

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Sueto Hayashida

“Good fun is go out on the beach . . . spear fish . . . And sports. That’s what I like. Other than that, I’m not interested in doing other stuff. But boys all go together. Not by myself. A bunch of boys go down. You know, our days, so poor, you cannot get spending money. No more nothing. So we gotta do something for supplement that. Maybe go steal or this and that. (Chuckles) That’s what we used to do. . . . When you think about it. We was really kolohe. Cannot help because we don’t have money.”

Sueto Hayashida was born in Pu‘unēnē, Maui in 1919. At age two, he was sent, along with brothers, to Japan to live with relatives. He returned to Maui in 1927 and lived in Pioneer Mill Company’s Keawe Camp. His father, Minokichi Hayashida, was a plantation blacksmith; his mother, Sue Matsuda Hayashida, reared the couple’s seven children.

Hayashida attended King Kamehameha III School and Lahainaluna High School. He was a star athlete for both his Keawe Camp teams in the plantation league and for Lahainaluna. Upon graduation in 1938, he began working for Pioneer Mill Company. His first job was as a *luna* for a *hō hana* gang, supervising school children and women. After briefly working the experimental office, Hayashida got a job with the Pioneer Mill plantation store in Lahaina.

After the store closed in ca. 1950, Hayashida worked as a plumber for Pioneer Mill Company. He retired in 1982.

He lives in a home just above the old mill with his wife, Margaret. The couple raised four children and has two grandchildren.

Tape No. 39-8-1-03

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Sueto Hayashida (SH)

Lahaina, Maui

January 16, 2003

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Sueto Hayashida for the Pioneer Mill oral history project on January 16, 2003, and we're at his home in Lahaina, Maui. The interviewer is Warren Nishimoto. [Also present at the interview is Margaret Hayashida (MH), Sueto Hayashida's wife.]

Okay, Mr. Hayashida, first question for you is when and where were you born?

SH: Nineteen seventeen, born in Pu'unēnē, Camp 1.

WN: Camp 1.

SH: Yeah.

WN: Nineteen seventeen. Okay. And your parents, what were they doing in Pu'unēnē when you were born?

SH: Well, I guess they worked in the plantation, field work [i.e., Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar Company]. So they send us [i.e., the children] to Japan, then they moved to Pioneer Mill.

WN: At age two you said you folks moved to Japan. Where did you move to? What part of Japan?

SH: Kumamoto.

WN: Kumamoto. Okay. And you know why you folks moved to Japan?

SH: Till today I don't know why they send three brothers to Japan. Had one more brother and one more sister older than us, and two younger brothers below me. But they send us three [middle] boys to Japan.

WN: So total, how many kids in your family?

SH: Well, six boys, and one girl.

WN: And what number were you?

- SH: Number fifth.
- WN: Number five, okay. So number five out of seven?
- SH: Yeah.
- WN: Oh, okay. So three of you went to Japan, Kumamoto?
- SH: Yeah.
- WN: Where did you folks live? I mean, who did you live with?
- SH: Oh, my aunty. My mother's maiden name is Matsuda, I think. I think that's where I stay.
- WN: Okay. With her family then?
- SH: No, get the Hayashida [side], too. My father's side. I don't know what family we were living with.
- WN: I see.
- SH: But we lived in the country. We used to take care the rice patch. I can still picture the place we lived with the mountain. Plenty fruits, too. Get plenty rice field. The person that we lived with was a farmer. Now, my cousin, she goes back all the time, Japan.
- WN: Oh, now days?
- SH: Yeah. She told me, "Before days was really hard work. But now days all machine." Before, all handwork. Now, all machine. Mechanical.
- WN: And this is for rice?
- SH: Yeah, rice. For digging, and harvesting, all machine now. So she told me go back Japan. But me, I don't want to go back.
- WN: You rather stay here? (Chuckles)
- SH: But I think, before I pass away, I better go, eh Ma [refers to his wife, Margaret Hayashida, MH]? Before I pass away, I better go Japan. You like go?
- MH: Too late already.
- SH: See, too late.
- MH: Too old. 'Cause his hearing is not that good, yeah?
- WN: So you were there [Japan] from age two until age eight?
- SH: Yeah. Went Japanese school over there.
- WN: Oh yeah?
- SH: I still can picture the school building, the road, all that.

WN: So what else do you remember about Japan?

SH: Japan, you play among the boys. We fight. That's why my aunty sent us back.

WN: (Laughs) Oh yeah? So what kind trouble you guys got into?

SH: Just like gang, gang kind. Probably this place, [too. Kids from] Keawe [Camp] and [kids] from Downtown [Lahaina] camps play together, they fight already. Young kids, that's why. But really, we was naughty though. I was naughty, but my big brother was worse.

WN: So was three of you, yeah?

SH: Mm-hmm [yes].

WN: So it was you three and then had other kids who lived around there?

SH: Oh, you mean in Japan?

WN: Yeah.

SH: Japan, [we had] property on a mountain. We lived in a section on our property. On the road outside you can see another owner. We own the property. So different people no stay next to you. No more neighbor like that. No more.

WN: All spread out.

SH: All spread out. Small place. They polish the rice in the mill. I don't know how. Small time, so I don't know how they do it. They need water for under the mill. I asked my brother, "How's the river?"

He said, "You think the river was big, but compared to now, you think just one ditch."

(Laughter)

SH: Just like one ditch.

WN: Real country place.

SH: Yeah. Country, all country. In the mountain. Regular road go down. Come to a place, you going up the hill already. You gotta climb up the hill. That's where we stay. And you come down this road, get one [house] here, one also there, all scattered right around.

WN: So when you had to come back to Hawai'i, age eight, do you remember if you were happy, sad, anything like that?

SH: I don't remember nothing. When we reached Honolulu, our friend picked us up where the ship docked and took us to their house. That's the only thing I remember. I don't know who. But the house had mangoes.

WN: This is in Honolulu?

SH: Honolulu.

WN: So then you folks moved to Lahaina? I mean, from Honolulu?

SH: When we came back, we came back right to Keawe Camp. That was where we were living all the time, young days.

WN: Keawe Camp. Okay. So that's where you grew up, actually, age eight?

SH: Yeah. Till I graduate high school [in 1938], I stay over there. Then I think one year [after graduation] or later, I moved to Mill Camp, Kuhua. When I met you [i.e., MH], then we moved to Kuhua.

MH: You were living with your brother.

SH: Yeah. Kuhua. We living in Kuhua because that's a bigger house, see? So I moved over there.

WN: So when you first moved back to Maui to Lahaina, you lived Keawe Camp?

SH: Yeah.

WN: You lived there only little while?

SH: No, not little while, till I graduate high school.

WN: Oh, till you graduate high school. After that you moved Kuhua?

SH: Yeah.

WN: Okay, okay. You graduated high school '38, you folks were married in '44. Okay, all right. So tell me about Keawe Camp. What was Keawe Camp like?

SH: That's the best place in the world.

(Laughter)

WN: How come?

SH: The boys are all close together. Everything you do, we do together. Sports, go fishing, everything. We fight, too, all gang together. I liked that camp.

WN: (Laughs) When you say, "fight," you fight who? The people from other camps?

SH: Yeah. Sometimes the other camps get all Hawaiians. (Tape inaudible.) You go home and tell the parents, the other camp guys come up our camp. House to house they search. That's the kind trouble we get into.

(Laughter)

SH: But the boys all stick together. Good sports. Basketball, football, baseball.

WN: You folks used to challenge the other camps?

SH: Oh yeah. We used to challenge.

- WN: So what camps had teams?
- SH: Pu'ukoli'i, our camp, Keawe Camp, then come Mill Camp, then Lahaina Pump [Camp].
- WN: Lahaina Pump, [a.k.a.] Waine'e [Camp]?
- SH: Yeah, Waine'e.
- WN: So how big was Keawe Camp? How many houses you think had?
- SH: A little bit over sixty, I think. Get some Filipinos living in that camp, too.
- WN: So besides houses at Keawe Camp, what else had over there?
- SH: Get the pump. They pump the irrigation water to irrigate the cane field. The pump pumped the water way up [i.e., higher elevation]. About this height on the other side, below the mountain. And from there, the water come down. Gravity flow come down the ditch to irrigate a certain field. All the plantation camp pumps do that. Lahaina Pump, Waine'e was just the same. They get the pump. They pump the water way up the mountain. Not mountain, but way up. And the water comes down, comes to the reservoir, or goes to the irrigation ditch to irrigate the cane field.
- WN: I see.
- SH: All get pump.
- WN: How big was a pump?
- SH: Oh, big.
- WN: Was it a building?
- SH: Big building. Waine'e get big one. Our camp, big one. But Kuhua [a.k.a. Mill Camp] . . .
- MH: Kuhua is [near the] mill, that's why.
- SH: The mill pumper. And then had Olowalu, eh. Olowalu, but that's small camp. They get the pump. All pump the water up to irrigate. You get surface water for irrigation, but it's not much. That [i.e., surface water] cannot take care all the acreage. Cannot. You gotta get pump.
- WN: And they pumped it from where? The water came from where? At a reservoir, something down below?
- SH: You'd be surprised how the water get underneath. So many hundred feet down.
- WN: Oh, so it's like a well, then.
- SH: Yeah.
- WN: Underground.
- SH: And you can see the water running under.

WN: So the people who lived in Keawe Camp, did a lot of them work for the pump or work at the pump?

SH: No, no. Pump attendants, only about three, I think.

WN: Oh yeah.

SH: [If there's] trouble, they call plantation to send the men down. Send the plumber. Pump attendants get maybe—how many guys? Three, eh?

WN: Oh, I see. What about like churches, or schools, or stores in Keawe Camp? Did they have?

SH: No store, no nothing. No school, nothing. No more. We walked to [King] Kam[eameha] III School.

WN: Oh, all the way down Front Street?

SH: Yeah, Front Street. Then Sunday, we don't go church.

(Laughter)

SH: Sundays is a day for go play. You go dive, fish, swim, then play sports. All that.

WN: What sports did you play?

SH: I play all sports. Any kind sports, I play. But my best one was basketball, football, and baseball. That's the three.

WN: So if you wanted to go movies, where would you go?

SH: Peek. That's what we used to do. We no more money.

WN: Yeah.

SH: So, our camp below, the Filipino camp, Kapunakea Village they call that, they had a theater all with corrugated iron. So daytime we go beach side to get a certain angle. We watch, no can see. Daytime we go there and we make *puka*. Corrugated outside, so you get nail, hammer, and you can make a hole.

WN: Yeah.

SH: Yeah, that's what we used to do. (WN laughs.) We used to peek through the hole. And if they chase us out, we get stones and throw. (SH imitates sound of rocks on the roof.) Movie going on, we rude making noise. They chase us out. We peep. Everybody grab stones and throw 'em on the roof.

(Laughter)

SH: That's what we used to do.

WN: What kind movies had over there?

SH: Cowboy movie. That's the kind.

WN: Like Tom Mix?

SH: Yeah. (Chuckles) That's right. Ah, I tell you.

WN: So what else did you folks do to have good fun?

SH: Good fun is go out on the beach. Me, I have to go down the beach, spear fish. That's what I like. And sports. That's what I like. Other than that, I'm not interested in doing other stuff. But boys all go together. Not by myself. A bunch of boys go down. You know, our days, so poor, you cannot get spending money. No more nothing. So we gotta do something for supplement that. Maybe go steal or this and that. (Chuckles) That's what we used to do.

WN: Oh yeah.

SH: We go to Lahaina town, go in the store, plenty guys go in there, somebody walk out with something.

WN: What store?

SH: It's bad to mention the store.

(Laughter)

WN: Yeah, yeah. Maybe better not. Yeah.

SH: When you think about it, we was really *kolohe*. Cannot help because we don't have money.

WN: Most of the boys in your group were Japanese? All Japanese?

SH: All Japanese. Yeah.

WN: Keawe Camp was mostly Japanese?

SH: Yeah. Filipinos [also] lived in the Keawe Camp.

WN: And what kind of work did your father do in Keawe Camp? I mean, when you folks were living in Keawe Camp.

SH: He was with the irrigator. I don't know how many years, then he became a blacksmith. Take the blacksmith [work] outside in the field. Welders no go outside. Blacksmith, set up blacksmith [in the cane fields] and chisel.

WN: So blacksmiths did anything to do with metal? You know, like train tracks . . .

SH: Big stuff no can. Maybe pick, hoe, punch. You know, punch to break stone.

WN: Oh, I see. So your father actually went to the different work areas to fix tools and things? So he was like a welder, too?

SH: Yeah. Those days was all manual work. So after that, [it became] all mechanical right?

When I just graduated from high school, I go apply plantation. They give me job and ask me if I want to work Saturday, Sunday. But me, I'd rather play sports. But my house was so damn poor, so no give us credit, some stores.

WN: You mean you had to pay right away?

SH: No, maybe some store they allow you some credit. But most of the stores, they don't allow [if one is not a plantation employee]. They don't care. Lucky after I was working plantation, it's okay. Tabata Store, that's the store we had right through. The man was smart. Because we was all boys, he figured we gonna pay back. We going work right? But us, no figure that way. But this man, he feel that way. Sure enough, he give credit right through.

WN: Okay. And so you went to school at Kam III School. So you walked to school?

SH: Kam III School, walk to school.

WN: And when you came back, eight years old, did you speak English?

SH: No. Because I was two years old when I went Japan, I don't know beans about English.

WN: You spoke only Japanese then?

SH: Yeah. So eight years old, I went in first or second grade. Six years old, [you're supposed to be in] first grade already.

WN: Yeah, maybe five, six years old.

MH: Five.

WN: But you're already eight years old.

SH: Yeah, like that.

WN: So you were older than most of the students?

SH: Oh yeah. Then after maybe a couple years passed, maybe three years or four years, I started to pick up faster than the young kids. So maybe I jump one grade and go next. I started to catch up.

WN: Must have been hard though. Everybody's speaking English, you only speaking Japanese. Your parents spoke Japanese only? They didn't speak English?

SH: That's the part, see. I really feel sorry. When we came back [from Japan] my mother used to work plantation, outside field, [as well as] my father. So we [i.e., the family] meet only at nighttime. And then we cannot stay too long nighttime to *talk story* because they had to go work. And this young boy come home late. No more family *da kine* stuff. As for me, I hardly can talk Japanese now. Then my mother got sick. Went to Honolulu. I think when I came back from Japan, lucky two years she stayed with us. No more. She came sick. She stay Honolulu. So we no more the family [life]. Most get both parents, and then they talk. You get family. Us, no more that. I never experienced that.

- WN: So you didn't have that close family kind [of] life.
- SH: Yeah. That's why, I was young yet, and I'm not ashamed—when you get your mother they talk Japanese to you. We no more that. After a long time I forget all the Japanese. Forget all that.
- WN: So what was your house like? How many rooms did your house have?
- SH: Ho, you'd be surprised. Parlor. And the kitchen, separate, see.
- WN: Kitchen was separate.
- SH: And all cement-floor kitchen. No more [kerosene] stove. All wood those days. All wood. So plantation offer you either kerosene or wood. So we take wood because we no get stove.
- WN: So when you say the kitchen is separate, was it separated from the house?
- SH: Yeah. Just about maybe four or five feet away. Four feet away, I think. Get cement walk that goes to the kitchen.
- WN: And your mother did all the cooking? Your mother cooked?
- SH: Me, I do the cooking.
- WN: You cooked?
- SH: (Laughs) I go school. My older brothers, they go work. So they don't do nothing. My father tell me what to cook. Night before, we prepare. "You cook this for tomorrow, *bento*." We get up four o' clock in the morning, I gotta cook for my two brothers and my father. Three *bento*. I do the cooking. Then I wash clothes with my younger brother. No more washing machine. Pound [with] the stick. We boil the clothes.
- WN: You boil 'em in what? The big . . .
- SH: Tub.
- WN: Yeah.
- SH: Soap suds inside, boil 'em.
- WN: Okay. Open fire?
- SH: Oh yeah. Then you pound the [clothes]. Then you kind of wash. Comes out, but not as good as washing machine.
- WN: You had washboard?
- SH: Yeah.
- WN: Wow. How often did you wash clothes?
- SH: Every weekend.

- WN: Every weekend.
- SH: My father and my brother, they go work every day. So they get two set of clothes for work because I cannot wash every day. So weekend, ho the load. . . . Hard life I had.
- WN: So where did you get your water from, to wash clothes?
- SH: The plantation, they get the water line.
- WN: You had running water?
- SH: Running water.
- WN: So you fill up the big tub with water, put soap in, put the clothes inside, and put 'em on top the fire?
- SH: Yeah.
- WN: Hoo.
- SH: And then my kid brother like go play. Too young, eh? And me, I like sports. Hey, I really suffer though. Because you start in the morning, you can *pau* early. Maybe you start about five-thirty, six o'clock in the morning, you start fire. Maybe take about three hour. Then we hang the clothes on the clothesline. Then we go outside play. That show you how hard life I had.
- WN: Yeah. So your mother couldn't do it because your mother was working?
- SH: Yeah. But my mother wasn't there already. Sick. She left for Honolulu.
- WN: How come she left for Honolulu?
- SH: Head.
- WN: Oh.
- MH: She mental.
- SH: Well, they claimed that in the cane field when she was working, she came like that. I think a wild pig ran away and go inside the bush, made her scared. That's why she get shocked. She scared so much. That's what I think.
- WN: So she had to go to Honolulu?
- SH: Yeah, and never come back. She died.
- WN: How old were you at that time when that happened?
- SH: I was young yet. Only about maybe ten years old, eleven years old.
- WN: Oh. So you had to do all the chores your mother would have done.
- SH: Yeah.

WN: Wow. So what kind *bento* did you cook?

SH: You know, those days, dried codfish.

MH: *Tara.*

SH: That, yeah. We go nighttime, we soak 'em in the water. Make 'em soft.

WN: How big was the piece?

SH: Oh . . .

WN: Three feet.

SH: And we cut [into] chunks. We soak 'em in the water. Make 'em soft. Then pick 'em up next morning. My father taught me how to cook it with *shōyu*.

When that guy used to kill pork, we buy big pieces and we put Hawaiian salt. We soak 'em in the wooden barrel and cover up. That's for *dashi*. When you cook vegetable or something, slash the pork. Even meat, too, we used to do that.

WN: Beef?

SH: Beef. Somehow my old man teach me how. I'm still living. (Laughs)

WN: What about rice? How you cook the rice?

SH: Rice, [my father] taught me how to cook the rice, wash the rice.

WN: In one big pot?

SH: Yeah. But when you cook rice with the fire, more 'ono than when you cook on the stove. I tell you, I did practically everything. House kind job, everything. Plantation job, everything. Anything, I do.

WN: So besides washing clothes and cooking, what other things you did around the house?

SH: Clean the house, iron the clothes.

WN: Wow, what kind of iron you had?

SH: The kind put the charcoal inside the iron. No more too much wrinkles.

WN: You had to iron the work clothes, too?

SH: Nah. That no need.

(Laughter)

WN: So you had to wash the clothes, dry the clothes, and then iron the clothes?

SH: And then clean house, too.

- WN: With what? Broom?
- SH: Broom. Only broom. And the parlor, we used to get nothing. Only wood [floor]. So we go mop. The bedroom, we get mat. And no more bed. We sleep all on the floor. Because plenty guys all line up [on the floor and] sleep.
- WN: What you folks did for light at nighttime?
- SH: Oh, I think we used to get electricity already.
- WN: Oh, yeah? Even when you're growing up? You didn't have kerosene lamp?
- SH: Oh, we get. I don't know when electricity came inside house, but we used to use [kerosene] lamp. If I can remember, only short while we used the lamp. Electric lamp came inside afterwards.
- WN: What about like *furo*?
- SH: *Furo*. The bathhouse was maybe about 300 yards away.
- WN: From your house?
- SH: Yeah. You gotta walk. Steam made the hot water. Steam plow. Every pump get steam plow. Made the hot water. And separate bathhouse.
- WN: That bathhouse was the only one for the whole camp?
- SH: Yeah. So that's too far to go. So we make . . .
- WN: You make your own.
- SH: Yeah.
- WN: I see. But when you had to do the community one, how many people shared the same bathhouse?
- SH: (Chuckles) The whole camp.
- WN: Yeah? And how big was the tub?
- SH: Oh, the tub is long.
- WN: Bigger than this kitchen?
- SH: No, no, no.
- MH: Oh, the room was big, but the *furo*. . . .
- SH: I think. . . . Maybe about—you see this wall here?
- WN: Yeah.
- SH: About here, I think.

WN: Maybe about six, seven feet? Seven feet wide?

SH: Yeah, seven to eight feet, around there.

WN: And then had partition between the boys and the girls?

SH: Yeah. And Filipino on the other side.

WN: Filipinos had their own tub?

SH: Yeah. Boys and the girls side, they partition. And Filipino one, this side get partition over here.

WN: Oh. And they all had different entrance?

SH: Yeah, all different entrance.

WN: Oh. So the boys and the girls, they only have partition?

SH: Sometimes we go up the roof. (WN laughs.) Certain girl come. You climb on the roof. You go peep. You bring *da kine* small pebble stone. You find a hole, you drop 'em down. (WN laughs.) They didn't know we stay up there.

(Laughter)

WN: How high up you had to go?

SH: The roof?

WN: Yeah.

SH: Oh, (tape inaudible) house roof.

WN: Oh, so you had to go from outside?

SH: Yeah. And the community toilet, too. Girls and boys share the same toilet. No more girls' toilet or boys' toilet. Same. But maybe one side get three holes. But get door for go inside. But you by the next guy sitting down. Go inside, only door and the partition.

WN: Like a stall.

SH: Yeah. Just made like that.

WN: Yeah.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

WN: And this is not flush toilet yet? You just talking about holes in the ground with seats. Not flush kind?

- SH: No. It's flush.
- WN: Oh, it is flush.
- SH: You see, the pipe go up, get one tank up there. Just like a float valve. The foot go down, flushing. So many seconds flush down. Always going. It's clean. Toilet no plug up. For that age, it's clean.
- WN: How far away was the community toilet from your house?
- SH: From here to that neighbor house.
- WN: So about fifty yards?
- SH: Yeah. But not everybody [was that close]. Some over a hundred yards away. (WN chuckles.) That's why if *shi-shi*, I no go inside. I *shi-shi* on the side stone wall like that. You know?
- WN: Yeah. I see. And eventually, you folks had your own toilet in your house?
- SH: No. Plantation camp, no more.
- WN: No more.
- SH: If you can afford to make your own toilet, well, you can. But plantation not gonna make for you.
- WN: So somebody took care of that, they cleaned it?
- SH: Clean the toilet?
- WN: The plantation, yeah.
- SH: If plug up, they call us as a plumber for the plantation.
- WN: What about like New Year's time or holiday time, did you folks do anything special?
- SH: Well, New Year's Eve, all the camp boys get together, go house to house. Play fire-cracker. Play music. The Filipinos, they play music, you follow them. Camp to camp. That's what we do. And then Christmastime, Methodist church they give out candy, packages of candy. Fruit, like that. Methodist church give. So we go every time.
- WN: Where did you have to go to get your candy?
- SH: Oh, the church. They get program. Me, I was a Buddhist, but I go Christian church. When I come back from Japan, I go to the schools. So over there, they give. Christmastime they get programs, see. They hand out. When they get program, they give candy, so they packed the place. All loaded. That's a big day for us.
- WN: Now, did you go to Japanese[-language] school?
- SH: Yeah.

WN: And where was that?

SH: The church, the Methodist church.

WN: Methodist church had Japanese school?

SH: They had one, two, three, four teachers. Hongwanji, how much had?

MH: Hongwanji? Plenty. Five, six.

WN: Where was the Hongwanji? Was it near here?

MH: Out around here.

WN: Oh. How come you didn't go Hongwanji?

SH: Because it was kind of far away.

WN: Oh, I see. So you went to the Methodist Japanese[-language] school?

SH: So from our camp, only one family never go Methodist. That family went to Hongwanji.

WN: So when was Japanese school? After English school?

SH: Yeah.

WN: So you went from Kam III School, you had to walk back up this way to go Japanese school?

SH: Yeah. Then more closer if you coming home, you don't come back this way. Come back to the school, then you go home. All walk home. That's why.

WN: So what did you like better? You liked the English school, or you liked Japanese school?

SH: I no like both of them.

(Laughter)

WN: What was different about the two?

SH: Japanese school, you go over there, the teacher talk Japanese only one hour, I think. But English, you go school, you stay over there eight hours. You learn all things. So for me, English school get any kind stuff, not only same thing.

WN: Okay. So after Kam III School, you went to Lahainaluna [School]?

SH: Mm-hmm [yes].

WN: From what grade?

SH: *Pau* eighth grade [at Kamehameha III School], we go freshman [at Lahainaluna School], and you go right up to senior year. Four years straight, I walk up [to Lahainaluna School]. And those days, I was a good athlete, you know. I not bragging, but hey. And I had to

come home and cook for the family. The coach asked me, "Hayashida, turn out for football?"

I tell him, "Nah. I cannot practice because. . ."

He tell me, "Why?"

"I gotta take care the family. I gotta cook." So I not turn out for football.

But basketball, the coach ask me, "Eh, Hayashida, you turn out for basketball?"

"Okay." You practice nighttime. That's why I played for the school.

WN: Oh yeah? What about baseball?

SH: Baseball, Lahainaluna never get team. Those days never get team. Only [plantation] camp league we play. Those days you used to get Wanderers and the Plebes instead of the camp guys and the Downtown guys. And then we used to get married men and single men softball team. Challenge each other.

WN: (Chuckles) How come? How come [married men and single men] challenge each other?

SH: No, just for fun.

WN: So baseball was more plantation because Lahainaluna didn't have baseball team.

SH: Now they get, but in our days no more.

WN: I see. So how was Lahainaluna School at that time? You liked it?

SH: Yeah, I liked.

WN: What was your favorite subject?

SH: Math. Plane geometry, algebra, all the kind I used to take. But really, you take plane geometry, you can make use of the knowledge. Sometimes you gotta figure out the angle of a vent, you know? If you know plane geometry you can figure out easy.

WN: What kind of teachers did you have? Where were the teachers from mostly? Were the teachers local teachers or were they from Mainland?

SH: I think was all Mainland. I don't see no local teachers. Our math teacher, that teacher's shrewd. That's why you gotta buckle down and study. Yeah. I no can forget him. Our coach used to teach us world history. And if you play sports, you go his class, you can put your head down like this. You fine.

WN: Sleep you mean?

SH: He no call on you for answer question. Smart this guy.

(Laughter)

WN: Now, while you were going Lahainaluna, did you work in the fields?

SH: Yeah, I work Saturday, Sunday.

WN: Saturday, Sunday.

SH: Yeah. Other guys no work. Me, I get work. They give me work. Then when I was going high school I applied plantation. They give me *luna* job [supervising] the old ladies. Cut grass gang.

WN: Supervising the ladies?

SH: Supervisor, yeah. I hate that job so I asked [the boss] if he get job for me.

He tell me, "Oh yeah, if you like job, I give you anytime." So he put me inside the office. Take care all the irrigation records.

WN: Oh, the office. Okay, so your first job, you worked during school, during weekends like that. But then when you graduated in '38, you started working for the plantation full time?

SH: Yeah, full time.

WN: Okay.

SH: Early part of my graduation, they give me supervisor job. Old ladies kind job. Cut grass. I hate that job.

WN: How come you didn't like that job?

SH: What, a young boy like that, and you . . .

WN: Oh. They didn't listen to you?

SH: Yeah. Maybe young girls might be all right. But all old kind. (WN laughs.) Oh, boy.

WN: You were like the young boy supervising the old ladies.

SH: Yeah, then I was in the office. Before I went inside the office, I was spray gang. You know plantation used arsenic mixed with soap and oil. They used to use arsenic for . . .

WN: To kill the insects?

SH: Insect, grass, everything. They used to get a knapsack with maybe more than a two-and-a-half-gallon tank, I think. Put it on the back, and then you pump like that, you spray. Afterward, a truck come inside with a big tank [filled with] compressed air. All the hose connected to the outside. Take one hose and go inside the line. You go to the end of the hose and spray the other side, come back. I used to do that to all the fields.

WN: So you sprayed mostly the weeds?

SH: Yeah.

WN: So this was after *hō hana*?

- SH: No, no. *Hō hana* no can keep up. The weeds grow and the plantation has only one small gang. No can keep up.
- WN: Oh, I see. So they used to do [both] *hō hana* and poison spray?
- SH: Yes. That effectively killed all the weeds.
- WN: Okay. So you worked in the experiment office after that?
- SH: I worked for almost a year or two. Then the plantation store get too much pilferage. Maybe take home something.
- WN: Oh, pilferage, yeah.
- SH: So he asked me if I interested in merchandising. I tell him, "Oh yeah." Me, I try anything. So I go. They give me job, delivery boy in the camp. I worked maybe two to four years as delivery boy. Then salesman, clerk in the store, too. Go help in the store. Then I have to go Māla Camp, Keawe Camp, Crater Village, Olowalu, go house to house. If you want to buy groceries, next day we deliver the groceries. I used to take—what you call that—*chūmon-tori*.
- WN: *Chūmon-tori*. Oh, so you go to the house, you ask them what they want, you write 'em down, then you take the order back to the store.
- SH: Then you get the order, and that order gotta go to the boss. If [the customer] get too much balance, [he would] cut out some [of the order]. No need this stuff. They cut out. Then what we get, we deliver that next day.
- WN: Put 'em in boxes?
- SH: Yeah, box.
- WN: Okay.
- SH: Olowalu Camp, they get plenty Hawaiians. Twelve in the family, fourteen in their family. Debts pile up. I go take order. Not one—he [the boss] cancel all. Moreover, he tell me no go over there already. He said too much debts.
- WN: I see.
- SH: You look that kind, pitiful. I been through that. No can get food. Same thing the Hawaiian guys. Plantation store, the manager, he cancelled the order.
- WN: So did the store tell you where to go, or you could go any place?
- SH: No, no, no. I assigned to—certain day you go this camp, certain day you go this [other] camp, like that. Assigned.
- WN: And then when you deliver, you deliver or somebody else delivers?
- SH: Sometime I deliver, sometimes the delivery boy. That's why I was delivery boy.
- WN: When you first started, all you did was deliver?

SH: Yeah.

WN: I see. And then afterwards, you started taking the order. Is that more hard than delivering?

SH: Nah. I go in the camp, I sleep.

(Laughter)

WN: So like in the morning you take order, afternoon you deliver, or what? How did that work?

SH: No, no. Next day.

WN: So next day you deliver in the morning?

SH: You go take order after lunch.

WN: Okay.

SH: Afternoon.

WN: Okay, take order in the afternoon.

SH: So the next day we deliver.

WN: Deliver, okay. And then that afternoon, you go to another camp to take order.

SH: Next afternoon, yeah, different camp.

WN: I see.

SH: So in one afternoon you had to finish the camp.

WN: And how often would you go to one house? How many times a week you go to the same house?

SH: One time.

WN: Once a week?

SH: No, all depend how many camps you get.

WN: I see.

SH: Some house they waiting for you to come. They like to buy.

WN: And the plantation store, what did they sell? What did the plantation store sell?

SH: Oh, everything. Yeah. Groceries, get dried goods stuff. Everything. Feed, any kind.

WN: What about other things like furniture or anything like that?

- MH: Furniture, no. Hardware store.
- WN: Hardware. Tools, did they have tools, too?
- SH: Yeah. Small tools, carpenter tools. All the kind stuff they get.
- WN: So could they order that from you, too?
- SH: Oh yeah.
- WN: Okay. And when do they pay the bill?
- SH: On the payroll [i.e., the store deducts the customers' bills from their paychecks]. That's why the customer no more chance to grab the money, keep some. No more chance. The plantation, they grab 'em. Smart, eh? (Chuckles)
- WN: So they had to do 'em that way? You couldn't pay if you wanted to do it on your own?
- SH: Yeah. So some come crying. Pitiful. Hard life, plantation life. Especially when you get big family. Big family, small pay. Only few people working in their family. Hard time.
- WN: You said that later on you became a butcher.
- SH: Afterwards, yeah. [The boss] ask me if I like to be butcher.
- WN: So from *chūmon-tori* you became butcher?
- SH: Yeah.
- WN: How did you learn how to be butcher?
- SH: I didn't know nothing. I go help the main butcher. You work couple months, you know all already. You know all the parts of the beef. My job is to clean up the tables. Scrape all the table, clean up all the floor. Afterwards, I cut the meat. When (customers) come, maybe for certain stuff, I give 'em extra, the kind soup bone like that.
- WN: So they would come and order what they want? What kind meat, and you would cut it and wrap it.
- SH: Yeah. But if I go *chūmon-tori*, they order meat at home. Then I go to the butcher shop and they cut that.
- WN: I see.
- SH: So I know what the set up is when I go butcher. I know what this family is.
- WN: So what kind meat? Only beef? Or pork?
- SH: Plantation used to get the best A1 beef. Pineapple bran-fed cow. Plantation used to get good beef. The fat not yellow. White. *Kiawe* beans cattle, the fat is yellow.
- WN: I see. This is what? What did they eat?

- SH: They ate the beans.
- WN: *Kiawe* beans?
- SH: Yeah. Their pasture all *kiawe* tree. Small *kiawe* tree. And then grass.
- WN: When they eat *kiawe* beans, the fat is yellow?
- SH: Yeah.
- WN: But to get white fat, what do they eat?
- SH: Pineapple bran.
- WN: Oh, pineapple bran. I see.
- SH: That's why I tell you I do all jobs. No more the kind job I never do.
- WN: Had fish, too, in the plantation?
- SH: Plantation store no more fish.
- WN: No more fish.
- MH: Had pork.
- SH: No, we talking about fish.
- WN: Yeah.
- MH: No, plantation had the beef and pork yeah?
- SH: Yeah.
- MH: That's what he asking.
- WN: That's okay.
- MH: Besides beef.
- WN: That's okay. I forgot to ask. Okay, so you're a butcher. And then you said the store closed [around] 1950. The plantation store closed. How come they closed?
- SH: Since they not making money, they said. Wasn't in the hole. But the profit small, so they figure no sense keep the store. So they close 'em.
- WN: So after the store closed, where did people go for groceries?
- SH: Lahaina town get all [privately owned] stores. That's why other stores, they lucky. Lahaina Store [the Pioneer Mill plantation store] was the main store in Lahaina town.
- WN: So they closed in '50. What did you do? You were out of a job then.

SH: Yeah. The main office, they asked me for my first choice and a second choice, what I like do. I told them at first I want to be a plumber. Then second choice is truck driver. (Chuckles) They give me plumber.

WN: How come you wanted to be a plumber?

SH: I like plumbing.

WN: You knew how before?

SH: No, no, no. I see how the plumber work, so I like. (Chuckles) Plumber get plenty time. If you finish the job, you get plenty time for rest.

WN: So you became a plumber for the plantation.

SH: Yeah.

WN: So you were still employed by Pioneer Mill?

SH: But you see, you go camp to camp. Maybe camp might have a broken pipe They call up the main office. The main office call up the (carpenter) shop. The supervisor send us out. Certain place, broken pipe. Or certain place, toilet plugged or something like that. Then we go out. I retire from plantation plumbing job. That was the best job I had.

WN: Plumber?

SH: Yeah. Going to camp. I sleep. *Bumbai*, they give me walkie-talkie, though. Then they can find me. (WN laughs.) "Where you was?"

"Oh, in the camp."

"Doing what?"

"Oh, pipe was leaking so I go fix," I tell like that.

They didn't believe me. They give me walkie-talkie after that.

(Laughter)

WN: So you worked as plumber from 1950 to 1982?

SH: Yeah.

WN: Thirty-two years then.

SH: Besides that, I take my own contracting job.

WN: I see. So if you're working on a plantation house, you working for the plantation. But if you doing outside house . . .

SH: That's my job.

WN: That's your own. So you got paid two places.

SH: But not while you working plantation you can go outside job. No. That's on weekends and afternoons. So when this contractor get house for build, he go in, he level 'em out, then he string 'em up, the house area. Then he give me his blueprint. Then I look the blueprint. Oh, bathhouse here. Here's the kitchen and outside washhouse. So I gotta go inside put my pipe inside first. So that's what I used to go do. Weekends I used to do that. And those days, when I started, was casting pipe. Used to get lead joint. Poke 'em and you put lead joint. I used to take my number one boy with me, help me. I let the contractor dig. I tell the contractor, "If I dig, I going charge you double." Because I no more equipment. He no like that. He get a backhoe. In no time, he can dig. He send the bill, too. He dig. He dig all. Then I go put all the pipe inside.

WN: So when you worked plantation, you got salary?

SH: Yeah.

WN: And then when you worked for outside . . .

SH: I bid for the job.

WN: Bid for the job.

MH: You worked some job in the mill, too.

SH: Oh yeah. That's what I told him. When the pipe broke, they send me inside go work.

WN: Oh. Did that happen a lot? You had to go inside the mill to fix pipes?

SH: You know what the superintendent tell me? He like me. I work steady in the mill. "You do in one week [what others] take three weeks," he says. Me, I no like stay inside the mill so I work fast and I get out of there. That way I go in the camp, sleep. See? So I don't want to stay in the mill. That's what you should do. Go in the mill work. When they build a new boiler—plantation get a boiler around the side of the road, when you come up on the right side.

WN: Yeah.

SH: When they build that three-inch pipe on the floor to the top, I put up. Used to carry one three-by-one, thirty feet long. You no can carry. But my helper was a German guy. Big guy. So we put rope, drag 'em up, drag 'em up. Pick 'em up. The boiler plenty steam work. So the superintendent ask me, "Hey Hayashida, can you do the steam pipe?"

"How come? That's welding job."

He tell me, "You do welding job."

I tell him, "Me plumber. You like me, I do the steam pipe, too." *Bumbai* they call outside contractor. The big kind steam pipe, outside contractor come put 'em in. I work hard to get the job finished. That's why also the boss like me.

WN: Well, the faster you work, the more you can rest, yeah?

SH: Right.

- MH: That's his motto.
- WN: That's his motto. Yeah. So when you started full time after you graduated, what about all your work you had to do at home with your father? Did you have to still do that? Cook and . . .
- SH: No, you see, now, my older brother get married. Get a wife, yeah? So she do that stuff.
- WN: Oh, and she lived over there?
- SH: Yeah.
- WN: Oh.
- SH: Even now, I cannot do that kind stuff yet.
- WN: And you folks got married in 1941. So after you got married, where did you folks live?
- MH: [Nineteen] forty-four, not forty-one.
- WN: Oh, '44, I'm sorry. Oh, you went to live with your family?
- MH: No, no.
- SH: No, [after] one year we get our own home over there.
- WN: When did you folks move over here?
- MH: Sixty-five yeah? Sixty-six.
- SH: We stay about thirty-seven years here.
- MH: Thirty. . . . Wait.
- WN: This is 2003.
- MH: Sixty-five I started, so sixty-six.
- WN: Nineteen sixty-six. What was over here before?
- SH: Cane field.
- WN: So 1950 they closed the plantation store, 1966 they built these new houses.
- MH: Yeah, because we bought the lot from the plantation. Oh, how many years?
- SH: The lot you mean?
- MH: Yeah. This place, we had this long time and then my boy was ten years so I started to work.
- WN: Okay. I can ask you that later. Okay. So then you retired in 1982. How do you feel about the plantation closing down?

- SH: Well, for me, that was the best place for me because I get easy life. Plumber, I go in the camp. I wait for the call, and I go do the job. I liked the plantation. No can beat.
- WN: So when they said they're gonna close down, when you heard, how did you feel about that?
- SH: I say gotta go, gotta go. No can help. That's the part, see. If you not afraid of work, no need worry. Any kind job they give me, if I can do, I work. That's why I tell you, any job, I do. Plenty different stuff I do. Me, I like try new things. You learn something, you see? Plumbing, I didn't know beans about plumbing. I take course.
- WN: Oh, that's how you learned?
- SH: Yeah. My helper is an old-timer plumber, plantation. He no think of taking masters. Me, I don't wanna stay still. I like get ahead. I take that course. I go county take that test, get the master. Then you can bid for the job.
- WN: You still do jobs now? You still go out and do plumbing for people?
- SH: No, *pau*.
- WN: What about this house?
- SH: Oh. My plan, this house, I did it myself.
- WN: Good then. No more leaks. (Laughs) What about the mill, what do you think about the mill? You think—they wanted to tear down the mill? What did you think about that?
- SH: The mill itself, the looks is not there right? It's all old. But when you think of the story—keep the story for the future, you gotta keep the smokestack and all intact. But if you like get for the future, for the young kids come up, better to leave 'em alone. Leave it as it is. That's what I think.
- WN: You mean keep the whole mill or just the smokestack?
- SH: No, whole mill.
- WN: Keep the whole mill.
- SH: But the look of the building is not good already. It's all rusted up. If you can fix up little bit and keep 'em, all right. But no. Getting worse. The time we was working mill, the mill not look old like that. Was good condition, yet.
- WN: Yeah.
- SH: Nobody touch nothing, come old.
- WN: So you think they should fix it up and make something out of the mill? You know like how they did with say like the cannery. They made the shopping center over there.
- SH: Yeah. I think it's a good idea. That's what I figure. Inside the mill, all the molds and machinery, they send it to the Philippines. Philippines, they break 'em down into parts. Ship 'em.

WN: Yeah. Okay, thank you very much.

SH: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW

**PIONEER MILL COMPANY:
A Maui Sugar Plantation Legacy**

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

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