

SPECIAL INTERVIEW I, II, III, & IV

DATE: March 9, 10, 11, 12, 1987

INTERVIEWEE: HERMAN VON HOLT

INTERVIEWER: Dr. Michaelyn P. Chou

PLACE: Mr. Von Holt's residence, Koloa, Kauai, Hawaii

Tape 1 of 3, Side 1

C: This is Dr. Michaelyn Chou interviewing Mr. Herman Von Holt in Koloa, Kauai. Today's date is Monday, March 9, 1987. We are in Mr. Von Holt's living room.

Herman, I'm delighted to be in your home and to have this opportunity to tape record your memories of what it was like to grow up in Hawaii and then to go away to school at Yale where Ellsworth Bunker was your roommate. I know that you are going to have a lot of stories to tell me and I'm very anxious for us to get started. Herman, would you tell me when you were born and where.

VH: I was born on January 29, 1894. I have the unique distinction of being one of the last to be born under the Hawaiian flag because three years after--four years after I was born the Republic of Hawaii was annexed to the United States. I well remember that day where we went down--I was four years old and we went down to the capitol building and my godfather was Sanford B. Dole who was the president and so we had preferred seats to witness this. All the Americans were cheering as the American flag was raised and the Hawaiians were weeping and hollering as the Hawaiian flag was lowered.

So I went--once I was coming back from Canada and there was a sign and it said, "Native Born Citizen Go Straight Ahead, Aliens Go To The Left and Show Your Papers

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and Naturalized Citizens Go To The Right and Show Your Papers," so I stopped in the middle of the road and I said to the immigration officer, "I don't belong in any of these categories." He said, "You have to." I said, "No. I'm a citizen by annexation of the Republic of Hawaii." He says, "Hey buddy, are you from Honolulu?" And I said, "Yes." He said, "I was in the Marines out there. How the hell is the old town anyhow. As far as I'm concerned if you were born there, it doesn't matter when, you're an American citizen by birth." "Well," I said, "I'm not technically."

Anyhow, I was born on January 29, 1894. My father was Harry Martin Von Holt. My mother was Ida Knudsen and they were married in December of 1890. Their first child was my older sister Mary Elizabeth and she married a chap named White who came from Baltimore--Green Springs Valley. I was the second child in the family. Then I had a--the next one in the family was my sister Hilda who married and lived in San Francisco. My third--my brother Ronald Von Holt who also graduated from Yale in 1921 and then became a rancher and a part owner of Kahua Ranch on the Big Island of Hawaii. Then there is my little sister--little Kat we called her--Katherine Ann Cole. She married a fellow named Henry B. Cole who was a vice president and for a long time he was in charge of the (inaudible) operation for the Hawaiian pineapple companies.

C: Herman, I know you were only four when annexation took place. I wonder if you remember how you felt at that time. Was it an exciting time for a four year old?

VH: It was a very exciting time. The feeling of joy and rejoicing and relief was universal on the part of the Americans and the English and the Germans who were all residents of Hawaii because the Kingdom of Hawaii at that time had several years of, I suppose you might call

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it, misrule. I mean, the kings were putting out lotteries and putting out selling opium and denuding the forests of Sandalwood. The whole thing was in sort of a mess and getting to be a part of the United States was so much better than being annexed by either Russia or Great Britain or France which we--I'm told this all--which a great many of the people were fearful of you see. So we were very glad and maybe my feelings were colored. I imagine they were, but my parents were delighted. Having this godfather by Sanford Ballard Dole made it all the more a sort of a family matter. He was--as I said, he was the president of the Republic of Hawaii.

I was educated at a little school on Kuakini Street called the Valley School. That was my first school and it was sort of a neighborhood school. It was run by a Mr. and Mrs. Dodge. All the kids in that neighborhood, our neighborhood--Judd Street and Liliha Street and Wyllie Street and around there, we all went to that school.

C: How many grades did it have?

VH: It only went through seventh grade.

C: Seventh grade.

VH: When I finished that--I finished the sixth grade there and moved over and went Punahoe. I took the seventh and eighth in what they called the Punahoe Preparatory School and the ninth grade in the Punahoe High School. It was was Ohahu College in those days. It was just about the time when the electric streetcars were going into effect. We could go to school on a streetcar and it took forty minutes for the corner of Judd and Liliha to go down into town and get a transfer and go out to Punahoe. But I had a horse because my father was the manager of the ranch and so I used to saddle up my horse and ride up over the back

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of Punch Bowl. You know the back of Punch Bowl how it goes through there and comes out down by the school, Roosevelt High School. Well, we'd ride down there and then I would get onto Wyler Avenue and Wyler Avenue, of course, wasn't paved then and so you could gallop all the way from where that high school is right into Punahoe and then I would put my horse out in the paddock. I kept a sack of grain there and when we got through with school and I was going to play football or something of that sort and then I would give my horse a whistle. I had trained him to come when I whistled and I would give him a quart of grain and then I'd saddle him up and go home in twenty minutes. It really was--I could get home in time for dinner.

I had a cousin, the son of my aunt, Ward Knudsen Gossen and his parents lived in Redlands, California and they entered him at the Thatcher School which had strong Yale leanings because Mr. Sherman J. Thatcher and his brother were both graduates of Yale and a lot of the boys who went there went to Yale. I was sent there by my parents and when I got there I found that because of his connections to Hawaii they called him Kanaka. When I came there they said, "Well, we got two Kanakas and we don't want to call"--so they said, "What is a big Kanaka?" And I said, "A big Kanaka is a Kanaka Nui." So they called me Kanaka Nui and said, "What is a small Kanaka?" I said, "Well, that's a Kanaka Ike or Kanaka Lili, sometimes they call it that." So they called him Kanaka Lili and they called me Kanaka Nui and then gradually they dropped the word Kanaka and he was known as Lili and I was known as Nui and even today some of the old Thatcher boys call me Nui when they see me.

C: Yes.

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VH: And that nickname went all through college and my cousin's name, they called him Lili and for people who did know it they finally dropped it and called him Lil. So he was know as Lil Gossen, L-I-L. Then gradually because his initials were Dalton--his name was Dalton Valdemar, well, then they just dropped the Lil and called him D. V. Gossen.

Now, I went to the Thatcher School from Punahoe and I spent three very delightful years at the Thatcher School.

C: Now, where is the Thatcher School?

VH: That Thatcher School is twenty miles back from Ventura and forty miles back in the mountains from Santa Barbara.

C: Southern California.

VH: Southern California. Well, really not too far because Santa Barbara is about half way. In those days when you went to school, one of the things we did was we got on a freight boat. The freight boat was a (inaudible) freight boat and they carried about sixty-five or seventy passengers. It took six nights on the boat to get to San Francisco and the smell of the raw sugar coming up from the hold because they were carrying 15,000 tons of sugar, it made a lot of people sick but I love sugar smells so it didn't make me sick. But we always got in-- somehow or other the boats got in about two o'clock in the afternoon and instead of going to a hotel where it would cost twelve dollars to spend the night, we would get our suitcase and steamer trunk and get a hack and drive right down to Third and Townsend Street where the train took off for the south. They had two trains. They had a train which went in the morning at nine o'clock which is called the Lark and they had a train that went at night which was called the Owl. We could go and buy a ticket and go on board--five dollars was

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the berth of the train. That took us right down into Ventura and for one dollar and a half you could in the dining car and get the best roast beef dinner you ever put in your mouth. So we boys were always looking for a good way to save our money. Then we got down to Ventura and we had to wait there two or three hours until the uptrain came from Los Angeles and then we got on the little subsidiary train, shuttle train, which chugged up the mountain out in the valley--Ventura River. It was quite a steep grade and we used to get out and run along side and thumb the nose at the engineer. When we got up to the floor of the valley where it was flat he would toot his whistle three times which meant, "Come and get aboard you rascals." He would speed the engine up and we'd go roaring into the station and school would send a tallyho down and we'd have about enough for everybody--put ten or twelve people and we had a six-horse steam. Then we'd drive in style up to the school.

When I went there I was a member of the Middle School for one year and then I was member of the Upper School for two years. They called it schools but it was really--well, I was a junior and a senior in the Upper School and I was a, I think we call it, a sophomore in the Middle School.

In 1910 the whole Upper School burned down. I remember early in the morning about half past four somebody yelling "Fire, fire." I jumped out of bed--one of the stoves had gotten overheated and caused the fire. We tried to put the water on it but the water system wouldn't work--the fire system had gone out. So I ran back into my room and shut the door. The fire was starting to sweep down the hallway and I took my--ran in my closet and grabbed a whole bunch of clothes and I threw them out of the window. Then I grabbed my--I had two rifles, and a shotgun and a revolver and they were very much treasured

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possessions. I did a lot of hunting you see. So I dropped them on the top of the clothes so they would break their fall--I was on the second story. And then I climbed down the lattice work and picked them up and ran across--by the time I had taken all my guns, took it across and put it safely out of the reach of the fire, I went back to pick up my clothes and all my clothes were burned to a crisp. The fire had just completely consumed the thing.

C: My goodness.

VH: So I had on a pair of pajamas, a raincoat and a pair of tennis shoes. I sent a wire to my father and said the school had burned down and requested permission to get a new outfit and he wired back, "Authorized. New outfit at your discretion." So the whole school went down to Los Angeles to a place called Bullocks and there we practically bought out the store. I bought a--I used my discretion. Perhaps I over-strained it a bit and I bought a tuxedo which I never had before. (Laughter) That tuxedo lasted me until 1936.

C: My, my.

VH: From 1910 to 1936. By that time it was green in color, but it didn't matter because at night you couldn't tell it was green. Then I got a new one. And the one I got at Bullocks I think it cost seventy dollars and I was horrified at the price and when I bought my new one it was two hundred and forty dollars and I was more horrified than ever.

I graduated from Yale--I mean, I graduated and went on to Yale. They had a very good custom there at Thatcher which I think many schools could follow. If you had a general average of eighty which would be 320 on the scale of 400, you didn't have to take any examinations at Christmas and Easter. The examinations were on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday and school was off you see. If you didn't have to take any

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examinations, you were through at three o'clock on Tuesday afternoon and then you could take a cut. I had three classes on Monday and three classes on Tuesday so I took six cuts and I was off the Saturday before. I had a whole extra week on vacation.

So I got down and I went up to see my uncle. When I walked into his office, he said, "Where's your cousin?" I said, "Well, I'm just lucky. I was able to get out of the examinations and he's staying up there." He said, "Gee, I wish he'd study a little harder like that because you're coming home early and well that must be his mother's side of the family coming out in him. If it had been me, I'd a been like you."

C: What did your uncle do? Was he a businessman?

VH: He was the president of the Bear Valley Mutual Water Company and helped build the dam up at Bear Valley and he was also director of the Security National Bank and a director of the Los Angeles--I mean, Southern California Edison Company and Union Oil Company of California. He was quite a prominent guy and he taught me a lot of things.

One of the things that was most interesting and I've always been very proud, happy to tell it. He had three pals and they always played golf every Wednesday and every Saturday. They would have a luncheon date and then they'd go out and play golf. They played on the Redlands Country Club and in those days the greens weren't green, they were boiled sand because there was no water, you see, in the Redlands country. So he came around to the seventeenth hole and it was his honor--the seventeenth hole, I played it many times with him. It was about a hundred and eight yard, mid-iron shot and he shot his ball off and he watched it and it rolled up on the green and came within about a foot of the pin and he said, "I'm going to skunk you guys again," and he fell over and was dead. So I

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made a little limerick about that taking out a few of the ideas from "Hortius at the Bridge."

Do you remember that poem?

C: Yes.

VH: By McCauley I think it was.

Dreary man upon this earth,

Death cometh soon or late

No matter what his fortune,

No matter was his fate.

How can man die better

Or more plain to his soul

Than to walk up to a birdie

on the seventeenth hole.

So that's my contribution to his death.

Well, I graduated from Thatcher in June of 1912 and I went on that fall and entered with the class of 1916. To the best of my recollection there were about eight hundred and thirty entering fresh man; we graduated about four hundred and ten. So we lost about fifty percent of our class. Out of that four hundred and ten, I've been told that there are now only sixty-two left.

C: Is that right.

VH: Age takes its toll.

C: Yes, it does. Are you the only one from Hawaii graduated from the year 1916?

VH: Yes.

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C: Are the oldest living Yale graduate?

VH: Yes.

C: That's quite an accomplishment over here.

VH: When I was at Yale, I belonged to one of their famous senior societies called the Skull and Bones Society. There were fifteen members in that Skull and Bones Society and I'm the only one left. I belonged to a fraternity called the Zeta Psi Fraternity of North America and in my delegation in my class there were some thirty-five or forty and there are only two us left. So you either have to be awfully mean or awfully tough; I guess I'm both.

When I got to New Haven, I had been asked by the members of the Yale group here to give their best regards to Dean Jones who was--Frederick S. Jones who was the dean of B. L. College. So I went in and I said, "Sir, my name is Von Holt. I'm an entering freshman and I bring you the greetings--as we say in Hawaii, I bring you "Nui Alhoa No" from the people out there." He said, "Von Holt, now that you're here, you better fill out this card if you haven't filled out a registration card." He gave me a three by five card and on the card was printed "Name in Full", "Racial in Full", "Place of Birth in Full". So I said to him, "I'm a kind of a chop suey guy. I have a lot of different relatives. I'll have to write awfully small." He said, "If you can't write small, you got no business trying to get into Yale." So I took my fountain pen and I wrote, "Herman Valdemar Von Holt; German, English, Scotch, and Norwegian by parentage, Hawaiian by birth, American by annexation of the Republic of Hawaii," and I gave it to him and he begin to grin and laugh. He had a good sense of humor and he said, "Well, Von Holt, I see what you mean. As far as Yale is concerned just call you an American from now on and be done with it." So I did; I became

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an American.

(Interruption)

VH: When I got to Yale, I had found a room with a man by the name of Jack Galt who was the son of John R. Galt who at that time was the president of the Hawaiian Trust Company.

C: G-A-U-L-T or G-A-L-T?

VH: G-A-L-T.

C: Right.

VH: He had married somebody by the name of Agnes Cotter whose brother was a famous Yale football player and played on the Yale football team of 1888 which was the most famous Yale football team in the history of football. There were only eleven men played the whole season, they didn't have a single substitute and they scored 696 points to zero.

C: That's fantastic.

VH: He was one of those I looked up to and admired and Mr. Galt--we called him Uncle Ran--and his two boys. I was planning to room with one boy but then the oldest boy whose name was Jack Galt got a bad attack of inflammatory rheumatism and he had to drop out a year. That left me all alone and so I got a single room in Pearson Hall which is at Yale. It was just off the campus and it was a five-story building. It had very few double rooms but it was mostly for people who didn't have any roommates. Well, in Pearson Hall I had a room on the fifth floor and there I met a very delightful chap by the name of Bunker and also met a fellow by the name of Warren Ransome who was rooming alone and another guy by the name of Don Geary, G-E-A-R-Y. We formed a mutual friendship between the four of us and we decided we would try and room together. So we made an application for

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a room and we were given a room at 336 Welsh Hall which is on the campus and we stayed there. In junior year, we went across to the Junior Oval and then we made application and we went back to--got the same rooms again for our senior year in Welsh which was a nice thing to do. I was in 336 and across the hall was some very good classmates, friends of mine, Morris Hadley and a fellow named Bennett Sanderson and Zuzana and Marcus Martin. They were all graduated from Grotten. They were what we called in those days--they were "Grotties".

I had a letter just the other day from Bennett Sanderson. His nickname was D-U-S, Dus, because of Sanderson you see. He said he understood that he and I were one of the few members of the class that were still alive and kicking so I wrote him a letter and told him I had a new house down here, so forth and so on.

C: At what point did you become roommates with Ellsworth Bunker?

VH: Sophomore year.

C: Sophomore year. Okay.

VH: I roomed with him and Warren Ransome and Don Geary in sophomore, junior and senior year.

C: So there were four of you together.

VH: Four of us.

C: Four of you in the large room.

VH: Well, as I remember it, there was a common bathroom out in the hallway and you had to go out of your room, but . . .

(Interruption)

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VH: There were two bedrooms and a study for each--I guess you would call them a suite, would you?

C: Yes. Sounds like it.

VH: Bunker and I occupied one bedroom and Geary and Ransome occupied the other. We had this little study and we had a common bathroom out in the hallway. Eight of us had to use that common bathroom but that was no problem.

C: What were your first impressions of Ellsworth Bunker? When you first saw him what do you remember thinking about him?

VH: I thought he was a very fine, gentlemanly, decent fellow and the kind of a guy I would like to room with. It proved that I was right. When we were--in sophomore year that's when the sophomore's get taken into what they call the junior fraternities. Because Ransome and Bunker had rowed on the class crew, but I had played football and water polo and wrestled and boxed and played catcher on the class ball team--I was better known. So I said to my four roommates, "Let us make an agreement that we won't join any fraternity unless they take all four of us" because then we would all go to the same fraternity for the meetings, you see. We passed the word subterraneously to two or three of the fraternities and the Zeta Psi group got the message and came over and offered us--all four--an election. As far as doing anything was concerned they made an exception because they wanted to get Bunker and they wanted to get me and they wanted to get Ransome so they took Don Geary in. His main call to fame was that he played the piano beautifully. He is a great asset to the fraternity because when we go over to the meetings, he would go up there and play the piano and everybody would sing and have a great time.

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Then in the fall, I played football. As soon as the football season was over, I turned out for water polo. When the water polo season was over, I rowed on the class crew. Ransome stroked the class crew, and Bunker rode number seven and I rode number six. A fellow who was a very good friend of mine by the name of Gilly Porter, he was the cocksman. He was a little, small fellow weighed about a hundred and thirty pounds. We used to row the (inaudible) in those days and the best time to row was from five o'clock to 7 o'clock in the spring.

We would row and we would get through about seven o'clock. By that time the dining hall had closed. So there was a cafe or a saloon they called it in those days at the edge of the bridge where we used to catch the streetcar and we'd go in there after rowing. They had this long, long bar and on the bar were roast beef and mashed potatoes and potato salad and all that kind of stuff. A regular buffet. If you went in there and you bought a schooner of beer for fifty cents then you could help yourself to anything and we used to go in there because we knew that the main school dining hall would be closed. So for fifty cents we'd get a big free meal over there and one schooner of beer and then we'd go and get on the streetcar and go roaring home.

C: Did you have very many classes with Bunker?

VH: What's that?

C: Did you have any classes with Bunker?

VH: Oh, yes.

C: Was he a good student?

VH: He was a very good student. He wasn't a Phi Beta Kappa but he was a very good student.

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C: What classes do you remember having with him?

VH: Well, I think we had--I remember he and I took Constitutional Law under ex-President Taft who came up and taught Constitutional Law. We took a course--Dr., Professor William Lyon Phelps--which was called "Tennyson and Browning" and the boys nicknamed it T&B. That was, of course, in English literature. I had a course in geology from Dr. Gregory who later on came out here and became the director of the Bishop Museum. I made a trip into Kalalau with him and Koloa one time and took him down and showed him all the sights that I had learned from my uncles on the Na Pali Coast, you see. Marvelous to see him. He'd look at that cliff, you know, and he'd say, "That particular outcropping of rock is between six million and seven million years old." He was a professor of geology and he knew all these things.

Well, we came along--we had a very interesting custom which I fell into in sophomore year. There were several Irish ladies who ran a little boarding club. You could get three meals a day, six days a week for seven dollars a week which is fairly reasonable. So I said--this lady's name was Mrs. McGuillicuddy, she was an Irish lady. I found out that if you ran a table as they call it. She didn't have the contacts but I had the contacts with the other students and I guaranteed her seven--which would be seven times seven, would be forty-nine dollars a week and I collected the money and turned it into her and then I got my meals for nothing.

C: My goodness Herman, you were very "akamai" [wise, knowledgeable] about that.

VH: So I said to her, "Mrs. McGuillicuddy, supposing I guarantee to take instead of six--if I keep it filled will you pay me the seven dollars." She said, "Well, that's a very good idea,

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young man.” So, I got my free meals and I got seven dollars a week for handling the books and all that sort of stuff. I had to collect the money and hand the money over to her. Well, always, in my life having a Scotch grandmother and a German-English father, a Norwegian grandfather, I was always impressed by my father that the thing to do--he always used to say, "Son, if your income is a hundred dollars a month and you spend a hundred and five dollars a month, you'll end up in the poorhouse and a very unhappy man. But if your income is a hundred dollars a month and you spend ninety-five and you put five into some good investment, you end up becoming fairly well off and you lead a happy life.” I've always followed that. Anyway that I could see to make a dollar, I tried making it.

My father was very cooperative. My brother and I--my brother Ronald--he let us keep chickens. We had about thirty hens and the only requirement was that we provide the eggs for the household. Any eggs that were over we could sell. My father furnished the grain, so we couldn't lose.

C: Of course.

VH: We kept the house well-supplied and I sold these eggs up and down Judd Street, you see. My brother and I had captured two little wild goats in the mountains up in back of Makakilo where we had a summer camp. We used to--father let me buy a little go-cart and I made it so we could run these two goats and pull the go-cart. I used to charge ten cents to go from one end of Judd Street to the other and back again. My brother and I, because it was kind of hard work--he took one lap and I took the other lap. We made--we insisted that if anybody wanted a ride they paid in advance.

C: That must have been quite a job to drive two goats and the cart.

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Tell me, why did your grandparents come to Hawaii? What brought them here?

VH: Well, I'll tell you about that. My Norwegian grandfather heard about the gold in California and he took a ship and walked across the isthmus of Panama, took another ship and went up San Francisco and, according to his memoirs, there were hundreds of ships lying in anchor and tied up. Everybody had deserted the ships and gone up in the gold fields. So he went up into the gold fields at the junction of the Feather and Juba which is about seventy miles north of Sacramento. He established a trading post there and he found that because-- he organized this trading post. He would accept gold from the miners and then once a month or once every two months or something he would pack it all up in deerskin bags and put it on a pack mule and carry it down to San Francisco. One night he was camped and he had always been interested in shooting and he had one of those early revolvers, you see. They had a little dog--his favorite little dog. A stranger came in just about sunset and said could he spend the night there. And my grandfather said, "Yes." So after they had washed up the pans and taken their pork and beans. He said, "You know, I always practice shooting." So he took a can and tossed it up in the air and drew his gun and shot it and all six shells went into can, kept pushing it up. Every time it would come down he would shoot it again and it would bounce up. He went to bed and the next day this visitor left. About six months later he was on a trip into San Francisco and one of the chiefs of the vigilantes in San Francisco knew him and said, "Knudsen, there is a man we're going to hang tomorrow morning and he wants to see you before we hang him." My grandfather says, "I can't imagine anybody wanting to see me just before they're being hanged." So he went over to the jail and found out it was this same fellow who had spent the night with

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him. He said to him, "Mr. Knudsen, I knew you were carrying a lot of gold and I tried to join you because I was going to shoot you in the middle of the night and take off with your gold. Your example of how well you could shoot and that little dog that you had, I decided I had better leave you alone. So I went after somebody else and now they got me and I'm going to be hung tomorrow." He said, "Well, I'm glad you didn't get me, but I'm sorry for you my lad." It'll teach not to go that kind of life.

He walked across the isthmus and he got malaria and after you've been up in California for about a year--1851 or so. His fever kept coming back and the doctor said, "We better go to a warm climate." So he went down to San Francisco and there were two ships--sailing ships tied up to the dock. One ship was going down to Mexico and the other ship was coming to Hawaii. The ship that was going to Mexico, they were interviewing the captain and they found the captain had his wife on board and she was an old harridan and he didn't like that so he shipped on the other ship and that brought him and landed him right here in Koloa.

C: Oh my.

VH: He land here about 1851 or 1952. He went over and established himself in Kekaha at a place called Waiawa which means the black water. He got a lease from the king of all of the lands that is presently being used by (inaudible) and all the mauka [toward the mountains] lands which is now called the Kokee State Park. There are some 78,000 acres as I remember it and he had to pay fifteen hundred dollars a year, but he had the right to make sub-leases and so he made sub-leases to a Chinese fellow by the name of Pa Ahn for the big rice fields. He made--helped start the (inaudible) Sugar Company, and he and my

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father were some of the incorporators with the Wilcoxs and Isenbergs. (inaudible) Sugar Company because of the fact that it had a warm climate--boy, it was warm down there too-- at one time the (inaudible) Sugar Company the par value of the stock was a hundred dollars a share and it was selling at about four or five hundred dollars a share. In those days, you either make a lot of money or if the price was--that was before--that's why we wanted to get annexed to the United States so we could come in as a territory and not as a foreign country. That was why all of the haoles [Caucasians] were glad that we were becoming a territory of Hawaii. He helped develop it and he got a cousin of his by the name of Faye, F-A-Y-E, Faye--I mean a nephew, it wasn't a cousin. They shot at it and one of the things they found out was that if they wanted to develop--there was a big swamp out there near Na Pali State Park and the Barking Sands (inaudible)--several hundred acres of swamp land and they wanted to drain it. There was an old legend that the chiefs had wanted to drain the pond and had hired the menehunes [little magical people] to dig a canal out to sea. The menehunes can only work one night on a job . . .

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VH: So, the sun came up and they hadn't finished the job and they had to go and--he had agreed to pay them all one fish to each menehune. So they went up and there is a hill above Kekaha called Puu opai. Opai is shrimp, you see. And so the . . .

(Trouble with tape)

C: We are getting the story about the menehunes. Menehunes are little people.

VH: They are little people.

C: Little Hawaiian people. They do magic things.

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VH: That's right. They do magic. So we have this hill which has been known right through history as Puu opai which is Shrimp Hill and this is where they handed out the shrimps to the menehunes to pay them for their nice work. But my grandfather reported in his memoirs that the reason that they had to stop was they found there was a ledge of very hard sandstone right there which is covered with sand, so the menehunes couldn't dig the ditch out. But (inaudible) Sugar Company put in a sump with a lot of lateral drains and when they--first of all they had diesel power and then when they had electric power, they made their own electricity and they had canals leading to this big swamp and they pumped the water up and over this ledge of rock and let it flow into the sea. So they drained it and they got--well they started in--the first two or three years they had maybe eight, ten, twelve thousand tons of sugar and after they drained the swamp why they were producing maybe thirty-five to forty thousand tons of sugar.

C: That's a lot.

VH: That's how got the . . .

C: I see. Well, I have taken you away from Yale for a moment but I didn't want to lose the story about your grandparents. That's the one that's told in this book called

Stories of Long Ago, is that right?

VH: What's that?

C: Your grandfather's story is told in this book called Stories of . . .

VH: That was my mother's book.

C: That's your mother's book, yes. I brought a copy with me and that was very interesting to look at.

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VH: Let me sign it for you.

C: Oh yes. Thank you, that's very nice. I'll do that in a minute. But, back to Yale and Ellsworth Bunker. When you were at Yale, was it part of the practice to go to chapel or to the very special . . .

VH: Chapel was mandatory.

C: Yes. Chapel was mandatory. Okay.

VH: You had to go--you had to attend some Sunday service. So Saturday was the only in which there was no (inaudible) and we used to sleep in on Saturday morning if we wanted to.

I'll tell a very cute story. There was a fellow came to lecture at Yale and give a sermon and somebody told him that according to Yale traditions no souls were saved after the first fifteen minutes. So he got up and he said, "I'm going to take from my text for today the word Yale. "Y" stands for youth and youth comes to Yale for "E," education. Education and youth are loyal to Yale which is "L" in Yale--and "E" was education." "A", ambition and so forth. He went on for about ten minutes on each one of these, Y-A-L-E, and the whole class was getting very much upset because they were being held there--you know, it was running into a lot of time. Finally, he finished and everybody filed out except one senior who was kneeling down there. So he went down and tapped him on the shoulder and he said, "My good man, I'm delighted to see that you are praying for your soul here." He said, "No, I wasn't praying for my soul. I was just thanking God that I wasn't going to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

C: That's marvelous. So religion was part of your education too in a way, was it not?

VH: Religion was part of Yale.

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C: Religion was part of Yale.

VH: It was started by ministers and has always been a very strong religious college. I don't think chapel is compulsory now, but then they've changed all the rules. They've got girls there which--I thought we got along perfectly well. I never felt the necessity of having girls and in Punahou when I went there, [there] was co-education, but when I went to Thatcher, it was all boys. When I went to Yale, it was all men. Now Thatcher is co-educational and Yale is co-educational. I never felt the necessity of having girls in the same class because they were a distraction. I never had any difficulty in making friends with the fair sex as you might call them. I thought that people who say it is good for you to rub elbows with a girl, I'd rather hold her hand.

C: At one time there was Dwight Hall and a lot of people thought that was more a center of religious life than college chapel. Did you ever go to Dwight Hall for the services?

VH: Well, Dwight Hall was headquarters of what you might call the YMCA group. They did have service there, but the services we went to were in a place called Bethel Chapel and that was at the corner of the campus.

C: But you were not a regular goer to Dwight Hall.

VH: Well, nobody lived in Dwight Hall when I was there. It was reserved for what you might call extracurricular activities in connection with the YMCA and the Knights of Columbus and all those other--Red Cross, all those institutions which do--Salvation Army--all those things which do an awful lot of good.

C: I see. Now I know you've been very active with your church and I wonder whether it started at Yale with some of the . . .

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VH: No. No, it didn't. Because, you see my grandmother was Alice Brown and she came out from England with her family. Her father was a named Thomas Brown. They came out in 1850--seven months from England to Hawaii. And my great-uncle Cecil Brown was the first white child born in Waialua area, Kauai. The Hawaiians could count up to nine just as we can today and there were seven months on the ships and one month after she got here, she delivered herself of this fine bouncing baby boy. The Hawaiians--my great grandfather, Thomas Brown, said he was going to have a great christening so the Hawaiians said, "Well, if you're going to have a christening, we want to give him a name to commemorate this wonderful epic voyage of seven months and his being born." Great grandfather Brown by that time spoke beautiful Hawaiian and he said, "Well, what do you suggest?" They said, "Well, we think you ought to call him "Kikila Palauna"--K-I-K-I-L-A, Kikila which is their way of saying Cecil, Palauna, P-A-L-A-U-N-A which is their way of saying Brown, Cecil Brown--"Na Keiki Ho'opai O Pelekani Hanai O Hawaii." Ho'opai means to conceived. Na Keiki--conceived in England and delivered in Hawaii. He spoke beautiful Hawaiian and he and my father used to say they would rather make a speech in Hawaiian than they would in English. Everytime they got together they always talked in Hawaiian to each other.

There is a funny story about Hawaii--they told this story in the olden days that my great grandfather, Thomas Brown--he was told he better not address his wife--her name was Nancy--pretty soon the Hawaiian servants would pick that up and they'd say Nancy. So, he called her Essence of Delight and he would always refer to her at home as Essence of Delight. One day he got back from town and the big Hawaiian cook came to him and

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said, "Palauna, Essence of Delight wants to know whether you want mashed potatoes or rice with your roast beef."

C: That's wonderful. Do you speak any Hawaiian?

VH: I know a few words. [Says something in Hawaiian] I know that and I know a few things like [in Hawaiian]. Do you know that? Do you know what that means?

C: You'll have to tell me.

VH: Huh?

C: You'll have to tell me what that means?

VH: That's "Three Blind Mice" in Hawaiian.

C: Hey, old Ben Dillingham used to sing that.

VH: I taught it to him.

C: You did. For goodness sakes, it is very popular. You used to campaign and sang "Three Blind Mice" in Hawaiian. You know who told me that? Hiram Fong told me that.

VH: Would you like me to sing it to you?

C: Would you? Sure. Why don't you sing it.

VH: ["Three Blind Mice" sung in Hawaiian]

C: That's wonderful. Well, I wonder did you tell Ellsworth Bunker very much about Hawaii? Did you have a chance to (inaudible)?

VH: I brought him out here on--I got permission from my family to bring him out here. We came out here.

C: What year was that?

VH: Summer of 1914.

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C: 1914.

VH: Maybe it was the summer of 1915. I guess it was the summer of 1915 because he came out here and I had obtained permission from my family to invite him to come out. I said to Mr. Bunker Sr. who was the president of a national sugar refining company in--had a beautiful place at 420 N. Broadway, Yonkers in New York--I said, "My family has given me permission to invite Ellsworth to come out and I think it would be nice if he came out to Hawaii because he's never been really west." Ellsworth pipes up and he says, "Oh, I've been west. I've been out to Buffalo, New York." So, he really saw a lot of things he had never seen before. We brought him out here and we brought him down to Kauai and I took him up to our mountain cabin above Makakilo where we hunted wild goats.

C: My goodness. How was he as a shot? Was he a good rifleman?

VH: No, he always wore glasses so he wasn't a very good shot.

C: And he wasn't used to being outdoors a lot probably.

VH: Well, if you wear glasses and he wore--I think they call it pince-nez. Then if you have to wear glasses in order to shave, when you're going to shoot at a goat which is 200 yards away why--if you take the glasses off you can't see anything and if you keep the glasses on, you can't see the goat.

C: That's right. I see. So he went along just for the trip.

VH: Well, I did the shooting.

C: You did the shooting.

VH: We always used to get fresh goat meat and I remember one funny story. My brother and I had gone out and we shot a couple of nice fat nannies. We brought them in and my father

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told me to skin them and we had goat chops. Delicious, like venison. We had some guests from the mainland and see they were just enjoying--we told them this was venison. Then when they had eaten it all we said, "These are not venison at all. It is really wild goats which Sherman and Herman shot." They immediately got sick and lost their appetite.

C: How long did Bunker stay with you?

VH: Well, he spent about a month here and then later on, he and his second wife, Carol. They spent some time with my Betty and me in our quest house at 900 Leather Drive. As I recall the story, Carol was the first secretary of Mr. Bunker's--of Ambassador Bunker's embassy in New Delhi and that's how he got to know her. Then she was promoted to be ambassador in Nepal. He lost his first wife who died of cancer. Her name was Harriett Butler and she was a sister of a fellow named George Butler who was an investment manager. There were two boys in the family; Ellsworth Bunker and his brother Art Bunker and a girl by the name of Katherine bunker. Katherine Bunker married George Butler, and George Butler was an investment advisor so it was all in the family. And he took care of his wife and Ellsworth, and the other brother Art Bunker went into Lehman Brothers and Company and put together a considerable fortune. Now, the son, his name is John Bunker, and he went into the sugar business. At one time he was head of one of the big companies, the B [?] Companies in Idaho. The Hawaiian sugar planters did a very smart thing. They looked over his record and found out all about him, so now he's the head of the Hawaiian Commerical--Hawaiian Refinery at Crockett.

C: Oh, okay, that's in California.

Did Bunker ever tell you what he thought about Hawaii after that first summer? Did

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he enjoy himself? And if so, what did he especially enjoy?

VH: Well, as far as I know, he enjoyed every bit of it.

C: Ah, good.

VH: Most time people at that age don't go around saying, "Oh, this is the most wonderful thing." They say, "Gee, I've had a good time," and let it go at that.

C: I see. So you were roommates with Ellsworth Bunker for about two years?

VH: Three years.

C: Three years. Did you do very much with him during the holiday time, or did you see him [inaudible]?

VH: Well, as I said, I would go down and spend some time at the Bunker home in Yonkers, and then he came out here and visited here.

Then when he was ambassador to Saigon, he and Carol came through here and Betty and I had them up to our mountain cabin, which is up there back of Mount Koloa. So we had them up there for a couple of nights at the mountain cabin, and we'd then reminisce about how he'd been there way back in 1914 or 1913 or some time like that.

So then Betty and I drove him down to--he was going down to get aboard a Navy plane at the Pilot's Point Naval Air Station. So we drove him in there and i said to the Marine guard, "This is Ambassador Bunker and Mrs. Bunker and I'm taking them." And he said, "Well, if you're Ambassador Bunker, produce your papers." So Ambassador Bunker said, "Well, my entourage is supposed to meet me here." "Well," he said, "buddy, that's just too bad. If you haven't got any papers, you can't go in." So Ellsworth was kind of chagrined that he hadn't had his identification papers with him, but just then two

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automobiles full of his entourage with secretaries and press men and bodyguards and all that drove up and produced the papers. And the marine suddenly saluted and he said, "Proceed, Ambassador!"

C: (Laughter) Oh, that's marvelous.

I know you probably didn't have all that much time to spend together because you were busy going to classes and Bunker was doing his own thing. How was he as a roommate? Was he as neat as you, or did you ever have any arguments, to speak of?

VH: He was the nicest fellow to room with you ever saw in your life. We never had a cross word the whole time. About the only thing that he and I ever disagreed on was the fact that he engineered that bill for the Panama Canal, remember that? And I didn't approve of that.

C: Just for the record, tell me what specifically you didn't like about it.

VH: Well, I thought that to give in to those Panamanians was something we shouldn't do. I mean, we had a strong military force, and if you have a strong military force and you believe in the Monroe Doctrine, then you shouldn't kowtow to a bunch of so-and-so's down there in Panama. But he honestly believed, and he told me so, that this was one of the greatest pieces of diplomacy that he ever did. But I didn't approve of it.

C: When he was going to Yale and you were his roommate, did you think he would be a diplomat. Did you think he was going to go into diplomacy?

VH: No, I didn't, because he had planned to go into the sugar business. His father was a--and he did go into the sugar business, and he went in the sugar business and he had to go down to Washington a great deal representing the sugar industry, and in that way he got to be familiar with all the people down in Washington and because he had learned to speak

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Spanish, well, then they said, "Here, we want you to be ambassador to so-and-so." He was I think ambassador to Rome, he was ambassador to India, he was Saigon, and all over the place.

He was the most charming, delightful companion you ever wanted to be. Always kindly, considerate and courteous. In all the years since we graduated, as far as I recall, I had three letters from him, and I don't know how many I wrote to him.

C: Oh, my.

VH: But he never answered them. But I didn't care. I didn't write to get an answer, I just wrote to tell him what was going on. And I would write to him and say, "If you will stop here in Hawaii, Betty and I will come down and pick you up and take you with us, so you won't have to spend any money on a hotel." But he was a delightful person, very kind, very calm, very considerate.

C: What an ideal roommate to have.

VH: he was an ideal roommate.

C: I'm sure you were just as nice as he.

VH: Well, I don't know about that. I'm pretty mean.

C: (Laughter) Well, to last three years as roommates, that's pretty good, isn't it?

VH: Well, maybe.

C: So after graduation at Yale, you just came back to Hawaii.

VH: After graduation, I spent the summer up in main. I was asked to go up there and be an athletic director for a boys' camp in Maine. So I went up there. Then I got back here in October of 1916 and I joined the National Guard and I joined the University Club. That

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was two things I did which were well worth while. The University Club then merged with the Pacific Club, so I am now the oldest living member, having joined the previous club in 1917. And that's a hell of a long time ago.

C: That sure is.

VH: That was before you were born.

C: Yes.

Two of the best things you ever did. Why did you especially enjoy being with the University Club and the Pacific Club? It's mostly a social club, or does it do other things?

VH: Well, it was a downtown men's luncheon club, and there were an awful good Yale and Harvard and Princeton men in it and I felt it was the thing to do.

The funny story about that--shortly after I joined the club Dr. James R. Judd, affectionately known to his many, many friends as Bill Judd--he came and gave a lecture on his experiences because he spent two years in France as a surgeon with the American Red Cross and the American Expeditionary Force. He had a lot of pictures to show of what happened to the wounded people and so forth and so on, and they were pretty gory. There was a fellow named Jimmy Coburn who was the vice president of our bank and apparently he couldn't stand the sight of that because he fainted. Mr. Bottomly--and there were about six other Scotsmen there and they all carried him out into the restroom and splashed water on his face and resuscitated him. Later on that evening, Bill Judd said, "I would like to ask everybody here to make a contribution to the American Red Cross." A number of people put one hand in their pocket and made a contribution.

The next the day the report went all over town. It said, "Bill Judd made a request

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for contributions where upon Coburn fainted and all his Scotch friends carried him out.”

C: (Laughter)

VH: I love Scotch stories. My grandmother was a Scotch lass. There is one great Scotch story I must tell you though.

C: Yes, I'd like to hear it.

VH: This man and his wife from Glasgow they came down to London. They saw a sign that said, "See London From The Air." So they went out to the airport and they said to the pilot, "We would like to--how much is it to see London from the air?" He said, "Well, it's five pounds to fly." And he said, "Well, we cannot afford five pounds. We have four people from Glasgow." So the pilot said, "I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'll take you up and I'll do everything I can to scare you and if either one of you cry out you pay the full price of five pounds, but if you don't say anything, you get it for nothing. So Sandy looks at Maggie and he says, "Maggie, this is our chance to get a ride for nothing. Let's both keep our mouths closed very tight." So they went up there and he looped the loop and he did the reverse loop. He did the falling leaf and he did the (inaudible) turn. He did everything he could to scare them and there wasn't a sound. Finally, after twenty minutes he finally came down, shut off the engine and the pilot and Sandy and Maggie were sitting in that order. He said, "Sandy, I'm surprised because I did everything I could to scare you, to frighten you and you never said a word, how come?" Sandy said, "Well, Mr. Pilot, you very nearly had me the once." He said, "When was that?" He said, "That was when Maggie fell out.”

C: (Laughter)

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VH: That's my favorite Scotch story.

C: That's wonderful. Oh, gosh. You have lots of wonderful stories.

What did you think about the National Guard and why was it special for you?

VH: Well, I wanted to get prepared for the military service that I could see was coming because when I got back some of my Yale people had gone into the ROTC but I was too busy doing football and various other things and I couldn't get in there. I felt that everybody should have some military training and this was a way to get it because we would go on weekends up there and go shooting in Punchbowl, the National Cemetery of the Pacific. That was our camping ground and we'd camp out there and go shooting. I just had a feeling that we were going to need people, so I joined the machine gun company and I learned how to take a machine gun apart blindfolded and put it together again and all that sort of stuff--and shoot a machine gun.

Then when war did break out, I applied for a transfer and I went to training camp at Schofield. About that time I met my first wife and we got married and I went over to Camp Gordon in Atlanta, Georgia and then I volunteered for the tank corps. I got sent up to Gettysburg and there I had the interesting experience of being under a Major Eisenhower who later on became president. Then when I went overseas, I served under a Colonel Patton and I had known him as a second lieutenant out here playing polo.

C: My goodness, George Patton.

VH: George Patton. He was rough polo player, but he was a hell of a good soldier.

C: So why did you decide you wanted to volunteer for this special . . .

VH: For what?

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C: Why did you volunteer for that special . . .

VH: For the tank corps?

C: Yes. Why not something else?

VH: Well, I wanted to get out of the job that I had there which was training draft troops. There's no lower to training draft troops and I could see that if I stayed down there training draft troops I might fight the whole war in Camp Gordon. I wanted to get out. If I was going to fight I wanted to get a chance to get somewhere so I volunteered and my application--the fellow who asked me said, "What was your background?" "Well," I said, "I was born and raised on a ranch. I went to Yale University and played water polo and football." He's say, "I'll approve you application. Those are the kinds of guys we want on the tank corps."

(Interruption)

C: So off you went to France to be in the tank corps.

VH: After I went to France, I came back. I go discharged at a little place called Camp Merit and they called me up from GHQ and there was a Colonel Wilburn as I recall his name and he said, "We need somebody who has had a lot of athletic experience to help with the ENR program for the troops as they are waiting to be sent. Would you mind agreeing to stay over for an extra six months?" And, so I said I would.

C: What kind of program was that?

VH: ENR, they called it. In the Army they call it ENR which is Education and Recreation.

C: Okay.

VH: So I became the athletic officer for the intermediate section which was all the territory in France from Paris down to (inaudible). I had a staff of about four or five officers and eight

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or ten enlisted men. I had three trucks and we got rid of millions of dollars worth of athletic equipment that had been shipped over. We arranged games--crew races and football games and basketball games and--we just acted as a clearing house for all kinds of athletics. One of the things that was interesting was that I got up a football team in the intermediate section and there were various outfits around there and we had quite a group. We won the championship of the intermediate section. We went up to Paris and there we had a round-robin tournament for the championship of the American Army in France. Finally, we came down to the final round and there was a team from the 89th Division and I found when I went out to meet him he was a captain trained by a man named Paul William who was a Honolulu boy who went to Punahou when I went to Punahou. He went Harvard and I went to Yale. He was an all-American at Harvard and I was given Honorable Mention for all-American at Yale. So we met--most interestingly enough we met for the championship--two boys from Hawaii--for the American Army in France.

C: My goodness.

VH: That's quite a coincidence, I think.

C: That truly is. I'd like to back up a little bit and ask you what your first impressions of Dwight Eisenhower when you served under him?

VH: He was in command of the tank corps when I was there at Gettysburg. I thought he was a hell of a fine officer. What more can you say?

C: Not much I guess. You were not with him too long. About a year or so, were you?

VH: Well, see, I was--I got Gettysburg. I was there about 3 months and then I went overseas.

C: Three months.

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VH: But as far as I can recall, he didn't go overseas with us.

C: Even at that early stage in his career, he was demonstrating good leadership qualities.

VH: Well, he was a good man. I remember him very distinctly at Gettysburg but I don't remember him going overseas with us.

C: I see. General Patton. What did you think of him?

VH: Patton had been here as a second lieutenant and a whole bunch of us kids used to go out to Schofield barracks to see the polo team and we got to know all the young officers. I had two very--three very attractive sisters and they would take them out to dances and all that sort of stuff. We got to know all these people. As a matter of fact, one of the great things about my past life has been that I have had a chance to meet so many attractive Army and Navy people. I got to know Admiral Spruance very well. I got to know Admiral Nimitz and all these people you see. You have them in your house for dinner and all that sort of stuff.

One time Betty and I were giving a weekend party and we had a lot of people over to our country place. Admiral Spruance was over and there was a fellow named Earl Gould who was in my time in college and he had gone back into the service during World War II and I had made the curry--a great big pot of curry--boiled some rice. Earl had called me up and said would it be all right if he brought his boy Earl Jr. who had just come back from Iwo Jima. I said, "Sure, bring him along."

So Admiral Spruance is sitting there and Gould is sitting here--young Gould is sitting here and he finished off his first plate and I said, "Earl Jr., let me get you some more." "Well," he said, "I'd love some more." So I went out and he ate that up. Admiral

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Spruance looked at him and said, "Gould, sit still and let me get you the third helping." He said, "Oh no. It isn't fitting for a four-star admiral to get me anything." He said, "Listen Gould, this is an order. You sit still and I'm going to go and get you your third helping of curry." So he went in the kitchen and brought him a great big plateful like this and young Earl Gould looked up and he said, "Admiral, I can't wait to get back to battery that a four-star admiral got me my fourth helping of curry and rice."

C: (Laughter)

VH: Those were the kind of informal things that happened, and they were a lot of fun.

C: Yes, and I imagine a lot of it happened because you were at Yale and you met a lot of interesting people. Of course, your family was so active in business and all.

VH: I kept what they called the Yale Book. And that is, it was a book in which people could come into my office and register their class and their ship on the premise that it would secret, I wouldn't give it away, you see. But a fellow would come in and say he was the class of 1914, well, I had a page for 1914 and he put down his name and the ship he was on at Pearl Harbor. Well, if any other 1914 people came in, they knew where to go at Pearl Harbor, you see. And we had quite a lot of interesting meetings that way.

C: Oh, I'm sure you did. Well, Herman, anything else for this initial taping that you want to tell me or should we break?

VH: Well, I want another little touch.

C: Okay.

Tape 2 of 3, Side 1

C: Herman, I was asking you about how many time you would go over to the Big Island

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where your family had ranching interests. I wondered if you would tell me something about your ranch over there.

VH: My brother Ronald and Nathan Richards bought the ranch in 1928 from Frank Woods. Ronald was the active partner and manager and I helped finance the deal on Ronald's behalf. They developed a very fine ranch, but for a number of years they didn't make any money because of adverse rationing conditions. There is a lot of wind that blows over those Upper Kahua plains. Ten or fifteen years ago they put in a windmill to develop electricity and now they've got twenty-five or thirty windmills. How many?

VVH: There are over 150 up there now.

VH: At Kahua. I didn't know that.

C: Wow.

VVH: And they are planning more.

C: Pronounce the name of that ranch for record, would you? It's a lovely name.

VH: K-A-H-U-A, Kahua.

C: Kahua.

VH: As I recall, it meaning "the gathering or the meeting place." Kahua.

C: Lovely name.

VH: Well, I wanted to first of all to tell you the limerick about Lilia Koulani.

C: Oh yes.

VH: Somebody wrote this and got the undying animosity of the Hawaiian because this was the limerick:

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A queen was she of low degree and oh fond of power
She held her way with regal sway until that faithful hour
When S. B. Dole, a Yankee droll, who had already grown tired
assumed the throne by telephone and told her she was fired.

C: (Laughter)

VH: I don't know whether you had ever heard that one before.

C: No, I haven't.

VH: You'd heard it before, hadn't you, sweetheart?

VVH: Yes, from you.

C: I don't think that's ever been recorded. Maybe but--so you were going back and forth to the Big Island.

VH: Well, I used to go up there to go to my brother's ranch and then when the Damon Estate brought the property at Kahua Ranch I used to go up there at least three times a year to look over the Damon Estate property. It was all that property down by South Point and the biggest part of the Kahua Ranch--total area was about 170,000 acres and the biggest part of it was covered with (Hawaiian word for lava). You know what [?] is?

C: (Hawaiian) is just lava.

VH: Lava.

C: But it's a special kind of lava.

VH: Well, the lava that comes out and is smooth is called (Hawaiian). The other lava that is all broken up is called (Hawaiian). I think the Hawaiians called it (Hawaiian) because they said, "A ha it's too bad for us."

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(Laughter)

C: You can't do anything with this stuff, right?

VH: After several hundred years it tends to flatten out.

VVH: Is it more glasseous, is that it? Does it have more of a glass like substance in it?

VH: Well, I don't know what it has in it but I know if you . . .

VVH: Crystalline.

VH: Put lots of water on it and roll it down, you can get something that will grow bushes on and that's how to start in about five or ten years. A lot of places there where the (Hawaiian) has spread, they've bulldozed it and brought in a little topsoil from the mountains and it begins to grow some fairly decent shrubbery.

C: And then could the cattle eat any of this shrubbery or what would you do with this shrubbery after it started growing.

VH: It would be for cattle feed.

C: Cattle feed.

VH: And grazing purposes. As you know, if you have greenery around it attracts the moisture. If you have a barren desert why it still remains barren.

C: So you spent a lot of your time outdoors? You were hunting and horseback riding . . .

VH: Well, I've been a hunter and a cowboy, a rancher and a carpenter. I've had a very active life I would say.

C: I didn't know you were a carpenter. What did you build? Were these buildings? Ranch buildings or--what would you do?

VVH: You were a pretty good water tank builder, weren't you?

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VH: Yes, I was a water tank builder.

C: Water tank.

VH: I learned how to make water--we used to buy these redwood water tanks from--and then we'd have to put them together and I learned how to do that when I was a kid from my father who was a pretty smart fellow. So I became the master technician on putting up water tanks for the group of people who have summer homes up there above Makakilo.

C: Oh, my goodness. I should explain that up there there is no water pumped up. You catch the rain water, is that right?

VH: That's right.

C: They all have that.

VH: When you put up a tank, you first of all level the ground. Then you get foundation blocks and--you use concrete blocks as foundation blocks--you put those down and put a level on them so you get them all level. Then you lay maybe four by fours as a foundation and put the floor of the tank on top of that. Then you put up the sides of the tank and tap it with a hammer. You have to be very careful not to--if you're going to tap it--the side will go in like that, you see, with a groove.

C: Groove or a dove tail.

VH: Dove tail.

C: Yes.

VH: Well, you have to take an extra piece--you have the dove tail you see. You cut it off here and then you hammer it here so you don't break any of these dove tailing features. Then you cover it over with--usually if you've got say a tank that it is ten or twelve feet across

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you put a center purlin I think they call it, a ridge pole--a rafter.

C: A rafter.

VH: You put a four by six in the center and two by sixes--a couple on each side. You usually have five pieces. Then you get plywood at T&G and make a top. You have that six inch space where the rafters are and you take wire mesh screening and you screen all around so no bugs can get in. Then you cut a hole about a foot square and you put a strainer in. You bring the gutter pipes in and dump them all in there and they fill up your water tank.

C: So this catches the rain . . .

VH: The roof catches . . .

C: The roof catches the rain.

VH: And you have gutters which have leader pipes which lead right into a filter and fill up your water tank.

C: Was the roof wood or metal or . . .

VH: No. The roof was almost always corrugated iron.

C: Corrugated iron. Okay. So your gutters--what were the gutters made with?

VH: Tin.

C: Tin.

VH: Tin gutters. Sometimes they used--very seldom though--aluminum, but good solid corrugated iron gutter were the standard in use. I learned how to solder the gutters together. You know, you put them in like this and then you turn them upside down and you solder here.

C: Again, sort of like a dove tailing.

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VH: Like a dove tailing. The one thing I never did do very well was to solder--a good plumber can solder upside down but I always had to take the gutter and turn it over so I could--otherwise that hot, molten solder would drop of on you.

C: Yes. That wouldn't be too good to have that happen. What other kinds of things did you build besides the water tank?

VH: Well, I built the quest quarters. The quest quarters was about thirty by eighteen and it had a bedroom and a kitchen--a kitchenette I guess you'd call it. I got a contractor to give me a bid on it and he wanted fourteen thousand dollars. My yard man and I built it and it cost twenty-six hundred dollars.

C: Where was this?

VH: Palahua.

C: Palahua.

VH: That's the name my father gave it. "Pa" in Hawaiian means place. Palahua means the place where the Lahua trees grow.

C: Lahua. Would you describe the Lahua? I know what it is, but for the record--a beautiful tree.

VH: Well, it's one of the lovely trees that has red flowers and it grows very well in certain localities and it's a wood they use to make fence posts and all that because one of the ways we found that you can treat liquor--you make a bonfire and you put the stump of the Lahua post that you want to use as a fence post and singe it pretty well so that it has about maybe a quarter inch of burnt wood all around outside. The termites don't like that so they won't go into it.

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C: I didn't know that.

VH: The other thing you do is, you can make a gate and all you need is a pair of pliers and a roll of wire. The way you make a gate that way is you take a beer bottle--and there were plenty of beer bottles in those days--and on the bottom of a beer bottle there is usually an indentation. Well, you take the beer bottle, empty it--down the throat . . .

C: The best place.

VH: And then you put it upside down and dig a little hole in the ground. Then you take the post of your gate and you put the posts in here.

C: Right in the bottom of the beer barrel.

VH: Right in the bottom of the beer bottle. Then you have an upright and you put a piece of wire around the top and a piece of wire around the bottom. On the bottom you take a hatchet and make a little--like a spear I mean . . .

C: Point the ends sort of?

VH: Point the ends so that it will fit into the beer bottle. That gives you an indestructible hinge because the gate then swings and it has no hinges, it swings by the wires which are holding it to another big post, you see. Of course, the rain does hurt the beer bottle and if you get some good old Lahua you can make a gate that will last twenty to thirty years and all you need is wire and a pair of pliers.

C: Did your father learn this from the Hawaiians?

VH: I don't think the Hawaiians had any beer bottles.

C: No beer--well, of course not. So you suppose he figured this out pretty much by himself.

VH: Well, I don't know. It was an old custom on ranches when I was a small boy and I couldn't

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tell you who invented it. Another thing you can do by using Kiawe wood. You can cut the posts--we found that you take the kiawe posts that you've cut, and a post should be about eight or nine feet long because you want to have it six feet high off the ground and you want to be able to bury it three feet in the ground, being a post hole digger. But you take it down and you put it in the ocean, in the salt water, for about three months and that seems to do an awfully good thing. The termites would not go into it because they--no bugs would go into it then and those Kiawe posts would last you for years and years and years.

C: My goodness. Does anyone do that any more? They don't.

VH: Now they have steel posts.

C: Yes, but that's chemical stuff and people don't like chemicals--are beginning not to like them. They say it contaminates the soil and it's dangerous for men to work around the chemicals.

VH: They have these steel posts which are so much easier because they are pointed steel and you can drive them down with a hammer.

C: Yes.

VH: But the other was more romantic.

C: Yes, I guess so. Were the Lahua trees very straight so they'd make good fence posts?

VH: They made good posts.

C: And they were not too big, huh?

VH: No.

C: About how many inches around would you say?

VH: Well . . .

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C: You get the young ones.

VH: No, you have to get dead Lahua to make a post because you don't want a live tree.

C: You wouldn't want a green tree.

VH: You don't want a green tree. But in the forest you can always find some dead wood.

Another thing we found out was that if you want to clear land, when the bulldozer came into effect, we would get about twenty feet of ship's chain, anchor chain, and we would loop that in the back of the bulldozer and that knocks down all the brush and the cactus and helps smooth out the land. The chain kind of rumbles over--and does a great deal in smoothing out. It knocks down all the no good brush that's growing there and gives the grass a chance to grow up, kind of levels off uneven spots. Very economical way to clear your land particularly when you have land that is just over grown with lantana or scrub core or any of those plants which is no good for food and you want to clear the land so the grass would come up.

C: What about irrigation? There wasn't any irrigation there.

VH: Most of the ranches in the Hawaiian Islands had waterholes where the cattle could drink, but as time went on, you could get water pipes. Then they piped water out to various locations where the cattle could drink. The cattle would go a long way to get a drink of water.

C: Then you'd have to put out salt for them as well.

VH: Right, that's right. And what we found out was that we would build redwood troughs and do you know what lemo is in Hawaiian?

C: Seaweed.

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VH: Seaweed. You have freshwater lemo as well as salt water lemo.

C: Yes.

VH: So, what we'd do was we'd get half a dozen gold fish and they would eat the lemo and keep the water absolutely clean.

C: Wouldn't bother the cows then any?

VH: Not any at all.

C: That's interesting.

VH: The only trouble we had with that is when the Army came in here they thought it would be a lot of fun to shoot at the goldfish in the troughs and the bullets would puncture holes and the water would all leak out.

C: Tell me about the time when the Army came in. This was during World War II?

VH: World War II--I mean, we had a great influx of Army, Navy and Marines that came in. I would say we had half a million people here. They were all over the place. We were glad to have them.

C: I'm sure. This was up around Schofield you had these soldiers come for target practice on your goldfish.

VH: Well, they were all over the place.

C: What were you doing on the morning of December 7, 1941?

VH: Well, I was--it was a Sunday morning and my wife had been for a number of year chairman of all the Red Cross Volunteers, Special Services. We heard a noise and we saw a black cloud. So I ran just a little ways from our Level Heights home and I said, "They're having an exceptionally realistic bombing practice out at Pearl Harbor." Just then six Japanese

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planes came down the valley and I looked at them and I could that they were--they had the red sun on them, the Japanese emblem. I watched them and they apparently had been given the job of trying to bomb the Hawaiian Electric Company's main power plant.

C: Where was that?

VH: In Honolulu, right by the waterfront.

C: Right on the water front, okay.

VH: They came down and the anti-aircraft from [inaudible] down at Picken Field and all that were shooting at them and the shells were coming straight over our head. I said to Betty, "This sounds to me like when I was in France and I heard the artillery firing. These people are not fooling, this is no practice run." They blew up a couple of homes on the other side. They didn't hit any of the planes but they blew up a couple of homes. The Japanese didn't realize how strong the wind was because when they let go of the bombs, the bombs missed the Hawaiian Electric power plant and fell harmlessly and blew up the water in the harbor. Big spouts of water going up like that.

C: You could see all of this from your home.

VH: Betty put on her Red Cross uniform and departed for her job and I had an appointment with Mr. Harold Castle and the Army to appraise some property at Makapu on the other side of the island. So I called him up and I said "Well, we turned on the radio and we heard Weber Edwards saying this is the real McCoy. We're being attacked by Japanese planes. So he said, "Well, let's go over anyhow. We've made all the arrangements." So we went over there and pretty soon we came along and we saw a Japanese plane which had been shot down. It was lying by the side of the road.

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C: Where was this? On your way down to Makapu? Where was the plane?

VH: Right at the base of Makapu. Some Americans had climbed to the top of Makapu and they started shooting at us. So we yelled, "Hey, you jackasses, we're American. Can't you understand. I was shot at in two wars.

C: My goodness. Over in France and over here in Makapu. You finished looking at that and then did you just go back home?

VH: Yes. Then we were told--everybody was told to put up blackouts with curtains and we blacked out our homes so we could have a light at night. One of the interesting things that happened was most of the buildings in town having awnings over the sidewalk--six or eight feet of awnings over the sidewalk. Up at the base of the awning the Hawaiian Electric Company had the meters for the various offices in the building and meters for the upstairs you see. I happened to be a director of the Hawaiian Electric Company at that time so I was told the story that soldiers were told to yell once or twice to put out your lights and if they didn't put out the lights to shoot them out. They go along patrolling the streets and they see a wee bit of light, maybe the light in the meter, so they'd yell at that light and say, "Put out your lights." Of course the meter didn't understand, so they'd take a machine gun Brrrrrr.

That first night, the night of December 7, the Hawaiian Electric Company said that they lost \$147,000 worth of meters which were needlessly shot out.

C: My goodness.

VH: That shows you what a lot of jackasses there were in the world.

C: Well, everybody was so . . .

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VH: Everybody was all excited and nervous.

C: Yes. My goodness, did they ever bill the Army for those meters?

VH: I don't think so.

C: No. That was just part of the whole war picture.

VH: You couldn't do much about that. Well, one of the interesting things that happened during the war at that time was a fellow named Souza had a dairy out in Halouva pretty close-- above where Aloha Stadium is. The Marines were guarding a pump up there on the top of the hill. Do you know what they mean by Red Hill?

C: Red Hill, yes.

VH: Well, the Marines were guarding--they had a pump there and they'd pump the water and then they had a distribution plan. Well, the Arizona National Guard was over on Halouva side and they saw Brother Souza's barn and about two o'clock when he woke up and he turned on his lights to milk his cows. So they were patrolling the Halouva Heights property and they no doubt--"Put out your lights." and you know what Mr. Souza said being a Portuguese, he said, "Go screw yourselves." So they shot at him and the bullets bounced off the wet floor and up towards where the marines were guarding their power plant. The marines got in communication with a commanding officer and said, "We're being fired upon by hostile forces." They said, "Well, return the fire and advance cautiously." So they saw across the valley these guns shooting off and then somebody had the sense to stop firing for a minute and they heard the supposedly Japanese enemy yell, "Put out your lights, you S.O.B." Souza's saying, "I won't put out my lights, not for you fellows. You fellows know nothing?" So they got a megaphone and yelled, "Hey you guys across the valley

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there, we're Americans too. Quit firing at us." So that was called the Battle of Souza's Barn. Souza came to me--I was the chairman of the NRA, National Reconstruction Act Milk Program. Everybody had gotten together and had agreed to have a stable price for milk. So--I think his name was Emanuel Souza or Joe Souza--he came to me and he said, "Please Mr. Von Holt, you know all those big shots down there in Pearl Harbor, you help me get paid for my six cows.

C: What happened to the six cows?

VH: Well, when they shot at his barn to put the lights they killed six cows.

C: You didn't tell me that. They got six cows, my goodness.

VH: They killed six cows.

C: Okay.

VH: But he had about sixty or seventy cows you see in the barn and when they were shooting to put the lights out they hit six cows and they died.

C: I see.

VH: I happened to know Admiral Nimitz quite well. I had seen a lot of him. So I went down and explained the circumstances and he said, "Well, that's the most ridiculous thing. He ought to be paid for it. What are those cows worth?" I said, "Well, I happened to sell him a few of them myself"--one of the companies I was interest myself, we had a company which sold feed and live stock. I said, "I know what Souza paid. He paid \$350 for them." He pressed the button and his adjutant came in and said, "Make a check out to Souza for \$350 times 6, \$2100." So he gave it to me and I conveyed it to Souza. Souza said, "I'm the luckiest Portuguese in all Honolulu. I've got one good friend in you and you got one good

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friend in Admiral Nimitz and I get paid.”

C: How about that. That's really great.

VH: The other funny story about the war days was there--some national guard outfit put an installation in at Waianae. The military command had forbidden any boats to go out. Consequently, the Hawaiians and the Japanese, and everybody couldn't get any fish. Well, this battery were firing a shot in practice and they had a miscue and one of their shells fell short and blew up two or three lengths of the railroad track down there at Waianae. They didn't want to admit they had a miscue so they said, "We've been attacked by enemy submarine.” There was a whole lot of akule and they were boiling as they do when-- because nobody had down any fishing for months. They said, "There's a submarine off port and has fired a shell and blown up a piece of Uncle Walter's railroad track.” Uncle Walter Dillingham was always--Walter Dillingham was always know as Uncle Walter, you see. This story was told to me by one of the recreations workers, a lady who was in charge of the recreation branch--I was chairman of the recreation board and she said, "What they did was they telephoned in to Hickum Field and said there is an enemy submarine off of port.” So those fellow, they don't know fish. They don't know how the akule is boiling and so they saw all this boiling and boiling and said, "Ah, that's a submarine.” So they dropped their bombs on akule and they killed many akule. Lucky for us Hawaiians there is a wind from Kauai blowing in and so all those fish blowing in and up on the shore and we Hawaiians go down at Waianae and stand there on the beach with out baskets. We (inaudible) in the war days were able to get any fish. Sometimes the engineers or the Army do good for us Hawaiians.” The Battle of Souza's Barn and the Battle of Waianae.

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C: Just for the record I wanted to say that the schools of fish, the akule, would swim in great circles.

VH: As I understand it, I've never been an akule, but the ahi which is tuna go after the akule which is a smaller fish.

C: A smaller fish, yes.

VH: So they're jumping and boiling and it looks exactly like a submarine blowing off air.

C: Of course, these little fish are trying to escape the big fish.

VH: That's right.

C: So in doing that they are stirring up the waters and hopping and jumping out of the water and all.

VH: Right.

C: That's a very interesting story. What other things did you do during the war for the government?

VH: Well, I did a lot of appraisal work for various people because I was a licensed real estate appraiser and a member of the Realty Board, member of the Executive Committee at the bank, all that sort of stuff. I had quite a number of appraisals.

C: Were these appraisals for people wanting to sell their homes and moving to the mainland or . . .

VH: No, no, no. The kind of appraisal I was doing was say the Army would come along and say, "We want to build an airfield," we wanted to determine what the fair rental price to be.

C: Condemnation or whatever.

VH: No, it wasn't condemnation. Very seldom did the Army--because condemnation you've got

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to go to court and it takes a long time. But the Army and the Navy both did an awful lot of leasing land, you see. For example, they came to me and they said they wanted to put an airport on some of the lands that the Campbell Estate owned Kahouku and there was quite a big salt pond down there at Kahou and I would say about--between five and six hundred acres--used to be a favorite spot when we were small. The ducks would come in on their way south, you see and there used to be good duck hunting down there. Well, somebody from the Army came in and said they wanted to build an airport at Kahouku and need an extra airport. I said, "Well, you don't want to build an airport, that's a swamp." They said, "That's all right. We'll get some coral and fill it up" That little island were Kua Lima is--we made a deal to rent them the six hundred acres of land where the swamp was. I told them it was a lousy place to build an airfield. They said, "Now can we get some coral? Who owns that little island." "Cambell (inaudible)." "Well, can we dredge the coral out of that?" And I said, "Yes." So we made a deal to sell them the coral out of that little island at Kua Lima for ten cents a yard. We sold about three million yards which is about three hundred thousand dollars. So then they filled in the pond and of course being freshly taken coral out of the sea, nothing would grow on it. Then they came to me and they said, "We're got to have some topsoil and we'll put it around our campsite so we can grow some bushes and the place would look decent. Do you know any place we can buy some topsoil?" And I said, "Well, we have many thousands of acres in the mountains above (inaudible) This topsoil is going to cost you a little more than the coral because it's topsoil." So I sold them about three million yards of topsoil at fifteen cents a yard. So that amounted to about four hundred and fifty thousand dollars. That money was paid in and became part of the assets

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of the Campbell Estate.

When the war was over, then they said they wanted to turn the property back. I said, "We'd like to have that swamp back again because that was an asset." He said, "You can't be serious." I said, "Well, it says in the lease you will restore the property to the same condition as it was or else you pay for it. Now that you've improved it, it's worth a lot more money than it was before. You're a tough guy to deal with. "Well, my job is to do the best I can for my estate." Finally, we made a deal with them that if they would leave all the buildings on the property that we would accept the buildings in lieu of restoration. That was where I first met Frank Fasi and he was--had just been discharged from the marines--he was an ex-captain in the marines and he had gone into the second-hand business. So I got a hold of Frank and we went down there. I said, "If you wanted to buy all these buildings from the Campbell Estate what could you afford to pay?" So he figured it all out and went and measured the buildings and all that. So finally he said he could afford to pay \$315,000. So between the selling of the coral and the selling of the topsoil, the Campbell Estate came out smelling like a rose.

C: So did Frank Fasi buy those buildings? Did he move them anywhere?

VH: He bought the buildings and moved them. He cut them in maybe three or four places and then trucked them into town and sold them again.

C: Where did he put them?

VH: All over.

C: All over.

VH: Everybody who wanted a house could buy a house from Frank Fasi.

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C: That's how Frank got his start. Isn't that right? He got those buildings and as you say he cut them up and trucked them in and resold them.

What was Frank Fasi like to deal with? You know, he's . . .

VH: I've always found him a very delightful person.

C: Good storyteller.

VH: A good sense of humor, energetic. I always liked him very much.

C: So you were very active still in business during the war. Did you have any dealings wanted from the Estates sell their homes and move off to the mainland? There was some of that. It's almost like scare selling. People moving their wives and children away from the war zone until things settle down and then people seem to think the war moved down to the South Pacific. It wouldn't center on Hawaii.

VH: There's an old saying that if you can get to paradise there is no sense in leaving it. I think that holds true. Most of the people who come to Hawaii are so delighted to be here they don't to leave. That's why we've grown to such enormous proportions.

C: Here's one transplanted Californian, in me, and there's another one in Mrs. Von Holt over there. Yes, this is paradise. It's like your parents, your grandparents . . .

VH: When I look back upon my ancestry, I am German, English, Scotch and Norwegian and they all came here drawn by some lure of the paradise of the pacific and they liked it so much they stayed.

C: Have you ever wanted to live anywhere else? Because I know you've traveled all over. You never want to leave Hawaii and . . .

VH: No, I'd rather live there.

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(interruption)

VVH: When I came here in 1970 I had a girlfriend that I had met in Texas, (inaudible). I visited-- my husband was in Vietnam and he was here on R&R. So I met him here and this was my first trip to Hawaii. We came over here to Kauai and stayed at the Coco Palms and I fell in love with it then. I had a chance to buy valley on Anahola, the valley to the (inaudible) to the bridge in Anahola from Jack Lai, L-A-I, a Chinese fellow. He was in the hospital and not expected to live and he wanted to leave a little legacy for his wife. So he made me an offer. I could have the whole valley for twenty thousand dollars and I couldn't convince my spouse that that was a good buy. He wouldn't give me the power of attorney to stay behind and buy it. That was one episode.

After I was here on this island for a week, I went over to Oahu and I had this girl friend I had met in Texas whose husband was a major in the Army and he was stationed at Schofield Barracks. They asked me to visit with them for another week. So I stayed with them for a few more days and we went down to the Waianae Coast for a little camping trip at the recreation center and they took me all around Schofield Barracks where you could still see the bullet holes where they strait the barracks during the attack on Pearl Harbor Day. Gosh, it was terribly. I could just picture it all in my minds eye what it was like. Bits of "From Here to Eternity" flash through my mind.

C: I should say.

VVH: It must have been very frightening for everybody. So I could see why some people would tend to leave the area.

(Interruption)

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VH: Well, I had a lot of trouble with Betty's mother and my father had a lot of trouble with his mother-in-law. So one day there was an article came out in the newspaper and father had clipped it out and put it on my desk. It described the sad story of a Japanese yard man who had labored for eight years and finally got enough money together to buy a second-hand Ford. He took himself, his wife, three or four children and the mother-in-law and went up Pacific Heights. There is a place out in Pacific Heights that overlooks the (inaudible). Quite a viewpoint there. So it was one of these old Fords with three petals, you know. Reverse and brake and forward. So everybody got out except the mother-in-law and she stayed there in the front seat. Then after a few moments she decided she wanted to get out too. So she moved from this side over to that side and in moving over she put her foot on the forward petal and the car plunged forward and went through the railing, rolled over and over, went down eight hundred feet and broke up. It killed the poor old mother-in-law, broke up the Ford and everything. So father cut this out and put red arrows pointing to this story and he wrote, "Son, knowing the troubles you're having with your mother-in-law, be glad we will gladly furnish you with a second-hand Ford."

(Laughter)

VVH: He put that on his desk the next day and when he went into his office this was sitting on his desk. Isn't that funny.

C: That's great.

VVH: I'm going to show you my twenty thousand dollar valley.

(Interruption)

C: Tell me, what happened to the valley? I know you couldn't buy it, but . . .

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VVH: You'll see what's happening to the valley. It's being built up.

Tape 2 of 3, Side 2

VVH: It had three rented homes on it.

C: Gee, for twenty thousand dollars.

VVH: They were just shacks but they were rented. People were paying. There was lights and everything. Had a perfect valley fresh water stream for horses and a nice little meadow--a sort of an island meadow like--for corralling horses. It was just perfect. This is whole valley all the way up. The entire valley.

(Interruption)

C: Yes. George N. Wilcox.

VH: This is called the G. N. Wilcox Memorial Hospital. All those early sugar people amassed a considerable amount of money before the income tax law came in so they had it all made.

C: One of the early sugar people.

VH: G. N. Wilcox is one of the early settlers here.

C: And they had what Grove Farm Plantation?

VH: Yes, and the owned a lot of Lihue Plantation.

C: Herman, I bet you have some favorite charities too.

VH: Well, not any more. I give to all of them now. Well, I quite giving to the church because they did a dirty trick to Val and me.

C: What did they do?

VH: Well, Betty and I deeded our property out in Alewa Heights to the church many, many years ago and reserved the right to Betty and me or the survivors to stay there as long as we

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lived. When she passed away, and I was a survivor and I--after several years Val and I got married and I took it up with the bishop. I said, "I would like to find out from you how much you and your board of directors would charge me to make some financial arrangements whereby Val can stay as long as she's alive so that she can have the same privileges as I did." Several months went by and finally I got tired of waiting and I called him up on the telephone and he said, "Well, we haven't done anything about it because the board is unsure as to whether you'll be able to get a tax deduction." I said, "Listen bishop, for there to be a tax deduction, that's my business and the board of directors doesn't have to worry about my tax reductions. I'm a tax expert myself and I take care of my taxes. All I asked you was to determine how much money you wanted me to pay and let me handle the taxes. (inaudible) board of directors." Those kinds of things you know make you (inaudible). Another time when I was treasurer of the church my Betty was Presbyterian and I was treasurer of the church. She and I were coming out from communion service and some jackass priest came up to her and said, "Mrs. Von Holt, you've got no right to go to communion."

C: Oh, my gosh.

VH: She said, What's the matter? Well, he said, "I've just been looking up your record and you were baptized in the Presbyterian Church and you've never been reaffirmed into the Episcopal Church." She said, "Why don't be ridiculous. I was married in this church. My husband is treasurer of this church. If that's the way you feel about me, I will never step in the door again." And she never did. They kind of provoked me.

C: I should say.

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VH: But I give a little to my old Thatcher School and my society at Yale called Skull and Bones Society.

C: I sure have. That's an honor society isn't.

VH: It is. There is only fifteen men elected every year. But it's--we started in 1832. It's been going a long time.

C: I know you were very good in sports but did you major in business at Yale? What was your major at Yale?

VH: Well, I majored in geology and chemistry and physics and constitutional law. We had a general course there; I can't say that I majored in any one particular thing. If I was to say what I majored in, I majored in football and water polo.

C: (Laughter) And when you came back, you were active in sports, recreational sports back here, too, in Hawaii, weren't you? The Governor appointed you to head a special board.

VH: Well, first of all, I was appointed a member of the Recreation Commission and then I served for several years as its chairman. I was appointed to the Park Board and then I was appointed to the Territorial Boxing Commission. I served as chairman of that for some time.

C: Hawaii was very interested in sports wasn't it?

VH: Oh yes. Well, when I came back from the war there was a (inaudible) qualified officials for football so a few of us who were interested in developing the official program--refereeing football and that sort of stuff--we got together and we formed an association called the Hawaii Football Officials Association and we used to meet every Tuesday night at seven-thirty and go over the rule and discuss it so we would educate some people so they

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could go out and officiate the games on Saturday and Sunday. We got some pretty good officiating out of that. I used to officiate Friday afternoon for the midget league and on Saturday for the school league and on Sunday for the major league--I mean, Navy, Marines, and so forth. I'd run around that field . . .

C: Well, that kept you fit and trim I bet.

VH: Oh yes.

C: Was there very much water polo in those days?

VH: Well, there was no water polo here in those days and they play a little different game than I played. We played a game at college which was the old intercollegiate, international game and it was like a wrestling match in the water. You had to wrestle with--take the ball away from the fellow and then wrestle with the goal tender to go in and score. Today what they play is really water basketball. They keep throwing the ball around. In my opinion it's a sissy game today.

C: Had you played water polo before you went to Yale?

VH: No.

C: I didn't think so. So you learned the game there and you got to be pretty good at it.

VH: Well, I played on the Yale water polo team for four years. I was an all-American water polo player--selected in the all-American water polo team for three years. I was captain of the Yale water polo team my senior year in college.

C: What about Ellsworth Bunker? Was he into very many sports outside of crewing?

VH: No, he wasn't. One of my roommates--I think I told you--he stroked the crew. Ellsworth rode number seven and I rode number six on the class crew.

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Ellsworth was very fond of golf. We played a lot of golf together.

C: Golf, huh.

VH: But he had very bad eyes. He had to wear glasses all the time.

C: That would be hard when he was swimming. So he didn't go into any of those sports.

VH: You can't have bad eyes--use glasses when you go swimming.

C: That's right. So he probably was a pretty good student at Yale.

VH: I beg your pardon.

C: Was he a good student at Yale?

VH: Me?

C: You and him.

VH: Well, an interesting story about that. At the end of my junior year, one of the professors who was in charge of our class asked him to come over and see him. And he said, "I've been going over your record. I see that you have an average of 328 for the two years in a row. Why didn't you study a little harder because we have a rule here that if you get an average of 330 for two years running you automatically get elected Phi Beta Kappa." I said, "Well, I'm just a little boy from the Hawaiian Islands. Nobody told me that. I could have given up a couple of movies and got that two extra points." I think I had probably the highest average of any of the people who were in major sports at my time at Yale. I missed Phi Beta Kappa by two points.

C: Too bad nobody told you.

VH: Well, you know, you can always bone up a little bit harder.

C: Well, you were busy. I don't know how you had time to study what with you sports

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because you had sports everyday I bet. When did you find time to study?

VH: Right after dinner. We got (inaudible). We used to have dinner at six or six-fifteen and right after dinner they'd why they'd clear away the table. While the maid and the cook were clearing off the table, we'd all go into the parlor and we'd have fifteen minutes of singing songs. Mother played the piano beautifully. And then we'd come back and by that time the table would be cleared and we'd do our homework for an hour, hour and a quarter, and then mother would say, "Okay kids, it's time to go to bed."

C: But at college you must have spent a lot of time away from your room in your sports, so you didn't study so much.

VH: Well, we studied pretty hard right after dinner.

C: You had your meals right there. NO, you had to go across the street.

VH: We had what they called a commons dining hall. It was the university dining hall.

C: Was the food pretty good?

VH: Well, I thought it was pretty good. Yes. If you got tired of eating there you could go and eat out at some of the numerous little restaurants which were around the place. Then I think I told you I ran a table there and I got my board for free.

C: That was pretty smart. Saved you money.

VH: And I got seven dollars a week for running two tables. I got my board for free for running one table and I got the seven dollars a week for running the second table.

C: You were making money.

VH: Yes, I was making money.

C: I bet your dad was proud of that.

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VH: I always thought that if there is a dollar to be made anywhere and I can see my way clear to make it, I might as well try for it.

C: Well, why not. That's good training.

VH: That's my Scotch and German and Norwegian and English ancestry.

C: Did you see very much of the president, the Yale president?

VH: Yes, I did.

C: Tell me about him.

VH: His name was Hadley when I was there and his oldest son, Morris Hadley was in my class. We were both members of the Skull and Bones Society and I was invited out to the Hadley place and I became quite a hero around the families there because I was the only one who knew how to cook rice in the Hawaiian style--in the good old style where you wash the rice and measure, you know, with a finger. That was the old fashioned way of doing it.

C: Yes, right.

VH: Now they have a Sanyo cooker which--but in those days when I went to college, they used to take a big pot about so big, so high, fill it with water and get the water boiling and then pour the rice on it and boil it for half an hour and then drain the water off through a strainer and then they call it rice. Well, it was nothing but much.

C: That was terrible.

VH: Terrible.

C: So you taught them how to wash the rice first . . .

VH: Yes, wash the rice.

C: And you add water just up to your first knuckle, right?

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VH: Right up to here, over the top of the water.

C: Right.

VH: Well, you boil all the water off and then you let it steam for about five or ten minutes.

They were amazed.

C: So you got to see the president and Mrs. Hadley.

VH: I got to know him very well and he stayed with Betty and me one time when he was coming through to the Orient--spent, I think, one night while the boat was in port, he and Mrs. Hadley. He had a very impressive--he was always sort of very nervous appearing but he had a brilliant mind and could talk fluently in Latin and Greek and German and French and so on. I was amazed because being a dumb cluck from Hawaii I could--well, I spoke a little German and a little French but to hear somebody converse in Latin and Greek was something that was just tremendous. He and his boy Morris would talk in Latin and Greek to each other.

He came up to our house one time. He was on a trip to the Orient. He died out in the Orient and Mrs. Hadley said, "You tell Betty and Herman everything that happened on the train." He said, "Helen and I were in our stateroom and the conductor came in and he said, "Let me see your tickets please." I started looking around and I couldn't find my tickets anywhere and finally he said to me, "Look here my good man, if you don't calm yourself down you'll never amount to anything in this world." Just then I found my wallet where it should have been, in the pocket of my coat, and I pulled it out and I handed him my ticket and he saw then I was travelling on a pass as a director of the New York-New Haven and Hartford. When he saw that he had spoken so disrespectfully to a director of a

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railroad company his chagrin was intense. (Laughter)

C: Did Ellsworth Bunker see a lot of the president at the same time you did?

VH: Well, not as much as I did but he saw quite a bit of him.

C: Did Ellsworth make Skull and Bones too?

VH: No, he should have. He was a great man.

C: Did you have any feeling that he would do as well as he did in diplomacy later on?

VH: Out of college . . .

(Interruption)

VH: The last of the old timers here. Why did start and build the sugar mills down in the hull here when you got all this good land around about. One of the old Scotsmen or Germans, whoever was in there, he says, "You can't use that area down there in the valley for anything that's really important like sugar cane. So, we put the building down there and we used all rest of the land to grow sugar cane. That's why we got it down here in the hull.

VVH: Unfortunately, see where those smoke stacks are compared to the land around--so the whole place can stink at the same time because the mill should have been built up higher where it would be less pollution.

C: Yes. The breeze could blow it away.

VVH: But it adds terrible to the pollution in this area because it's built down in the valley.

C: That's right.

VVH: So they out-smarted themselves in the long run. Eventually, the environmentalists are going to come here and they are going say, "Hey, that mill cannot work here any longer." I'm surprised they haven't so far. It was be politics that has permitted it so far. Look at this

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smoke up in here.

C: That's right.

VVH: There's smoke all around here. They must be burning cane around here someplace or something. Look at this--a lot of smoke up here. Or it could be the traffic. I can't believe that much traffic. They're burning cane somewhere around here.

C: But those Scotsmen or Germans or whoever were really good people though, weren't they?

VH: Yes, they were.

VVH: Yes, they were descendents of the missionaries that were good Scotsmen, good religious people. And as Herman says--what does Herman say? The missionaries came to do good for the Hawaiians and did great for themselves.

VH: Yes. The missionaries came to do good to the Hawaiians and remained to do good for themselves.

C: Herman, did you have any really good friends among the Hawaiian people?

VH: Well, I had lots of good friends.

C: Can you name any of your old Hawaiian buddies that are long gone? You used to surf with Duke Kahanamoku, didn't you?

VH: I used to surf with Duke Kahanamoku and (inaudible).

C: The whole beach boys gang.

VH: All the beach boys out there. We used to go surfing.

C: Where would you go surfing?

VH: Off Waikiki.

C: Down at Waikiki. But nobody went out to Makaha in those days, huh?

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VH: Not in those days.

VVH: The railroads just went around there when you were going on your way to Kahuaku.

Mokilea.

VH: In those days we used the big boards. I made three of my own boards and I got a three inch redwood plank, fourteen feet long and three inches thick and about at least thirty inches wide. I shaped it myself with a drawing knife and a hatchet and then sandpapered it all down and varnished it. It weighed 120 pounds. After you've been out surfing for about three or four hours, when you dragged your board up the beach it felt as though it weight 300 pounds.

(Interruption)

VH: You should pay perhaps eighty percent of the tax.

(Interruption)

VVH: Tell her the story of the Dillingham's fight.

VH: Well, the Hygienic Dairy had a letter signed by the Hawaiian Trust Company as agents for the Roman Catholic Church and it said that Hygienic Dairy would have the right at any time to buy the property--something like sixteen hundred acres of land--over at (inaudible).

VVH: I thought it was a leasehold you had there.

VH: Well, we had a leasehold but as I remember it said we had the right to get a new thirty year lease or something like that.

VVH: That's was it. A new thirty year lease, not to buy land.

VH: It was a new thirty year lease and we were coming to the end of the lease . . .

VVH: You had first option for a new lease, for lease renewal.

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VH: A new lease, that's right. Well, to make a long story short, what happened was that Knowle and Ben went to the bishop and told the bishop that they had communicated with me and we weren't interested in making a new lease. Based on that information, the bishop sold them the land--the sixteen hundred acres of land. Then when we protested we ended up in a law suit and I put the bishop on the stand--my attorneys did--and he said, "You heard testimony from Mr. Von Holt saying he tried to get the new lease and you've heard testimony from Mr. Knowle Dillingham saying that he admitted that he told you he had seen Mr. Von Holt and that Mr. Von Holt was not interested in a new lease." The bishop said, "That's right." My attorney at that particular fight was John (inaudible). He said, "Well, bishop, in view of this testimony would you say that Mr. Dillingham was lying to you?" He said, "Well, at least I would say he was dealing with untruth." I was a director of a railroad company and shortly after that Uncle Walter talked to me and said, "It's very embarrassing for me to have you on the board of directors of the Dillingham Corporation because you were in public and called my boys liars in court." I said, "The bishop put it very aptly. He said they were guilty of telling an untruth. I don't expect to serve anymore on your board of directors. All you have to do is leave me off the slate." Which he did and I no longer served as a member of the board of the OR&L and the Dillingham Corporation.

VVH: But, how much money did you walk out of court with Herman?

VH: Well, they didn't want it. We got a verdict saying we had to get out and so we filed an appeal and they didn't want to have the whole thing brought out again so they came around and I think they paid us \$275,000 to get out ahead of time which wasn't bad for a kick in the teeth with a frozen boot.

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C: Yes. Is that what made you to decide to liquidate . . .

VH: No, we get the dairy running for many years after that.

C: Okay. So this happened about what year, Herman?

VH: I've trying to think--difficult for me to remember the year. So much has happened in my life, it's difficult for me to remember it all.

VVH: We have the court records of it, the briefs.

C: Okay. That's an interesting story.

VVH: It was--we have two copies of it. I ought to file one in . . .

(Interruption)

C: Today's date is Wednesday, March 11, 1987. I'm still in Koloa, Kauai and continuing to work on the Herman Von Holt oral history interviews.

(Interruption)

VH: I wake up in the morning and gather my wits. I take a look in the newspaper and read the obits. If my name is not there, I know I'm not dead. So I eat a good breakfast and hop back into bed.

(Laughter)

VVH: Another dear one she used to tell us was "My hearing aid suits me, my teeth fit me fine. My bifocals suit me but I do miss my mind."

(Laughter)

VH: When asked about old (inaudible) he said, "There are three things wrong with old age. The first and worst is you keep forgetting names and faces. The other two I can't remember."

(Laughter)

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C: Your favorite limerick--the Sphinx.

VH: The spell of the African moonlight is stronger than anyone thinks. It often causes the camel to make amorous love to the sphinx. But the posterior end of the sphinx is very deep in the sands of the Nile, which accounts for the hump on the back of the camel and the sphinx's inscrutable smile.

(Laughter)

VVH: What about Maggie and Sandy, did he tell you about the ride in London? You've got to tell her about Maggie and Sandy, hon.

C: I don't have that one.

VH: My grandmother was a Scotslady and her parents took her from Scotland off to New Zealand and then from New Zealand they came up here. They bought the island of Nihinau. So we'd been--as they say--(inaudible) to Kauai for many many years. Kamia means to boil--boil the soil like the native sun. My British great grandfather was a chap named Brown and in 1850 he left England he came out here and had his first child, who was the first white child born over here in the district of Wonalua. Our connections to Kauai are very firm and strong and I have as many relatives--cousins, and so forth--here on Kauai as I have on Oahu. It was sort of like coming home.

VVH: Get back to Maggie and Sandy.

VH: Well, Maggie and Sandy went down from Glasgow to London and they saw a sign and it said, "Come out to the airport and see London by air." So Sandy said, "Well, Maggie, that would be a nice thing to do. We could see London from the air." So they went out there and they talked to the pilot, and this was many years ago when they had these very small

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three and four seater planes, and he said, "Lad, how much to fly Maggie and me up and around about and see London." He said, "Well, the regular price is five pounds." Well, he says, "We're poor people from Glasgow. We cannot afford five pounds. There is no way we can get it cheaper." He says, "I'll tell you what I'll do, Sandy. I'll go up there and I'll try and scare you and if you or your wife cry out, why then you pay the regular price. If you don't say anything, then you get it for free." So he turned to his left and he said, "Maggie, this is our chance. Now if you'll just keep your mouth shut and I'll keep my mouth shut, we'll get a free ride." So they went up and he looped the loop and then he did the reverse loop and then he did the falling leaf and then he did the (inaudible) turn. He did everything he could to scare this poor Scotch couple. Not a sound. Finally, he leveled the plane off and he came down and he said over the intercom, "Well, Sandy, you got the free ride but how were you ever to keep quiet, I don't know. How was it you were able to keep quiet?" "Well," say Sandy over the intercom, "Mr. Pilot, you very nearly had me the once. I almost cried out one time." He said, "You did? When was that?" "Well, that was when Maggie fell out."

(Laughter)

VVH: He may have lost his wife but he going to bloody well keep his mouth shut--he wanted that ride for free. That's my favorite story.

VH: The other Scotch story of my grandmother's . . .

VVH: It's a favorite of Jackie's if I think it's the one he's gonna tell.

VH: The story about the same couple, Maggie and Sandy. They went up to the (inaudible) to one of those indentations in the Scottish coast to go fishing. They got a gilly. Do you

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know what a gilly is? A gilly is a lad to help you take care of the boat. And so they got this gilly; they went out and went fishing. They came to the next to the last day of their vacation and a great squall came up and the wind it blew and finally the boat was capsized. (inaudible) and ropes and all that kind of stuff. Poor Maggie was drowned and they kept diving for her but they could not find her. Finally, Sandy said to the wee gilly, "Lad, keep searching for Maggie and send me a message when you've found her body." Well, three weeks later he got this message from Scotland. It was collect of course. (Laughter)

"Finally discovered Maggie's body wedged under ledge of rock. Encrusted with oysters, what shall I do?" Well, he scratched his head and wired back--collect, of course--he said, "Sell the oysters at the highest possible market and reset the bait."

(Laughter)

VVH: I call that a sick joke.

VH: My grandmother when she was 82 or 83--she came to me and she said, "Herman, I want you to arrange for me to go up in the flight." This was many years ago when their flights were not as easy to make. I said, "Grandmother, you're 83 or 84 and aren't you scared to go up?" She said, "Oh no." She got in this plane with the pilot and they flew all around. He flew very carefully and when she came down I helped her out of the plane. I said, "Grandmother, you weren't scared?" She said, "No. All I said to myself was nearer my god to thee if we have an accident."

C: Isn't she something? Intrepid woman.

(Interruption)

VH: I would say rice is my favorite food.

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C: Rice is your favorite food. Did you grow up on rice?

VH: Sure, we had rice all the time. I would rather have rice than potatoes any time. Rice and roast beef.

C: You got a favorite vegetable?

VH: Rice.

C: It qualifies. That's right.

VH: And I like coleslaw very much.

C: Coleslaw, okay.

VH: Very fond of coleslaw. What's your favorite vegetable?

C: Well, I eat everything.

VH: I do too.

C: I really do. I like spinach. I like eggplant. I like all the Chinese vegetables. I literally eat everything.

VH: I'm very fond of Chinese or Japanese restaurants and having things like egg foo yung and chow mun soy and all that sort of thing. In the olden day we used to go down Wo Fat's restaurant and then--I still understand it's still going strong.

C: It's still there.

VH: Have you been there?

C: Yes. I sure have.

VH: It's a lovely place to go.

C: It goes back to 1890, something around there.

VH: That was before I was born so I didn't go there then. But I went there for many years

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during my growing up days.

C: Did you ever learn to cook?

VH: I'm a great cook.

C: Tell me what you . . .

VH: The greatest argument that Val and I have is who is going to cook. I taught her how to cook curry.

C: You did?

VH: And I make better rice than she does, but she won't believe it.

C: How did you learn to cook?

VH: Because I did a lot of camping, you see. We had a mountain cabin up in the Palehua area back of Makakilo--learned to cook up there. And I did a lot of camping down here on the Na Pali coast. My brother and I were always the cooks of the party.

C: What kind of supplies did you have to bring in to camp? What would you bring?

VH: Well, if we were going on a camping trip, we had coffee, then Eagle Brand Condensed Milk and we used that a great deal because it's condensed milk and it's--you don't have to carry sugar if you use that in your coffee.

C: Yes, real sweet.

VH: Rice, and used to use a lot of canned corn.

C: Canned corn. Creamed style? Do you like that creamed style?

VH: Creamed style, yes. That's very very . . .

C: That's good over rice.

VH: Oh, I say.

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C: I love it. It's very good over rice. What about fruit?

VH: Fruit?

C: Yes. What kind of fruit do you like?

VH: I would say my favorite is oranges. Bananas, papayas. We have--the Hawaiians have about thirty different varieties of bananas here on the islands--maybe thirty five. But the best of them all is a banana called the Ihulena.

C: Ihuena.

VH: Ihulena.

C: Would describe it for me?

VH: It's called the apple-banana.

C: It's the little one, the little fat one.

VH: The little small, little fat one. And that's delicious.

C: It even smells better than the others. This is a wonderful fragrance.

VH: If you want to have something really delicious you take a couple of those little apple-bananas and you slice them up and you put the Eagle Brand Condensed Milk--a spoonful of that--all around. You don't have to put any sugar on it. It's wonderful.

C: I bet. That's wonderful.

VH: (Inaudible) They grew wild in the mountains and they were very much favored by all the Hawaiians. We had a lot of bananas up there at in our mountain cabin area.

C: What about mountain apples? Did you get those?

VH: Yes, we got lots of mountain apples, but you have to be careful about eating mountain apples. If you eat too many at one time, it asks as a diuretic . . .

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C: You don't want to eat too many of those.

VH: Don't eat too many at one time.

C: Do you like mangoes?

VH: Yes. Mangoes are very good. I love mangoes.

C: What kind do you like?

VH: We had some awfully good mango trees in the early days--Hawaiian Mango.

C: Hawaiian Mango.

VH: I mean the one that was called the Hawaiian Mango. I don't know where it came from.

C: They're smaller?

VH: After that they had a lot of mangoes, like the Haden and various others. We had some big mango trees in our yard and we used to go out with a long pole with a little wire basket. We'd reach up and pull down . . .

C: Pull down on . . .

VH: That was you could get them down without bruising them.

C: Those trees grow pretty tall so it's sometimes hard to get. Tell me about hunting? I understand you folks made a good Palehua stew.

VH: Yes.

C: What did you put in the stew?

VH: Everything.

C: Everything. Okay.

VH: But the kitchen sink.

C: So, you'd go out hunting and what would you get? What did you bring back? What did you

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put in the stew?

VH: Well, onions and cabbage and meat. Onions and cabbage were the main thing.

C: Would you put chicken or would you . . .

VH: Usually beef stew and if we saw some wild goats, we had wild goat stew.

C: What do wild goats taste like?

VH: Like venison.

C: I bet that was good.

VH: Wild goat is delicious. If you get a young nanny . . .

(Interruption)

VH: No one knows quite how much they're worth.

VVH: Considerable.

C: Considerable, I'm sure.

VH: Well, when Aubry died, I'm not sure if it's true or not--when he died his estate was worth nine million dollars which is pretty good for an estate of thirty, forty years ago.

C: I should say.

Herman, is there anything that you could have done that you didn't do? Whether in business or travel or education or whatever.

VH: I can't think of anything right now.

C: What do you do for a hobby or a place you--do you read books or do you play bridge? I know you play bridge.

VH: Well, I love to play bridge and we're going to try and get into the Bridge Club down here. I play a lot of cribbage with . . .

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VH: A lot of cribbage with my stepdaughter Jackie and with Chuck and I read until my eyes get tired.

C: What kind of books do you like to read?

VH: Well, any kind.

C: History books?

VH: Well, I don't read too much nowadays because I've had a cataract operation in this eye and I'm going to have another one in this eye.

C: I see.

VH: So they get a little tired. By the time I've read the morning paper I seem to think that's enough to read for the day and then I read some magazines. I've been reading a very interesting book called "Life with Rose Kennedy."

C: Yes.

VH: If you haven't read that, you ought to read it. I recommend it.

C: I want to read it, yes.

VH: I was an omnivorous, if that's the word, reader. All my youth I used to read all kinds of books. I read all the books by James Fenimore Cooper. Did you ever hear of G. A. Henty?

C: How do you spell the last name?

VH: H-E-N-T-Y. He wrote all kinds of books but they were historical novels. Like he wrote a book called "With Clive in India."

C: That title I know.

VH: "With Kitchner in the Sudan" and he wrote King of the Khyber Rifles".

(Interruption)

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C: Herman, it is now the morning of March 12, and unfortunately I have to leave. I would love to have you tell me some of your stories about the workers in your household and around your house. You were telling me earlier about some people you had working for you who were of Chinese ancestry and I think you had some marvelous stories to tell about them. Would you just do that for me know?

VH: You mean the story about the Chinese janitor?

C: Yes, the one about the Chinese janitor.

VH: That Chinese janitor's name was Yuen. He was a very faithful worker. Also in my office I had a big oscillating fan. During the war years--just before the war broke out, World War II, my big oscillating fan was sort of acting kind of sticky and not oscillating properly so I said to Yuen, "Please take my fan down to the electrical shop and have it oiled and greased and he said, "Bossy, you likee takee fanny down to Lamsey, oil greasy fanny." I said, "Yes, that's right." So he started off and took it down there. Then the war broke out and I didn't use the fan and after a while it got pretty hot in the office and I said to one of my secretaries, "What's happened to our fan. I don't see it around here? My secretary said, "Well, boss, you remember you sent it down to be oiled and greased." I said, "Well, tell Yuen to go down and pick it up." She said, "Yuen is now retired." So I call up Ramsey at the electrical shop and I said, "What about my fan?" He said, "You don't have a fan, Mr. Von Holt." I said, "That heck I don't have a fan. I sent it down with my janitor." "No, we don't have any fan." Well, Ramsey's office was just two or three blocks away from my office so I walked over there and I said, "Where is your storeroom that you keep the uncalled for items in?" And they took and showed me and it was quite a big room. It had a

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lot of shelves in it. On one of the shelves was my big oscillating fan. I could tell it because it was a big white fan. So I said, "That's my fan, up there." They said, "Oh no, that belongs to a Chinese gentle man and we haven't been able to locate him." So I went over and I picked up the fan and on it was a tag and on the tag it said, "H. Wee Won Ho." They said, "See, that belongs to a Chinese gentleman." It said Wee Won Ho. I know what happened because my janitor came in here and said, "This here fanny. He belongee my bossy Mr. H. Wee Won Ho. You oily greasy. You let him know when he po." He said, "Well, you have solved the mystery Mr. Von Holt and because we were so dumb about it, we will not charge you anything for repairing the fan. So that's how I got my fan back and I got it free. When I went and told this story to the boys at the (inaudible), he said, "Well, your the only director that's got three names because I have--my English name, my proper name, is Herman Valdemar Von Holt and when I used to ride out with the cowboys they called me Hele Mana Puna Holt because that's the way a hawaiian would say Herman Von Holt, Puna Holt. Now you have a Chinese name, Wee Won Ho. I've go three different names.

C: I love it.

VH: H. Wee Won Ho.

C: Herman, do you spell your name Herman with one `n' or two `n's'? I've seen it both ways.

VH: I spell it with one `n' Actually I was christened with two n's and my grandfather had two n's in it but I dropped the n many years ago because it was bad enough to write a big long name like H-E-R-M-A-N and then--so I just used the one n.

C: Do you remember the rice straw story?

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VH: The rice straw story. I had a company called the Hawaii Feed Company and we decided to go in and put in a bid for some rice straw. In those earlies, the Army at Scholfield barracks used mules to haul their artillery and it was before mechanization and they used a lot of rice straw as bedding for the mule. So I said to my partner, Knowles--he thought we could get buy up some rice straw--and I asked him if he ever heard of a corner in grain such as the Chicago Board of Trade. He said no, he hadn't. So I explained if you bought up all the rice straw why you could--nobody could bid against you. I said, "Let us see what we can do." So we bought a baling machine and we had two or three fellows who were expert and a lot of baling wire and we bought up all the rice straw in Honouliuli, Waipahu, Hauula. Then I heard that there was a considerable amount of straw down here on Kauai over in Hanalei. So I came down here with about eight hundred or one thousand dollars in one dollar bills and I found there was a man by the name of Hariguchi who was the rice straw kind of Hanalei. I believe that his son is still in the rice straw business. So I explained the purpose of my visit and I wanted to buy up the rice straw. In the rice straw business--in the rice business, I should say, you harvest the rice and a lot times you have this straw and a lot of times they burn it up because it was of no use. So they were glad to sell it and give up the privilege of baling it for a dollar an acre. He had about eight hundred acres and we gave him eight hundred dollars and we had a contract where by he would let us bale the rice straw. So we brought our baling machine down and we baled it all up; got about six or eight hundred tons of rice. We had a boat from the Inner Island Steam Navigation to come and anchor there and we loaded the boat and sent the rice straw out to Schofield Barracks. After this business enterprise, Haraguchi said, "Hey, my good friend from Honolulu, you

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better come my house. We have good chicken hekka dinner." So we went up to Haraguchi's house and he said to Mrs. Haraguchi, "This my good friend from Honolulu. Mama san, you make good chicken hekka." So she had this little baby boy about three or four years old on her back in the Japanese custom. She went downstairs to the basement of the house there were a lot chickens around there. She got a couple of chickens, killed them, slaughtered them, plucked them and started to cut them up. Well, the little baby boy which was on her back was disturbed by all this activity and he began to cry. His crying interfered with the hot saki wine drinking that Hariguchi and Knowles and I were doing. I'm one of the old Hawaiians who knows the old Japanese custom that when you drink hot saki wine, you toast each other and then you go (inaudible). So we could hear ourselves drink and when you can't hear yourself drink that spoils the whole party. So Hariguchi said something in Japanese which I took to mean "Hey, mother, you better keep the boy quiet." So she took the baby boy off her back and handed it to Hariguchi's old mother who was an aged lady of about eight-five or so and didn't have a tooth in her head." She had nothing on but a kimono. So she rocked the baby and she said, "Baby san, don't you cry." But baby san didn't understand her and he kept crying and crying. Finally old grandma Hariguchi she opened up the kimono and clasped the baby onto this withered old breast and I looked at her in complete amazement. I said, "Grandma san, me donado you lili makuli, how come you chi chi hana hana for baby?" She said, "Me now 79 year. 40 year no more chi chi." I said, "Well, what are you doing now?" She said, "Ha. Me now only fool baby so he no cry."

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Let me do--remark that there was an old custom, old saying which I had heard many, many years ago that the best way to keep a baby quiet is to give a baby a bust in the face. That was the story of Hariguchi and the rice straw.

(Interruption)

C: Did you miss papayas when you went off to Yale?

VH: No, because we had other fruit.

VVH: It's very adaptable.

C: I can tell that. It's wonderful. Do you ever lose your temper?

VVH: Yes.

VH: Yes.

C: I can't imagine this gentleman losing his temper.

VVH: Yes, with me.

C: He does.

VVH: And the sum total of it is he'll go into a little sulk for two seconds.

VH: But I was raised in a family that was very even-tempered and my father used to lecture us kids and say, "Never lose your temper."

VVH: If I nag him, he gets annoyed sometimes--when I nag him about his health or I want him to exercise. He'll do that, "Well, I'm doing the best that I can" and he'll stomp off to his room and then he'll come out five minutes later as sweet and as darling and as precious as can be.

C: I just have that feeling that he is just a real gentleman in the truest old sense of the world.

VVH: Renaissance man, no question about it. Our worst battle was over a bottle of catsup, I told you about that didn't I?

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C: Yes. Would you mind telling it for the record?

VVH: For the record. Well, when we got married my son contributed to the wedding party--my son Gene contributed to the wedding party with five pounds of peeled shrimp, prawns--beautiful prawns that just filled a whole bowl. He brought this bowl in . . .

(Interruption)

VVH: So what happened was that for all this--I always make my own cocktail sauce with my horseradish and my lime and lemon and ketchup. (inaudible) I had bought a huge bottle of ketchup and we had used it all. Actually, I think what happened I think we ran out of sauce and I didn't make more. We had all this ketchup left over still in this big bottle and he got a little annoyed with me and told me not to buy such big bottles anymore that he liked to have the free room on the shelf in the refrigerator. I said, "But, hon, I saved seventeen cents." He said, "I don't think we need to save seventeen cents anymore." It's not worth it to him to crowd his refrigerator.

C: That's a great story.

VVH: The other one we had a row about was his shorts. He came down one day for brunch in his underwear. I got quite annoyed with him because the housekeeper was there and I thought it was improper for him to be running around in his underwear when the housekeeper was here. I wanted him to go back upstairs and put on his overshorts. He refused to do it. He said, "These are my shorts." I said, "No, they're the wrong shorts. You're wearing your underwear, not your overwear." We're gotten into a bitter fight over that one. Would you believe within--he stalked off angry with me and within five minutes he was downstairs for the rest of his breakfast in his proper shorts.

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C: This is what Chin Ho has told me. That when he was just getting started he used to delivery everyday to you at what was the First Hawaiian Bank. He said, "You know, Herman Von Holt was the always the nicest person. He was always fair and pleasant and just really nice. He wasn't like some of the others who didn't always have the time of day for him. He really appreciated your being as nice a person as you were to him.

(Interruption)

VH: Many years ago up near the present site of Mililani there was a little valley and my father wanted to put a little dam in it to get some extra water for his livestock. It was known as the Dam Von Holt. For about two or three years there was no rain. Consequently, this dam stayed empty. When they did have a big rain, we happened to have a cousin from England who was staying with us. The telephone rang and his wife said (Hawaiian). This cousin from England said, "I'm sorry but neither Mr. nor Mrs. Von Holt is home." "This is Kunewa the cowboy, head cowboy out in Ewa and I want to give him the message that that Dam Von Holt full like hell. We have big rain out here." So she didn't understand the Hawaiian diction very well. When my mother came back, she said to my mother, "Ida, a terrible thing has happened. Somebody from the country, from the ranch called up and said that Harry was as drunk as a lard.

(Laughter)

C: I love that story because I know the Hawaiian--the way they would say things. This is really cute.

(Interruption)

VH: This is a story about Grandma Cooke who was one of the descendents of the missionary.

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She had sort of a country place up at Luaka which is up toward Nuuanu Pali. About ten or fifteen acres of land and she had a very nice home. It was cool up there. She had cattle, horses and cows, and she had a part Hawaiian, part Chinese lad whose name was Charlie Ah Sing who took care of them. One morning he came in and he said in his quaint dialect, "Missy Cookie, Missy Cookie, too much pilikia outside." That means in the Hawaiian language "too much trouble outside." She said, "What's the matter?" "Missy Cookie, me danado"--which means I took a look--"now horsee he go inside cow barn, cow no can. So cow he go inside horsee barn. Now too much pilikia because horsee he kau kau cow kau kau and cow he kau kau the horsee kau kau . . . you speakee Hawaiian akule. But I change over, I put horsee in horsee barn, and cow in cow barn. Then all okay because then horsee he can kau kau horsee kau kau and cow he kau kau cow kau kau."

(Laughter)

VH: You gotta be bilingual.

VVH: It's a real tongue twister.

End of Tape 3 of 3 and Special Interview.

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