

Oral History Program

OH-10

Box #1

Oral History Program

ARIEL BALIFF

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ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

NARRATOR: ARIEL BALLIF

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INTERVIEWER: Kenneth W. Baldrige

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Side A

INT This is Ken Baldrige in the home of Ariel S. Ballif, speaking with him about his experiences at the MAC [Maori Agricultural College] and as President of the New Zealand Mission, it's August 16, 1972. First of all, perhaps we could talk about your tenure as a principal, the title you had at the Maori Agricultural College [also referred to as MAC]. Now, you were called from here to go down there in that position, is that correct?

AB I was called in 1927, and we went out there and arrived there about the 1st of June, 1927. As I recall, we arrived there in the winter time, President Jenkins [was the] president of the mission. He met us and we spent a day in Auckland and then we went on to Hastings, then out to the MAC. Things were pretty rough at that time. The school itself had been run by missionaries since Elder Sells left; he had been gone quite some time. The man in charge was, Elder Kimball when I arrived. Elder Kimball stayed on and we had a very good staff. I am not sure if you are interested in who was there?

INT Yes, I am.

AB The members of our organization at that time included Alton Christensen, who has since become Stake President down in Richfield, Utah, and has been a very prosperous businessman. He was our secretary-treasurer at the College and a very excellent teacher and help. We had a man by the name of Jensen who took care of our athletic part and taught English. Lawrence Manwaring and his wife went down with us and they were very effective as teachers, she, in the music. My wife, Arta, taught the boys the speech area and drama work. There was a man by the name of Fuller. He still lives out near Salt Lake. He was very effective with us as a farm manager and set up a very good program but Arta was just indicating that there were some interesting things [that] happened to us just as we got there.

Our first introduction to the farm itself was with President Jenkins. We had an Elder's Court in which one of the elders was cut off, disfellowshipped and sent home, as a matter of fact. He never did, I don't think, ever come back to the Church. It was quite a sad thing and quite a serious experience for my wife who was very young at that time to go through. The young lady has been fine, however, since. She's an excellent person, and she came through all right but the boy was just a little off to begin with.

INT Was this--this wasn't one of the faculty, then?

AB No, this was not a faculty member; this was one who was on a mission there and one who had made some very serious mistakes.

Sister Baliff: It was Elder Palmer.

AB You're wrong, Elder Palmer was the man in charge of the Te Karere, we had a printing press on the place and Elder Palmer and Elder Stevens. Stevens' now is in Ogden. I don't know where Elder Palmer is at the present time. But Elder Stevens and Elder Palmer ran the press. We also had a man by the name of Porter during this period of time who worked in the press. These people also helped us with the boys, wherever they were qualified to assist.

But our school standing was pretty--well, I'm not saying it was low--but it was not very well-organized and certainly did not satisfy the inspector. We had the government inspector come every year to see how we were doing. But we developed in this program soon after I arrived. I should indicate that first welcome out to the school besides this other unfortunate incident. All the boys--there were eighty of them--lined up along the old dormitory side there and as we walked over they performed the haka [traditional Maori dance] and it was quite an exciting experience when you have never seen that before.

INT And your wife was expecting . . .

AB Yes, my wife was expecting a baby at that time. So it really was quite an exciting moment. It was exciting; it was really thrilling; these kids had it down. We also had a young Maori man by the name of Elder Marsh. He came over to the United States and was sent back on a mission. He was there at the College and he taught the boys music. They had one of the finest boys chorus that I had ever listened to, marvellous singers, and he had a good band. He had all the musical activities at the school that you can imagine.

About the school itself, we set up a program of farm training for these kids. We had boys all over the South Pacific--Samoans, Tongans, Tahitians. I remember Taumata Mapuhi who is from Tahiti and an all-rugby football representative. He was very good, also Willie Shortland, who was one of the All-Blacks for a long time was there at the very beginning.

They set up a program of farm training; we gave each boy a plot of ground and had him work it through under the direction of Elder Fuller. Elder Fuller also directed what they would do in the livestock area. We had a good herd of cows. The boys would take care of the cows and they would do the milking as a part of their program of regular training. We also developed by the same man, Elder Fuller, a fine chicken group. We produced enough eggs to sell to town as well as what we needed on the farm. So those programs went along very well. Elder Fuller was a very fine man with this particular sort of thing. When he left we had a pretty rough time after that; we didn't have a good man to take his place was the reason. Of course, when you don't have anyone with interest, the program itself generally slips a little. But we had a fine couple there, McIlroy's. Particular Sister McIlroy; she was the matron of the school.

INT Was this Tu McIlroy?

AB Tu's wife, Annie McIlroy. He came once [in] a while. He worked out and came in there, but she was there all the time. She kept the boys happy and she directed them in their cooking. They made the best whole wheat bread in the world out there.

INT These faculty members, such as Elder Marsh and Elder Fuller, these were called as missionaries?

AB Yes, we were all called as missionaries.

INT And they were out for, what, a two-year period?

AB Three years.

INT Were all the elders on [a] three years assignment at that time?

AB I think they all were at that time. Most of them had to learn the language but at the school we had to teach them English and they were not permitted to use their languages. This was the instruction we had from the government education board.

INT Oh, the government said . . .

AB Oh yes, it was a government restriction. That was one of the things that they have tried to recover. The schools institute, in certain areas, at least, the study of the Maori language. But the student had to live in the English-speaking world. If he was going to be effective in his working and dealing with people in the English world, he had to know the language. As long as they reverted back to their language, they did not get a very good hold of the English, so that it was really quite important to train them that way. I felt that it was not the wrong thing to do. It would have been nice to keep each boy's language, but even then, when they got to the school--these boys had been in public schools so long that few of them could write the Maori language. They could answer the questions in Maori when their folks spoke to them. They knew the instructions when their folks spoke to them but to get up and give a full sermon in Maori, many of them would be very much handicapped. Then we [also] had some English-speaking kids there at that time.

Then, you see, the next time when we were out there, they became very unhappy, some of the "old boys" were very unhappy because we conducted all of our services in English. But the mass of them--see, that's thirty-five years later--couldn't even speak the language at that time.

INT Now, at the school, did you and the faculty members feel it desirable to learn Maori in order to communicate more effectively?

AB [We] couldn't, all these kids could speak English. They started off with English. The only problem would be, if we learned the Maori, it would be getting our help from the students. That's the way most of the elders learned it anyway, in contact with the people who spoke the language. So we felt that is was not a good

program to have the elders studying the language at the time. In order to be effective in the English side of the program, it would have been very difficult. We had the regular curriculum of the secondary school where we had young people even in the [primary] grades see, so it was not fully a secondary school. College, of course, down there means a secondary school.

INT You still had the primary school, did you?

AB Some of it. We did not have all the grades, but we had a few who were not able to go on to the upper [grade]. We took the grades where they were and encouraged them to go on with that. It was primarily a primary school [when it had started out], but it had grown to [a secondary school]. We had an excellent wood work shop there and the people, various people, ran that shop for us. This boy I'm thinking of, the elder whose name I have lost, was very helpful in running this shop. He was a good teacher all the way and one of the mainstays there for a long period of time.

INT Now, these elders that were out there teaching were, in many cases, I suppose, only two or three years older than the boys they were teaching.

AB Well, no, I think that in general, they were up in their twenties. See, we didn't start sending people as young as eighteen for a long time. The war really put the eighteen year olds in the mission field, and the nineteen year olds. When they began to draft people, in order to get them there, they went at that early age. Our missionaries were in their twenties, in their early twenties, most of them. I think practically all of them were that far along. I know that when we went out, we were young but then it was in 1927; I was twenty six years old, as the principal of the school.

INT Had you been teaching here?

AB Yes, I'd been teaching at Ricks College that year and had four years of teaching experience before I went out and then, of course, was responsible for the whole program, developing the program in secondary school. We were close to the inspector and to the Educational Department. In fact, in our second year, we made applications for grants and we received two hundred pounds. That's the first time that any grants had been given to the MAC and that, two hundred pounds was helpful; we could use it in the general expense of school, not the wages or anything of that nature because there were no wages. They were all missionaries so it was diverted entirely to the development of the school program.

INT How did you come to be called to go out there?

AB I haven't the slightest idea [laughter]. I was married and we had one child. At the time this call came, my wife was expecting the second baby and she was pretty sick on our travel out there because it's a pretty rough sea; it took twenty one days on the boat to get there.

- INT Were you called by one of the General Authorities?
- AB Oh, yes. We were called officially from Salt Lake from 47 East South Temple [Main Office Building of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints]. We were set apart normally, as missionaries are set apart, with the specific assignment to the school.
- INT You had no inkling [a hint] of what this was all about until you were called, then?
- AB No, not at all. We did not have the slightest idea about it. They were looking for people and I think they came to the college where I was teaching--well, they knew the president of the College and he advised them of people that were available. Of course, we had wanted to go on a mission. I had planned one time to go on a mission and my wife was going to teach. Then, the program didn't work out exactly that way, so we went out there. My background of school administration was very limited. All I had was what I had been able to observe in the schools that I had worked in. I had worked in an elementary school and worked in a high school and worked in a junior college. So that experience helped us.
- INT So it was a short career that you had, but was helpful, for sure?
- AB Very, very sure.
- INT Did you encounter any administrative headaches?
- AB Well, our greatest problem, of course, was the stimulation to the students. These boys were not easy to get into the real swing of an educational program. They came off from the backblocks, many of them. Some of them--we had some pakeha [caucasian] boys--Melvin Going was there at school. I don't know whether you know Melvin, but he came over here; he is quite a contractor over here right now. His sister married one of the Austin boys.
- INT Where is he, Melvin?
- AB Melvin is in California at the present time. I have not seen him for many years but that's where he is. I was thinking of the farm work that we did. We weren't just school teachers. In summer time when the boys were away--our school year there, began the first week of February and ended about the middle of December. From December to February, the missionaries, most of them, were out in the [mission] field. Elder Lawrence Manwaring and I and Elder Fuller stayed on the farm and then, of course, the TeKarere printers were there all the time too--so this was located at the school, this printing press.
- INT Did many of the boys stay back; I suppose the ones from the islands?
- AB Most of the island boys stayed around. They would go out for the shearing but they would come back to [MAC] as a home base. But I was thinking that we were farmers as much as we were school teachers

because we had to plant crops. Our big crop was oats which we used for chaff. When it was threshed, it was all cut up with the heads and all cut up into small, very fine, so that horses could eat it out of a bag. This is chaff; that's what they called chaff. You cut the whole thing; if you get it at just the right time, and the right color, it's very valuable and you can sell it very well on the market. So our product was hay and oats and the chaff, mainly. But the land was very poor. That area of Hawkes Bay was very shallow [with] lots of pumice, [which] made it pretty rough to develop real good crops.

We had also a very interesting experience in cutting the wood. We would go and contract sections of wood, to get the wood for the school because we burned the wood. Coal was practically unavailable at that time. We did later, for the last one and a half years when I was there, get some lump coal that we used in the faculty homes instead of in the school. The cooking was done with pine wood, very heavy pine wood.

INT Was it on the property?

AB No, it was properties around the area that we would have to contract taking out, clearing it for them. Then, of course, some of it we had to actually buy outright.

INT Now, was this part of the work project that the boys had?

AB It was usually in the summer time that we would do this and the boys who didn't have employment outside, we would help a little by using them to get this wood. We all went out to get the wood. I remember, you had to cut it down; then you had to blow it with powder in order to split it. It was large, tremendous trees. They were not always available, but we were able to get them for three years while I was there. We didn't have to go too far for them. They were very, old trees, but the people wanted to clear that land. That made it possible for us. Lots of our boys contracted work in scrub-cutting--going out, clearing the land in the mountains. New Zealand at that time was doing an awful lot of clearing and planting. They'd clear the land and then plant it with airplanes. They could not get into it any other way and the airplanes would go over and drop the seed and fertilizers.

INT Oh, they were doing it at that time? I didn't realize that came in so early?

AB Well, it was handled mostly--parts of it at least--see, that's just in 1927 when Lindbergh made his flight over across the sea, so these small planes were quite active. And in fact, I don't know how they could have gotten into it without them. They fertilized the ground that way too, to drop fertilizers. Another thing that they did besides the scrub-cutting was to go out with these people who were harvesting the grass seed. They would work with these people who harvested the grass seed and bring it in.

Still another area of employment for the boys, was with the shearers. We had two boys that were the top shearers in New Zealand. They were

Sid Crawford [OH-5A] and Jury Thompson. Both of them joined the Church there at the College. I had the privilege of baptizing Sid Crawford. He came down from the Taupo area where he had been working, about ninety miles away. He came down the day before I left and we baptized him across the street in a pool where the kids would go swimming.

INT And this other fellow was not a member either?

AB He wasn't when he first came, but he became a member while he was there, was baptized and he has passed away since then, but Sid, of course, is still very active down there. He is, at the present time, I think, a patriarch. He was president of the [Hawkes Bay] Stake for a long time. Jimmy Southon, [OH-15A] who was the first president of the Hastings, or Hawkes Bay Stake, graduated from BYU [Brigham Young University].

INT From MAC?

AB Sorry, MAC. Thinking occupational terms.

INT How did the parents view the school; did you find that there was a great amount of parental support?

AB Yes, they were anxious to have their boys go. The Te Aute School which is run by the Church of England was just a short distance from us. It's up at the Te Hauke area. The people wanted their children to go to that school, because of its great reputation. We were gradually building a reputation in that area. Our football team, for example, would defeat them every time they played them, and that was quite good for the old boys; say, they really got a kick out of that. We could not quite compare with them in numbers; they had an awful lot of support from the people generally around the area and, this as I say, made it a little difficult, but most of the people who were not so affluent could, and did encourage us and gave us a lot of help. Nopera who was a great person at that time, one of the rich men of ours up there. He was a great supporter to our school. He was on our board, as a matter of fact.

INT And this is N-O-P-E-R-A?

AB Yes, Nopera.

INT This is his last name?

AB That's his last name. I don't know his first name. He was always Nopera to us. He and Stewart Meha, of course, were very, very, strong supporters. Way up in the North end Hohepa Heperi was a great person, of course. All of these men were very strong supporters to us. Jim Elkington [OH-2,3] was younger, but he was a tremendous booster for MAC. He was among the first that were there and we had a younger brother of his while I was there but these old boys came back.

INT Turi, was he the one, Turi Elkington?

AB Turi? No, he was younger than that. I know Turi. He was down on [D'Vrville] Island when I was down there to their place a number of times. But this I can't think of his first name. Anyway, he was an Elkington. And some of the Hohepa Heperi family from up North had a number of boys. In fact, one of the boys from up North had T.B. [Tuberculosis] very bad and he had been to our school. Before he came back, he was taken really ill with this and died; he did not get back to school to finish.

INT But he did not die there at the school?

AB No, he did not die. We did have one boy from the islands that died. Not at the school; he was at the hospital in Napier when he passed away. This boy's name was David Langi. He was a fine young man, a fine boy.

That family; I'll never forget the messages that came back as we informed the family--warm feelings. We certainly did everything possible that was possible to do for him. There were two boys who got diphtheria [a serious contagious bacterial disease]. That's what it was. We had an isolation ward in the dormitory. These boys were not in there as soon as they took sick and the doctor was called. Then they were taken into the hospital where they could be properly cared for. But this boy, David Langi--and the other boy was from up on the east coast.

INT Kaiser Paerata [OH-11A)?

AB Yes, Kaiser. Kaiser Paerata also contracted this diphtheria and they were in the hospital at the same time and they both received exactly the same care. And David passed away there and we buried him at the little school cemetery right there just north of where the church is built. And Kaiser pulled through. Kaiser's father and mother were terribly worried. They were great people, too, upon the east coast there; they were very important people. We had the Amaru boys from up there too. Wi Pere and his brother both were at the school. But it's hard to recall the names of all of them. But there are lots of fine boys there, excellent people.

INT Did you ever get a feeling that some parents regarded the MAC as a place to send their delinquent boys?

AB To have them reconstructed? I never had that feeling. I felt we had a few boys who were a little rough. I remember there we had some kids up from the Gisborne area, even down a little from Gisborne, between Gisborne and Napier.

INT Wairoa?

AB Just above Wairoa.

INT Mahia?

AB That's the old place where Sid . . .

INT Nuhaka? Sid Crawford? Sid Christy? They were from Nuhaka.

AB Nuhaka, yes, that's right. That's the place I was trying to think of. Anyway, these people from that area, a lot of boys up there. We had to handle some of them a little rough. I remember one particular instance where the boys would get awful hungry during the evening and they'd go in where the fresh bread was baked, slip out a loaf of fresh bread. It was difficult to catch the boys who were doing it. But I got the idea from my contact with one of the boys. I had him come in the office and he was very sure that he had never touched it. And then I said, now, I called him by name, "Joe, you take off your shirt," and I took my belt off. I said, "Joe, you have the opportunity to tell the full story if you would like." [He said] "I never did it, brother; I never did it." And I said, "All right, you turn around." About that time, he said, "I'll tell you the whole story." I did not have to touch him at all. But this kind of approach to him was what was needed to break him down. I knew he had taken it. And he admitted that he had taken it and who else was involved. Anyway, we had a very good goal; Joe never gave us any more trouble at all. It was just an interesting incident and experience there.

We did not have awful enough of trouble with the boys, of course, because they were concerned; if we had anybody give us real trouble, we'd send them home. We wouldn't keep them. That was about the only incident of real correction. Now, wait, I had the Samoan boys; there were three or four of the Samoan boys. We had some Purcells, Johnny Hunt. In the summer time, they went way down in the end of the paddock, the farthest point away. They had taken one of the chickens and they cooked the chicken [tape switched at this point].

INT Now, this Hunt boy and the others had gone down the paddock.

AB Yes, they had gone down to the paddock and one of our men was able to--Allen, that's the man I'm trying to think of, Elder Allen . . .

INT The one who was in the wood working?

AB Yes. He was our very best teacher. He had had experience in teaching and he, I thought, was the most outstanding teacher. But anyway, he walked in on these boys and I tell you they were surprised and frightened because they had stolen the chicken. They cooked it and were eating it. But he brought them back. This was the one boy that we were just about to send home but you've never heard such pleading in your life as he put up, and the other boys, too, who were involved. But the one who had taken it and got the boys to go with him was the one we were most concerned with.

These two instances stand out in my mind about the only real--oh, we had regular day-to-day problems. Boys would get in fights, angry with each other, and all this sort of thing. We had a system that had been established before I got there; I did not like the term very well. It was the "black-mark" system. If a boy got certain numbers of black marks,

he couldn't go to town on the weekend. Every weekend we would take them to town. We had an old truck that had been given to us, I think, about five years before I got there. It was a chain-drive. On this--we had seats on it--and we took the boys in town on this big bus.

We also had a Franklin air-cooled car that President Wright had willed to the College. We used that for a long time. It was quite a machine; it created quite a sensation when we went into town. There were not many cars at that time in Hastings. The little tiny ones, the Austins, I couldn't get into, but there were quite a few of those. But the boys loved to go in town on Saturday to a show and to watch the football. We had a football team; this participated every Saturday somewhere in the vicinity so that they would go where the team was. But if they got into trouble during the week, you see, they were cut out of this weekend experience. It was quite effective but merit system was established rather than the black mark. The kids all called it the black marker. That didn't seem to set very well--I didn't like it personally--so we gave them merits and let them go in.

We had a very good set of rules governing the boys' activities and we had some fine boys as our monitors. We had a head monitor and then there were about five others among the eighty boys, you see, that sort of monitored the whole area and all their activities. They would take care of the dining room and to see that the work was done and cleaned up. It was the boys who did not do their share that would get these demerits instead of merits, you see.

INT Some of the fellows have mentioned the punishment of having to miss a meal. Was this in effect while you were there?

AB It was when we came, but we didn't hold to that. Of course, to miss a meal was a very serious thing to the kids. They would miss a meal and this would cause them to do other tricks, and steal the bread and this sort of thing. I think our system worked about as well, as any of them. That was in force, I should say, for a while when we first got there.

We had a very interesting experience one Christmas time when all the boys were away but the Samoans. They got a little pig. Not a suckling, but a little larger, about three to four months old pig and fixed it like they would in Samoa. They had cooked it all in one piece put an apple in its mouth, and on Christmas Day, they came over carrying this pig and we had a great dinner. My wife made angel food cakes, they'd never had that opportunity there, our group, anyway. They were really quite excited about it; it turned out to be quite an event. It was in Samoan style-hangi, you see?

INT With a little bit of English?

AB Attached to it, that's right.

INT Now, were you viewed by the community of Hastings and Hawkes Bay, in general?

AB Businessmen, of course, were very interested in school. We had the

mayor out a number of times while I was there. He had a big store in--Mayor Roach was his name--he had a big store. Roach's Store was where we had done business for years, just established. When we had eggs, surplus eggs to see, they bought our eggs. We had a good relationship there and he was very interested in the school. He came out and visited us a number of times, spoke to the boys. Among other businessmen, we had some very fine friends, in the highways. He was a bikeman, but he was a great fellow, just a very fine individual. I think he had a big bike store [for] bicycle repairs and sales. His brother was in business, also. The men in the shops, [whom] we did a lot of business [with], were very friendly, very kind. Many of them came out. They loved our football team; our football boys played even the advanced boys, the seniors. They held their own with them, too, very often.

INT Was there much opposition from the other churches?

AB Oh yes, the other churches were pretty bitter. The mayor had me into the Mother's Day program and all of the other ministers were on the stand. I was on the stand with them. The one who made the talk said, I am sure he was talking about us but he said, "This is the one good thing that came out of America [laughs]". It was quite interesting.

We were invited to many of the affairs that would carry on there; when important people came, they had banquets. The mayor was very sure to see that we had an invitation, too. So we felt quite a part of the community except for the churches [that] were quite bitter at times. Of course, we were considered to be a Maori church. It was quite true; most of the people were Maoris in the Church, but that changed its picture later.

Oh, the old MAC was a great school. You see, it was shaken down just after we left. That was in--we left there in July 1930. We were allowed to leave that much early because my wife's father was leaving Rexburg and was going to Chicago and would be there for a number of years. We were due to leave, anyway, at the latter part of July, so we were permitted to leave at that time.

INT Now, were you present when a mission president--I don't recall who it was--made the prediction that some disaster might befall the school because parental support was beginning to lag?

AB No, there was no feeling of that. I have never ever heard--and the people whose children were there were very good supporters. The Church generally didn't support it--what I mean is they weren't sending everybody there, that they could have sent. But I have never had--I've heard people talk about this, but I've never seen [any evidence of non-support]. We did have an earthquake when we left, of course, that shook it down and never did open for another school year, of course.

Elder Hodge came in, by the way, he was a full-fledged school teacher of the New Zealand system. He taught for years and he joined the Church. He was selected to be the principal and he took over when I left. But they never did open another school year because the earthquake shook it down just at the time that they were to start.

INT Just about the day before they were scheduled to open?

AB Yes.

INT I can't recall who told me that, but they said at one of the huitaus--who was the mission president there in 1928?

AB Eparaima [Ephraim] Magleby. Now, you see, when we got there, it was Jenkins, and then Eparaima came in and was there till nearly the end; he was there when we left.

INT It seems like they said he was the one that said the school would be taken away because some of the . . . it seemed that the support had begun to decline and then they felt that the earthquake was kind of the fulfillment of this.

AB Of this promise, I have never ever heard him say that. I'm pretty close to him. He was down at our place quite a bit. He was quite ill. He had to finally leave before his mission finished. Elder Christensen took over for him when he left.

INT What do you feel the greatest contribution of MAC was?

AB Well, I think it's found in the boys that came out of MAC. I think it gave them an appreciation for the Church in the first place that they would never have gotten anywhere else. It gave them a good education and a stimulation towards education. This is reflected in the lives of their families afterward as much as it was during that. When you produce men like Sid Crawford [OH-5A], and the old one I mentioned ago, Jim Elkington [OH-2]; people of this kind, products of MAC--Kelly Harris [OH-11B] were very active people, dynamic and carrying on with the Church program. The Ahmu boys [Oliver Ahmu OH-32] were there and they became very important to the development of the Church in later years. Many of them were the Branch Presidents, district presidents, all the way through clear from down the South Island. I remember the boys, of course, the Elkington boys were down there. The Hippolite family, there were a number of their boys who were at the MAC, and the old man himself was at the MAC earlier. I'm trying to recall some of the others but, anyway, all scattered through the mission--when I went back as mission president--the boys who had been there were very strong to have this. The Amaru boys, I mentioned those before . . .

INT As I talked to many of the fellows about the extra-curricular activities--I mean football, glee club and I think your wife would be very thrilled to hear how many referred to the dramatic productions

they had been in [when] Sister Ballif had directed for them. They still remember those activities with fond memories.

AB I remember Tom Clark when you talk about this. Tom Clark and Joe Hapi were the people and, of course, Mita, his brother was in the legislature, Steve Watene [and] Mita Watene. These boys were all there at the College when we were there, and they became very active people. Steve didn't stay too close to the Church; he didn't leave the Church, but he became [one] of the very outstanding members of Parliament for the Maori people. The names of them are so far away from me at the present moment.

INT Well, this seemed to be part of the universal feeling as I talked to them, the spiritual growth, and they felt that they had not been short-changed academically either; they felt that they had received a good academic base.

AB Well, in high school periods, it's basic and we gave them the basic things that the high school training would give. Our curriculum was well-accepted by the inspector; he was very pleased. He did not like us to continue so much with the younger ones; he didn't want that. He wanted us to move into this other, and we did move mostly into the secondary school. That's when they gave us the financial help. The government was under the recommendation, of course, of this man. [They then] gave us finance which was very helpful to us at that time. I tell you we lived on a very small budget down there.

INT When Elder Hodge came in--was it Hodge or Hodges?

AB Hodges.

Side B

INT He was the first New Zealander to head the school?

AB The head to the school. That was from the latter part of July to the end of school year, and then he was setting up for the new school year when the earthquake shook it down.

INT Now, did this seem to indicate the beginning of a tendency to turn it over more to New Zealanders?

AB To local people? Yes, they were concerned then to get people who were there. I think it would have been my recommendation, because they'd have--you see, the term of an elder was too short. After you'd been there--we were there for three and a half years, just about, three and a half years--but that was too short, to keep turning it over all the time. You lose ground because somebody comes in with a different idea, different experiences, and didn't have any feeling for the country there, and the people there. As a matter of fact, in the setting up of a new school, my recommendation at the very beginning was pretty well carried out. We asked for the man to come out, and the man who came--it was our first man--what was his name?

INT Boyack [Clifton D., first headmaster of Church College of New Zealand, 1958-1961].

AB Yes, Boyack. He came out a year ahead of time, which he should have done, and that's what we asked for--to get things set up. But Boyack's point of view was to give them a good American high school education. That was all right; that's fine. But it missed the point of preparing them to take the [national] examinations and being qualified for jobs in New Zealand. Now, in order to get a job in New Zealand, the boy had to pass those exams, and that's the thing that they couldn't quite see. But they do now; they see it now, this later days. And they have, I suppose, as many, if not more--of the percentage of their school, pass that [school] Certificate examination than any school around them. It has done very well.

INT Were there any types of examination at MAC at that time?

AB No, not at that time. We could have the boys sit for the school certificate if they were prepared, but we did not have many prepared. We were far enough along, or developed; we did not want to discourage the kids too badly. That was one of the problems. Te Aute had a long traditionally established program, equipment, and places to teach the boys, but we had a pretty rough set-up. We had those two little barrack-type buildings where we taught them, the classrooms. But the material that we had to work with and the equipment was not good at all [The noise of a doorbell and arriving company may be heard in the background].

Before we leave the MAC, we should mention one very important thing that happened during these three years. The huitau held at the MAC, and this was quite remarkable from the fact that all of the old MAC "old boys", and these people came from all over the two islands and participated. They were the ones who took the responsibility and set up the program and got everything in line. We had terrible weather; it rained like the dickens [laughs]. But it was still a very interesting one, and the people got to know the school. Now, this was one very important thing. We got to the people down there to see what was going on, to see how well . . .

We had great competition with the kids in keeping their rooms clean. You've never been in rooms--they wouldn't let you in their rooms unless you were on sliders, I mean the pads that they had at their doors. They never walked on their floors; they always walked on these pads. And their beds were made perfectly; a woman could not make a bed as well as these kids made it. So from that point of view, they learned a few personal things that were good when they went back to their homes. Cleanliness, frequent bathing--they had showers around. Insisted upon them; keeping as clean as they could, and it worked. In many of their homes, we saw the results of it later.

INT Many of them, I suppose, this was the first time they had been exposed to that type of thing, those really from the backblocks.

AB I think it was. Some of them, as I say, came from pretty good homes, but it was not the affluent group in our society. But people like Hohepa Heperi encouraged some of those boys like his own grandson to come down, and they made fine contributions to our group. The outstanding thing, as you indicated a moment ago--the "old boys", think of this--is the great football days. But with that, came this other training under the influence of men who had testimony of the truth, who had faith, and who were good students of their subject.

They weren't the most professionally trained men in the world, but they were all boys who had university backgrounds, that did the teaching, did the direction. You can't associate that close with people like that--I'm talking about the boys themselves--and not have a little of it rub off on them, not only from the classroom stand-point which is--I think their work in the classroom was very well done. But the personal character-developments element; you didn't have in a lot of other schools.

INT I think that's so very important.

AB And that's reflected, I think, in the educational program of the Church, today, you see, in each of the institutions that represent the Church.

INT Well, let's come up to your second mission down there then; you were called to go down as mission president. What were the circumstances behind that call; do you have any knowledge of that?

AB It was late one evening; we had a group of people at our home. It was just before Christmas; President Richards called me on the phone and I'd never been more surprised or shocked in my life, because I felt that the people who went down there would be people who knew the Maori language, and who had experience in the mission work. It was a total surprise, and I couldn't even get my breath when he called me on the phone that night. And then he said, "Well, you and your wife come up, and we would like to talk to you about it." I told him I'd be very pleased to come. But it was the biggest surprise that one can have. It was even more surprising than the first call. I'd always thought in the mission experience that I'd go where my father and brothers had gone, to the French mission, but that's what happened.

It was a fine experience to meet with President Richards, and to go over the problems and discuss the things to find out what they do on a mission. I was very much surprised when he said--I asked him, "Do you have a hand book for your mission president and something that will give us a guide." He said, "We've concluded that it's much better for the individual to be dependent upon the spirit of the Lord, and use the experience that you've had--I'd been a Stake President and a bishop--and let the spirit guide you. So we are not at the present moment, to the point where we are giving you a hand book specifically directing everything that you should do." And he said, "You can always contact us if a problem arises that you can't handle." And we did a number of times [laughs].

Well, that call came to us, I said, just before Christmas in 1954; that's when they called us. We didn't leave until March of 1955. That time I was the chairman of the Department of Sociology and in charge of the BYU summer school. So we shaped the materials around; we left in March, 1955, left by train to Los Angeles; then we flew from Los Angeles to New Zealand. And that was those big old propeller machines. We stopped, of course, at Honolulu for a short time, and then we stopped at a little island way off down by Fiji. I can't remember the name of the little island; they don't use it any more, I guess--but it was an air strip there on a coral reef just about a mile and half long. That's all there was to it. We had an interesting experience there, because the propeller on a machine had just given way, and a terrible accident had occurred. And they stopped every machine, and had them gone over with instruments to make sure that there were no defective propellers. That gave us quite a thrill, but we went on to New Zealand without trouble. We left, as I said, in March; which is cold, and we got down there just in the winter time in March and April.

INT Yes, you came out of one winter into another.

AB Yes, into another one; that's correct.

INT Yours was the last mission to cover the entire country?

AB We had the full mission. We had seventy-two branches and sixteen districts. One of the things we did early was to remove all missionaries from responsibilities in branches or districts. Missionaries were still there, working with the people but we wanted them to work with the non-members to convince them. There had been quite a number of missionaries whose total experience had been as a branch president, this sort of a thing. And we felt that that wasn't the most desirable not for the missionary, nor for the people. I felt when I went out there this time that the Maoris had had the Gospel for over a hundred years, and they ought to be prepared and ready to take the responsibility themselves. I was very much concerned about this. There had been a lot of excuses made for the Maoris--that you can't treat them the same as you do other people--but I believe that the Gospel prepares people to take responsibility. And that's the reason why I was not particularly happy to have other people taking their responsibility and their job. So that was one of the first things we did.

INT And that would seem to be a major . . .

AB I think it was a major move for the welfare, because from that time forward we made our huitaus [conference] training grounds for our elder's quorum. We first set up the elder's quorum in a very specific manner. Now, there were lots of elders, lots of people had been ordained as elders. But the identification with elder's quorum work was not too common. They knew they belonged to a group. But our training from that time forward was training of an individual as a member of a quorum, the

quorum duties, quorum responsibilities, and the importance of the Melchizedek priesthood in the operation of the Church. Now, there were a couple of high priests when we got down there; these are Hohepa Heperi and Stuart Meha--and I think Nopera was . . .

INT Weren't there four of them?

AB There were the three of them when we got there. The other one I think had passed away. But anyway, whatever the number it was, there were that many high priests. But they were just high priests, I mean the function, and the operation of the priesthood as a guiding force was not uppermost in their minds. They knew they had to have that; they knew they had to be elders and had to be ordained in order to function in certain offices. But the general things that the Aaronic Priesthood could do--they were doing. But the direct responsibility for handling wards or branches and responsibility in districts that was--I am not saying this was the beginning of that--but I mean that was the emphasis that we followed. And we trained them at the huitaus in these meetings for administrative works. So by the end of three years, we had groups of people who were transferred directly into the stake organizations in the various auxiliaries. Arta had charge of the Primary, Mutual and the Relief Society. And we had the boards trained, and we had them operating as boards in the various districts.

We had another very difficult thing, people, whenever they had a problem, had been coming directly to the mission office--no matter where they were nor what group they belonged to. But we learned--I am talking about organization, I am not talking about individuals' personal problems--but we put great emphasis upon them going from the ward, the branch, to the stake or to the district organization. There was no sense in [having] the district organization there, unless they could function as a mediator and organizer for the branches. And this emphasis we placed upon that, and I think it was a good training tool; it helped a great deal in setting up the stake. You see, they grew very fast; there are now seven stakes. And I think the eighth one is now being considered, but at least seven stakes exist in New Zealand. By the time we were ready to leave, there was the second stake to be organized down in the Hawkes Bay District. We had people there trained to go right into the program. Jimmy had been the district president down there, and he stepped right into the--Jimmy Southon [OH-15A], that is--stepped right into being the first president in the stake down there.

INT Now, you were aware, I assume, that the stakes were going to be organized; this was presumably based on your recommendation?

AB Well, we recommended that they to be made, to work toward that goal. That had been one of our objectives in the mission, to prepare the people to take care and to operate their own church organization. And I think they were well prepared.

INT Because this was quite a step, wasn't it, the first overseas stake, so to speak.

AB That's correct. But they had been there. You see, the Church had been there for over a hundred years, and these people should have been ready to go. Now, a lot of excuses had been given to the Maori, saying that, "Well, the Maori, you just can't hold them responsible." I don't think that's true. I think the Lord expected the Maoris, after they had had the Gospel as long as they had and had been operating in it--my feeling was they were to be expected to do just as much as any other person who had had the Gospel as long, and had been schooled in it as long. There were a lot of them [Maori] who [were] well prepared. A lot of fine work had been done with the missionaries previously, through the mission president and missions previously. So I say there were lots of fine people who were prepared. But again we were able to use a great number of the old boys, MAC boys. They were really active. At our first huitau, after we first got there--this huitau was held at the college--these old boys were there en masse. And they had worked out a real program, they thought, as to how we could go ahead and continue the school, or have the school really developed. I went down and visited the old grounds, and they were in a pretty desolate situation when we saw them all broken down. But that was all cleared up, and I think homes were built in that area. The old faculty home was still there, and it didn't get to shake and didn't do much damage to that. But they were very anxious that a new [one] would be set up, and the opportunity be given to the children of today. And I felt they were right, and of course, the school was then in process; they were building it then. But there was a great deal of enthusiasm. But the point we tried to get over to the "old boys", that it was not just a matter of enthusiasm, or wanting it, but they had to get behind it and support it; they had to do something about it.

INT Before you went down on your mission, you were involved in the planning of the College, weren't you?

AB That's correct. There were about five people who had spent a good deal of time with George Beisinger [superintendent of LDS constitution in late 1950's]. I chairmanned that group for a period of time. We set up what we felt would be a good program as far as a building program was concerned. [The buildings were laid out just about like George finally built them down there]. And we had a fine experience there going over it because we had been there. Bill Carr was there for part of it; one or two other previous missionaries who had worked at the [Maori Agricultural] College were. And President Richards talked with us a number of times about it. It was concluded that we would set up just such a program, as they finally actually put on the drawing boards and built.

And, one other thing that we did at that meeting was to recommend very strongly to the First Presidency that a man be sent down for one year before they started the school, so that he could get a lay of the country and get the picture; I mentioned this to you once before. And they did just; finally, that came; Brother Boyack came out there before, or while we were still there.

INT You had two--while you were there as mission president--the College and temple, the entire temple view project was under way.

AB We broke ground for the [New Zealand] Temple. And we dedicated the Temple while we were there. It was quite an experience that way to be there during that whole period of time. And then there was another interesting thing to me; the old MAC didn't open its school year after the one I had opened [in 1930], but--Elder Hodge finished that school year. When the next school year came [1931], the earthquake shook

it down, and it never opened again. And then I was there to the opening and the dedication of this new school [in 1958] which was a carry-on of the--not the old MAC; it was changed to Church College [of New Zealand]--but it was basically the school idea that had been established earlier. It brought the two periods together. . .

INT And then preparing a mission for stakehood, you might say.

AB That's right! Getting them operating. And I think that by the time they were ready to set up--when the time for dedication--by that time there were sixteen areas that were pretty well organized. I say quite well; they functioned almost as stakes. They didn't have all of the things that the stakes did, but every one of those districts had an elder's quorum either in the district itself or in two related. The quorum would be made up of people in two related, or closely associated districts.

Another interesting thing that happened--competition has the tendency to destroy unity in Church work, especially competition of the kind that rewards are given for excellence. Now, it had gotten so bad that when we got there, there were certain branches in the mission that wouldn't speak to others; they wouldn't participate because these others had won the coveted trophy or whatever it was. And the trophy became the great objective rather than doing the thing for excellence. So we attempted to break down that feeling. We cut off the competitions for plaques, or cups, or things of this nature, but evaluated the competition on the basis of excellence. Now, this is a hard thing to do, but it has greater value, because then you begin to do the thing for the right reason. That's the proper way to do it. And that was done in the music and all.

We had a tough time to get all the choirs to sing together instead of in competition. But we did finally have--by the time of dedication--a choir of about 450 voices, or nearly 500 voices, under Kelly Harris [Oh-11B] that sang the songs for the dedication program. And it was a beautiful chorus and it was well done. Now, they were trained in different districts, but when they came together, they had the music well in mind, and everything had been worked. They came for practices after the hui was opened, that's at the beginning--so that they were ready to present this music at the dedication. It was a beautiful experience.

Well, the same thing was true in the Maori culture; there had been this terrible competition between the various canoe groups, who all had the interpretation that they wanted to put on. But Lucy Hemingson, who had been responsible--we had given the responsibility to the Mutual organizations to develop a unified experience or expression--had a terrific job to get them to do any other interpretation than their own interpretation. But one very interesting thing we did was to call all the elder leaders from sixteen districts into Auckland, where we had a long hui. And we went over very carefully each of the numbers we wanted to be done and arrived at a point where they could all agree on. Then these were written up and sent out to each of the groups who were to participate. And we had over a thousand people participating in unison with the Maori culture. Well, this was quite an achievement; Lucy should take a lot of credit for that, but that was the thing that was hard to do with those people, to get them to change their old ways. Lucy Hemingson; she's still there. She's in Auckland. I think she is originally from--where is the family where the mission president always stayed?--just above Hastings, farther up from Hastings. Tahoraiti, I think is the name of the Maori pa up there. But any rate that's where the Duncan's lived, in the Dannevirke area [Urieme & Polly Duncan, legendary stalwarts in the early twentieth century, lived in Tahoraiti pa in Dannevirke, approximately sixty miles south of Hastings].

INT Well, that would be quite a job to bring all those various tribes together.

AB That's where we were talking about, where Lucy was from. Now, she came from that area. Then she was up at Auckland; she had been working in Auckland for many years when we got there. She was the one who took the responsibility for bringing them all together and it worked out beautifully. And they were very happy when they all participated. President McKay was thrilled to see them all do that thing in unison. It's the one thing that made him say--I am quite sure it's one of the factors that caused him to think in terms of the unification--he said, "You're no longer Maoris,"--this is a quote, I could play it for you; I've got the record where he says this--"You're no more Maoris or Tongans, Tahitians or Samoans, Australians or Hawaiians. You're the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. It's a unit, and we can not keep those people separated into the wrong categories or groups if we're going to be successful as a mission." Now, that was the kind of spirit and feeling that we had had. But that time we were going very strong with the pakeha; there was a great number of fine Europeans who joined the Church over there when I was there.

INT Now, I know originally--not at the very beginning, but in the 1880's when it started then--most of the proselyting was done among the Maoris; this was the case for many years. Do you know about when a serious endeavor was made among the pakeha?

AB Well, I think [it was] following the war [World War II]. When President Halverson [A. Reed Halverson 1945-1948] was there. I think, Halverson

followed Matt Cowley [1938-1945], and President Halverson put more emphasis [on pakeha]. He had a great number of fine pakeha families. Then, each of the presidents such as President Young [Gordon C. Young 1948-1951]; he did an awful lot of work with the white people, you see, and so did Brother Ottley [Sidney J. Ottley OH-14; 1951-1955]. These people all had worked with them before we got there, and there were lots of them who had joined the Church while we were there. In Auckland they tried to separate these groups out, and let them hold the meetings separately. But by the time we got there, Brother Ottley had found--I guess it was him, I'm not sure, either he or President Young-- had found that it was not doing as good a job as it should do. So they brought them all together and built that fine Auckland Chapel there and we had a very big group and fine attendance, and many Europeans.

So that I think it is before that time, some time--I couldn't tell you exactly when, but the emphasis kept on going that way. We didn't send any Maori-speaking elders, as far as I was concerned, because in every area the Maoris themselves could speak English just as well; with the exception of the real old people. Now, in some areas, some of our missionaries would take time--where these old people were--to learn enough to talk to the old people. It was essential and I thought that was perfectly all right. But [we had] no concentrated effort to have all missionaries learn the Maori language; that's what they used to do, and that's what sort of cut them off from the Europeans. But, after I got there, there was very little effort, if any, to teach the language, to all missionaries.

- INT Now, in the creation of the Auckland Stake, were you asked to make recommendations concerning the creation of the stake? Or had you just suggested that it was about time that the mission considered or be considered as ripe for a stake?
- AB Yes, we had talked about it a good deal when President McKay came. He had us come in and talk about it. He was very much interested in it, as to whether or not it could be done, or how effective it would be. I think he had a favorable enough report from the people who were there. We all reported that it was, we felt, time for it, for it's been a long time.
- INT Did the creation of the Auckland Stake pretty well follow your recommendation, or had you recommended other areas as well? Such as Hawkes Bay?
- AB Well, immediately following this one was the Hawkes Bay one, and both were recommended while we were there. In fact, we had also recommended one up in the North end, up in the Kaikohe area because they had some excellent people up there. And yet it was one of the last ones to be formulated. There was a little difference, I think, of people up there--a little problem between leadership--people. That made it delay as long as it did, I am sure. Then, of course, they found that in Auckland; they had had several stakes in a hurry and the same thing was true at Hamilton. Hamilton was cut off from Auckland, and then

Hamilton Stake has been divided, because there was a great concentration of the people in those areas.

INT I arrived there in August of 1960 and the Hamilton Stake was created in November, and at the same time the Hawkes Bay Stake was created also. Elder [Spencer W.] Kimball came down. The preparation for the

College, [Auckland] temple, creation of the stake--these, of course, loomed very large in the history of your mission presidency.

AB The school was established--I mean the building was going on--pretty much like the plans that we had worked out in this committee here; yet that was practically done before I got to the mission as far as the school itself was concerned. The building had gone on for a long time, you see, and they were working at it. This training of the local people to do the carpentry work, brick work, painting, and all this sort of thing had gone on quite a long time; they had had a good organization there under Beisinger. He was a very good man and did an excellent job. The Temple itself was--the ground was broken; they had already bought it; I did not have anything to do with the land, the land was already bought for that. That was ready to go and we broke ground--President Brown was there--broke ground, dug the thing and built it and then dedicated it within the period of time. So just about two and half a years, actually on the construction of that temple.

A very interesting experience with President Brown was that we travelled the mission. He went with me to every section of the mission and spoke--I think I heard him speak about forty-two different times--and never repeated himself. He is a marvellous speaker and he thrilled the people, really. And we had a very interesting experience; we went to Wellington; we were supposed to have air transportation on the big planes over [to South Island]. We got down there and we were shunted; they did not have any reservation for us but we had had reservations made long in advance. But we decided finally to take a small plane and just he and I would go over. His wife and my wife were there but they stayed in Wellington. And we went down to the airport where this little plane was. He looked at it and he said, "I don't know whether the Lord expects me to make this kind of sacrifice or not." But anyway, we got in and flew in that little tiny plane over to South Island, and landed and there were people there to meet us. We went on and held the meetings and then came back on the big plane. That was quite an experience. He didn't know, neither did I, I'll tell you; I did a lot of praying right then.

INT When did you go, to Nelson?

AB We landed in Nelson; we went into Nelson. There was another little place right in there. Anyway, we had about four or five stops in the South Island. But it was quite an exciting experience.

Another thing that always impressed me was the tremendous sacrifice of the people. Not enough is ever said in the building of the buildings

about the people themselves. The people made the greatest sacrifices it seems to me. They let their children come; their young men come. Some of them even gave up the running of their own farms and came there to work and they paid or sent in to us an equivalent of about \$50,000 annually to take care of the supplies.

We really had the welfare program in effect because these people had to be fed and they had to be clothed. They came there without pay, so that it was one of the things that somebody had to take the responsibility for. And the people did that. I'll tell you it's always been a thrill to me to think in terms of the tremendous sacrifice the people made in sending their people to work and supporting them while they were there. And it was most effective. I don't think enough credit has ever been given to the people themselves for what they were able to do in the way of contributing to the program.

INT Was your period there a time of great growth? With all this activity going on in the Temple View area?

AB Our missionary work was quite effective. One of the things that was most effective about it was finding the people that already belonged and we followed down every membership card we had so that when we sent in our report, we knew exactly how many people were there, how many were active and how many were not. And this, of course, was a big step towards the growth of the Church. At the highest point, we had only 140 missionaries, that's the highest number we ever had at one time. [It was] hard to keep the districts and branches going, and the people too; you see, there were 17,000 people on record. At the time, I think it was the biggest mission in the Church, in total number of population. Sixteen districts and seventy-two branches took a lot of energy and time. We held three huia [district conferences] in each district every year during that time, and then, of course, we'd hold the big huitau [mission conference] in the winter or spring; I've forgotten which month. Anyway, usually just the one meeting for the big huitau, and during my time, they were held there at the College [CCNZ]--where we had the greatest opportunity.

So things like this, the people's participation and interest in the whole development of the country, was marvellous to me, the way they responded, and they will respond. We had to cut some people off the Church; there had been quite a liberal attitude. Some of the people had committed real serious problems; they came and asked us for forgiveness, and had been forgiven as much as sixteen times. Some of them happened again and they were cut off from the Church. It's quite a difficult thing for them to see; they couldn't quite figure it out. I think that was one of the problems with the Maori people, was that we had been too liberal, too forgiving, I don't mean too forgiving; I shouldn't use that word. But we had been too lenient with them when they made mistakes so that they hadn't had to measure up like the people do at home, after they had had it as long as they had had it.

INT Yes, that's right.

AB Of course, there are lots of things that we haven't talked about that happened during the mission, but these were the outstanding things. We not only built the Temple, we built a new mission home, which is a beautiful home. Well set up for the care of the missionaries. We saw what was needed; we had a place where we could meet and feed the new missionaries when they come in; and the missionaries who worked in the office and then had a lovely place in the upper part of the building for the people who visited us. These things, of course, happened then. You'll do a lot of editing of this, I suppose, anyway.

INT Were you aware that the mission was going to be divided also? Had you recommended that?

AB Yes, that was one of the things I thought we should talk about. Following the dedication, President McKay assigned Elder Romney to stay and he and I went over the mission and then we set up the boundary lines, and selected the people for the new stake, set them apart, got everything moving in that direction while he was still there. Now, a very interesting thing happened. We went over to the Gisborne area by car, and when he had to go over that pass in there, we had a storm and it was wet and slippery and that was what made him decide that the mission division should be on that side of the mountain and the other on this side. And I think it was still a fair division of the population of New Zealand and certainly it was a fair division of Church membership [New Zealand Mission and New Zealand South Mission were divided by the mountain ranges separating the East Coast & Hawkes Bay from the rest of Northe Island]. I notice that recently they've changed that, haven't they?

INT Yes.

AB You see, he was very much concerned about people travelling over those roads to come to meetings. The roads have been improved [now], and that make a difference.

INT I seem to remember going through the Waioeka Gorge from Gisborne.

AB Yes, that was a rough country in that day; it's really rough and he held his breath most of the time across there. It was very interesting.

INT Your period there was a time of great happening.

AB It was a real change . . .

INT Now, did President [Robert L.] Simpson [1958-1961] and President [Alexander P.] Anderson [1958-1961] come down while you were still there?

AB President Simpson arrived just before we left, but President Anderson had gotten as far as Hawaii and he didn't have his passport. It was quite an amusing thing. But anyway, he had to wait until that could be flown over to him and then they came later. I had left before Brother

Anderson got there. But I went over the division of the mission, and the work with Elder Simpson and he was the one who took over.

There was another interesting thing. In the process of setting up the stakes or [as we] prepared for the stake organization, one of the bits of research that we ran down from the office was the property held by the Church in New Zealand. All over New Zealand, there were chunks of property that had been deeded to the Church. Nobody knew anything about them or where they were and so with Mr. Cowley, who is a lawyer in Auckland, that we did a lot of work with. He and I had made a survey of all of these properties and we got the whole set lined up with the official titles and all cleared for the Church. Another thing that was very interesting was that there were about to give us taxation on all of our property. We hadn't been accepted, but Cowley and I got together and he had fixed for the Church of England a bit of legislation that had passed. He set up the same program for us and we went down to Wellington, and Mr. [Walter] Nash was very helpful, and so was Mr. [Keith] Holyoake, as a matter of fact. Mr. Holyoake was the [prime] minister but Nash came in just a little bit later. But they helped us get through the legislature, the Parliament, to get this law enacted which made it possible for us to hold it, but we could not send money out of the country. Tithing money was banked and was kept in there, but it was authorized from Salt Lake City. So that's the way all the money is handled there now. But this was set up while we were there.

INT That's interesting.

AB That's an interesting bit that not many people know about it, but it's just a little different. But the property deal--there must have been fifty to sixty pieces of property.

INT But what happened to them?

AB They still hold them; they're still there. I don't know whether they have sold any of them now or not but when we left, they were all in the clear. And beside that, we had set up about forty-two pieces of property where we expected to build chapels. And the chapels in many of those areas have been built now. Some of the properties were changed; later we found that it'd be better to build in some other places. But this was all done at this particular time, that is, setting them up. So we had quite an experience of finding the properties and getting them. George Beisinger and I very carefully went over the country. Chapels were started in about six different places while we were still there with the building program.

INT Well, there was a lot of building going on.

AB I should say. Well, I don't know whether that's helpful or not.

INT I think that was very helpful because it covers a great deal of activity there, and I appreciate very much sharing your time and experiences.

AB Glad to do it. Sorry we've had such a rough time getting together.

END OF INTERVIEW