

MARTHA OLSEN CHRISTOFFERSEN

THE WATUMULL FOUNDATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

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(1886 - 1983)

Mrs. Christoffersen was born and raised in Ahualoa. Hawaii on a coffee farm owned by her father. who also served as veterinarian for Parker Ranch. Her parents. the Olsens. had come to Hawaii from Norway on a sailing ship which Mr. Olsen had helped to build in his father's shipyard and which had transported animals to be delivered to Parker Ranch.

After graduating from the government school on Hawaii. Mrs. Christoffersen received teachers' training at the Territorial Normal and Training School in Honolulu, then returned to Ahualoa to teach. While in Honolulu, she lived at the Kaiulani Home for Girls which was managed by the home's matron. Mrs. Susan Dorcas Heapy.

Mrs. Christoffersen narrates her own and her family's history. the way of life in Ahualoa, and describes the growing of coffee.

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INTERVIEW WITH MARTHA OLSEN CHRISTOFFERSEN

(MRS. RANGVALD THEODORE CHRISTOFFERSEN, SR.)

At her Poha! Nani apartment, 45-090 Namoku Street, Kaneohe 96744

August 16, 1971

C: Hartha Olsen Christoffersen

M: Lynda Hair, Interviewer

Can you go back to this time?

Dh yes. indeed.

Where was this on the Big Island?

On the Big Island, yes. You see, my father and my mother, pure Norwegians, came out from Norway. Mother had learned by going from Norway to England for a high school education and she wanted to be a high school teacher, educated in English. And my father, from Norway, went on the same sailing vessel for four years. They had four years--each one had four years [of high school education]--but they never met each other on the sailing ship. The Norwegians were sending their girls and boys on this sailing vessel to England for their education. Father wanted to become a veterinarian, so he was on the same boat as my mother was and she was to become an English-speaking high school teacher. [Carl Emil and Regina Olava Gulbrandsen Olsen]

Four years they traveled back and forth, these girls and boys. A lot of others too, but I've forgotten the others' names. I'm just talking about my own family now. And Father. well. it was a little bit hard for him to learn to speak English. He spoke it with quite an accent but Mother. she did very well.

So. his father was a shipbuilder in Norway. My father's father was a shipbuilder in Norway and my mother's people were very wealthy. What I mean is this. that they could afford to send their children to England for an education on the sailing vessel. back and forth, so they were considered wealthy. When they were away at school. father's father received a letter with a drawing of a ship and up on the main deck were to be pens. wooden pens--P-E-N-S--and he couldn't understand that. So when my father came back--they came home

every chance they had, you know, from school--he said, "What is this?" in Norwegian. So my father said, in Norwegian he told him, "Well, I can't tell you what it is. It's a ship with, it looks to me like. pens up on the main deck." Well then, he said in Norwegian. "I don't make pens for my people. I build them lovely rooms on the decks of my ships--sailing vessels that I build."

So then, of course, Father knew that my mother spoke good English. He had met her finally on the sailing vessel from England to Norway. so he told her that his father was in a quandary, just didn't know, and she said, "Well, w-hat is it?" "The letter." "Well, bring it to me." "Oh, n he said, "I can't get it away from him; I've got to take you there. He wants to meet you to see if he can trust you with this letter." (laughter) So Father said, "All right, all right." So he asked my mother to go with him to his home and his people were, as I say, quite well-off. Shipbuilding, you know, they make money. Usually they're very poor and they live in little homes that they're not ashamed of or anything. But when he [Grandfather] found out that she could read, oh, was he thrilled that my father knew such a lovely lady. She had golden hair like mine. Mine, of course. is getting gray but hers was just beautiful.

And so, they got talking and everything. So then he brought out the letter because my father said, "Well, now bring the letter. Do you like her?" "*Dh* yes," he said, "I love her. I hope you do too," he said to my father in Norwegian. And my mother was taking this all in. being Norwegian, you know. (both chuckle) They used to entertain me with these different little things, young as I was. *Dh*, it used to thrill me. Well anyway, it was a letter from Seattle, Washington, United States of America, and he wanted him to build a ship thus and so. Evidently, the man was an architect himself. It was drawn just beautifully in the way he wanted it and all and my mother explained it and, oh, of course my grandfather knew right away what was wanted. He said, "Well, (Norwegian phrase)," that it ~ for animals and not for people. (laughter) I found that the other day and I laughed and I thought, how strange. So he found out that it was just for animals.

There were eight boys in the family, no girls. They wanted some girls, so Grandfather said, "We must have another child because I want a daughter." But eight children, so she said, "No. No more. No more."

M: Eight boys, wow.

C: Eight boys and my father was the middle boy. I said, "Well, how could you be the middle boy?" I told him, "Because there were eight." "Well, he said, "if it had been nine children. I would have been the middle boy, but when did

you get so smart?" He told me in Norwegian. Oh dear, we had great times.

But anyway, he said to his father. "You know... my going away, as I've been out asking off from helping you with building ships here, I've been taking out captain's lessons to become a captain." He says, "What do you want to be a captain for?" "Well," he says, "the trouble that you used to send me on, trying to find men to come in and sail your ship to the port that it's supposed to go to, got me sick and tired, so I just learned to become a captain and I'll take your ship anywhere you want me to take it." "Well," he said, "then you're going to California." And my father said, "And... here's that?" "U.S.A." He wrote it down. He had copied that. He was smart enough to copy that. So Father says, "Well, that's where I've been wanting to go for a long, long time." He'd always wanted to be a sailor but his father said, "No, none of you will be. You have to stay right home here." You know, in those days those old parents were very covetous and their word was law. They had to do it. And I know I had to obey my parents.

M: How far back was this that you're talking about?

C: I'm talking about 1860.

M: Eighteen-sixty or so. Let me check this and make sure it's operating. (recorder turned off and on again) I'm getting all this down.

C: I'm just jumping about but it's the story.

M: That's okay.

C: And so he said finally, "All right. You take this ship to Seattle, Washington and I want you to sail out on this and so day." And you know, that's what I've forgotten, but I guess it doesn't matter. It was in the 1860's. He said, "And when you get there, if you can sell the ship, sell it." So my father asked him, "What price would you ask for it?" And he told him the price of the ship. He would be content with that and so. And I forgot that. So my father said, "Very well, but I cannot leave on the day you have set for our sailing." "Why not?" said his father. "You know you were to obey me until you leave the home until you leave the business, the home, and leave us and go out on your own." "Well," Father says, "I tell you, it's going to be my wedding day." So he had proposed to my mother. "Well," he says, "I get married and I'll give her that as a treat; and you sell the ship and half for you and half for me, the money that you get." So my father said, "Very well, what are you asking for it?" And he told him and I've forgotten how much that was. The krone, you know, in Norwegian. I didn't even know the

Norwegian names for money or anything. I didn't know very much Norwegian.

But anyway, Father agreed to it and everything, so they were married and that's how these two Norwegians came out to America on a business trip for the father, shipbuilder that he was in Norway. They had experiences of all sorts and they used to entertain me by telling me these different things and, oh, it was really most interesting.

My mother said that she tried to teach my father English but, she said, "He was a stubborn old Norwegian and I couldn't get him to learn to speak it." I said, "But you did, Mother." "Oh," she said, "yes, I had to run here and run there and do all the business and he'd come along like an old dummy and listen and half the time he'd break in on a most important conversation and he wouldn't know what they were screaming about." It must have been a field day for them. But anyway, I was the only chick of the family.

Where were you born?

On Hawaii.

Oh, you were born after they came here.

Yes, you see, with the ship they got to Seattle and when they got there, my father went to find out from the address what to do. Here was the ship. What to do about it? And he had quite a little time getting into the port, you know, a foreign ship like that and all. My mother finally fixed that up. She spoke English. She had learned in England to become a teacher and she knew English, so she talked to them all about it and got them all in. But Father said, no, that was a man's business about getting the ship and the cattle. What was it to go on the ship? Well, there were some mules and some horses and some cattle, a couple of bulls, some sheep and all this was to come to Kamuela-Waimea, Hawaii--Parker Ranch. The great big Parker Ranch. Do you know anything about the Parker Ranch?

H: Yes, yes I know.

C: Well, that's where I was brought up and I was a wild-horse trainer. I was just looking at Sarah [a horse]. Did I show it to you? Do you have time enough?

H: What's that now?

C: I wrote up a little bit. I wanted to make some money and I didn't like working in the coffee, you know, with the coffee beans and everything.

M: I've got these that you handed me. Is this what you're thinking of?

C: Yes, but I had the other with the And so, I wanted to show them that I broke in horses, so I had to make a sign and put it on my gate. Oh, here it is. I had nothing to work with, no steel, no nothing, so I told the Japanese man, "Come, we go up and you get me some koa." We had a lot of koa wood. You know that lovely koa wood. So here is what I wrote. I came across this today. And that was the sign I made, the horseshoes--wooden horseshoes. I showed him how I wanted it made and he carved it out. You know, Japanese are very, very clever in doing that kind of work and he varnished it and they were the most beautiful thing. So we hammered it on a board and hung it on my gate--my father's gate. (chuckles) I broke in wild horses. That was my mission.

And when I came to Honolulu, I wanted to become a teacher. You can read the little story I wrote. 'Course, as I say, I'm not a writer. I was seventeen years old when I did that. (Lynda reads her story silently)

That's terrific I

Then you understand. People around there were interested in me--you know, families--and they wanted to know who taught me how. I said, "Well, my Japanese man and I." Did I show you his picture--the old gentleman?

No.

Oh, I just brought it over. Where did I put it? My father had trained him to help him with the animals and to speak to the Japanese because the Japanese were there and they didn't speak English. I want to show you his picture. Where did I put it? I went and got it purposely for someone. Oh, there I His wife had died but he lived and I called him Otosan. That's Father in Japanese--Otosan--and the mother was Okasan. Oka and Oto. That's where I learned my Japanese really.

M: Oh, I see.

C: And he was so good and he took such good care of me and the place and all.

M: Let's back up now because I don't know yet where that fits in. You were just telling me how your parents got here.

C: Yes. that's how my parents came here. Now this is something I would like you to find out if you possibly can. I haven't been able to find it out. I don't know where to go to trace it or anything but this is it: my father came and,

of course, he had this ship which he had delivered with the animals--for the animals--and then he was on his way down here and he did sell the ship to the company the t the [Parker] Ranch had bought the animals from.

M: They also bought the ship.

C: The ones up in Seattle bought the ship.

M: Oh. I see.

C: Because they were always sending animals to the different islands here. It was a new project, I guess, of theirs. Oh, they had a terrible storm and one horse fell and was hurt and they didn't know but what he might have been kicked, because one of his eyes was hanging out when Father came up early in the morning to see how the animals stood the high waters. you know--the roughness. He found this animal standing with this eye so he took care of the eye. So that ~as Jock and Jock had just one eye but, oh, he ~as a darling horse.

Father said to me. "Now Martha, you've got to learn about animals. You ~ant to learn about animals, you take care of Jock and he'll be your horse. You just take care of him." He and I were the best of friends. I made friends with this horse. I said, "All right. Dad, and I'll help you with your animals, too." And we just. the three of us, gre~ up together--Father and Mother and I.

Mother, of course, was all right; she spoke good English. And Father, he was learning and (chuckles) she used to get so irritated with him, I think, on his pronunciations of different words and all and I used to teach him when I'd go sneaking in and always help him with his animal hospital. He built regular stalls, you know, for his animals and he kept the animals in there and I always helped him.

And then, right after he had built it, the barbed wire came into vogue. You know, for fences. In the meantime. Father had sold the ship and his father said that he was to take half of the money--send him half and he keep the half as a wedding gift for both of them. So Dad was so tickled and he had heard, through the sailors. • He got in with the sailors, being that he always worked ~ith ships and he got to kno~ quite a few sailors, and he told them that he had this ship and any time anybody ~anted to, animals could be transported from the United States to the Islands. This ~as a territory at that time. [In the 1860's, the Ha~aian Islands ~ere a kingdom.]

So Father got this lovely piece of coffee land up in Ahualoa and King [alakaua •••. That is the right way to pronounce it: [aLA-kaua (accent on the second syllable).

Kalakaua, because if you say KalaKAua (accent on the third syllable) that means a different thing entirely. Just the way the Hawaiian language is used. Well, the pronunciations.

M: Inflection of the . .

C: Yes, yes, inflection. That's it. At that time, King Kalakaua said that up there towards [008--you know Ahualoa is between Waimea-Kamuela and Kona--they were selling land at a dollar an acre. A dollar an acre and, of course, it was just a monstrous bit of land and Father bought, ah, I don't know how many acres there--250 acres, I guess. because a dollar an acre. He took out \$250 of the money that woss their wedding present and he bought this coffee land.

They had to send to Brazil for coffee plants and coffee plants were brought in on sailing ships and very often two-thirds of them were dead for the want of fresh water. Some of the people said. 'IWell. they were dry so we gave them salt water. That was the only kind of water we could afford.' Well, the poor things died.

M: Needless to say.

C: So I said to Father one day--I was thirteen years old then--"If I plant coffee beans. will they grow?" "Oh yes." said Father. "they'll grow." I know coffee from A to Z because I had to help him with his coffee.

My mother, well. I'll tell you, Mother was a lady. She had never been accustomed to hard work or anything like that. Her people were very wealthy landowners and they had wheat and grain and they traveled back and forth. And then, she was very highly educated. Father was educated enough. He had to be because to be a captain of a ship he had to know something.

So I was a little dumb-duddy, you know. We had schools right there in Ahualoa and Miss Kate Horner was my teacher. She's one of the Horner girls.

M: H-O-N-A?

C: H-O-R-N-E-R. Horner. Kate Horner. She was my school-teacher and, oh, she was an adorable, beautiful thing and was she educated. She was a niece to the Horners in Paauilo on Hawaii. She played the organ at school and we all sang the different songs that she taught us.

M: Was she Hawaiian? Part-Hawaiian?

C: No. no, no, she was pure white. Her father was William Horner and her name was Kate Horner and she had a sister,

Edna Horner. Her mother used to drive in those little sulkies, you know. We had the old buggies but this was a sulky with the long shafts--two shafts--and a beautiful horse between them and the horse got frightened and ran away with her and she was in a terrible wreck and she broke both her hips. Both her hips were broken and in those days, you know, our medication wasn't like it is today. There were no specialists or anything, no hospitals up on Hawaii.

Kate Horner was our teacher and she used to depend on me a lot to run errands to the store for this and that and I would go and I would entertain her mother once in awhile. I only knew her as Mrs. Horner and the father was Mr. Horner. but it was William. She was Mrs. William Horner and he was William Horner and the two daughters were Edna and Kate. And Edna, she was just a devil. She flew kites and she climbed trees and she was just a sport, while Kate was the lady. She played piano and she played organ and she taught us all to sing and she played the guitar. Oh, she played the guitar beautifully. Very musical and very beautiful she was. I got kind of tired there towards the end because if there was anything to be done, Martha--Martha had to go do it. I was Olsen then. O-L-S-E-N. Martha Olsen. She would have little coffees and she said, "I want you to put on your prettiest dress you've got and come to school because I'm having a coffee party and I want you to pour the coffee--serve and pour the coffee for us." I

M: This was when you were just a

C: Thirteen. Between twelve and thirteen years old. And I said, I'd be very happy, and I ~. I was very happy to because I got coffee, too. 'Course I had coffee at home all the time. And I was treated to all the delicious cookies and cakes. And all the ladies around there, of course, they're all dead now. I'm eighty-five years old.

M: My goodness. You don't look that old.

C: Well, I never felt it till I got this massive stroke from going out and mowing my lawn. However, I enjoyed myself. I enjoyed myself very, very much but, at times I felt very, very lonely. I can remember that. I used to sit and I'd think about the neighbors. There were a lot of Germans had come out at the time to Ahualoa because of this getting the land for a dollar an acre, but they had to live on it and improve it and plant coffee. And as I said, the coffee was sent from Brazil to us.

I said to Daddy one day, "Dad, if I plant seeds, will they grow?" He said, "Yes. " I had taken seeds and I didn't know just how to do it but first I put them in raw, just out of the pulp. I put them in the ground and they didn't grow. So finally I took and dried them, then I planted them and

before long little shoots came up. So I taught myself how to grow coffee.

So I said to my father. "HoW' much will I get for a coffee plant?" He said, "HoW' many have you got⁷¹¹ and I know... he knew very well how many I had, because I'd seen him slinking around there, you know. looking at my little garden. And I said, "I have twelve" in Norwegian. Twelve trees. And he says, "Well, aren't you going to give your daddy one?" and I said, "Oh yes, sure. You can have them all if you want them. "

END OF SIDE 1/1ST TAPE

M: Okay.

C: He was the postmaster there and somehow or other he befriended me as I noticed him and all the kids in school used to tease, "Oh, you Mr. Horner's huspals," meaning sweetheart, because he always used to call me Sweetheart. Me. just a young girl, and these crazy Hawaiians and Portuguese and Japanese and Germans and Norwegians. There were other Norwegians there too, had come out on sailing vessels, and then lots of the sailors that came in on the sailing ships. I have a book on that I'd like you to read someday. These sailing ships came down to Lahaina. That was on Maui--Island of Maui.

And you remember years ago the whales used to come down from Alaska to the Islands to get warmed up in the warm ocean water. They used to swim down here, the whales, and they would kill them. They had the sailing ships in Lahaina.

M: Yeh, seems I've read this story.

C: I said to my father, "I want to go and see them catch whales." I didn't know what a whale was; I thought it was a little fish like I used to catch, little fishes like this, you know. So he found a picture and he showed me and I went, "Ohhh!" He said, "Do you want to go? If you do, I'll have somebody take you over there." I said, "No, no, no, no." I wean't going to go. I dido' t think it was a big, wild-looking thing like that. He used to often say, "Well, if you don't behave--stop riding wild horses--I'll just take you and let you loose." I said, "Oh no, don't, don't, because I don't want to get killed by these whales." He said, "AII right, then you be a good girl." So I was the best girl in the world, you know. (Lynda chuckles)

Well anyway, my dear father, just three days before I was nine years old Oh, but then, I'm going ahead a little bit. I must go back to when Mother was carrying me. She decided she wanted a last horseback ride before I was to be born, so her grandfather decided that, yes, she could ride

his horse because it was a tame, old horse and he knew it would be no trouble. In those days on Hawaii, the lightning and the thunder that we used to have, and the hailstones | And it was the hailstones that dropped out of the sky onto the animals that frightened them. And the barbed wire came in and so many of the horses weren't accustomed to barbed wire fences. They were accustomed to log fences, big logs that they could jump over, and they would run into these barbed wire fences and cut themselves all up and Father had so much work. patching up these poor. torn-to-bits animals.

He used to say, "Martha. we got a horse in there; he's a bay; he's a beautiful horse. but" he said. "he's so hurt and all and he's just"--of course he spoke with an accent-- "mooning all the time." Hooning: moaning. So I went to the poor horse that was "mooning all the time" and he was such a beautiful horse. At that time. I was reading a little bit more than. I guess. I should have because my reading and everything was--oh. Father was very particular about everything. But I got from a German girl--she gave me [a book] and they were talking about Romeos and everything. you know, and, Lord. I didn't even know what a Romeo meant or anything. But anyway, I named this horse Romeo. I said. "You know, I have a nice name for you." I can remember so well I told him. "Your name is going to be Romeo and Daddy says I can keep you for my horse. You're going to be !!. horse \lfhen you get well and you're going to get well." He used to nibble on my ears. I used to wear pleated white blouses for Sunday. but for the weekday for school and everything they were the blue--what do you call? Not denim, blue

M: Serge?

C: Serge. That's right. My mother was quite a sewer; so was my grandmother. and they taught me how to sew too. | made my daughter's wedding dress and it was beautiful.

Well anyhow, back to our story. I went and told this horse, "You know, Daddy said that you belong to me now. so don't you go to anybody else because you're my horse and Daddy said I'm to have you all the time and I'm going to make you well. You're going to be all well." So a Portuguese lady that used to come to do our laundry weekly, she said, "I'll bring you medicine." It was lard with something that she mixed up and I was to plaster him every third day with this, right on his chest, and do you know that it healed up even to the Father had stitched up several of the deeper cuts that the hair grew over. Usually the hair doesn't grow right over, but it had grown long enough so that it covered all that. And that was my horse and he did anything I asked him to do. All I had to do was talk to him and it was just like he knew what I wanted. So that was Romeo. His name was Romeo.

- M: You were about nine years old, hmm, when you got him?
- C: Yes, and I had Romeo until I was seventeen years old. when I came down to Honolulu and went to the normal school. I went there for four years. That was when I made this sign so that I could get some money.
- M: You went in to the wild-horse training before you came to OYO here [to Honolulu]?
- C: Yes, oh yes.
- M: That was to earn your money so you could come.
- C: That was to earn my money_ I came down to the training school and it was a Mrs. (Susan Dorcas] Hespny the t had the Kaiulan! Home for Girls out on Beretania Street here in Honolulu. She was a great big fat lady--oh. she was enormous--and I came down and I went to see her and I told her that I wanted to come to normal [school] and I'd been recommended by a Miss Somebody--I've forgotten her name too-- a teacher, to take me in because I was from Hawaii. "Oh," she said, "that's what this building is for; for all you girls from the other islands so that you can come and become teachers." They were badly in need of teachers here for all the islands. so I became a teacher.
- M: What year was it that you came down to start school?
- C: It was when they first started out with the normal school, when the first normal school was built, and you will find that out at the I came the day that it was opened and I have forgotten that date, but we can find it. They still have the normal [school], I understand.
- M: Yeh.
- C: I was one of the first students that came up from the Kaiulan! Home For Girls and this Kaiulani Home For Girls had girls from Hawaii, Kauai, Maui and Molokai and all around. Part-Hawaiians, all the nationalities, you know.
- M: Was it just a place for you to stay?
- C: Yes. we stayed there and we did our own washing and ironing. I was so ambitious, you know, I liked cooking anyway so I said. "Well, I'd like to be an assistant cook." And so Mrs. Heapy said, "Oh, Martha, if you'd just take my place. Will you take my place?11 "Oh," I said, "no, I can't. I can't shop. I don't know how to shop and I don't know where to shop." "No. no. no," she said, it mean, supervise the cooking and all." Well, I got started and I said. "I cook Norwegian style." She said, l'Well. we'll have it

Norwegian style." (Lynda chuckles) I can remember that so well. Oh, she was enormous.

M: How do you spell her name. do you remember?

C: H-E-A-P-Y. And she had a son [Stafford Hespny]. Mrs. Hespny lived a long while [1857-1916] and I used to help her, but she finally passed away. And then he went to pot and so did his wife and they ended up very sadly. However, it's just one of those things, you know. I used to just weep for those people, knowing how it was, because in my father's home we were not allowed cards and were not allowed liquor either.

And my mother learned the Hawaiian language and she was ordained by Judge Menali up on Hawaii. Judge Menali was a bright Hawaiian boy that some of the white people up on the Island of Hawaii were so entranced by his English that they sent him back to England and he came back an ordained Christian minister and my mother was ordained by Judge Menali.

M: Why did they call him judge?

C: Well, he was a judge and a minister.

M: Oh, I see.

C: But he didn't go into the ministry because they had the Hawaiian ministers there, but he was a judge; he judged and then he took up the ministry, too.

M: Was your mother of the Lutheran faith too?

C: My mother was of the Lutheran faith. Then they sent for Grandma and all to come out. Then my mother wanted a horseback ride while she was carrying me, before I was to come. And so, she was out horseback riding with her parents, with my grandfather and my grandmother, because Father was working with his animals--he was very busy--and a big hailstorm came up and frightened the horse and he reared and she fell off backwards and I was born on the roadside. [Jonas and Anna B. Olsen Gulbrandsen]

M: Oh my goodness, right then and there.

C: Right then and there, right on a little dirty, dusty trail I was born. She was out riding with her father but when he saw what was happening, he went away in a dead faint.

Oh my gosh!

Her father, not his father. Her father.

Yeh.

He went in a dead faint. Course Dad was home with the animals.

He didn't know what was happening.

He didn't know what was happening and Mother never recovered from the shock of that. I grew up. I'm what they call premature baby, but they don't know just how much of a premature I am. (Lynda chuckles) Here I am, eighty-five years old and have had the best life ever. Poor old Father. After Mother's death, he was lost.

M: Well, she didn't die then, though.

C: No. not right away. I was seven years old when she died. But it was the big storm. The storm was on and the horse reared and she slid off the back and fell down and I was born on the trail. She took care of everything. She had me and she was prepared, as I heard them all say. My grandmother said she was prepared because she had been sort of a midwife. helping out nurses around in the little coffee village. We were all up in the coffee at this time. They were. I finally. eventually got there.

Now what's the name of your homestead. again? Your grandparents' place.

Dh yes, Ahualoa.

No, that's the place where you were born. Your homestead where your grandparents' home is that you said you still had.

Kapulena. Kapulena. K-A-P-U-L-E-N-A.

Yeh, that's the name I wanted.

And my people are all--my father and all of them--buried up on the little knoll, a beautiful little knoll, in a graveyard up there.

M: Can we backtrack a little bit? I'm puzzled. Your father was apparently not a farmer in Norway.

C: Dh no. Father's people were shipbuilders.

M: Then how did he decide to come here and be a rancher or a [coffee] farmer?

C: They got this letter from Seattle, Washington, United States of America, to build a ship.

M: Yeh, you told me about that. He sailed the ship down with the animals for the Parker Ranch.

C: Yes, because then he decided that he liked it so well here and he was offered to be the veterinarian of the Parker Ranch with the three owners of the Parker Ranch.

M: Oh, okay now. You didn't tell me that.

C: There were three brothers, owners. Now it's Smart that owns it because one of the Parkers got married and had a daughter and she is Mrs. Smart and they own that there. Yes, that's it. Now, anything else?

M: Okay, then he was the veterinarian for Parker Ranch at the same time that he had his own little coffee farm.

C: And he had his own little farm and then he had Hawaiian, Japanese, Portugese, English-speaking men working for him so that, when people brought their animals in. one of the men would talk with either the Japanese or the Hawaiian and then tell him.

M: Did he have his hospital right there, then, at your home?

C: Yes, and I used to help him with the animals and this one in particular. this horse that got so cut up **it** moaned and it moaned and it groaned and it groaned. [retells the story of Romeo] So that was my horse, my Romeo.

END OF SIDE 2/1ST TAPE

That's why, when they all died and left me alone, I wasn't lonely because I'd been all alone all my life.

M: Uh huh. Did your mother just die then of ? She just declined sort of then.

C: She just declined, little by little. In the first place, I noticed that she always was in bed, more or less. Mornings she wouldn't get up and Father would bring her a cup of coffee and some toast and he used to say to me, "Now you take care of Mother and if she asks for anything to eat and you don't know how to cook it, you come over to the hospital to me and I'll tell you how to do it." Well, I never went there because I learned all the cooking and the bread-making and pie-making and cake-making, raisin bread-making and all

them to go through the [aisle]?" I said, "What can I do with two great big monsters like that? I tell them what to do and they won't do it." "Well," he says, "I'll just see to that."

So he went and he worked on them and he got them sent to another school. He made the parents take them out of that school. They said, "No, they're not going to go. They said they'd be good." I said, "Well, they've been saying that right along but they're not good." They said, "Well, have they done anything to you?" I said, "No, they threatened me. I'm not afraid, because I'm pretty strong. Unless the two of them tackled me at once, I couldn't say what would happen, but one alone, I would handle him." So first thing you know, these two kids were gone. I never found out where they went or where they were sent or what happened or anything. The whole family moved and I think they were discharged off the plantation and had to go find work someplace else. Oh, they were torments; just terrible.

(reading what she has written) This year, all the coffee trees have been sending forth thousands of new shoots. The climate obliged by remaining perfect throughout the mild winter months. Spring was fast rolling toward a heavenly display of white coffee blossoms which gladdened us all, showing it meant a banner crop.

Long before the break of dawn, the younger of my two maternal uncles was busily working on his Winchester rifle, spoken of as the good old forty-four. His constant demand for either the gun rod, gun patches or gun oils kept me on the hop, chase and hunt, so much so that all the morning chores were being sadly neglected, even to my breakfast, which irritated Okasan who always insisted that we eat all her well-cooked food on time and while hot. Needless to say, I was slightly huhu--peevd--(I get my Hawaiian in you know) at being detained from my morning chores. Uncle, being my senior by several years, I thought could have helped himself by having had all the gun equipment together and right at his fingertips.

On steamer days from Honolulu, Otosan would harness our old pet horse Daisy to the family buggy, now serving as a carry-all, and drive down to the landing for our weekly ho iolawa--supply. This being one of the many other chores today, I would always take on the barnyard chore which I knew he deeply appreciated and I so thoroughly enjoyed. At this time of day, the five milking cows were mooing and their calves impatiently bleating. The two hundred Peking ducks and chickens, which were my personal project, were quacking, cackling, crowing. The four riding horses were stumping in their stalls. The quite lovable donkey, Sarah, that Bobbins, our Australian sheep dog, had found in our front yard shortly after its birth, today began braying for the first time and

about frightened me off my feet. This creature remained Sarah until the end of her days, even though she was a male, much to my chagrin. Was there ever such an unheard of symphony, I wondered, but it was all, nevertheless, sweet music to my ears since all of them were so dear to me.

Huna, my advisor, in passing left my mind filled with the plantation executives' endless concern over the hundreds of acres of freshly planted cane that had been uprooted out of all the furrows, chewed with the bagasse littering the entire field, by these hateful nightly marauders. (Those were those big wild boars. They love sugar cane, you know, and they used to go and eat. And we planted the sugar cane with the slips--sugar cane slips--not by seed. They call it the seed for sugar cane, but it's slips.) Prompted by Huna, I placed both my hands firmly on my hips, faced Uncle, and told him the plantation executives had declared a twenty-five dollar bounty upon the head of any number of wild boars. I then questioned him if that was his reason for the sudden attention to his gun. "Is this another of your intuitive bits of nonsense?" he cried. "Because no one as yet has informed me about it." "Well, I am doing it now," I saucily replied. He appeared greatly surprised and looked at me so threateningly I wished that I had not spoken.

I finally got all the animals and fowls well taken care of and was on my way to a belated breakfast when Otosan drove in. Uncle joined me to help Otosan carry in all the ho, lolowa--supplies. Suddenly Okasan dashed out and grabbed me by both shoulders and literally shoved me up the two stairs into Father's chair in our dining room to face a now cold breakfast. Having the kindly Cherry Blossom Lady's reaction to my indifference to such a mere thing as food just then or at any time, for that matter, amused me greatly because every morning I would enjoy such ripe fruit right off our trees growing in the garden--bananas, papayas, mangos, figs, passion fruit, lychee nuts, oranges, strawberries, raspberries and guavas, both the strawberry and the common sweet and sour guava. I was never famished at any time, due to all the delicious fruits in season the year around.

Uncle sauntered in and asked me to have a cup of coffee. I was going to talk on the subject of the boars but, knowing Uncle, I intuitively knew he would soon be charging out after a dozen or more boar heads. Yes, Uncle had decided that he and I should ride our own horses, lead the third horse with a packsaddle to which two boxes were attached to hold the hogs' heads.

Although I had a premonition of some fearful happening, Uncle managed to talk the matter over to his advantage and all went off as scheduled. We arrived at the spot where a number of vicious boars were always huddled together inside old black lava tubes. Hundreds of these tubes were formed as

8 result of the boiling hot lava flow's covering forests of big trees. As time went on, these trees deteriorated, leaving large caverns known to us as lava tubes. This particular section was fenced off with barbed wire by various business executives who hoped to prevent the destructive boars from entering the cane and other fields.

Uncle suggested our stripping through the wire and sneaking up to their dens where he would shoot them on their way out. I was to follow five feet behind, being ever watchful of a tree nearby in which I could climb in case of an emergency. "Tree, fast t" was to be my cue from Uncle. No sooner said than we were charged by several fierce boars which seemed to come out of nowhere. Uncle, in the lead, yelled "Tree, fast!" I heard grunts of several tones as I hurriedly climbed the nearest tree. I also heard a loud crack, like the breaking of a piece of wood, followed by the most awful human scream I had ever heard or ever want to hear again.

From my perch high up in the tree. I could hear and see those boars fiercely battling among themselves. Such fearful squealing and grunting predominated the area for hours. During this time I wondered why Uncle had not used his gun, for I had heard no shots. I then called to him but, receiving no answer, I suddenly knew he had been killed and devoured.

Finally, a waning moon appeared and shone down feebly on the bare ground between all the surrounding trees, thereby disclosing numerous boars milling around in wait, possibly for me. Some of the larger animals were fast debarking the trunk of the tree I was in. That, however, was the least of my concern, as I knew the tree was hardwood and several feet in circumference.

Before very long, a heavy dew began falling and I got icy cold. I then prevailed upon our Hawaiian ingenuity by breaking off heavily leafed branches within my reach. By draping these around my neck and shoulders, I very soon experienced a warm glow which brought on drowsiness. I fought off this fearful drowsiness by digging deep down into my trouser pocket for my faithful companion, a harmonica. Unconsciously, I began playing Uncle's favorite hymn, "Nearer My God To Thee," (It just brings tears to my eyes when I read about it now.) and with complete realization I played all the hymns I knew, thereby easing my heartache as well. Next I played the lovable "Aloha Oe"--"Farewell, To Thee" -- whence I heard Dtosan's welcome voice yoo-hooing, our signal call of the mountains. Dh, the blessed feeling of hope and security |

M: That's the end.

C: I tell you, I'm not a writer; I just write as I feel and go along.

M: That's fantastic.

C: And now about the coffee. I planted these coffee trees. I didn't finish that either. So I planted my little coffee beans and up came these beautiful trees. You know the little coffee beans. they shine [when they're] green and they shine when they mature. My father said, "Who taught you how to plant?" I said, "I watched them plant coffee beans," the Portuguese over there. There were some Portuguese families there.

END OF SIDE 1/2ND TAPE

posts and then he had sheet iron that he had hammered. You know where you used to put the sheet iron on the roofs?

M: reh.

C: Corrugated iron. Well, he hammered the corrugated iron all flat, as flat as he could get it. and he had that standing and underneath there is where I kept my plants and every seed that I put into the boxes just grew. Eight plants I would sell for eight dollars but they had to be fourteen inches tall and they grew into the most beautiful coffee trees you ever saw. So that's how I made my money to come down to the normal school.

You know. years ago, how people used to have these carpetbags? You know?

M: Yeh.

C: I came to Honolulu with seven hundred dollars Hawaiian money--big dollars. Have you ever seen them? Would you like to?

M: Yeh.

C: I'll show you how big they were. All I could was to carry it and the man In those days there were just hacks and the hack man said to me, "What you got in there that's so heavy?" "Oh," I said, "that is Hawaiian dollars. I'm going to normal school to be educated." "Well," he says, "you lucky I'm an honest man. If I was like some of the people around here--hack drivers--they'd say, 'All right, I'll take care of it' and you'd lose it. They'd take it home and you wouldn't have it. But I know you're an honest girl and you worked for this and I'm going to just be your

friend." And he was my friend. He could have taken the whole sack and gone and nobody would have known.

I guess I'd better get my cane. I'm going to show you a Hawaiian dollar. Press that open with your fingernail, I guess.

M: What's it S8Y, 18837

C: I think all have dates on them. I was offered two thousand dollars for my belt, but I said, "No."¹¹

M: My gosh.

C: I want it as a souvenir for my children--grandchildren.
(long pause, then recorder is turned off with counter at 45)

END OF SIDE 2/2ND TAPE

September 9, 1971

M: Well. you've made a remarkable recovery.

c: That's what they all tell me. Now let me see, we have plugs all over the place.

M: No, that's fine. I'm all set.

C: You've got it going?

M: Yep, we're going.

C: Oh, good.

M: You know the last time I talked to you, we covered a lot of ground.

C: Did we really, now?

M: Yeh, we did. I was listening to the tapes this morning and we got

C: I was hoping that you hadn't come here all in vain, because it was all new to me and I didn't know.

M: Oh, you told me some wonderful stories. You really did. I'm going to move this closer to you so the mike [microphone] is not six feet away.

One of the things I wanted you to tell me more about was more stories, if you can remember them, about your childhood on Hawaii.

C: My childhood, yes. Well, it thrills me to hear them over the radio, my radio. You see I have a radio and I have it right here beside me and I listen to it and they talk about the marvelous Kona coffee. My father, I told you, he got half of the money for selling the ship after bringing the load of animals down. It went back and they bought it. the ship, back in California. And so, he bought land for a dollar an acre up on the slopes of Mauna Loa and Mauna Kea, but we had to live on the land. It was that contract.

Do you know that I have inquired all around here and I have not found a person, up to [this] date, that knew anything about this, but King Kalakaua had They didn't know about that. It was a dollar an acre and people had to live there. But as I look back upon it now, people came from Germany, from Norway, from allover the world to Hawaii and bought this Kana land for coffee.

M: The other coffee farmers, what nationalities were they?

C: Well, they were Portuguese and some were Japanese, some were Chinese, all nationalities. They came from allover to the Island of Hawaii and bought up the land and started raising coffee. A lot of them were people that came out with the little coffee plants from Brazil. They were Brazilians that came out and, if you please, they didn't care for it, evidently, because they went back to Brazil. They figured that they got more money back in Brazil, raising little coffee trees.

We all worked in the coffee fields; planted them. Oh were they beautiful, the great big trees when it was budding time. They were snow white. Everybody had coffee trees and the whole place there looked like snow. They looked just like it had snowed underneath these great big lehua trees that grow wild up there. But we had an awful time keeping all the acres of coffee from the ferns growing up all around and taking all the good right out of the earth. Anything grew there.

So a ship went back and brought back to the Islands a shipload of young coffee trees, but when they got here they were all withered because, my father said, they watered those trees with salt water. They didn't know any better.

M: Oh yeh, I think you told me that.

C: Did I tell you? Uh huh.

M: Yeh.

C: So they had these dry trees and they said the leaves all came off the little plants. They were about so high. I measured most of them and put them in sections. Some were

twelve inches tall, some were thirteen inches tall, some were fourteen, some were fifteen, so Father said, "You segregate them now and then we'll put a price on them." Then they were planted and, by golly, it wasn't long before we had to haul out six hundred--our own on our homestead--of coffee trees. big trees that were already giving beautiful coffee. because of a blight that had taken over. It had come in on this ship, so it wasn't the water, it was the blight that had gotten the plants, you see.

M: What's this, six hundred trees were killed?

C: Six hundred trees were just dried up. leaves fell off and everything. These little tiny bugs. It had a name but I never could recall that name that we called them, the coffee bugs. They all called it that there.

And so I said to my father, "Gee, this is terrible." "Yes," he says, "it's a big loss, but we've got to be brave." 'Course I guess he still had some money from what he got for that ship. We never were in need of anything, you know, but just the same our little bankroll was diminishing. So I said, "That's all right, Daddy. I know how to plant coffee beans. I know the coffee beans to pick and plant and let me plant some." He said, "What do you know?" I said, "Well, I learned from Mr. Bortfeld." Now he was a German man that had come from Germany but he had been in Brazil and he had worked in the coffee there and he had come out to the Islands.

I said, "I'm going to plant coffee beans." And he said, "Da you know the kind of beans that are to be used?" I said, "Sure, the coffee bean." And he said, "No, not every bean is plantable." Well, I didn't know what plantable meant [Lynda laughs] but I pelted it around in my brain and finally said, "Well, I'm going to show you how I do. I've got little coffee trees growing." He says, "Where?" I said, "In my little coffee plantation. You come and see."

So I took him down the gulch, across, over to a flat place where the big stream came down and some water ran over in there and it was quite wet. "Here's my little plantation." I had twenty-one coffee trees growing. He looked at them and he says in German. "God in heaven! You do this?!" I said, "Yes, I planted them." He says, "What kind of bean do you use?" I said, "I'll show you." In my pants pocket that I had in my blue denims I carried these coffee beans around. I said, "Now here are the coffee beans." He said, "Yes, yes, but them all you cannot plant." I said, "Na, I know I cannot plant them all because they wouldn't be good, sure, but I show you." So I took them and I turned them over. You know, the two beans are together like this and then you look in and there is a certain bean that would be a good, flourishing tree. The bean told you that.

M: How?

C: Just by looking at it. You see, they have a little opening. They're together like this and in the center between them there's a little membrane. I call it a little membrane.

M: I know .., hat you mean.

C: And you were to go by that; that was your guide to a good coffee bean. So I looked and I picked and I picked and I picked. "Now, I said, "these are the ones I'm going to plant and these I take home and I dry them and then we plant them and grind them up for coffee." "Hmm," he says, "you is smart." I said, "Smart?" He says. "You picked the right coffee bean. Who teach you?" I said, "Nobody taught me. Just my Daddy said. He showed me the beans I was to plant would be thus and so."

Of course Father had traveled the world over on these ships that his father had built in Norway and delivering them and he had gone and seen everything and that's how he took a ship to One of those ships used to carry the coffee trees from Brazil to Lahaina, Maui. And then they were delivered from Lahaina, Maui to Hawaii--these coffee trees. This was in the early--let me see now if I can remember. I had all this data and all written down and everything and had the barrels of stuff come up from Honolulu to California and the Japanese struck Pearl Harbor and struck lots of Matson ships and all my stuff was sunk. It went down to the bottom of the sea. All my data on coffee and everything. But I still remembered how to--I mean, I could go out now and pick the real good coffee beans still.

So I said to my father, "I'm going to start selling plants. You tell people to come to me." He says, "How much are you going to sell this little patch for?" "Well, I don't know," I said. "I think five dollars will be good." Father says, "Gracious me, you almost have to pay five dollars for a plant. It's as high as that." They were fifteen inches tall and beautiful green leaves, you know, and beautiful stems. You want to have a tree that has branches that will branch out well and if there're too many you have to snip them off. You have to train it so that it will be a good one. So he taught me how to do that too, you see, but he was quite pleased that I had all these plants.

I only got seventy-five cents a plant for one coffee tree and, here, when they bought them the way they did, after paying freight and everything on them, they were two dollars a piece. I says, "Well, that's all right. This is home grown. I don't have to send them on ships or anything so it has to be a little cheaper; it can't be too expensive," said I to my father. "Oh, Martha," he says, "you'll never make

any money. (laughter) I said, "I don't want to make any money. I'm not looking for money, I'm thinking about people coming and buying my coffee trees and having nice, beautiful coffee trees in their coffee plantations." So that's the way it went with this. And this man came along and he bought the whole thing up. the last block that I had.

So that was when I had to find something to carry these Hawaiian dollars in. Have you seen a Hawaiian dollar?

H: You showed me your belt.

C: Oh yeh, the belt, that 's right. The two--the buckles, that's the Hawaiian dollar. Those are big and heavy, you know. Well, I didn't know what to do and, of course in those days, my people traveled from Norway here and it was the carpet Isn't that what they called the carpet satchels?

H: Carpetbag.

C: Carpetbag. So I got ready to come down to Honolulu to school. I heard that there was this place and it was the Kaiulan! Home For Girls and Mrs. Heapy was in charge of it. It was a home that had been provided by a very wealthy lady in Honolulu. I can't recall her name now but she was the one that really got this started. We paid twenty-five dollars a month for our room and board there, but we girls that came from other Islands worked in the Kaiulani Home For Girls. We each had our weekly jobs allotted us by Mrs. Heapy.

H: Howald were you when you went there?

C: I was eighteen, not quite eighteen and a half.

H: That puzzles me because something you said earlier, you were talking about, you were seventeen and you were in your last year at school.

C: At seventeen, I decided. When I was seventeen years old at the government school up on Hawaii I decided [to attend normal school] because I couldn't get a teaching job.

H: Oh, I see.

C: Yes, that's where I was seventeen and by the time I got myself all fixed up and clothed • • A Portuguese lady did all my sewing for me and I sewed the buttonholes and sewed in the buttons and all this to come down to Honolulu and I was a little over eighteen when I came here.

Mr. Woods was the principal of the normal school and I told him I had finished the government school and Miss Kate Horner was my teacher. He was quite pleased that I was going

to be a teacher. I had written a composition. I've forgotten now what **it** was but **it** was about being an American and he said that **it** was the best he'd ever read, for a child 8 little past seventeen, because he had said, "Write **it** as you feel. As you feel within you about **it**, write **it**."¹¹ So I did. Well, that was my prize thing because, oh my, they had their signatures there and everything. And that all went down into the bottom of the sea so I've been trying to recall some of **it**, but you know you can't remember a whole lot. [Edgar Wood, prin • 1897-1921]

M: No, you can't.

C: I know' I couldn't.

M: Bits and pieces.

C: 'Course **there're** some people who can. My daughter could. She's very brilliant.

Anyhow, I came down to Honolulu. I told the Japanese, Okasan and Ootosan, that I wanted to go to Honolulu and become a teacher. I wanted to go to teachers' school. He said in Japanese to me. "That's going to cost money."¹¹ I said. "Yes. I know. I've been saving."¹¹ They said, "No. we want to give you money, because we saved all the wages your father paid us and we have no children so we want you to be like our daughter and you go to school and you come back a teacher." I said, "No, no, no, no. no. You have to have that money to live on." Young as I was. I had been taught responsibility by my people. and I had reared myself up into a woman.

Father had said to me, "Now, Martha, we've had a lot of trouble here with girls allowing boys to kiss them and to love them and don't you ever do that, not until you find the man that you think that you would like to marry. If he asks you to marry him, then you can consider a closer friendship." So when I saw them looking at me, I'd begin perspiring. I can remember so well I got so nervous I didn't know what to do, you know. (Lynda laughs) I jumped on my horse and dashed home.

I was riding this wild animal and they told me, "No. ¹¹ They said, "We'll get a horse for you." I said, "No, no. This horse I am breaking in for a man. He wants this horse broken in." And they said, "Why? Why does he want this horse broken in?" I said, "Because he said it is a special breed of horse. You know, this is not a kanaka horse." They said, "What are you talking about?" I said, "We have kanaka horses here that are common horses and this horse is a pedigreed horse." And they said, "Well, how did he come here?" I said, "Well, we got it from the Horner Ranch" and the Horners had gotten horses from Europe or somewhere.

Everything to me was Europe, you see. I didn't know all these little places. They're just from Europe. And that was what I was to break in, one of the Paauilo horses. That's the plantation and it was owned mostly by the [Horners]. It wasn't sugar plantation; it was really a ranch. Paauilo was a ranch owned by the Horners.

One of the Horner boys, William Horner, was in Kukuihaele on Hawaii and he was our manager of the Kukuihaele Plantation. And we had our coffee land at Ahualoa, just off Kona, but part of it was gone. And Father had some land in Kona too and, do you know, he left it in the care of a man that came up there. He was a lawyer and he was an accountant and he was everything and, do you know, he said that the cost of running the plantation [was such] that I lost everything. I didn't get any money after Father's death, so that was that about that lovely, great big coffee land.

M: The land was sold?

C: He sold it and went off. He went away from the Islands. He did that to a lot of people there. He was just a great big robber that came and was so kind to everybody and got us all to agree to his taking care of our property for us and then he sold it all out.

M: Did he buy it outright from you?

C: No, he didn't buy it. He just was managing it for us.

M: How could he turn around and sell it, then, if he didn't own it?

C: Well, you know how the times were years ago, not like today.

M: Yeh.

C: Father had written this letter that he had turned it over to his care and it was as good as giving it to him, he said, so there you are.

M: So after your father was killed, then this fellow turned around and sold that land?

C: He sold not only my land; he sold a lot of other people's land around there and went off a millionaire.

M: Oh my gosh!

C: And nobody really knew his real name. In Hilo, he had a name; in Honolulu here he had another name, but it was the same man. But you know how, years ago, everybody trusted everybody.

M: What was the name that you knew him by?

C: We just knew him by Uncle Jim, that's all. ~owever, that was **it** •

M: Well then, after the land was gone then, it belonged to someone else.

C: Yep.

M: What did the Japanese couple and you • ? You stayed there. though.

C: No, then **I** came to Honolulu with my satchel, my carpet bag. with seven hundred dollars--Hawaiian dollars--in it and all **I** could do was to carry it and **I** was a big. strong girl.

M: Where had you gotten that seven hundred? That was from your

C: **I** saved it.

M: All those years.

C: All those years **I** saved. **I** raised chickens and **I** sold chickens and **I** just saved all the money **I** could because **I** knew **I** had to come to Honolulu. And the Japanese wanted to send me on their money that my father had paid them. **I** said. "No. no, no." And of course there were horses left there that were sold.

How old were you when your father died, then?

I was just between seventeen and eighteen. **I** had had my seventeenth birthday. going on to my eighteenth birthday, and **I** think a couple of months.

And how old were you when your mother died?

My mother died when **I** was seven and a half years old.

Oh. **I** see.

My grandmother partly raised me--my mother's mother--but the Japanese people really raised me.

Was that the grandmother that was also killed in an accident?

C: She was killed by a bull cart coming down the hill in a gap.

- M: Yeh, you told me that story, [omitted by family's request] but I've got the time thing all mixed up.
- C: Well, I'm a little bit confused, too, about exact dates.
- M: Yeh, well, about how old were you when your grandmother died then? She'd raised you after your mother passed away.
- C: Yeh, I was eight and a half years old then. She was on her way down from Iapulena. We still own that property. From Iapulena, she was coming down to Iukuihaele landing where we had a home and where Father had been the engineer
 . .

END OF SrDE 1/3RD TAPE

- M: I thought he was a veterinarian.
- C: My father was a veterinarian and my father was an engineer. My father was everything under the sun. (Lynda chuckles) Really. Dh yes. As far as engineering went, he learned engineering with his father because he was one of eight boys . . .
- M: Oh, that's right. The shipbuilding.
- C: And the shipbuilding and that's where he learned his engineering, you see.
- M: Yeh, I see.
- C: It's still a little confusing to me because there were so many tragedies, on and on. Anyway, that old horse hit me and he knocked out these two teeth Bnd I was ashamed to go to school even, but my Japanese man, he said that that was all right for me to go to school and I had to learn. He said, "You have to learn." I spoke Japanese beautifully then, but now I understand it only and I listen around and I am here to tell you, honey, that we can just look for Japan trying to come over here and take the Islands again.
- M: Really?
- C: From the talk I hear, the scheming and the talking, I can understand it, yes. I'm not a vicious person but I hope they'll never get these islands.
- M: Well, I think it would be pretty hard for them to do it, considering we are part of the United States now.
- C: Yeh, all right, but look at the way the Japanese here-- the whole island is full of Japanese. Every good job's held by a Jap.

H: Wow.

C: They're the ones that got the education. Who educated them? Japan. Japan gave them the money to educate the brilliant ones. I know, because I've heard them talking and telling each other about it.

M: Hmm. Well, let's see. I had a couple of questions I wanted to go back and ask you. Can you remember any of the names of other families that lived in the Ahualoa area?

C: Ahualoa? Yeh. There were the Bortfelds.

H: Yeh. I got that name down. Any others?

C: And there were the Nielsens. (long pause) And lots of Portuguese. There were an awful lot of Portuguese that came out. You see, they came out on the ship that brought the coffee from Brazil, because at that time--I think still--Portugal sort of owns Brazil, don't they or something?

Well, not anymore, but they colonized it way back.

Long years ago.

Yeh.

Well, it was in those times. And there was Fontes--Mr. and Mrs. Fontes. And of course there were my mother's people that were Olsens and I was an Olsen and my father was an Olsen, but my father's and my mother's people were not related. They were just Olaena and they were ship people too.

H: The grandparents that came over to Hawaii were your mother's parents.

C: My mother's parents. They were Olsen too. O-L-S-E-N and my father was an O-L-S-E-N too. Not O-L-S-O-N. That's the Swedish and the Danish, with the O in it; but the Norwegians are with the E. Now like Christoffersen, S-E-N is Norwegian, the spelling of their name. S-O-N is the last. That's Swedish and Danish.

H: One other thing that you said now that I'm confused about is you said your Grandmother Olsen raised you after your mother died.

C: She didn't raise me. She used to come down from Kapulena.

M: Oh, I see.

C: From her home. That was her home in Kapulena; they bought it. Oh, it was a beautiful home. My step-grandfather, she married. The real grandfather died, the one that was riding with my mother, you know, when I was born on the roadside. You have that.

M: Yeh. That was your real grandfather.

C: That was my real grandfather that was with her but he passed away. And then years later, came another Olson but he was O-L-S-O-N. He was a Swede, came to the Islands, and he worked on the coffee plantations.

You know, when my children come .

I want to finish this story before we get off the track.
(chuckles)

Yeh, yeh, yeh.

I've got you on it now. So he married your

He married my grandmother, uh huh, and I can remember the wedding. I can remember it so well and the man standing there and pronouncing man and wife in English, because there were no Norwegian what-you-calls here. What would you call them? Ministers.

M: Minister. Well, did they then •

C: They lived right in Kapulena in the big home. He was quite a wealthy Swede and, to tell you the truth, he was an alcoholic that had been' sent out from Norway by his people, very wealthy, so he was getting five hundred dollars a month every month, sent him from the estate back home, so they lived in luxury. Just everything luxury. But when he went on a tear, drinking okolehao in those days (Lynda chuckles), he was just a madman but Martha was his favorite. And when they couldn't do a thing with that wild man, they used to say, "Martha, go and quiet him down." So I would go and I'd tell him in Norwegian--we understand the Norwegian and Danish and the Swedish [which are] very much alike--"Now you have to go to sleep. Remember you have to go to work tomorrow. He was a luna, what they called a L-U-N-A, overseer on the Kukuihaele Plantation. I said, "You've got to go to work tomorrow and you don't want the manager to be disappointed in you, because my grandma had told me what to tell him. So he would say, "Yes, that is what I must do." So he'd peacefully go to bed and sleep off his--what they called it?--jag.

M: Urn hm.

C: And up next morning and off to work. When he was sober, he was just a darling and he had a beautiful singing voice. And so did my father. My father was very musical. On the one and only trip that he made back to Norway on the sailing vessel, he worked his way over and he brought back his organ from his home in Norway. He brought it to the Islands and, oh, you know, an organ in those days in the Islands was just so special. The Hawaiians were fascinated by it. And he played the guitar and he played the mandolin. He played any instrument. I used to just envy my father the way he could sit down and play and sing, but when he sang I was just fascinated, he had such a beautiful voice. Everybody was just tickled to death and so he used to just run around singing all the time, you know.

M: Well then. after your grandmother and this other Olson were married. how long was it then until this accident when she was killed? I mean, how old were you when she was killed in that awful accident?

C: They were married one year and two months. so that's fourteen months.

M: After?

C: They were only married fourteen months when she was killed.

M: Oh. I see. How old were you then. can you remember?

C: Well. that's what I had all written down. you see, that went to the bottom of the sea. Yes. I was between thirteen and fourteen.

I see. I just wanted to be able to say in general

Yes. sure. Yes.

. that your mother passed away when you were about seven and a half and your grandparents, when you were about thirteen.

Yes. yes, about thirteen.

And your father when you were about seventeen.

Yes. that's right.

I see. And throughout this whole time you had the aka and Orosan.

- C: Yeh, Oksssn and Ootosan that were my . .
- M: Did they live in the house with you and your father?
- C: No, no. Father had built a house.
- M: For them.
- C: Had built a house for them, yeh, right on the same premises in the coffee plantation. And they say that the people that bought the coffee place, their children's children are running **it** now.
- M: Oh for heaven's sake.
- C: That's why I want my daughter [Regina Else (Mrs. Sidney R.) Hinds], when she comes . They're over in Falls Church, Virginia right now and they're coming here for Christmas and I'm going to have her take me up to Hawaii. And you know Bob Krauss that writes for the paper?
- M: Um hro.
- C: And how he told about--did I talk to you about that?-- Mauna Kea, up on Mauna ICes where they have the--where he goes. He writes a lot on Hawaiian history, you know. Why goodness me, summertime I used to be one of the guides that guided people up the slopes of Mauna lea and we'd sleep on the trail in our blankets. In those days we dido' t have sleeping bags or anything like that but we slept in big, big blankets.
- M: You went on horseback.
- C: Oh no, we hiked!
- M: Oh, just walked.
- C: Right up Mauna lea. Dh yes.
- M: This was when you were a teenager.
- C: Yes. oh yes, when I had graduated and was teaching school.
- M: Oh. I see.
- C: Then I didn't like school because there was a Hawaiian boy and a Japanese boy that were very . He was half Japanese, half Portuguese. They would pinch the little girls as they passed them on the desk, you know, and these girls would cry. They had sharp nails and they'd break the skin and it would bleed and the mothers were after me about it and I said, "Well. I didn't do it." But the mothers said, no,

that it ~~was~~ the boys, so I got after these two boys and I said, "I'm going to report you to the superintendent if you don't stop pinching these girls." I said, "Look at this arm on this poor child." three great big wounds, you know--wounds. And these poor kids would bring great big pieces of cloth to school sod cover over their arms where they pinched them. I said, "If you don't stop I'll report you to the superintendent," and they did this to me (a threatening gesture). "And we give you this when you go home today and you'll never teach another day." And I got frightened because they were two great big worthless things. Both landed in jail a year after that and they were taken to Hilo and put in jail in Hilo. Oh, we had quite a time.

M: Listen, you said something else earlier that I hadn't heard about before and that was that your father had been out here sailing one of his father's ships before he came with his wife?

C: No, no, no. Father built the ships that had been sailing out here to Lahaina on Maui--Lahaina, Bay of Lahaina. He had come then and that was in the early 1860's and that's how he learned to like the Islands.

M: Oh, okay. Well you see, you never told me that. I just got the idea that they'd come with those animals, that one special boat that he built with the animal pens on the deck and everything.

C: Yeh, that's his father's.

M: I thought that was the first time he'd ever been out here.

C: Oh no, no. He had been out here. He came out as a sailor and his father--oh, he was ostracized almost. His father said, "No son of mine is going like a common sailor. He's got to go as a captain or nothing."¹¹ You know these old haughty creatures that used to be. (Lynda chuckles) Oh, I was very strictly brought up. No drinks, no gambling, no playing cards.

Yeh, you told me about that.

Oh yes.

What did you do for fun? You told me about • •

I had nothing left for me for fun, so I broke in wild horses. I took to breaking in wild horses. I had to do something. Okasan and Otsan, they took care of the housework and all the cooking, you know, although I kept on cooking. Grandma was the one that really taught me how to cook and I cooked the same as she did, because I was eight

and 8 half years old when she was run over and they had her in the parlor on a table.

This is your grandmother.

My grandma.

No wait! See, that's what I don't understand.

Well, she was riding down •

Yeh, you told me about **it**.

• to see me.

But you told me about two different ages. I thought we just got **it** straightened out that you were about thirteen when she had that accident.

C: No, no, no. eight and a half.

M: You were eight and a half. That's what you told me the first time.

C: When Grandma was killed I was eight and a half.

M: I see. Okay.

C: Thirteen was later on. Something else was later on. But Grandma. **it** was eight and a half I was, and they said I was not to go into the parlor because that 's where she wss. And I had been told by this Frieda Bortfeld that said that Grandma was in the parlor, that they had her there and that they were going to put her in a coffin and they were digging the grave. And they're buried right on Kapulena, at Kapulena right on the place where all of them are. They're all there. We have a little graveyard up on the hill and all the beautiful roses and everything that have grown up there. I was planting rose bushes up there all the time. It was a beautiful spot.

END OF SIDE 2/3RD TAPE

END OF INTERVIEW

SUBJECT INDEX

- 1 Family background: the Olsens
Anecdote: the ship for animals
- 2 The Olsen family
- 3 Mr. Olsen becomes a captain
The Olsena' wedding in Norway
- 4 The Olsena' trip to Hawaii
Anecdote: language problems
Parker Ranch, Hawaii
Martha Olsen Christoffersen
- 5 Anecdote: the wild horse-training sign
Otosan and Okasan, family servants
- 6 Importing animals to Hawaii
Mr. Olsen's veterinary hospital
- 7 The Olsena' coffee plantation, Ahualoa
Miss Kate Horner. teacher
- 8 The William Horners
Edna and Kate Horner
Childhood memories
- 9 Whales and whaling ships at Lahaina
- 10 Anecdote: Romeo the horse
- 11 Territorial Normal School
Mrs. Susan Dorcas Hespy
Ksiulani Home For Girls
- 12 Stafford Hespy
Mrs. Olsen's horseback riding accident
Martha Olsen's birth on the roadside
- 13 Maternal grandparents' homestead, Kapulena
- 14 Mr. Olsen, Parker Ranch veterinarian
- 15 Mrs. Christoffersen's teaching experiences
- 16-18 "The Fearful Tragedy, 11 a story

- 19 Anecdote: planting coffee beans
- 19-20 Anecdote: Hawaiian dollars
- 21 Purchase of Ahualoa land
Description of coffee plantations
- 22 Anecdote: planting coffee beans
- 23 Cultivating and selling coffee trees
- 24 Kaiulani Home: Mrs. Susan D. Heapy
Territorial Normal School
- 25 Ootosan and Okasan
Breaking in wild horses
- 26 The Horners and Horner Ranch
Anecdote: the swindler
- 27 Family history
- 28 Mr. Olsen's vocations
The Japanese in Hawaii
- 29 Neighbors in Ahualoa
- 30 The Olsons' Kapulena homestead
Family history: Olson. step-grandfather
- 31 Mr. Olsen's talents
- 32 Regina Christoffersen (Mrs. Sidney R.) Hinds
Hiking up Mauna Kea
Mrs. Christoffersen's teaching experience
- 33 Family history
- 34 Frieda Bortfeld
Family cemetery, Kapulena

THE WATUMULL FOUNDATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

The Watumull Foundation Oral History Project began in June of 1971. During the following seventeen months eighty-eight people were taped. These tapes were transcribed but had not been put in final form when the project was suspended at the end of 1972.

In 1979 the project was reactivated and the long process of proofing, final typing and binding began. On the fortieth anniversary of the Watumull Foundation in 1982 the completed histories were delivered to the three repositories.

As the value of these interviews was realized, it was decided to add to the collection. In November of 1985 Alice Stnesky was engaged to interview and edit thirty-three histories that have been recorded to mark the forty-fifth anniversary of the Foundation.

The subjects for the interviews are chosen from all walks of life and are people who are part of and have contributed to the history of Hawaii.

The final transcripts, on acid-free Permalife bond paper and individually Vela-bound, are deposited and are available to scholars and historians at the Hawaii State Archives, the Hamilton Library at the University of Hawaii and the Cooke Library at Punahou School. The tapes are sealed and are not available.

August 1987