

Name:	Alphilius Ombari
Date of interview:	Friday, 23 May 2014
Location of interview:	Kokoda Primary School, Kokoda, Northern Province
Chief interviewer:	Didymus Gerald
Time interview concluded:	12:24 PM
Duration of interview:	09:35:14
Main language of interview:	English
Image:	

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW

Time	Transcript
00:00	<p>[INTERVIEWER]:</p> <p>This is interview number 4, the name of the interviewee is Alphilius Ombari, he is from Kamondo village. He will be talking about his carrier dad, Ombari Hara, and his brother Hara Keno, who was a policemen during the war. Alphilius, we are pleased to meet you this afternoon. You have a story to tell about your father, Mr Ombari Hara who was a carrier, and your brother Hara Keno, who was a policeman during the war.</p> <p>You have the floor now. You can go ahead with your story.</p>
00:42	<p>Yes, I am please to come forward to tell you about this. My father was a telegram linesman, and he was the carrier of all these. The war was already down at the Awala and Soroputa, the first PIBs met down there. Papuan battle was broken there. That time they were rushing him, rushing him to carry all these things and move. He's a village man, he doesn't know what he was doing, but he was doing he was struggling very hard to carry all these things. Because the war was close; they were rushing him to go back to Isurava</p>
01:43	<p>where the war went because Japanese was approaching very fast. So you know, weather was no good, it was muddy, they struggled very hard, and at the same time somehow he got swapped on the power or something, his hand, one right hand and the left leg was paralysed through the war. So that's the story my father was telling me about this. I asked him 'how did you get your leg and his hand paralysed?', and he said during the war was carrying this electrical thing around and I've got this so I let my hand and my leg was paralysed. I never said anything I kept it, how can I expose this out, as my father took part in the war. I am very happy that my father took part in the war. I welcome how you are approaching and I'm giving you this information. Thank you.</p>
03:07	<p>[INTERVIEWER]:</p> <p>This telegraphic line, where was it built, do you mean to say it was built from Awala all the way to Moresby?</p>
	<p>It was built at Awala, Kumusi, Kumusi and then they were pulling up, the war was still coming so they were rushing to come up, they were pulling all the way up to Isurava.</p>
03:40	<p>[INTERVIEWER]:</p> <p>Did they use those telephone lines during the war? Did your father tell you any story about this?</p>

	They were using the telephone/telegram lines, they were contacting where the actual war was coming up. They were rushing him, carrying these things.
	[INTERVIEWER]: Did he build this line all the way to Port Moresby?
	He went as far as up the track, then he got this accident, power shock, so he came back again.
	[INTERVIEWER]: Were some local men involved in this project?
	Yes, there were, there were.
	[INTERVIEWER]: Who was supervising them?
	I don't know, he didn't tell me about this.
04:36	[INTERVIEWER]: Did your father and other young men involved in this project, did they know about the use of this lines that they were pulling?
	I don't know, he didn't tell me about it.
	[INTERVIEWER]: where does your brother Hara Keno fit in to this lines?
04:57	He was – before the war, as most of our elderly brothers, they went across to Port Moresby, they were working in the plantations. So when the war was breaking out or they had news of the war, they recruited some of these plantation workers to be in the policemen and in the army – PIBs. That's the time they got him in Moresby. So from there he, after the war, he was sent from Moresby to Goilala, Tapini, he stayed there. It was still during the war. And then from there he came to Kokoda, so he stayed at Kokoda station just here. His old house is here, he stayed here till when he finished here after the War he went home and then he finished.
06:08	[INTERVIEWER]:

	During the War, what kind of work did the police do? Did they support the PIB?
	He was supporting the PIBs and he was escorting some of these carriers. That's what he told me.
06:24	[INTERVIEWER]: Would it be fair to say they were responsible to the ANGAU officers or the Australian army at the time?
	I don't know about that.
06:35	[INTERVIEWER]: When your father got injured during the course of his duty, did the army discharge him or did he still carry on with his task up until the end of the war?
	When he got this accident, when he got sick, they sent him back again, somebody escorted him back.
07:02	[INTERVIEWER - JR]: Did he ever receive any compensation for having an injury?
	No. Just sent back to the village.
	[INTERVIEWER]: What would your comments be in relation to this program that we're undertaking now?
	I'm very happy to give myself, my brother and my dad to expose it now. Thank you.
	[INTERVIEWER]: Any other further comments you'd like to make?
	Got nothing to say, I'm willing to give.
07:45	[INTERVIEWER]: Thank you, Mr Ombari.

	[INTERVIEWER - JR]: I might ask a question about your brother, who was the policeman. So where did he serve?
	He served in the first police. During the war, he was in Moresby, and then he was coming up carrying the, escorting the carriers, and going back till war was ending. He was posted to Tapini.
08:22	[INTERVIEWER - JR]: So for the whole duration of the war he was in Central or Northern Districts. With other men who were also from Northern or Central, or were they from all over?
	They were all mixed in. All the Papuans were in there.
	[INTERVIEWER - JR]: Is he still with us, or did he pass away?
	He passed away.
08:45	[INTERVIEWER - JR]: Before he passed away, did he talk about his life as a policemen? What duties were like, whether they were interesting?
	When he was in his life, he said he was escorting some of these carriers around, dangerous time... he was still escorting them around.
	[INTERVIEWER - JR]: Why do you think he needed to escort the carriers?
	Some of them they had no escorts, but they were going with them at the same time.
09:20	[INTERVIEWER - JR]: They were in danger or because they might desert?
	They might desert at some point.

