

Kate
Mrs. Kortshak
May 26, 1984

Interviewed by B. Krauss

K: I was born on Kauai and went to the island of Hawaii at the age of three months. When I was six-and-a-half, my father announced that we were going to go to Honolulu. My twelve-year-old brother said he wasn't going to go. He had his best friends in Hilo, and he wasn't going to go, and so, of course, my father just left that. I asked if there was going to be a Hawaiian cherry tree in our garden where we were going to live, and he said, "Well, I don't know" (because he didn't know where we were going to live). I said, "I think I'll stay in Hilo with Sam."

So he took me on his lap--I was only six--and said, "I'll have to tell you something about Honolulu you don't know. They have a zoo there and they have a real elephant, and it puts its trunk out and you can put a peanut at the end of its trunk, and it puts it in its mouth." Well, I thought that outweighed the Hawaiian cherry tree, and there might be one anyhow, so I decided I would go. He told me he was very happy.

I've lived in Manoa Valley since 1918. We moved there in the first months of 1918. We arrived in Honolulu on the first of the year and lived in a little house on Wilder Avenue until we could find a house that my father and mother wanted to live in. It was that big white house on Kamehameha

Avenue across from the President's house that the Hales live in now. That's where we lived then.

I: Next door to the Hans?

K: Yes. Next door to the Hans, the lower side. Right near Oahu Avenue, but there was nothing but empty lots between us and Oahu Avenue. That was just guava bush at that time. We lived there for a year. Then my father was given a chance to buy it, but he didn't know how mortgages worked and he was scared to try. So we rented a house in Liliha for a year; by then he had learned how mortgages worked. So we bought the house from E.B. Clark. E.B. Clark was a marvelous person.

K: He was a person who used to buy a house and plant fantastic gardens. Then he would sell the house. We bought this marvelous house on Damon and McKinley for \$9,000. It had four bedrooms and a large sleeping porch, as well as the bathroom, of course. Then downstairs--it was enormous downstairs--it had an L-shaped living room, dining room, a huge porch, and kitchen. The garage was underneath the house. There I lived until I got married. My father, of course, lived there a lot longer. It was an ideal house. It was close to Punahou School, about a block-and-a-half from the stile that you had to go through to walk to Punahou.

In those days, the Portuguese used to grow grapes along Metcalf Street, and also potatoes. They had potato farms up mauka, so they would come early in the morning, and come up McKinley and go along up to their farms and then be back in the afternoons. My brother told me, "Remember, there was one

Portuguese man, he used to scare me half to death. He had one eye, I think he had a little bit of cotton in one eye." But I think probably he was partly blind. As a little boy, he probably thought it was cotton. Anyway, we never felt very comfortable about those Portuguese. I don't know why. They weren't very friendly, for one thing. Whether they were unfriendly because they thought we were unfriendly, I don't know. We always thought most people were unfriendly because they thought we were Germans, and so I had a terrible time at Punahou. But there was no friendly relationship between the Portuguese who came every day. You would think that we would have made some kind of acquaintance because there were children, too, who worked in these fields, but there was no inter-relationship at all.

I: Could I ask you a few questions? What was your maiden name?

K: My maiden name was van Heenskerch Vuker.

CB: Is that a German or French name?

K: No, it's a Dutch name. It's a very famous Dutch name.

I: Vuker. And your first name is . . . ?

K: Kate Leilani.

I: You told us you were born in Kilauea, Kauai. You want to give your birth date?

K: Oh, sure. September 4, 1911. I met my husband in Zurich when we were both studying for our doctor's degree. He was born in Chicago. We were talking about when we were born, and he said, "Oh, I was born in 1911." I said, "So was I." I said, "What month were you born?" He said, "September." I

said, "What day?" He said, "September 4." So I thought, well; we both sort of looked at each other.

I: His name was Hugo?

K: Hugo Peters?

I: What about the immigration of your parents to Hawaii?

K: I'm not too sure. Let's see. My brother was born six years earlier than I was, which would be 1905. He was born in Denver, so that was a year after we were already in the United States. So they came to the United States in 1904. My father was a chemist in the sugar beet business. That's very seasonal, and Michigan's sugar beet season was over. They had written frantic letters of application all over the United States, and my mother and father became very thrilled because several people wrote that the letter was placed on file. Anyway, there were two places that had not answered.

One was in Denver, so my mother said, "You know, I have a sort of a feeling. Let's go to Denver." The day before they arrived in Denver, the chemist in that particular sugar beet factory had left. They were just thrilled to have a sugar chemist on the job. That was where my older brother was born.

I'll tell you something interesting. My mother and father went shopping for diapers. The sign at the store said "Swaddling Clothes." So she went in with my father and asked for swaddling clothes. The saleslady incredulously said, "Swaddling clothes?" My father was not about to have my mother embarrassed at all, so he said, "You know, baby's

first pats." Now she said, "Oh, diaps." My mother put that word in her mind. "Diaps, that's the word."

I: Your parents came from Holland?

K: They were married in Holland. They were married several months before they came to the United States. He had his job in Michigan already assured before they came. I think they must have come to Hawaii around 1906 or 1907. No, wait a minute, no, because from Denver they went to Salinas, Spreckles, and so they stayed there for several years, and then they came to Hawaii.

I: So for a departure point, I'll put down Salinas, right? Were there other children besides your brother?

K: Oh, yes. My sister was born in Wainaku, Hilo, when I was a year-and-a half, and then my baby brother was born five years later. So there were two boys and two girls.

I: When were you married?

K: 1937, March 10.

I: How many children do you have?

K: I had four. I now have three, all girls.

I: Okay, you go ahead with your story.

K: After we were married I became pregnant almost immediately. We were living in a miserable little apartment where Princess Kaiulani Hotel is now. It was owned by Mrs. Fullard-Leo, who lived just above the old apartment. It obviously was not going to have room for a baby. So we moved to a two-bedroom house near the experiment station. My husband was a chemist at the station on Keeaumoku Street. We lived there; the rent

was \$65 a month. Then I found a place on Clark Street that was \$60 a month, but it was unfurnished. It had only a stove and a refrigerator. I figured that maybe with the \$5 a month we could probably buy a dining room table or something. So, little by little we added furniture with the \$5 that we had saved by not being in the house on Wilder Avenue. We really scraped in those days, but it was, I think, a terribly educational experience for me. We'd been brought up in a family that always had enough, and we had our allowance. If your allowance got down too low, your father helped you out. It was really quite something to have to just really feel that toward the end of the month you just plain had to. I had a special place in the kitchen cupboard for food for the end of the month so we couldn't run out.

I: Did your family send you when you went for your doctorate, that is, was it possible through family support?

K: We all together went around the world. It was my father and mother's thirtieth wedding anniversary, and they wanted to go to Holland and see all of that.

I: That was before you were married?

K: Yes. I went to Zurich because I had been working here to try to find a new acid derivative at the University, and we were trying to find a water soluble derivative. They were injecting oil right into the buttocks, which was so painful, so we were trying on the water soluble derivative and I did get one. I'd been looking up and found that the suit of coaling was water soluble so I said to Dr. Renchal, "Can't we

try making chum of real coal? He said, "We can try." Well, I tried every which way to make chum of real coal, and I couldn't do it by any ordinary method. So then fortunately for me Dr. John Payne, the new member of the faculty in the chemistry department, took over (I don't know what happened to Dr. Renchal). Dr. Payne said to me, "I have a new idea," and he showed me a way of synthesizing. He had been working for Dupont, and he had a lot of the latest things. So we did make chum of real coal, and I always was very thrilled ^{that} my article in the American Journal of American Chemical Society was published before any of my husband's papers. So anyway, they decided, Renchal and Payne decided, I really ought to know more about the structure of the molecule and so forth. The best man for that, they felt, was in Zurich, Switzerland, so I told my father, and he said, "Well, why don't you go there then and get your Ph.D. there?" So I went. That was in 1934. Soon after I got there, my guiding light there, Dr. Neehi said, "Dr. Holland said you have to take physical chemistry." I said, "Over my dead body. I will not take another course in physical chemistry. I've sent you all my grades and everything else from the University of Hawaii, and passed the course in physical chemistry. I hate physical chemistry, and I don't want to take it again. I will cram for the final examination before I get my Ph.D. but I will not take another course in it right now." He said, "You must," and I said, "Oh, no, I'm not going to do it." So he was really frightened. He was a shy man; he was just

horrified by my attitude. He said, "Well, I will talk to Professor Harban." He came back to me and said, "Well, Professor Harban said his English isn't very good, but he has an American student and so he said he'll have you talk to him. Tomorrow morning you and I will go and see him." The next morning we went up there and an American student was there. I was introduced to Hugo Kortshak. I looked into his eyes; he looked into my eyes. We both liked each other's eyes.

I: Let's go back to elementary school. Where did you go to elementary school?

K: I went, alas, to Punahou for elementary school.

I: And high school?

I: I went to Punahou through the seventh grade, and then they started the standard school, and the first one was Lincoln-- well, it was called M.M. Scott Grammar School. I still think that the reason they changed after one year to Lincoln School was because they tried to write a graduation song, but it's impossible to make a graduation song with "M.M. Scott Grammar School," absolutely impossible. They changed it.

I: Was it where Lincoln School was, down there by Thomas Square?

K: That's right.

I: By that time McKinley had moved across the street.

K: At that time students were allowed to leave school at the end of the eighth grade, and a lot of families who needed the money earned by their children, took the children out at the

end of the eighth grade. McKinley High School was the only high school in all of Oahu at that time. Children from the other side of the island used to come in on Sunday evening, and then go home just for the weekend. Oh, we used to hate it. They used to have boarding houses, and some of these boarding homes were not exactly wonderful.

I: So then from Lincoln you went to McKinley.

K: Oh, yes. My father wanted me to go back to Punahou. He said, "Of course, you going back to Punahou." I said, "Absolutely not, never. I'm never going back to Punahou." He said, "Well, you have to." I said, "No, I'm not. I'm going to McKinley High School."

I: Your brother Sam was the only one who graduated from Punahou.

K: That's right.

I: Sam graduated in 1923, a year after I did, and then you went to the University of Hawaii for a bachelor's . . . and majored in chemistry, following your father's footsteps.

K: Yes. Funny thing. You had to take a year of science, so I took chemistry and I fell in love with it. It was funny because I went to an annual chemistry dinner with my husband once. The head of the chemistry department came over to me and said, "What made you major in chemistry? I'm really interested in knowing." So I said, "Well, you'll laugh, but it was Mendeleev's periodic table." I said, "That day, when that was explained to us, I was just absolutely thrilled. I just went boom, treading on air. I knew I had found my profession. I was going to be a chemist."

I: Did any of your brothers become a chemist?

K: No. My oldest brother was a lawyer and my youngest brother did all kinds of things, but his really best thing was being a personnel manager. He was really marvelous with personnel and labor relations. He was absolutely marvelous.

I: Sam taught at the University.

K: Yes, he did after he stopped practicing law. He went to Columbia University and got his doctorate and taught, and he was a marvelous teacher.

I: Then, when you returned from Zurich, did you start working at that time?

K: No. I started getting ready to get married. My mother died before I got married. She died in October; I got married in March.

I: Where did you have any work experience . . . ?

K: No, I didn't. I had a lot of work experience, unpaid work experience after I got married, after we had children, and there was so much need for foster homes in juvenile court. When my first child left for college, we took in one foster child. We had three beds. We took in foster children, never more than two at a time; they come and go. We took in an awful lot. We must have had between 20 to 25 foster children from the juvenile court. It was horrible to see what kind of homes these kids came from. They were so amazed. One girl told her social worker, "You know, those guys really love each other. You should see the way Mrs. Kortshak looks at Dr. Kortshak and Dr. Kortshak looks at Mrs. Kortshak when we

are at dinner. They really love each other, you know." This was something totally new to this child. The worker told me about this and I thought to myself, isn't that awful to grow up not knowing that people who were married love each other? I just felt it was horrible, those things I heard. It was no wonder we have juvenile delinquents, and the things that happen to them. This first one we had was a child of a welfare woman; she ran out of welfare money towards the end of the month. So what she did was she'd pick a stone and go and watch till she saw a policeman. Then she'd throw a stone at the store window. Of course she would have four or five days in detention home and have food. That's the sort of thing that was going on.

I: And now, if you had all those foster children, you probably were very familiar with the schools in Manoa with your own children.

K: Yes, we sent our children to the public school.

I: Was that in Manoa?

K: Yes, we sent them to Punahou and Hanahaoli for the first two years, and then we sent them to Punahou.

I: What do you remember about Manoa School?

K: Well, Manoa School was very nice. It was inadequate at times, but all schools are inadequate at times, I discovered. We can't have perfect teachers every year, but Manoa School did pretty well, and of course we did an awful lot of teaching at home. My husband and I had a system whereby we would decide on two vocabulary words that we would use the

the dinner table in casual conversation. Then children would ask us what they meant and we would explain. We would use the words in several different ways, and then they would learn those two words, you know, not that they knew they were learning it but they were. That's what we did.

CB: Add 730 words a year!

K: Oh, it was terrific. They had a terrific vocabulary, but it was very important, I think. My husband was a living encyclopedia anyway. He knew dates. You could ask him any historical date. Ask him what Charlemagne did at such and such a time. He would say, "Don't you remember? That was when" I've never seen anything like it. Just like being married to an encyclopedia. He was marvelous in geography, and everything. He was marvelous.

Manoa School was about half-and-half haoles and orientals.

I: This must have been during the '40s when your children were in school.

K: Yes.

I: So you stayed here all during the war.

K: Yes. We went to Kaimuki for a short time until my oldest child was four and then we came back to Manoa.

I: Where did you live in Manoa Valley when you were bringing up the children?

K: Right where I am now, on Ferdinand Avenue. Manoa School was really "Bertram School," Then they went from there to Stevenson, but my oldest child wanted to go back to Punahou,

so we let her go back to Punahou. Her emotional health, I think, would have been better if she had gone to public school. I think she would have been happier, because at that time kids at Punahou . . . I don't know how they are now, but at that time they were very snobbish. She never had the right kind of clothes, you know. So she had a hard time. She would have been happier in public school. But my other children all went to public school.

I: Have you ever seen the book that Arbie Devereau and the committee put together about the history of Manoa School? I had the impression, maybe directly from her rather than the book, that there were very few haoles in Manoa School. But she sent her kids there, and it was she who helped write the English Standard System that was in effect by the 1930s.

K: Manoa was not an English Standard school. It didn't have one at that time. But those were mostly haoles in Manoa, so you just about had an English Standard school without its being called "English Standard."

W: There was a sign out in front. It said right out on the sidewalk, "English Standard School." I worked for the Advertiser. It must have been in the late '40s. Mr. Cowen was very much opposed to that. He was trying to get rid of the sign in front of the school.

I: It was not set up as an English Standard school. My impression was that haoles sent their kids to other schools because it was non-English Standard.

K: Well, it was not an English Standard school by the time my

children went there, but it was an adequate school in some ways. Some of the teachers were terrible and some of the teachers were good, but that we found all through, from first grade through twelve.

I: And then they probably were almost through by the time the school moved to the new campus where they are now. I suppose your children mostly went to the old school.

K: Yes.

I: Did they walk?

K: I think my husband dropped them off. We kept them pretty close to home because they had to do their practices, and they loved to read. So they stayed close to home. We had friends in the neighborhood but we didn't associate very much with them. There weren't many children. Our children did not change at all. We spent anxious hours discussing how we could improve their character but we did not. My second daughter was one who, when she got a penny a week at age two-and-a-half, she saved those pennies. She is today the family financier. Anyone who wants to know anything about finances turns to Peggy. My oldest daughter stayed pretty such the same. The third daughter was a great asset to me during the war because we had a constant stream of servicemen. We seldom had a dinner without having at least one serviceman for dinner, and sometimes they spent the night too. It was just constant. She was a baby and some of these men were so homesick for their own children that she was willing to sit on anybody's lap and be cuddled. Always did these men so

much good. She's still a friendly and outgoing kind of a person. My fourth child (at the age of four, I think) came to me one day and she said (at that time we had a beach cottage on the other side of the island), she said that a child had come to her who was eleven or twelve, and she wanted to come and live with us because she was afraid of her father. And at other times she came to me about problems of other children. They would come to her, and I would go and then invite the mother for a cup of coffee. We would discuss children and so forth and get the problem ironed out. She was the one that cared greatly, and she is still that type of person. She's a counselor now in Kailua, in the part called Maunawili.

I: You eventually became a teacher yourself.

K: Well, I was tutoring. I decided when my oldest child was in the seventh grade that we would never be able to do our ambition, which was send the children here for two years and then give them two years on the east coast so they would get a picture of the United States. So we would never be able to do that if I didn't earn some money, and I wanted to be at home when the children came home. The only way to do it was to tutor, so I called Punahou and I said, "Do you need a tutor?" They said, "What can you tutor?" I said, "Well, I can tutor French and German and Latin, and I can tutor all the maths, and I can tutor chemistry, and I can tutor almost anything, biology. I could tutor everything, so Punahou was more than thrilled. I was busy from 7:30 in the morning till

4:30 in the afternoon, ten minutes in between, but it brought in the money.

I: You taught at the Academy of the Pacific?

K: No, at Star of the Sea. It was really a Quaker committee that started it. Then we brought it up to a Quaker meeting. Gertrude Bowles is a Philadelphia Quaker, a different kind of Quaker. She said that if we wanted to start in September we would have to work like dogs. She said, "You can't start a school that fast. It takes years to start a school." Well, in a Quaker meeting you have to have total agreement or we don't act. We decided we'd talk it over, and then we'd start it anyway. So we did. But it was harder without the backing of the Quaker meeting.

I: You started at the remedial basis?

K: Yes, definitely. We took in every child and taught them how to read, if they didn't know how to read. We taught them how to do math if they didn't know how to do math. We just took in every child and we had limited enrollment, fifteen per class, seventh and eighth grades, and we added a ninth grade. We met a terrific need.

W: All you needed was some awareness from the community.

K: Yes.

CB: Are you still associated with them?

K: Unofficially, very much so, but it's a real need, and it's not a need that is being met by the schools.

I: Where is the new campus?

K: It's on Alewa Heights, and it's going to be lovely. My

connection with the school is I'm invited to all special occasions and so forth. They give me a lei, that sort of thing. It's a small school and they intend to keep it small because you cannot give children the individual attention that they need if you make it too large.

I: They were in a home in Manoa, in Nuuanu before that.

K: Oh, yes. That was when I was principal. You have no idea what children can think to do. I got so many calls from neighbors about what the children were doing. They were damming up the stream. They were doing . . . oh, the stream was right behind there, you know, and why not make a dam. It's a child's natural right to build a dam in a stream. And then, of course, there was a horrible find. Someone came up and said there must be a leak in the water pipes because your water bill is phenomenal. You know what had happened? They had discovered that they could make a little fountain way in the back of the property. A little fountainette, a beautiful little fountain going. Of course I was too busy being a principal to know about it. Children from the seventh to eleventh grades, I would say, can think of more crazy things to do. That cost the school enormous amounts of money and irritated the neighbors. Oh, my. I hated being principal. I feel that usually most children learn to read by the time they are through the sixth grade. Not always, but those children can be taught very easily. It's very easy to teach children to read. They also have to learn arithmetic. But I have hit a snag. Just two years ago I had a Samoan student.

I taught him how to add and subtract but I could not teach that child the multiplication table. I tried every which way, but there was no way. I was completely baffled and I have tried to find out what could be the block. I just don't understand what it was, and my daughter tells me that . . . well, there are some people who don't have the intelligence to learn everything. I said, "Yes, but when you put two chocolate chips here and two chocolate chips there, and two chocolate chips there, how many chocolate chips are there?" and he says, "Six." "All right, now, how many group of two are there?" They say, "Three." "All right," so I said, "Three times two is six. Right? See that?" Then when you ask him the next day how much is three times two, he'd say, "Five," which is really frustrating.

CB: What about the Quakers in Manoa? When did they get that property on Oahu Avenue?

K: We were looking to get away from the YWCA and we were trying to find a place. I was at that time one of the young active Quakers, and we had a Quaker visiting couple who were living here. So I asked her . . . no, we were just at the Quaker meeting, so I asked them to look at the Sherrets' property. They looked at it and they loved it and that's how they got it.

SIDE 2

K: So that's where it is. Oh, you'll have to call the Quaker meeting about that. Unlike my husband, I'm not one for dates.

- W: I mean Mr. Sherrets. After he died.
- K: Yes, after he died. I called Lucy and I told her that the Quakers were interested in buying, so if she could just hold off selling it to anybody else, the Quakers would really like to buy it. So she did.
- CB: Was this before or after World War II?
- K: Oh, this was after.
- M: In the mid-fifties? '55 or '60 when you bought it?
- K: I really don't know. I'm really terrible about dates.
- W: The Sherrets had three boys and one of them was in Punahou, the other two at Roosevelt.
- K: Yes. I think so.
- W: Mundy was in my cub scout troop, the Class of '58.
- K: Well, we had so many beautiful years. I'd say fifteen years. Mrs. Cox, Mrs. Issac Cox, was practically the first. She and old Gilbert Cox.
- I: Who was Gilbert Cox?
- W: He was Herbert's father. He had been a missionary in Japan, a Quaker missionary. Well, they came down much later.
- W: Yes, and Mrs. Issac Cox was the one who really started it. She was the first Quaker, and she really resented the way Gilbert Bowles sort of took over. Mrs. Issac Cox was the lady who set it up. She was absolutely a marvelous person. She did so much for Hanahaoli. She was the first Quaker. She was a wonderful person; she always had energy to do everything.
- W: Geraldine Cox. Her name was Katherine Lee? The father of

Doug and Dick and Chip, three boys--Charles. But they always said they were the first Quaker family in the islands.

K: Well, we didn't have any religion, so we read this article by Rufus _____ on what modern man can believe, and was so impressed with it that we went and took all his books out of the library. We'd each take one book and say, "Listen to this." But I must say a Quaker meeting is very difficult to get used to and I didn't think. . . well, it's better now than it used to be. They'd say, "I'm glad you came" and that sort of thing, but there was no real friendliness, no outreach at all. This sort of threw us off a little, but we were determined to keep on with it, and I'm glad we did. I think that people who first come to our Quaker meeting still find it a little difficult. You do have funny things happening at Quaker meetings. There's no question about it. My husband was a chemist with HSPA. One wonderful day, you know, we used to divide the junk mail between us, I noticed he had a large envelope and I didn't think too much of it. He said, "Hey, I won a prize." I said, "How much is it?" He said, "20,000 pounds." I said, "How much is it in dollars?" And he said, "\$44,000. Gosh." He said, "And they're paying our trip to England, yours and mine. I never thought this would happen. I said, "Wonderful," and we sat there just enjoying it for a long time. It was really an absolutely fabulous thing. Of course I felt he deserved it.

Well, Professor Coblin of Berkeley had done some

research on how the algae converted carbon dioxide into more complicated matters. He summarily did it this way. And so the sugar planters after very meticulous research made a discovery. I'll never forget the time he came to bed with me (after the children went to bed he always would give me all these talks for a while before he went to bed). He said, "You know, I think I found something, but nobody's going to believe it." I said, "Well, in that case you just have to make sure that you know exactly what it is." So he went to the head of this department, who was Burr. Well, anyway, Burr, whether it was jealousy or what, refused to allow him to publish, so I said, "well, you know, this is too important a discovery. You have to go to the head of the station." He was told if the head of your department said no, it's no. So for years his findings were absolutely unknown. Finally, Lou Nickels became the head of the department. When he saw the research he said, "Why hasn't this been published? Get it ready for publication this minute because we're going to shoot it off tomorrow." Then it was published, you see, and that's when Hugo got that prize. That was years later.

W: What happened to Mr. Burr?

K: Unfortunately, alcohol took him over.

W: When did you start the Academy?

K: I'm sorry, I can't really remember that.

W: Was that after your children were out of high school?

K: Oh, yes. It was after my oldest child was gone. Yes, I

guess it was after my last child left. I know I still had a foster child because I remember at one time my foster child was sick and couldn't go to school so I had her lying on the couch in my office. They would come and bring little things they found in their pencil boxes. These kids who are not successful in school work can be more tender and can be sweeter and more thoughtful than almost anybody else. They were so darn nice.

When my brother was a young teenager, the kids, his friends and he used to . . . Manoa streetcar used to go down as far as Wilder Avenue, but there's a hill and those naughty boys. I didn't hear about it until yesterday when I called them. So he said, "Well, you really have to tell them how we used to grease the tracks on the streetcar. The conductors and ~~used~~ used to have buckets of sand to counteract the grease. So it was something I never knew. I'm sure my father did.

CB: We had little tinkles of these activities given to us, putting caps to explode on the tracks, and pulling off the trolley connection above so that the car wouldn't go.

K: But there are many memories . . . there was a terrific . . . Punahou Street used to be lined with the most gorgeous monkeypod trees. It was just absolutely gorgeous, both sides, all the way up to at least Wilder. However, there was a terrific hurricane. My mother had been downtown that day and of course the streetcars weren't working. So she had to walk, and when she was walking home she saw the fallen trees.

She stopped to rest under one of the large monkeypods were is now Central Union Church, and she heard this funny creaking noise So she moved aside, and right where she was standing, this enormous monkeypod fell down. She told me once she didn't know how she had the strength to leap over this enormous trunk. She just leaped over. Well, as she was going up Manoa hill. The wind was so strong that she could hardly walk, and the man whose name I couldn't remember, I tried to find out last night to remember. . . Dave, Dave was his name. He was a man who did real estate. He had a little two-seater car. He told her he had been driving up and down the hill to help people who couldn't make it against the wind, and he took her home.

I: Is he the Bailey who lived up on Oahu near Anuenue Street?

K: I really don't know. That was in 1918. That was the year my father had to go to the Philippines. I came over the first of that year.

CB: Do you remember the hurricane?

K: Oh, I sure do, because my grandmother put the sewing machine in front of the back door. I was so worried about that. I can't remember exactly the month, but I'm sure the weather department has that detail. I can remember being terrified because I didn't think my mother would be able to come in, and my grandmother was frantically trying to close all the windows and trying to secure the house and everything. She was very irritated by this little six-and-a-half year-old or seven-year-old, whatever it was, who said, "She won't be able

to come in, she won't be able to come in." She said, "Hush, silly." I was a very persistent child, very irritating, but anyway, that was apparently part of the same typhoon that my father had run into. He had gone to the Philippines to scout out the places, new sites for Honolulu Iron Works. The Captain and he had been sitting on deck talking, and the Captain said, "You know, I just heard about a typhoon." So he called me and told me to go to the radio to listen for any warnings about the typhoon. Well, he just kept being uneasy, so finally the Captain said, "Send the radioman to me." Then he confessed that he had been giving out these daily bulletins because he told them at the Star-Bulletin that he would give items to the Star-Bulletin, our daily newspaper, but the radio wasn't working. So then the Captain took everybody, all the people on the ship, and he said, "The only thing I can advise you is to pray, because there is absolutely nothing we can do. We are going to be in the midst of a typhoon in a very short time, and the only thing I can advise you is to pray." But they came through. At that time we were still living on Kamehameha Avenue in 1918.

CB: Did you have trees and stuff blown down around there?

K: The pepper trees fell down. Pepper trees don't have very big roots, and they fall down at a slight excuse, but that was a real terrific wind. The monkeypod trees were a real disaster. Just terrible.

I: You had three generations here in the household.

K: Well, my grandmother lived with us part of the time. She

sometimes lived with her other daughter, but most of the time she spent about six months of every year with us.

I: Did you continue any Dutch customs?

K: Oh, yes, to some extent. We had a horrible Dutch breakfast before we went to school. It was horrible because what they feed kids in Holland for breakfast on a cold winter morning is not what you feed them here in Hawaii. You have to eat this in time to get to Punahou so won't be sent to the principal because you're late. I was talking it over with my sister a couple of weeks ago, and she said, "Oh, weren't they horrible." We had half a papaya, we had a bowl of hot cereal you wouldn't believe, and then we had a full glass of milk. That's an awful lot to down, and I don't think it's good either. We always gave our children a very light breakfast because we figure starving people get light food first, and then you also do that after a whole night's starvation. You don't give them a huge breakfast, but oh, a piece of toast and an egg, that's right. We had to down all of that before we got to school. It was horrible. I just look back on the breakfast with horror, but that was a really good Dutch breakfast.

We had St. Nicholas, who came on the 5th of December. Sometimes it was grandmother; sometimes it was my father; sometimes it was my mother who had to go out. All of a sudden St. Nicholas would arrive and throw all these candies around. But one day my grandmother's disguise fell off, and I recognized her hairdo. I told her I wouldn't tell the

younger kids, but I knew St. Nicholas wasn't real. So she said, "Oh, you can't say that," and I said, "Yes, I will." I told her why and she gave up.

We had Dutch cooking a lot of the time, such as on Father's Day.

CB: Where did your family go to church when you lived on Kamehameha Avenue?

K: I'm afraid that we didn't go to church. My mother went to the New Thought Center. But my father was very irreligious.

CB: I should think this would have led into the Unitarian Church.

K: The Unitarians weren't here at that time. The New Thought people tried to have Sunday School but it never lasted more than two or three times. So my mother had to give up on the Sunday School. It was never on Sunday, it was during the week. We grew up not irreligiously, I would say, but my mother did give us a lot of religious teaching. My father was not, but his mother was deeply religious; he came from a deeply religious family. My father's family had among them a minister to the royal Dutch family.

CB: What is the "New Thought"?

K: Well, it's the Unity school of Christianity, sort of like Christian Science, only they don't have this feeling that you can teach how to heal a person if they don't see a doctor and don't take medicine.

CB: And this was operating as a group here in the '40s and '50s?

K: '30s.

CB: I hadn't heard of it before.

- I: I can't imagine living on Kamehameha. They took the trolley home.
- CB: What did it cost?
- K: Five cents.
- CB: Of course that was more money then, than it is now.
- I: I bet your children walked home from school even if your husband took them in.
- K: Oh, yes.
- CB: Then they had enough to be able to walk, if they were on Ferdinand part of the time.
- K: Oh, yes. But you see, when we lived on _____ from Punahou, of course we had to go through the cow pasture. That was really irritating. When I was in seventh grade I used to have to get my little brother from first grade. They got out at twelve, so I had to rush down, take him through that stile. So the cows chewed their cuds right in front of the stile on both sides of the narrow path. He used to be scared and I told him, "There's nothing to be scared of--just cows, you know." We went whooshing through the stile.
- CB: Where was that stile?
- K: It was on McKinley Street right at the end of Atherton Road.
- I: Where? There still a road from Punahou by that area.
- CB: Well, that's up at the top of ^{KA}~~Tontakela~~ Drive, the entrance into Punahou that you can walk through above ~~K~~akela Drive.
- K: The stile was a little makai of that.
- ~~CB: Well, Rocky Hill is another situation that puts you way above.~~

- I: Do you know something about the hill that is part of the eruption? When Tantalus erupted (it was a volcano), it erupted and part of it was this hill. Another one was this slope at Moiliili.
- CB: Well, this valley is said to ^{be} have the only one like ~~it in~~ Waipio on the Big Island. Well ~~any~~, it's the same shape or configuration.
- K: And of course on November 11, 1918, the newsboys were screaming, "Extra! Extra!" the first time I saw grownups crying because they were happy. I knew my mother and dad were thrilled to death, but they were crying.
- I: You mentioned that you uncomfortable at Punahou because people thought you were German.
- K: Oh, my! They made my life pure hell. They used to ^{taunt} ~~tell~~ me on the way to and from school. It was just horrible; they wouldn't let me play junk and po, they wouldn't let me play jacks, and I was shunned. I was never so happy when they first stuck me in a new school. My mother asked me on the first day, "How did school go?" "Oh, it was wonderful," I said. I sat down to eat my lunch and a girl came and sat beside me and asked if she could eat lunch ^{with} me. I said, "Of course." She sat with me and two other girls sat and ate lunch with me. It was so much fun. I said, "I think I'm going to like this new school." Did you know, I think my life at Punahou was just a poor _____, I just hated it. And in the fifth grade, I point-blank refused to go to school. My mother found out what had been happening and so she called

Miss Winnie. Miss Winnie then sent a note to the teacher to send Katie Vuker and Adrian Balch and Olive Baldwin and some of the other girls down to the office. I guess there was four or five of them. She carefully explained to them that not only had the war ended in 1918, but Katie was not German; she was Dutch and she spoke Dutch at home. She explained the difference and she explained that Holland did not take part in the entire war. Then these kids were so clever that in no time (I don't remember if it was Adrian or . . .) someone said something about the girls throwing bread in the cafeteria. So Miss Winnie ordered those kids to come in. Well, in no time that office was full of miscreants of one kind or another, and the whole office was completely filled with kids. Finally, Miss Winnie threw up her hands and told us all to go back to our rooms and behave ourselves. And the principal of the Honolulu Junior Academy. I can assure you, it was really terrible.

I: Who was your teacher in fifth grade . . . Mrs. Baldwin?

K: Oh, yes, I loved her. She was first semester. Then she decided that she wanted me to be in the "A" class, which would be Mrs. Woodbalmage next year, the following year. So in order to do that, it was better to transfer me mid-year to the "A" class. I had some teacher, I don't know who it was; she was very unpleasant. Of course she didn't like a new kid coming in in the middle of the year, and so she wasn't very pleasant to me. We had a wonderful substitute. She didn't know I was German—or whatever and so she was very nice to me

and didn't make any difference between me and any other kid. But then the regular teacher came back, but I managed to get through the year. Then I had Mrs. Woodholf in the sixth grade. She was very nice, and the seventh grade I enjoyed. Then I went to standard school.

I: You went in the eighth grade to standard school?

K: Yes, that was the first time. They went from first to eighth.

CB: I've been using the city directory quite a bit. I noticed that Margaret Young's . . . whose family name was Schmidt . . . her father changed it in 1918 to Smith.

K: With me, the persecution of the kids was terrible. My father and mother were so mad because there were so completely out of all of this. Holland was neutral and my father certainly was not on the German side at all. They were so puzzled at the fact that we were persecuted at all. And I know the Harmon boys had a hard time. And that's why at last we stopped teaching. We had been talking Dutch with my four-year-old. _____ was speaking German with her, and we had the Japanese maid teach her Japanese. So she knew three languages, plus English. So she knew four language when she was four years old and was perfectly able to switch over from one language to another whenever it was necessary. I said, "I cannot do to her _____." I'm sort of sorry today.

I: She remembered the languages?

K: Well, they all know some Dutch because we sang Dutch songs

but they never could speak Dutch. Well, they all learned German and English.

CB: Hugo used to read Dutch.

K: I taught him Dutch in three weeks. I was talking to him (this was before we were engaged), and I talking to him, saying to him that if you spoke a foreign language at home, you really would want your husband or wife to speak the language. So the next time he came up, he said in a very irritated voice, "Why do the Dutch have the same word for 'we' and the game golf?" I said, "The game golf is 'gof' and word _____ is 'hof.' It's just spelled the same way. How come you know that?" He said, "Oh, _____ had some Dutch newspapers." I said, "Oh, you are getting interested."

I: Is it similar to German?

K: I think it's more similar to English. If you know a little bit of German and English you can learn Dutch . . . it's very similar to English that one of the Dutch kings, the king, King Ed

CB: William of Orange.

K: . . . yes, there was a very close connection there. The Dutch language is very close to English.

I: What language do you were you taught in . . . ?

K: In German. I was in German Switzerland in Zurich. You had to get a certificate that you knew how to follow the courses in German before you were allowed to enter for your Ph.D. Well, I'd taken all the German courses here.

I: Had you even taken chemistry in high school at McKinley?

K: No, I didn't. Well, I hadn't taken chemistry because you had to take a year of science. Later I took chemistry, took all the chemistry courses they had, and I was really very, very good in chemistry. I just loved it and I did some original research.

CB: Were you ever up in this area before World War II--around in here?

K: Oh, yes. The Agees had a house up here by the stream. I don't know too much about the house, but I know we used to walk up to Manoa Falls along the stream, and we walked up to the taro fields to get down. We were scandalized. You know something, turtle _____ pooped in their boat. We were so shocked. She thought she out to punish the turtles. At that time it was so safe for children to roam. They could roam all over. It was perfectly safe until the war.

CB: You mean World War II? Did you swim up here?

K: Oh, yeah. In Manoa Falls. I couldn't swim but we got wet. There wasn't anything out there, and on a cold night there was nothing like swimming without clothes on. We used to swim the same way at Sacred Falls, and over there was a beautiful pool that we used to swim in. Oh, there is just nothing like it, there's just absolutely nothing like it. And it was just delicious, I'd just feel so free.

We had an excellent principal. She was an excellent principal. One of the things she did was every week we had to read _____. Of course we didn't understand it, but as a grown up I do. The words are still there, and are a

familiar part of me. I just feel that it's not necessary for children to understand everything that you say you have to read.

I: The kids read Winnie the Pooh. They don't understand what the words are, but they love the rhythm and the sound of the words.

K: We played baseball and I'll tell you one story. Mr. Baum, who started the Territorial Savings and Loan, used to live on Damon Street. My father used to give him a lift downtown. One day he said to my father, "You know, Mr. Vuker, I want to be the kind of a father you are." My father was kind of surprised. "You know, yesterday you were playing baseball in the backyard; one of the kids threw you a ball and you didn't catch it." One of the kids said, "Why didn't you catch it, dumbbell?" I want my kids to grow up so that they can say that to me."

CB: Did you ever see tennis being played at the Kamehameha Stream . . . Manoa Road?

I: There was a tennis court on Kamehameha and Manoa Road but it was private then. Do you remember people playing tennis?

K: No, I've never seen it, because I have a terrific inferiority complex about other people _____, and I think I just ignored it.

I: Did you ride on the streetcar?

K: Oh yes. It went as far as Punahou.

CB: Cooper Road to Punahou.

I: Well, don't you remember ^{Ooster}~~Foster~~ Garden, who was the

conductor?

K: ~~Foster Garden~~, yes.

CB: Transferred from the trolley to the Aquarium.

I: To the University.

K: Well he had to be in the open air _____.

I: There was a little platform on the back of the trolley. He used to stay out there leaning on the rail rather than being inside, and that explains that.

X: You know where I last saw him?

I: Where?

X: On Makiki Street. Down there by Beretania. He ~~is~~ operating a laundry?

I: He became quite an artist, you know.

Y: Who was this?

All: ~~Foster Garden~~. *Oakengard.*

I: Did you ever see his mullet paintings? They are the most exquisite geological paintings. Absolutely exquisite, and they got him to illustrate _____. He did some beautiful paintings.

CB: ~~We're told it's Neill's Foster Garden by some people. I found another name in the directory.~~

I: Well, thank you Katie.