

Sonny Alohalani Kaniho, Interview 1, 5/15/96 at Humu`ula
(unrecorded, expansion of notes taken/ corrected at 6/27/96
interview)

1. Chronology:

c. 1908 father came up to Keanakolu to apprentice with Ikua Purdy
1922 Sonny born at Kawaihae uka
1923 sister Dolly (Helen) born at Keamoku, where father was working; later F moved to Humu`ula from Keamoku; Sonny, mother and sister brought by horse-drawn wagon by John Levi (Hulihia), then working Waiki`i
1928 family moved to Waiki`i (waggoned out) so he could go to school there
1930 family moved to Waimea when father made cowboy foreman
1933 (mother had died), father married Martinsen girl from Ka`u; in 1934 he took in-laws up Mauna Kea to see sites there; dad knew the sites and burials there, learned from Ikua Purdy and other old Hawns. (but Sonny didn't learn)
1935 Sonny went up Mauna Kea to Hale Pohaku w. Boy Scouts
c.1937 after 8th grade, Sonny started working for Parker ranch as cowboy, sometimes came up to Humu`ula
1940 (January) cowboys went to Humu`ula to rope wild Mauna Kea horses, Sonny caught two with one cast of rope--stud and colt--but lost the stud
Jan. 31, 1940 quit Parker ranch & moved to Honolulu for job
June joined Natl. Guard
Oct. activated
Nov. discharged w. hernia; then worked at Pearl Harbor, tried to enlist after war declared but wouldn't take anyone working at Pearl Harbor
after WW2, enlisted & sent to Europe

later years dad increased cattle at Humu`ula, made waterholes (reservoirs) w. ditches to fill them; had to balance number of cattle w. water; brought cattle up from Waimea for 1 year (heifers used for breeding) & then exchanged for a new group

2. Sonny got homestead at Humu`ula in 1991 after applying; 4 brothers also applied & got--William, Kenneth, Martin (one has died and that lease passed to nephew Gary); about 500 acres in all, 100 acres each.

3. forest--When Sonny at Humu`ula as child, many more trees there. Gradually they were cut for firewood (need a fire every night) and for fence posts. Especially cut for fence posts by CCC when it fenced off the Mauna Kea forest reserve. Get more water with trees--they catch the fog and increase the moisture deposited in area (which is mostly from fog). If area forested it could carry more cattle, but DHHL has never had a conservation policy to maintain forest.

4. Looking at the eastern remnant of stonewall--Sonny said built

to hold the sheep in, with posts at top holding barbed wire. Was the boundary of Humu`ula Sheep station. Already built in his time.

Asked about `Ainahou--Sonny doesn't remember it if was also used by Parker Ranch, maybe for cattle.

5. Looking at the sheep station buildings--locating old buildings and making map.

The trees used to come down to the present Mauna Kea access road. Old wagon road was north of present Saddle Road, came right to HSS (see map).

shearhouse (still there), dipping tank to the south
manager's house (for Carter, still there)
meathouse (where carcasses hung)
Kaniho's house
Nihoa's house

Only those two families stayed at Humu`ula all the time. Nihoa's probably left the year after them for Waimea, because the son was ready to go to school, at Waimea in 1930 when they got there.

bunkhouse and attached kitchen--

bunkhouse for cowboys and shearers who came up for a while, Sonny doesn't know how many; slept on one long platform, one beside another.

other houses:

farther up [on Keanakolu trail], Laumai`a house, Hopuwai house, Keanakolu house (on HH land--now gone)

other families lived at Pua `Akala and other places on Piihonua side, came up from Hilo side

forge--was blacksmith who made horse shoes, gate hinges, wagon brackets (can't remember name)

6. catching wild cattle by pini--Used to tie steer to tree for a day till they learned no use to fight, then "pinned" wild steer to tame one and brought them both in.

7. George C. Allen--Sonny remembers the name, but can't remember who he was.

Rally Greenwell--was already at Waimea by c. 1935.