

Name	Nuwaselo Nuwapai
Date of Interview	Wednesday 5 April 2017
Location of Interview	Divinai, Alotau, Milne Bay Province
Interviewers	Anne Dickson Waiko, Elizabeth Taulehebo and Keimelo Gima
Duration of Interview	42:20
Main Language of Interview	Tawala
Image	

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW

TIME	TRANSCRIPT
11:35	I was told that Sikana is an Orokaiva man, that's what I was told. A man from the Popondetta side. My grandfather told me that that man Sikana is from the Buna area. He was a big man. This story is long and known among the old people but I am only telling pieces of what I can remember from my grandfather's story telling.
11:58	These two old men Koipo and Bililaga if only they were still alive then they would tell a good version of the story because they witnessed him in the war. Most of their children who know the story have passed away as well. Their sister passed away. I was a small boy and I used to sit and listen to their stories and that is what I am telling you. Truly they said that Sikana is not a Japanese man; he is a man from Popondetta but a big masculine man. He was fearless in fighting and only goes forward without retreat.
12:32	In town and the area in front of Waterfront, that area is where the Japanese and Australians clashed and experienced one of the heavy fighting. A lot of Japanese and Australians were killed. There was a lot of blood spilled and that area was filled with blood. They fought all the way down west. They continued fighting all the way down to Waema and there is a there is a bridge that they call as Taela bridge. After the bridge there was a American base and all the Americans were away while two brothers were left to look after the base. There were plenty Americans living there but they were away that day and only the two brothers remained. That's what the old man was telling me.
13:09	Those two Americans left at the base were brothers, and they discussed between themselves as to who was to attack Sikana first so the decision was made for the younger brother to remain while the elder brother will fight with Sikana. Sikana had already defeated all the other men (Australians/Americans) on his way down before Waema and his final objective was to stand the (Japanese) flag. He ran all the way down and about to reached the bridge when those two Americans I mentioned, the younger brother told his elder brother, 'you go and I will fight with him so if he kill me or if I kill him then you will be the one to tell the news to the others about what happened here.' As soon he reached the bridge and was crossing over, they did not fight by combat but they shot him instead. He killed the American soldier and at the same time he was shot and killed there. The elder brother was the one who relayed the news that Sikana was killed. The Japanese had already taken control of all these places down and won the war. You see he was about to stand the Japanese flag but was killed. That's what my grandfather was telling me.

14:29	My grandfather was not recruited to help in the war. He was among the people who were escaping to safer places. But while they were running away, they met up with some of the soldiers on their way so they decided to help them voluntarily. These were the Australian soldiers. My late grandfather Billy told me that the Australians and the local men were 'kaladi' people and they called each other bastards. These men were not small, they were big men and he joined and assisted them.
15:19	The Japanese walked down from here, Sikana and his men walked down. Between Ahioma and Alotau and further down, whenever they encountered Americans he was the one killing them. Some of the Americans were big in built but none of them could defeat him. He used his gun which had his bayonet attached to it and would kill them and just throw them down like this. He attached his bayonet to his gun and was using it to kill. Okay at Alotau and down to KB and further down, you see blood was like water flowing everywhere. A lot of soldiers were killed along that way.
16:03	My grandfather and his family were sent to Taupota but my grandfather, I don't know what got into him and he left Taupota and returned here. When he returned he joined the American soldiers and was helping them to scout around. He just wanted to join them, and also he is a man who plays card (gamble) a lot so he returned and joined the Americans and they used to play cards. He used to observe the soldiers also, what they do and how they train. They used to train with bush knife and pretend to chop their comrades, and he used to watch them practice like that. My grandfather Koipo and his brother Bililaga were alive when the war came here and they witnessed it. During the war, they ran away with their sister Tinula, who is my grandmother. They used to travel to Taupota and back here during the war here.
17:42	But the problem with my two bubus is that they were associating very closely with the soldiers, American soldiers and voluntarily helping them in whatever ways they could. They were helping also by showing them bush tracks to scout the places. Another root cause of the Japanese defeat and loss was because they entered the Church at KB Mission and tore up the Holy Bibles. That's what the Japanese did.
18:30	Yeah its true about what they did and happened here. He told me that there were no people living here during the war. The man (Sikana) is from Orokaiva but he is very big man. He was like people during the old times, like the first Man. Do you mean that man Sikana if he had another name or not? As for me, I only know him by the name Sikana through the stories I heard. I did not hear them mentioned his village name or where exactly he's from but they said that he's from Popondetta,

	<p>an Orokaiva man. Popondetta is in general but they did not specifically mention the name of his village.</p>
19:43	<p>He (Sikana) was the one who led them down and they landed here (Wahuhuba) because he lived here for a very long time and he was familiar with the places. Because you see when he came, he knew which places to go, and passed through all these places down, Waema was running for Giligili. However, those two white men were very smart and they shot him but he had already crossed the enemy line. This is one story that was kept hidden and never revealed at that time, about what the white men did. They kept it secret because he had crossed over the enemy line but he was shot and his body was dragged back, away from the line and was left him with the flag. Had they left his body and the flag inside the enemy line, then the story would be different and the war would be different also. So that's why the story was not revealed openly.</p>
20:42	<p>I wished my granduncles and grandfathers were still alive so they will tell you a detail story about him and the war. What I heard from them was very detail from the beginning to the end. You know those days, I was not really interested in their stories or asking them to tell me the stories, only when there is a gathering then I gain interest to listen to their stories, when other people ask them to tell the stories.</p>
21:55	<p>At that time you know the war was on and the Americans were based down that side and the Japanese were moving down towards them. They (Japanese) had their bayonets attached to their guns and they used them to fight. He (Sikana) had his bayonet attached to his gun on one hand and Japanese flag on another hand and fought his way down. No one was strong enough to defeat him because he used to stab them (Australian soldiers) and fly them to the side and continue running.</p> <p>The only part of the story, I am not sure about, is where exactly in Popondetta he was captured by the Japanese and taken down here.</p>
23:14	<p>Yeah, they (Japanese) did mistreat the local people and were very cruel towards them. And when they found Sikana, they had to take him. I think the Japanese were told by other locals that Sikana was once working in Milne Bay so that's how they got him to direct them here.</p>
25:50	<p>Maiogaru's story- Samuel Auboti at Rabe has a book written about her and he knows the story. After the war and the missionaries returned ...</p> <p>There are several other stories also contained in that book. However what we are telling you is what we heard from our grandparents and other people. Its second hand information.</p>

31:48	During the war most people were not really concerned about food. They were more concerned with running away to safer places and hunger was not a problem to talk about. But yes, the army did supply some of the people with food during the war.
32:12	Some of the people were living around here but when there's heavy fighting then they used to run away to Taupota and stay there for a few days and return here. My grandfathers were doing this during the war here. My grandparents returned from Taupota and they went to Suau and while they were there one of their daughter passed away.
39:40	The war time was a favourite story for the old people because they witnessed it and they could repeat the same events, retelling them over and over again. And my grandfather was one of them. That's why they nicknamed his as 'Repeat'. They named him Repeat because when his time to tell stories, he does not tell any other story but only about the war and war alone. Every day he tells stories about the war. My grandfather's name is Koipo Wanigela. And his brothers are Bililaga Wanigela and Tilua Wanigela. My name is Nuwaselo and my father's name is Nuwapai, and my grandfather is Doilegu.
41:00	This recording includes the memories of Koipo Wanigela told by Nuwaselo Nuwapai, his grandson at Divinai.