever, make me think of that time only one thing. I feel for my finger, when I was here. I think, "Gee, the same kind when I had, when they went take vaccination." Put vaccination on me. I neva' go school for all that time. I was start red spots on my face. That night, my mother worry. The doctor far, you know, Makawao. If you been Maui, Makawao. And I stay Kuelo, you know Kailua, going to; that's far, eh? And no car. No car to call the doctor or tell the doctor come. There was no automobile those days. Oh, they worry and they do anykind. They try roll the bed. They don't want to go off. I know why. Then afterwards the red spots went come on my face and on my hands--both hands. And then on my legs. I cannot go school because of
the fever and oh, one week, I think, I start to go to school. But when they talk about when this spots come out then they said--my parents they talk about it. I remember when I was small, I still remember, they said "This is Molokai sick." When you go over there, pau, you no can come back.

INT: Ma'i Pake [Chinese sickness].

DK: Ma'i pake. We use to talk about, sometimes, mai Kalihi. And then sometimes they sai ma'i pake. The try to put this kind sick on the Chinese because the Chinese came over here from China to work on the plantation. They blame the Chinese. Before that, they blame the alii. So, they went give this kind sick to the alii first, pau, then call this alii. When the Chinese come up here work for the plantation, they blame the Chinese, ma'i pake. You see, we don't know why they do that. So today, I know one doctor, Dr. Skinsnes--the daughter come over here. His daughter come over here, she no scared you know. And one time, me and Johnny Kaona, we was talking to her, "Gee, how come you not scared?" "oh, my father," she said, "is a doctor. My father is a doctor. He said that this kind sick, no can catch. That's why I no scared." When she go home, she get [indistinguishable]. As pake. She's a Catholic anyway. And Lucy Kaona when come hug me and say hi. You know, kind of surprised to see, unusual yeah? Haole, maybe they know, but because her father was a doctor and she said that the father said this kind sick is not contagious.

INT: Let me ask you a different kind of question now. When did you learn about the Mormon Church; when did you become a Mormon? Were you always a Mormon? Was your family LDS?

DK: Yes. That's a good question because when I was born ... and my grandmother, my father's mother, fill the paper--Lahapa [David Kupelie's Grandmother]. So, I had to make her fill up the paper, you know. When they took my father, already, had this kind disease already. Took 'em to Kakaako, and over there he died. Then my two sisters--one sister her name Rebecca and the other one, Mary--so too much for my mother so, they give me to my grandmother to take care me. She just take me and she's a Catholic. I don't know, then she ... I hear they talk about David's Catholic Church. Then when I went back--my grandma left anyway--so, my mother took me back with her. Then, when I got baptized, all the people, the elders used to come around too. They sleep our house; that's where the elders sleep. Sleep Sunday, and Monday they started going to Keanae, Nahiko, Hana, Wailu [Wailuku]. They no how to talk English you know. When they come back, they know how to talk English, little bit. Smart. Then when they come back the next they smart talk. And I wish, I used to play with them and I wonder why they no baptize me. I see them baptize the other ones, then when I kind of come big, then I asked, "Why I not Mormon?" They said, "No, you was baptized Catholic." So, when I came here, my wife is Catholic.

INT: Did you meet your wife right here at Kalaupapa?
DK: Yes, we got married over here. And I used to come to church here, but they tell me, gee, if you are . . . I said I don't know. But anyway, they went out on Maui, too, they tell me "No, you Catholic." I was working, working; go up the pali, Sunday and all, you know, take the show back. Saturday night you had to take the picture back. And with the same picture, they had matinee up here. Then they send 'em back. Any way, Tina and Leimamo Martin were hard to find, so one of the fathers was going to Maui, Father Gustaz [The Martins were patients who requested that Father Gustaz check records of the Maui Catholic Church in their behalf]. And that time I tell him, "Gee, could you go find out I know, I remember when I was kind of big they use to drag me, walk all the way, you know. Pretty far, from here to the tank, I think. Walk all the way. You know small kids, they no like walk, they grab you, pull you. I get my aunties, I don't know if they my aunties or what, I don't know. I was too young.

And they pull me and say, "Oh no, we go . . . ." On the way they go buy candy. They make you with candy so you feel happy. Anyway, I was going, going 'til I went back with my mother. And I asked, "Gee, how come I not Mormon?" No, you already baptized Catholic." So when I came here, the Father Gustaz was going to Maui. Was he--going to his church? He said "Yeah," he know where the church was and explained where. He said he knows. "Could you go over there and find out and bring back my name?" But they still had the paper. I still get 'um home. Yeah, I was right, then from that time on I started coming to church; never got baptized until it was 1968.

INT: 1968? And that's when you were baptized? You were baptized in 1968?

DK: Yeah!

INT: But you were coming to this church since 1918, 1919?

DK: No, not everytime because work and gambling horses. Those days I don't know what to do, but, anyway, when I find out from this Father, when I get the papers and I started to think gee, I better go; this is the true church.

INT: Do you remember anything about the Kalaupapa branch during the years that you were living here?

DK: Yes, I was here and I come to church. I get the pictures inside there [gestures to the photo album] with all the members.

INT: Did any leaders of the Church come to Kalaupapa when you were a member a long time ago? Do you remember any of the leaders of the Church?

DK: There, sitting down, laying down over here. Here [pointing to photo].

INT: That's you?

DK: There, right there. Yeah.

INT: We're looking at a picture over here.
DK: This is the old church.
INT: This is the old Kalaupapa branch?
DK: Yeah.
INT: That's a pretty big congregation. Who was the branch president?
DK: Oh, Kauhi.
INT: Is he buried here at Kalaupapa?
DK: Yeah, buried here. The wife died; his wife was a patient and he was a non-patient.
INT: He was kokua?
DK: Kokua, yes, Eleakala Nakulu, one of the counselors, I think and Kauhi's president.
INT: Let me just ask you a quick question about the kokua's. Once the kokua's relative died, the one who was the patient, could the kokua's stay here if they want to?
DK: Oh, if you want to stay here; they hold you back, 'cause not enough workers. Instead of bringing workers over here you already here and you need a job, cut meat, or some of them cowboy, go up the pali. I used to go up the pali and bring the cattle down. We bring down twelve head, that's for one week. They issue meat out twice a week. Because no more icebox, those days no more icebox, no more electricity. So they issue out; they give six for Tuesday or Wednesday. There are six for Friday or Saturday. Friday and Saturday they issue out.
INT: What was life like here during the depression years? Do you remember the depression years from about maybe 1928 to about 1938?
DK: Yeah, no more poi. And now I remember from McVeigh, McVeigh was our superintendent. He went hunt all over the valley. By Halawa Pelekunu. They use to plant taro all those areas, Hawaiian. And they sell to the board, but no more, not enough. So, he went to Laie, down Laie. And well, Jack would talk to you about this if you want to ask him more about it. So, Woolley, all the people was eating at that time. He said, wait until he get through eating, then he came out, talk to McVeigh. McVeigh said that we running short of poi. So, he supplied us with taro. Those days they plant taro, everyone. When I went down there [recently], I no see no taro patches.
INT: Yeah.
DK: No more?
INT: All the taro patches gone. The taro patches are in the area that now has the PCC. That's why the PCC has the lagoons and all like that--that's all the natural spring water that used to be taro patches. But now Laie doesn't have any taro patches. But, I remember before used to have taro patches. When I was a small boy, I used to play in the taro
patches in Laie. So how did Superintendent McVeigh get taro then?

DK: They went get the taro from Laie.

INT: He got the taro from Laie?

DK: Yeah, and dry it out.

INT: And they brought the taro in by boat?

DK: Yeah, and we have the boiler pack, you know. They get the small little corms going into the boiler. They would load up the truck outside, load 'em up, take inside town. Take about 60 . . . anyway, over 60, I think, not more than 79 [or 70]. I remember, cause we used to haul the taro from Waikolu and the amount of times we had to bring down, fill up the boiler, push 'em inside there and lock all the gate. Lock 'em up and open the steam because they have a big boiler. Open the steam, steam go in there. The next morning, the fun. In the evening, that night, all the steaming. You know how much all the steam to let 'em in. Next morning, all the kokus and their husbands sit in here. All the women, some of the men, too—that's their job down there—grind the taro, peel the taro, the ladies all peel the taro. Non-patients. They all peel the taro. And the men put 'em in the grinder, grind 'em up, issue out.

INT: Did you have enough money to live on here in Kalaupapa during the depression years?

DK: No, they went plant potato on the other side and they issue out potato by ration. Every now and then pick up a ration. Not enough food. It was the toughest time that we had, I remember. Today, we pretty lucky; we have a lot of food; before, not enough food.

INT: You were married?

DK: Yes.

INT: Did you have any children?

DK: Yeah, plenty of children.

INT: Did you raise any of your children down here? Did you raise any of your children in Kalaupapa?

DK: No, they take 'em away from us. Down the nursery. They stay down by the other side of the river by the old hospital. They keep 'em inside here. If you want to, take a look. And they keep them down there until one year and then they send them out. If it's a girl they send them to the girls' home, and if it's a boy they send them to the boys' home. But then, all the boys start to get sick, you know. I say to myself, "Gee, my sisters never got sick. I going follow my sisters." I get sick, my uncle get sick, die all. My father . . . all the men died. All of my aunties never, not one of them. Because--I don't know. When you think about it, gee!

INT: Who raised your children for you? Where were your children raised, top side?
DK: No, all was in the home. Then after one year then they tell us to let your family take care. I have some family up here to, was living up here, Akina. Kind of family for us. So, we send some of our children up there and my mother and sister, Helen Campbell.

INT: How did you feel about having to send your children away--your babies?

DK: Now, I asked the sisters because the girls never get sick, you know. Not one of the girls, not one, but only the boys in the home get sick. John McCuey--you know John McCuey? I ask him, "Gee, how come you say no more? How come you get sick?" "Oh, the doctor come over there and he inject us." And sometimes he know the doctor coming, he run away from the room. And my son went get sick, one of my boys when get sick. And as my other son, my other son went kind of suspect. Any spot on the face, they think the father or mother be sick. So my big boy never get, I don't know how he got away [laughter].

INT: So your sister-in-law and your other relatives raised your children for you?

DK: Yeah! And I use to work hard to send money to them, that's why I had to work.

INT: How many children was that?

DK: Twelve.


DK: We no keep the record, us never think about this going come up like this now today, wonderful.

INT: You can visit your children now?

DK: Oh yeah, I go out and stay with my boy most of the time, cause he's the one that lived with me. Came here and stayed with me. Suspect, kind of suspect. And he went parole from Kalihi. He was in Kalihi, you know. Kalihi, the receiving station? For a while and then he pull away from there. Then was kind of hard because you get children under people and they don't care to teach 'em. Because that's not their children, but if your own you can tell 'em, teach 'em how as what our church doing today. The mother have to stay home to take care of the children, raise them up the right way. But, other people, they don't care, they just let the children go all over the place. And today we have a lot of this kind of people, hippies and all that. Doing all kinds of trouble.

INT: Now, for a period of time, you were a policeman over here, huh? You were one of the cops over here?

DK: Yeah!
INT: What did you do as a cop? Did the people over here ever misbehave?

DK: Sometimes. Some seem to be tough, you know. That's why they put the jail right close to the hall. In the hall, some, when they get drunk they come inside there and they just talk any kind, while the show is going on they talk. We go over there stop, or we throw 'em out. They make more trouble so, we throw 'em in jail to cool 'em off. The next day, they feel all right. You know Vic Holson, he good friend of mine, but not because he's a friend of mine he can do any kind. We throw 'em in jail [laughter]. "Ah, how come you make me like that?" "No, you behave yourself. We don't have to put you in here if you behave yourself." It's true, we go throw 'em in jail [laughter]. He's a friend of mine, good friend. When he's drunk, he do anything; he has to go there.

INT: Was there any serious crime in the settlement while you were a policeman? Anybody shoot somebody or . . .

DK: Only one got shot. Leilani, over there, poke with the knife. The other one was [uncertain] going with Mary Andrew. . . get shot.

KBELL: Jealousy.

INT: Was it husband and wife kind?

KBELL: No, they were boyfriend and girlfriend and then jealousy happened. They were fighting for something. It was really an accident sort of thing. They get angry, two shots, another guy shot 'em . . . Akana shot Andrew.

INT: But, that usually wasn't the rule over here though, huh? Normally the amount of crime over here was mostly petty thievery and drunk-enness?

KBELL: Nobody stole, it was mostly because they got drunk or they tried to get away from the settlement, they ran away.

[Interruption]

INT: Were there very many people who would run away from the settlement or try to run away?

DK: Not too much because half of the settlement, before way back, at one time there was a stone wall from up the tank, somewhere, all the tank anyway. And you see the stone wall goes right down to the beach, as the boundary. Suppose to be the boundary. And all this side, that's all the kokua, you know. Supposed to be and now they mix up. They know each other, they might be family or what. These people run away and stay up there because they mix up too much, the board—never like, so they buy property, land, how many property they have down here. They buy, property for you, show you the other side, till they get rid of all this kokua that own the property, so the state own the whole settlement. So, when they run away, after that they used to run away and stay with them for a few days or sometime, that's what I hear. What I hear, I don't know if it's true or not. And I know
this man talk about it because he was one of them that run away, but he knows them when they were down here.

INT: Did you ever have to go top side to go get anybody who ran away?

DK: I know one time when Kaleohano, Sheriff Kaleohano went look for him because he run away. I went go down Kaunakakai and the sheriff said, "Eh, we go up the pali go look for this fellow." "How you know?" "Oh, they went report the same time I went tell him the name." Yes, no more him around here. No more, we went look around, no more. So, we went go look for him, but couldn't find him. He hide, ah [laughter]. He just run and then hide, but he came back anyway.

INT: Why did he come back? He came back on his own?

DK: He came back on his own.

INT: You've lived at Kalaupapa a long time and you've seen a number of changes. What do you think about life at Kalaupapa now? And, what do you see, you know, what do you hope will happen to Kalaupapa in the future?

DK: Gee, I don't know; this is something that might be when we put the cross up, you know. We belonged to the Lion's Club. All of us in the Lion's Club and my job is civic improvement, community betterment. One of the civic improvements--any way, one of the persons putting the cross up, you know. Wood cross up the top of the pali here, the crater. And he said, "Gee the cow, everytime he rub against the post, fall down." One night he went put one cement post cross, was real hard. We had to bring him before the meeting. And the directors we have, they talk about this before. The directors used to say "Okay," then, they can give us the money for build up one cement post out there. We bring 'em up in the meeting and they all agree. So, after, we started to build up this cross up there. But I tell them when we make the form, to form the cross, we take the cement and we pour inside there, we leave the hole already, we pour. "Oh," he said, "No. We build it down here, then we take 'em there." "Nah," I said, "gee, nah, we make the form, we dig the hole, build up the cement, put the ..." I tell him. "Gee, not enough reinforced steel, not enough. They said "Enough." I said, "If you put 'em up there, yes, it is enough, but if you going pack 'em, going crack. How you going take 'em up?" "Oh, on the truck." "It's pretty long, you know. Watch out, going crack." "Nah, not." Ah, then other people, they don't understand too, they back him up, you know. Nobody back me up. I said, "Well, it's going to crack." The truck is too short, the cross is too long. The weight. They never listen. Okay, I know I agree. They say "Hori, you know Hori? Hori is the carpenter. He know." I don't think so. I tell them straight--I don't think so. You know, Malakaua, he can talk, but for come work, he don't show up when he's for, but for talk, he play smart you know. Akamai, yeah [laughter]. Good for talk, that's all [laughter]. Anyway, you folks see, going crack. When for lift 'em up with the lifter and pull 'em, crack already. I no talk nothing. I already went talk, I went tell
we have to take 'em up there, we have to wait to put 'em up. So, we have to put the reinforce in; we had to make the form again, double job, you know. And when we all got through, everything up, then it went settle right down. And I know some day went down [i.e., it would go down]; you know what the main reason struck just come out, come to my mind. I don't know how this settlement going close some day. "Oh, how you know? Gee, what this cross up for?" And today we find out. To me, I think this place going close up. It's open up now. They said it going close up. I don't know.

INT: What would you like to see happen to the settlement after you're gone? When you die, do you want to be buried here at Kalaupapa?

DK: All I know is that I want to be buried with my wife. I took my wife in the temple, to be sealed with my wife and my family, 1968. My wife died the same year I went become Mormon, before she died, I came Mormon anyway in '68. And in 1969, I talked to Bro. Jack, I want take 'em down to the temple to be sealed. "You no can, you never make one year. You no can take 'em down." I said, "Well I try if can." Anyway, we went together with Molokai [temple group] when Molokai went on the 24th of November. We went together with Molokai, all of us, with topside. Sealed with my wife, my family. Not all yet, but have some more. Kuulei's helping me. She's the one taking us, in charge of the group over here.

INT: Would you like Kalaupapa to become a national park? What would you like it to become? What would you like to see Kalaupapa become?

DK: You know, one reporter came here and nobody like go in the office right next to the Superintendent's office, yeah. That's where you meet anybody, you have to go there. And then somebody tell me, "Ah, we want someone to go inside there." And I see Bro. Jack going in, I see Alice Pake--she's the kind outspoken kind of woman [laughter]. Maybe if she like go inside there, see what she going talk or what. So, I went inside there, then one other one, oh, I forget who was, was only four of us and was this reporter; one woman came in. Was mostly, I think, about Hale Mohalu. They want to know if--this lady wanted to know our feeling about Hale Mohalu. Why we want Hale Mohalu, keep that place open for us. So, kind of good question. Then Alice Pake--I never talk nothing. I see Bro. Jack talk about "Oh, we like Hale Mohalu, you know. We like Hale Mohalu. I like Hale Mohalu; I like Hale Mohalu open, too." Alice Pake, no, she against us two, she said, "No, you know when the people down there, they ought to put them in jail." I said, "Alice Pake, how can you put anybody in jail [if] they never do nothing? Just because they like stay down there and you have to put 'em in jail." She was doing more talking than me and Bro. Jack. Then this woman, oh, she look at me because I don't talk much, yeah. And the other guy, he wanted to know what I want. Maybe I have something to say, so I started to talk about if they only went put this infirmary in Hale Mohalu, to me I think it would be a better idea. Close Kalaupapa because no more end, this thing never can end, because this thing trouble going come up every time. Sure as up our living, just talking about other people. No disturb you know. And close this place up, move 'em all down there, fill up
the settlement down there. Oh, this Alice Pake yell at me. Said, "No, we no like no more end, because that place—we no need to clean our yard; no, we no need clean our yard." "Clean our yard for what," we said. I stay way behind here, you know. Clean our yard everyday with koa or rock. Nobody go around my place and look my place. But, if I stay in front here, might be a little better, eh? Clean the yard. I think we don't have to work hard to clean our yard [laughter]. No, I said. Even Bro. Jack said no. I think we no more end. They talking about each other, that's all they doing right now. Picking on each other.

KB: Was there any type of organization of the patients here to help make any rules for the community? Was there any kind of a local council?

DK: Yes, they have four of them as councils.

KBELL: Six. Six; with the chairman, seven.

DK: Oh, you was one of the spokesmen, yeah?

KBELL: I was one of the councils.

DK: Well, she can talk about all what the council doing.

KB: When you were a policeman, were you hired by this council or were you hired by the state?

DK: Now, they said in the rules, we just had the meeting not too long ago, just last week, I think.

KBELL: David, he asked you about the job—your job when you were a policeman.

DK: Oh, policeman.

KBELL: Yeah, that's what he's asking you—you were working—who appointed you, how did you get your job?

DK: I don't know, because [they] just come ask if you want to serve. The sheriff have to come and ask. They want you to become one of their police officers.

INT: Who paid you? Did the territory pay you or did the state?

DK: The state?

KB: What years were you a policeman?

DK: I remember, I was working up the pali, what year? I cannot tell what year. Anyway, the sheriff came and asked me if I want to be one police officer. I said okay, then I should join police officers.

KB: How many years did you work as a policeman?

DK: Seven years, I think.

KB: About seven years?
DK: Yeah.

KB: Well, we appreciate very much your sharing your experiences with us. I think this will be very helpful for people that want to know what life was like in Kalaupapa at that time.

DK: Plenty people, eh. A lot of troubles, they make all kinds of troubles. And some of them, when you talk to them seem good, but some of them they don't care. Kind of hard, yeah?

KB: Thank you very much; we may want to come back and talk with you again after we have a listen to the tape.

DK: Okay.

[626] End of interview